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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 11

January, 1929

Number 1

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

1928 - 1929—*Increasing Tension—Anglo - American Antagonism—
Labour Anti-American Propaganda—Bottomley—And the
“Economist”—A Warning—Outcome of Mondism
—Disrupting the Unions—Towards a Slave
State—Revolutionary New Line—
Maxton - Cook Fiasco —
The Outlook*

IN any survey of the developments of 1928 and the outlook for 1929, the dominant feature is the visible and growing tension of the whole world situation. Alike in the economic and political field there is a sense of gathering forces advancing with increasing momentum towards a point of crisis. The more vivid and dramatic expressions of this in the disarmament failures and growth of Anglo-American antagonism, which have been the conspicuous events of 1928, are themselves only the high points in a wider total situation. What is noticeable is the way in which, in a host of different fields of activity and development, not only in the political sphere and in the economic sphere, but also in the working-class movement, the same general situation reflects itself in varying forms; issues and forces of the most varied kinds, developing along varying paths, are drawn ever closer together into a single dominating situation. It is as if the process of the concentration of capital, which has in the past ten years advanced with such giant strides still further along the road already indicated in Lenin's *Imperialism*, is reflecting itself in this knotting together and unification of issues.

IT is only necessary to examine the principal developments of the year in a series of different fields to see how closely the factors of the world situation are being drawn together. If we were to take the principal development in the sphere of international politics, it would be the growth of Anglo-American antagonism with its ironic “pacific” accompaniment of the Kellogg Pact. If we were to take the principal development in the economic situation, it would lie in the process of Rationalisation

and its consequences. If we were to take the principal development of the year in the British Labour Movement, the answer would be Mondism. If we were to take the principal development of the year in the sphere of the revolutionary working class in Britain, the answer would be the New Line. But it is only necessary to single out these four points to see how closely they are connected. The intensification of capitalist productive power, organisation and world competition, embodied in the process of Rationalisation, is the basis of the intensified world antagonisms in the international political sphere, embodied in the Anglo-American antagonism. But Rationalisation and State capitalist organisation on the one hand, and the advance to war conditions and organisation on the other, are the basis of the capitalist transformation and reorganisation of the reformist-led Labour Movement, embodied in Mondism. Finally, the transformation of the Labour Movement, and the sharpening issues arising from heightened State capitalist organisation and war advance, are themselves the basis in their turn of the New Line of the revolutionary working class. The whole world situation is thus developing in a direction in which the issue of State capitalism and war on the one side, and of revolution on the other, is becoming ever more sharply defined as the ultimate dominating issue of the world situation in the period in front.

THE Anglo-American antagonism has been the outstanding political feature of 1928. It is to be expected that after the temporary outburst of general excitement there will follow a lull and the prominent demonstration of reverse tendencies. Steps towards a closer understanding will be taken; and a temporary measure of naval agreement may even be reached. But it is sufficiently evident that the reality and depth of the developing antagonism will no more be affected by such surface changes than the similar surface changes were able to affect the developing Anglo-German antagonism. The rapid increase in the economic rivalry throughout the world, with the inevitable growth of American manufactured exports and general world expansion, rules this out; and both the policy of the American dominant forces, represented by Hoover, and of the British

Foreign Office (whether represented by the nominal spokesmanship of a Chamberlain, a Grey, or a Noel Buxton, will make no practical difference) shows clearly enough the line in front.

MORE instructive than any details of the diplomatic situation is the present trend of the Press in both countries. The reappearance of all the characteristics of the period of Anglo-German rivalry is abundantly evident, not merely in the political articles, but still more clearly and typically in the non-political articles, where anti-Americanism or anti-British feeling is given a social, moral, literary or artistic form of expression. (It is worth noting that this type of propaganda is frequent in the reformist Labour Press, in the Joad-Russell-Allen type of expression; sneers, superiorities and disgusts at American standardisation, mass-produced conventionalism, crudeness, immaturity and intolerance, with the implication that British conditions and institutions are superior or freer, are continual; it was a former Chairman of the I.L.P. who declared that he "loathed three things: Bolshevism, Fascism and Americanism"; and it is another prominent spokesman of the I.L.P. who has devoted a whole book to anti-American propaganda. This whole question is worth special examination and treatment; for the seeds of future anti-American war are being abundantly sown in the Labour Movement.)

THE political trend is no less definite; and here it is the so-called "popular" Press (*i.e.*, the large-scale Press run by the bourgeoisie as instruments of mass propaganda), the *Daily Mails* and Sunday Press, the *New York Americans* and *Chicago Tribunes*, which are, as often in questions of foreign policy, the most instructive. What is cumbrously expressed in the polite acidities, alongside of conventional expressions of friendship and statesmanship, in the upper bourgeois Press, is more plainly set out for all to read in the bourgeois mass-propaganda sheets. It is worth noting also that Bottomley, after his temporary misfortune of being thrown overboard after the war by the respectable brigands of the bourgeoisie who had no scruples to use him during the war, is now, in his

new organ, *John Blunt*, hotfoot on the anti-American trail ("Blunt Words to America"), no doubt judging correctly that a new war is needed to re-establish him as a national hero. With magnificent simplification, he exposes on the part of America a subtle campaign to seek a quarrel with Britain, with a view to the annexation of Canada.

He proceeds:—

What the devil are our politicians thinking about? Are they deliberately blind, or merely fools? I am told that if you look at some of the oars used in the boats carried by our battleships, you will find they are marked "Made in the U.S.A."—further, that practically the whole of the storage batteries in our submarines are made by the Exide Company of New York, and over here some of the Royal Mails are carried by Ford motors! Then they tell me on the Stock Exchange that the recent financial boom is due largely to the influx of American money!—(*John Blunt*, December 8, 1928.)

It is clear that "Made in the U.S.A." is now to serve the purpose of the old "Made in Germany" cry, and the sinister hand of the American is henceforth to be found in everything.

LET us turn from Mr. Bottomley to the more sedate columns of the *Economist*. We find an article on "American Penetration of British Industry." It would appear that the cousinship of Mr. John Bull Blunt and Mr. John Bull Economist is not so remote as might be imagined. It is pointed out that Marconi International Marine Communications, Limited, is taking steps to restrict the foreign holding of shares to 25 per cent. and directorships to natural-born British subjects.

The directors believe a considerable proportion of the recent activity in the company's shares to have been due to foreign buying, and "cannot ignore the possibility" of its having for its object the placing of control in foreign, and, one may add, in American hands.

Imperial Airways, it is further pointed out, and the General Electric Company have already taken similar steps. It is added that

although the new electrical merger gives direct control over only 1,200,000 votes to the International General Electric Company (of America) out of a total of 4,115,425, yet there is sound reason for believing that, in fact, American interests will be powerful.

On the situation, the *Economist* comments:—

The reason for, and effects of, the influx of American capital into certain British industries cannot be yet stated accurately . . .

No whole industry in this country is yet mastered by American or other foreign interests, but it appears very forcibly that hitherto "free" international markets in certain industries are passing into unified control dominated by American capital.—(Economist, Dec. 15, 1928.)

This process is of exceptional interest. It is naturally to the interest of the American financial giant, with its superior resources, to attempt the "peaceful" economic penetration and conquest of Britain. But it is equally obvious that British imperialism, as the above indications already illustrate, will take active steps to prevent such penetration, and particularly to protect those industries of "national importance" (wireless, electrical, air, &c.) which, it will be noted, are of war significance. This is a type of situation that manifestly points to future war.

IT must, however, once again be emphasised that the Anglo-American antagonism is only one factor, although the dominating inner-imperialist factor, and therefore tending more and more to draw all other inner-imperialist factors in its wake, in a total world situation, and that therefore any isolated view of it will tend to a false understanding. Not only is the advancing tempo of the other imperialist antagonisms in 1928 to be kept in mind (French move to the Right, despite election increased Left vote, with the Poincaré Cabinet reconstruction dropping the Left; German move to the Right, despite election increased Left vote and nominally "Socialist" coalition ministry, with the cruiser campaign, and such things as the election of Hugenberg to the head of the Nationalists; the Lugano deadlock; Italian increased sabre-rattling and talk of its coming war of expansion; Japanese war of aggression on China with the occupation of Shantung, and conflict with the United States); but in addition, there is one respect in which the development of the Anglo-American antagonism differs completely and basically from the previous conditions of the development of the Anglo-German antagonism. This is that the Anglo-American antagonism is developing, after the opening of the world revolution, alongside of the existence of the Soviet Union. For this reason, whatever the long-term calculations and preparations of the British Foreign Office and Admiralty, the immediate concentration of British imperialism is still primarily against the Soviet

Union, China and the revolutionary menace. The possibility of a deal between the imperialists at the expense of the Soviet Union, opening out an immediate war perspective, remains ever present.

IF we turn from the international situation to the development of the British Labour Movement in 1928, it is impossible not to note the close connection. At the moment of writing, the exact future of the Mond-Turner Treaty is under debate by the employers, who feel themselves strong enough, in face of the abject servility of the trade unions, to impose what terms they please, and, since the trade union leaders have shown themselves in any case such fawning jackals and Communist-hunters, to insist on more onerous terms of servitude, or, alternatively, to keep their hands free for further attacks on the workers without any appearance of breaking the imaginary "industrial peace." But the policy of the employers in this question is simply a secondary question of their immediate tactics. It is the policy of the trade union leaders that is the essence of Mondism. The decisive declaration of Mondism is contained in the General Council's declaration of the "third course" (as opposed to the revolutionary policy, or to the former reformist policy of fighting to extract sectional advantages from the employers) in its Report to the Swansea Trades Union Congress and adopted by that body:—

The third course is for the Trade Union Movement to say boldly that not only is it concerned with the prosperity of industry, but that it is going to have a voice as to the way the industry is carried on, so that it can influence the new developments that are taking place. The ultimate policy of the Movement can find more use for an efficient industry than for a derelict one, and the unions can use their power to promote and guide the scientific reorganisation of industry as well as to obtain material advantages from the reorganisation.

This declaration turns the unions into organs of capitalism, and reverses the previous policy of the Trades Union Congress, which found its expression in the Scarborough decisions. By placing the hope in a "scientific reorganisation of industry" within capitalism (an obvious contradiction in terms from any Socialist standpoint), it guarantees co-operation in capitalist Rationalisation, which can only be against the workers, and therefore—what logically follows, and is the real significance of "concern for the

prosperity of industry" and "scientific Reorganisation"—in intensifying capitalist competitive power against all rivals, driving to war, and at the same time organising and strengthening the imperialist war machine by making the unions a subservient part of it. Co-operation with capitalism is not a pacific policy, but a policy of war.

FROM this essential transformation of policy, the necessary counterpart of which is the Labour Party policy of coalition, follows a corresponding inner transformation of the movement, which has gone forward with extreme rapidity in 1928, is still in process and is likely to reach very much further in 1929. While the limitation of the Labour Party to a restricted and obligatory reformist basis reached its final completion in 1928 with the Birmingham resolutions, which at last without reserve dictated to the unions their permissible choice of delegates, thus ending once for all even remotely any conception of the capture of the Labour Party by the workers or even power to influence it, the centre of the fight at once passed to the unions. It was at the outset pointed out, when the transformation of the Labour Party was first begun seven years ago, that the process could only end in its transference to the unions, and, if persisted in, in splitting them. This is the stage now reached. The new process is the subordination of the unions to the political basis of the Labour Party. By the indications of the Miners' Federation resolution on the Scottish situation, the Boilermakers' new ruling as to Trades Union Congress delegates, the Shop Assistants' Union "document," &c., it is clear that the line is to make trade union activity and representation dependent on acceptance of the political line of the Labour Party. In this way, when a revolutionary majority develops in any union, its elections and decisions are to be automatically ruled out, or, rather, even candidatures prevented beforehand, so that the inconvenience of the Scottish example, where the defeated officials have had to use the ugly method of ignoring majorities and simply refusing to vacate seats, may in future be avoided. The appointment of the General Council Committee on "disruption" points to the prospect of generalising this new type of basis of trade unionism.

IF this type of policy is carried through, the most serious situation for trade unionism since its inception will have been reached, and the issues raised in the near future will be grave and dangerous. No doubt the reformist leaders calculate that they will by this means be for the future as secure for life as Mussolini's trade union leaders, Daragona and his associates. But the removal of the last means of constitutional redress of grievances for the workers points in a very different direction. Herbert Smith was not so far wrong at Llandudno, when he demonstrated his conception that he and his fellow-reformist leaders had finished with reasoning and democracy and majority rule, and reduced the issue to the plane of a physical contest. That historic event of 1928, and demonstration of the inner cowardly reality of reformism (cowardly because they count on the protection of the bayonets of the bourgeoisie), will not be forgotten by the working class. Like Baldwin, in 1926, the reformist bureaucracy to-day are teaching lessons to the patient workers of Britain which they may live to regret. For the final issue of such a contest will not rest with the reformist bureaucracy, nor with the bourgeoisie, on whose legal and armed protection these treacherous slave agents count. They are confident that they are setting up a compact and impregnable counter-revolutionary machine, which will be without parallel, to hold the workers in servitude at every point, and leaving no escape save in the face of guns; and the guns, they count, will be on their side, *i.e.*, on the side of the bourgeoisie. They are ready and even eager to split the unions in order to confirm their position and drive the class-conscious workers into forming revolutionary unions, which, they count, can then be easily suppressed by the legal and police apparatus of the bourgeoisie, if the employers' whip of victimisation is not already sufficient. How ready they are to split the unions has been shown already by the action of Adamson, the former Chairman of the Labour Party, in immediately forming a new union so soon as he found himself in a minority in the old one. They have on their side, as they know, all the instruments of suppression, the employers, the law, the police and the capitalist state. Undoubtedly, the menace to the working class is the heaviest in its history in this

country. *A new slave state of rationalisation, State capitalism and Mondised trade unions on a Havelock Wilson basis is growing up before our eyes.* By these means, like every despotism in its last stage, they will be able to maintain the whiphand for a period still. But in the end they are performing their rôle in destroying the last strongholds of democratic illusion for the workers, and paving the way for the workers' revolution.

THE New Line of the revolutionary working class is the beginning of the answer of the revolutionary workers to this new situation. In the face of the consolidation of capitalism and reformism into a single unified machine of suppression, the independent mobilisation and independent leadership of the revolutionary workers is the decisive factor for the future of the working class, and its unreserved realisation becomes the vital task of the present period. The decision of the Communist Party in the early part of the year to enter on the open fight against the Labour Party, and the support of this decision by the Left-Wing workers, as shown at Aberdeen, marks the opening of the new stage. Until a comparatively recent period many revolutionary workers still believed in the possibility of a constitutional conquest of the Labour Party and its eventual transformation, as the workers became disillusioned in the reformist leadership, into a revolutionary party by a change of leadership; and at that time any Marxist prediction of the inadequacy of such a perspective, and of the inevitable future disintegration and ultimate liquidation of the Labour Party, and the inescapable necessity of a completely new revolutionary basis, still aroused a sense of shock and outrage. To-day, however, the facts are clear to all. The Labour Party is no neutral mass-organisation, awaiting who will to guide it, but a machine of reformism, devised by reformism, for the control of the mass organisations, and which is prepared abundantly to protect itself against any danger of transformation. The decisive fight of the revolutionary workers is and can only be outside that machine and against it, even at the same time as we seek to win the workers who are still entangled within the machine. The conception of a Socialistic transformation of the Labour Party needs to

be denounced, not only as a utopian dream, but as a reactionary deception and misleadership of the workers, and passive support of MacDonald. With this goes equally the conception of the advance of the workers through a Labour Government, or a Left Labour Government, or Left pressure from within the Labour Party upon a Labour Government. The path of advance lies through the independent leadership of the revolutionary workers to the working-class conquest of power through a Revolutionary Workers' Government.

OF especial significance in connection with this is the experience of the "Left" reformist attempts which developed during the year, and centred round the Maxton-Cook campaign and the Independent Labour Party. It was noticeable that these attempts met with relative failure precisely because they were unable to place themselves upon the basis of the New Line, and thus fell ineffectively between the hardening discipline of the Labour Party and the revolutionary alternative. The Maxton-Cook campaign opened with a flourish and a statement of general principles of class struggle against the line of the dominant Labour Party leadership; it announced mass conferences and a mass enrolment of workers solemnly pledged "to support the efforts of Messrs. Maxton and Cook towards establishing the New Order." But in fact the basis remained the Labour Party and support of a Labour Government, as both Cook and Maxton made abundantly clear in their speeches ("as one who is working to clear out the Tories and secure the return of a Labour Government"; "a fight for Socialism inside the Labour Party."—A. J. Cook, *Sunday Worker*, December 16, 1928); and this completely vitiated the campaign, and made it—it is necessary to speak plainly—in practice nothing better than an organised hypocrisy. The fear of the Labour Party discipline on the one side, and of the masses on the other, paralysed every step. The mass conferences were never held, and were replaced by hush-hush meetings at which questions were suppressed, discussion ruled out and resolutions refused. No programme was at first issued, and it was announced that there would be no programme; the intention was only "a kind of

Moody and Sankey revival campaign"; when, later, a paper programme was extorted by pressure, it was immediately abandoned in practice and no attempt made to fight for it. The decisive collapse came with the failure to make any definite fight at the Birmingham Labour Party Conference. Since then the campaign has passed for the time being into the background, and been replaced by the attempt to stoke up enthusiasm for a MacDonald Labour Government. What will happen in the event of a Coalition Labour Government, and whether any step to a break will be taken in that case, and, if so, into what direction, remains to be seen. The present tendency after the Birmingham discipline resolutions is towards a general retreat (Cook's withdrawal of signature from the manifesto of Llandudno; Maxton's "reconciliation" with the Labour M.P.'s, &c.) The whole episode has been a valuable demonstration to the workers of the correctness and necessity of the revolutionary New Line as the inescapable path of advance.

IN general, the conditions of the present period are admittedly difficult and heavy going for the workers. The economic conditions are hard; the prospects of capitalist development in front are very different in their reality from the smooth promises of the reformists; and the work of revolutionary propaganda still demands above all a humble work of building up from the bottom and building truly. But the issues are clearing as they have never cleared before. The capitalist accelerating advance is already showing powerfully the revolutionary perspective in front. The consolidation of reformism into the capitalist camp, while in its immediate effect increasing the burdens of the workers and destroying their hard-built organisation, nevertheless represents objectively an advance. By this, reformism becomes daily more clearly stamped as the agent of capitalism; and the path is opened for the revolutionary workers to stand forward, no longer only as fighters alongside and as critics of the reformist leadership, but as sole leaders of the working class in the very great crises and struggles in front.

R. P. D.

POLITICAL "NEUTRALITY" IN TRADE UNIONS

By N. LENIN

[The reformist theory of "neutrality" of trade unions in the political struggle of the working class was repeatedly attacked by Lenin. At the present day the situation foreseen by Plekhanov, quoted in this article, has come about and the trade unions represent an appendage of reformist social democracy, and are even being transformed into organs of the bourgeois State. Does this mean that "neutrality" has been given up? Not at all. In such a situation, Lenin replied, social democracy will have ceased to be the socialist party of the working class. It is, therefore, of interest now to recall the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress, 1907, on the correct relations of the trade unions to the party of the working class, and the remarks of Lenin at the time on this subject, which have their application for the present struggle against reformism in the trade union movement.]

THE resolution of the Stuttgart Congress¹ on the relation between Socialist parties and Trade Unions is of great importance. As Kautsky points out, and as any reader of the resolution can see for himself, it at last puts an end to the recognition of the principle of "neutrality." The resolution contains no word on neutrality or non-partisanship. On the contrary, there is a thorough recognition of the necessity for close connections between Trade Unions and Socialist parties and for the strengthening of these connections.

The injurious aspects of the principle of neutrality were made manifest at Stuttgart by the fact that a half of the German delegation, in fact the representatives of the Trade Unions, were the most decided advocates of the opportunist standpoint. Propaganda in favour of neutrality has had really dangerous results in Germany, for it has played into the hands of the opportunists within the social democracy. This fact must henceforth be taken into account,

¹The text of the Resolution of the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International (1907), which is here discussed by Lenin is appended at the end of this article.

particularly in Russia, where the bourgeois democratic advisers of the proletariat, who champion the neutrality of the Trade Union movement, are so numerous.

At the Stuttgart Congress, the opportunist and revolutionary wings of international social democracy took up definitely opposed standpoints on a great number of most important questions, questions which were answered in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. The resolutions of this Congress, elaborated by the debates, should serve as a constant guide for every propagandist and agitator. The work accomplished at Stuttgart will do a great deal to promote unity of tactics and unity in the revolutionary struggle of the workers of all countries.

Our whole Party now recognises that work in the Trade Unions must be carried on, not in the spirit of neutrality, but in that of the closest possible collaboration between the Trade Unions and the social democratic parties. It is also recognised that the party character of the Trade Unions is only attainable by the work of social democrats within the Trade Unions, that the social democrats must build strong nuclei in the Trade Unions and that where it is illegal to establish Trade Unions, illegal unions must be created.

As Kautsky pointed out in his report to the Leipzig workers, the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress put an end to the recognition of the principle of neutrality. The advanced development of class contradictions, their recent intensification in all countries, the many years of experience in Germany—where the policy of neutrality strengthened opportunism in the Trade Unions, without in the least preventing the emergence of special Christian and liberal Trade Unions—the extension of that particular sphere of the proletarian struggle brought about by united action on the part of Trade Unions and political parties (mass strikes and armed insurrection in the Russian Revolution as an example of the probable forms of the proletarian revolution in the west): all this has completely destroyed the basis of the theory of neutrality.

Within the proletarian parties, at the present time, the question of neutrality does not appear to give rise to any great divergence of opinions. But that is not the case with the non-proletarian, quasi-socialist parties of the type of our social revolutionaries,

who form, in reality, the extreme left wing of the revolutionary-bourgeois party of the intellectuals and progressive peasants.

It is extremely characteristic that, of our people at Stuttgart, only the social revolutionaries and Plekhanov defended the idea of neutrality. And that most unsuccessfully . . .

Plekhanov referred to Lunacharsky's remark that the neutrality of Trade Unions was defended by the German revisionists, and replied :—

The revisionists say that the Trade Unions must be neutral, understanding thereby the utilisation of the Trade Unions in the struggle against orthodox Marxism.

And Plekhanov concluded :—

To do away with the neutrality of Trade Unions will not help us. Even if we were to bring the Trade Unions into close and formal dependence upon the Party, if the "ideology" of the revisionists gains the upper hand within the Party, then doing away with the neutrality of the Trade Unions would only mean another victory for the "critics of Marx."

This argument is an excellent example of Plekhanov's favourite method of avoiding the question and hiding the real nature of the dispute. Should the ideology of the revisionists actually gain the upper hand in the party, it will cease to be a Socialist Party of the working class. We are not dealing with the origin of such a party, or with the struggles and splits that would be caused. We are dealing with the fact that in every capitalist country there now exist Socialist Parties and Trade Unions, and it is our business to determine the fundamental relations between them. The class interests of the bourgeoisie inevitably give rise to the effort to limit the Trade Unions to a narrow and petty sphere of activity within the existing order, to keep the Trade Unions away from any association with Socialism, and the theory of neutrality is the ideological garb of this bourgeois wish. The revisionists within the social democratic party will always try to get along in some fashion or another within capitalist society.

It is true that at the beginning of the political and Trade Union working-class movement in Europe it was possible to be in favour of the neutrality of Trade Unions, as a method of extending the original basis of the proletarian struggle at a time when it was relatively undeveloped and when there was no systematic bourgeois

influence operating on the Trade Unions. But to-day, from the standpoint of international social democracy, advocacy of the neutrality of Trade Unions is entirely inapplicable. One can only smile when reading Plekhanov's assurance that : " Marx even to-day in Germany would be in favour of the neutrality of Trade Unions," particularly when such an argument is supported by a one-sided interpretation of a single " quotation " from Marx which ignores the whole of Marx' writings and the entire spirit of his teaching.

" I stand for neutrality, as Bebel understood it, and not in the revisionist sense," writes Plekhanov. To speak in that way is to swear by Bebel and yet to sink into the morass. No questions asked ! Bebel is such a commanding authority in the international proletarian movement, such an experienced practical leader, a Socialist with such a delicate sense of the requirements of the revolutionary struggle, that in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred he himself found the way out of the morass when he had made a false step, and also led out those who were willing to follow him.

Bebel was wrong when, with Vollmar, he defended the agrarian programme of the revisionists at Breslau (1895) ; he was wrong when, at Essen, he insisted on the difference in principle between offensive and defensive wars ; he was wrong when he wanted to raise the " neutrality " of the Trade Unions to a principle. We readily believe that if Plekhanov will take the wrong turning only in the company of Bebel, then it will not happen often, and not for very long. In any case, we are of the opinion that one should not imitate Bebel when he is mistaken.

It is said—and Plekhanov emphasises it particularly—that neutrality is necessary in order to organise all workers who have succeeded in realising that their material conditions must be improved. But those who say this forget that the present stage of development in class antagonisms inevitably gives rise to " political differences " on this very question of how improvements can be won within the framework of modern society. The theory of neutrality of the Trade Unions, as opposed to the theory of the necessity for their close association with the revolutionary social democracy, results unavoidably in this, that in the interests of this

improvement those methods are favoured which involve a blunting of the class struggle of the proletariat. A clear example of this (connected, by the way, with the evaluation of one of the most interesting episodes in the modern Labour movement) is afforded in the same number of the *Sovremenny Mir*, in which Plekhanov defends neutrality. Besides Plekhanov, we observe Mr. E. P. as the eulogist of Richard Bell, the well-known English railwaymen's leader, who concluded the workers' dispute with the companies by a compromise. Bell is called "the soul of the whole railwaymen's movement."

"There is no doubt," writes E.P., "that Bell, thanks to his calm, prudent and consistent tactics, has won the complete confidence of the Railwaymen's Association, whose members are ready to follow him everywhere without hesitation."

Such a standpoint is no accident ; it is closely bound up with the very nature of "neutralism" which places in the foreground the unity of the workers for improving their condition, and not their unity for a struggle which would be of service to the cause of the emancipation of the proletariat.

But this standpoint does not in the least correspond with the opinions of English Socialists, who will probably be amazed when they learn that Bell's eulogist writes in the same journal with distinguished Mensheviks like Plekhanov, Jordansky and Co., without coming into opposition with them.

The English social democratic paper *Justice*, in its leader of November 16, writes as follows about the compromise between Bell and the railway companies :—

We fully agree with the condemnation by practically all the Trade Unions of this so-called peace treaty. . . . It takes all meaning from the existence of the Trade Unions. . . . This senseless agreement . . . cannot be binding on the workers, and they would do well to reject it.

And in the next number of November 23, Bernet wrote an article on the agreement under the title : "Sold again !"

Three weeks ago the Railwaymen's Association was one of the most powerful Trade Unions in England ; now it has sunk to the level of a benefit society. . . . And this change has occurred, not because the railwaymen fought and suffered defeat, but because their leader, either deliberately or from sheer stupidity, sold them to the capitalists before any struggle had taken place.

The editors add that they have received a similar letter from "a wage slave of the Midland Railway Company."

But perhaps, it may be objected, this is an "exaggeration" of a "too revolutionary" social democrat! No! The journal of the moderate I.L.P., which has never yet called itself socialist, the *Labour Leader*, published in its issue of November 15 a letter from a railway Trade Unionist who, in answer to the praises with which the entire Capitalist Press (from the Radical *Reynolds* to the Conservative *Times*) overwhelmed Bell, declared that the agreement entered into by Bell "is the most contemptible that has ever occurred in the history of Trade Unionism," and that Richard Bell is the "Marshal Bazaine of the Trade Union Movement." Another railwayman demands that "Bell must be called upon to answer for this malevolent compromise which condemns the workers to seven years' hard labour." And in the leading article of the same number of this moderate paper the compromise is referred to as "the Sedan of the British Trade Union Movement." "There has never been such a favourable opportunity for demonstrating, on a national scale, the strength of organised labour." "An unexampled enthusiasm" and will to fight prevailed among the workers. The article ends with a biting comparison between the suffering of the workers and the rejoicings at the banquet attended by Lloyd George (a Minister playing the part of capitalist lackey) and Bell.

Only the most extreme opportunists, the Fabians, a body composed entirely of intellectuals, approved of the agreement and made even the *New Age*, a paper friendly to the Fabians, blush for shame. That paper had to admit that, while the bourgeois Conservative *Times* published in full the statement of the Fabian Central Committee on this matter, "not one Socialist organisation, not one Trade Union, not one important working-class leader" declared in favour of the compromise.

That is a model example of the application of neutrality at the hands of Plekhanov's colleague, Mr. E. P. It was not a matter of "political differences," but of an improvement in the conditions of workers within the existing society. The whole British bourgeoisie, the Fabians, and also Mr. E. P. were for an "improvement" at the cost of renouncing the struggle and of an

unconditional surrender to capital—but all Socialists and workers in the Trade Unions were in favour of a united working-class struggle.

Will Plekhanov now still continue to propagate “neutrality” instead of co-operation between Trade Unions and Socialist parties?

APPENDIX

Resolution of the Stuttgart Congress (1907) of the Second International on the Relations between the Socialist Parties and the Trade Unions

(1) The political and the economic struggle of the working class are equally necessary in order to achieve the complete liberation of the proletariat from the bonds of intellectual, political and economic slavery. While the task of the Socialist Party organisations lies predominantly within the sphere of the political struggle of the proletariat, the task of the Trade Unions lies mainly in the sphere of economic struggle of the working class. The Parties and the Trade Unions have therefore an equally important task to fulfil in the fight for proletarian emancipation.

Both organisations have their distinct spheres of activity determined by their nature, in which they should decide their actions absolutely independently. But there is also a continually growing sphere of the proletarian class struggle in which work can only be carried on satisfactorily by agreement and co-operation between the Party and the Trade Unions.

Consequently, the proletarian struggle will be carried on the better and the more fruitfully the closer are the relations between the Trade Unions and the Party, the unity of the Trade Union organisation being in no way compromised.

The Congress declares that the working class in every country must establish and continually maintain close relations between the Party and the Trade Unions.

The Party and the Trade Unions should assist and support each other morally in their activities, and, in their struggles, should only employ methods which are of service to the fight for the emancipation of the proletariat. If differences of opinion occur between the two organisations as to the expediency of employing certain methods, these should be discussed between them and an agreement reached.

The Trade Unions can only fully carry out their duty in the struggle for working class emancipation if their actions are conducted in a socialist spirit. It is the duty of the Party to assist the Trade Unions in their efforts for the improvement and amelioration of the social conditions of the workers. In its parliamentary action, the party should emphasise to the utmost the demands put forward by the Trade Unions.

The Congress declares that the development of capitalist production, the increasing concentration of the means of production, the increasing amalgamation of the employers, the growing dependence of the small scale concerns in face of the whole bourgeois society, will reduce the trade union organisation to

complete impotence if it occupies itself solely with trade interests, takes up an attitude of co-operative egoism and upholds the theory of a harmony of interests between labour and capital.

The Congress is of the opinion that the Trade Unions will work the more advantageously in the struggle against exploitation and oppression to the extent that their organisations are more unified, their methods of mutual assistance the more complete, their funds destined for the Trade Union fight the greater, their members have a clearer consciousness of the economic position, and the greater their enthusiasm and their spirit of sacrifice inspired by the socialist ideal.

(2) The Congress invites all the Trade Unions which fulfil the conditions laid down by the Brussels Conference of 1899 and ratified by the Paris Congress of 1900 to send representatives to the International Congresses, and to establish relations with the International Socialist Bureau at Brussels. It instructs the latter to establish relations with the International Secretariat of the Trade Unions at Berlin for the purpose of exchanging information relating to working-class organisation and the working-class movement.

(3) The Congress instructs the International Socialist Bureau to collect all documents which may facilitate the study of relations between professional organisations and socialist parties in all countries and to present a report on this subject to the next Congress.

THE INDIAN LEAGUE FOR INDEPENDENCE

By CLEMENS DUTT

THE foundation on an All-India scale of the Indian League for National Independence adds a new body to the already numerous nationalist organisations and groups existing in India, and a significant factor for the course of the struggle between the proletarian and bourgeois elements for the leadership of the fight for national emancipation. Until its session in Madras, at the end of 1927, the Indian National Congress, which claims to represent the central stream of the nationalist movement, had never pronounced its goal to be the complete national independence of India. The aim of national independence, although repeatedly put forward since the war by a small radical group, was never endorsed by the Congress, ostensibly on the ground that it was too dangerous to express openly or that it was not necessary or practicable, but really owing to the influence of the middle-class nationalists who entertained hopes of establishing harmonious co-operation with the British bourgeoisie in the capitalist development of India and the exploitation of the Indian masses.

Events since the war and the collapse of the non-co-operation movement led by Gandhi have had a shattering influence on these hopes, and the influence of the middle-class leaders has been correspondingly undermined. British imperialism has been successful in maintaining its monopoly of exploitation, its whole policy has been directed towards strengthening its own stronghold in most direct opposition to the needs and demands of the Indian bourgeoisie. The appointment of the Simon Commission, in complete disregard of Indian nationalist opinion, with its obvious aim of introducing reforms into the British administration of India which would enable the British bourgeoisie to consolidate their hold over the country, compelled the Indian bourgeois nationalists to adopt a stronger attitude of opposition. The National Congress was influenced in the same direction by the

knowledge that the Indian proletariat was growing in strength and was awakening to independent political activity, that a renewed outburst of revolt on the part of the pauperised peasant masses was becoming more and more likely, and that the impoverished intellectuals and petty bourgeois elements were more and more being faced with the alternative of revolutionary struggle or passive submission to economic ruin. Under this pressure, the Indian National Congress at Madras passed a series of semi-revolutionary resolutions, declaring the goal of the Congress to be complete national independence, declaring against assistance for British imperialism in a future war and for support of the International League against imperialism. At the same time, the Nationalist representatives in the Legislature Assembly and in the Provincial Legislative Councils refused to take part in helping the work of the Simon Commission.

The last year, however, has seen a further development and differentiation in the Nationalist Movement, both in the direction of a move to the Right and of a move to the Left. The upper sections of the Indian bourgeoisie became frightened as a result of the rapid development of the working-class and mass movement. Within the last half-year there has taken place a notable modification in their attitude towards the Simon Commission. All the Legislative Councils have now, after all, appointed Committees to sit with and work with the Simon Commission. At the same time an All-Parties' Conference, representing all sections of the Indian bourgeoisie, including the Liberals and Independents who stand outside and to the Right of the National Congress, has adopted a proposed Constitution for India which is based not on independence but on the granting to India by the British Parliament of so-called Dominion status within the "British Commonwealth of Nations." That this conference was presided over by Dr. Ansari, the President of the National Congress in 1928, and its constitution drafted by a committee headed by this year's president, Mr. Motilal Nehru, is eloquent testimony of the make-believe character of the Independence resolution of the National Congress in the eyes of its own leaders.

The proposed constitution, embodied in the Nehru Report, which is supported by these Congress leaders on the plea that it

represents the greatest common measure of agreement as to India's demands among all the sections of the Nationalist Movement, is naturally governed by the need of obtaining the agreement of the most Right-Wing sections. The constitution has been put before the Simon Commission and, in effect, represents a form of co-operation with the latter. It is explicitly a capitalist constitution and its capitalist character was especially emphasised by the adoption by the All-Parties' Conference of a special resolution inserting a provision in the document that "all titles in private and personal property enjoyed at the establishment of the Commonwealth are hereby guaranteed." Thereby the supporters of the Nehru Report are committed to a drastic pledge given in order to reassure the big landlords that the Nationalist Movement does not intend to take any steps to deprive them of their property or to divide up their land, and to reassure the British bourgeoisie that their investments and claims to exploitation shall be regarded as a sacred trust by the Indian bourgeoisie.

Under these circumstances of a flagrant abandonment of the Congress declaration on Independence, during a period of growing revolutionisation of the masses, the Left-Wing leaders in the National Congress were compelled to come out more openly in support of the independence slogan. The contrast between the Nehru report and the declared goal of the National Congress led to a raging controversy on the respective merits of "Dominion status" and "complete independence," which became a first-class debating issue for the nationalist Press and for political meetings. Those who disagreed with the moderation of the All-Parties Conference came out with the proposal to establish an Indian Independence League to press for their point of view in the country at large. Yet it is a remarkable and significant feature of the situation that the sponsors of the League, with few exceptions, were themselves participants in the All-Parties Conference. The League, in fact, has its origin in the statement read at the All-Parties Conference by Jawarlal Nehru, the son of Motilal Nehru and acknowledged leader of the younger radical section in the National Congress, a statement endorsed by the signatures of thirty other Congressmen present. They proclaimed that they were supporting the All-Parties' Report for the sake of

unity without giving up their adherence to the Congress goal of independence in support of which they proposed to form a special organisation.

There was a quick response from all parts of the country. First of all, an organisation was formed in Madras headed by Srinivasa Iyengar, under whose presidency the National Congress had first passed the independence resolution, and who alone among the prominent leaders had refused to take part in the All-Parties Conference on account of its rejection of independence. Later, after a Nationalist Conference in the Punjab had decided that it would support both independence and Dominion status, and Dr. Ansari, the Congress President, had explained that acceptance of the Nehru Report did not prevent Congressmen from maintaining their own standpoint in favour of independence, Mr. Iyengar has also come round to this accommodating view.

The new League, however, first took definite shape in Bengal, where a group of Congress members, headed by Subash Chandra Bose, ex-deportee under the Bengal Ordinance and Joint Secretary of the National Congress, published a manifesto and provisional programme for the League. The programme was adopted with minor alterations in Bombay and elsewhere. This programme itself expresses in the sharpest and clearest form both the positive and the negative aspects of the new movement and provides a key to the contradictory elements within it. The programme is divided into three sections, headed respectively "economic democracy," "political democracy" and "social democracy." Under the second head is the single solitary demand for "complete national independence," with no further items whatever.

The economic programme is the most important section. It is the most far-reaching in character of any programme yet put forward by a bourgeois nationalist organisation. It has a decidedly socialist tinge. It is lavish in its promises on behalf of the masses. All these things are new in the history of the Indian nationalist movement and reflect the changed conditions of the national struggle. The programme calls for removal of economic inequalities, equitable redistribution of wealth and nationalisation of key industries and transport services. It demands the eight-hour day, unemployment benefit and other labour legislation for

the industrial workers and the introduction of a uniform system of land tenure with annulment of agricultural indebtedness and even abolition of landlordism for the peasants. At the same time, the League really champions Indian capitalist interests, as is seen in the revealing proposal that "all disputes between labour and capital management shall be submitted before an impartial board for arbitration with a view to making strikes and lock-outs unnecessary." Mr. Jawarlal Nehru has himself defended the labour demands as a necessary part of "enlightened capitalism."

There is no need here to examine the items of the social programme. The programme as a whole is clearly seen to be modelled on the famous tripartite programme of Dr. Sun-Yat-sen with its demands for "nationalism, socialism and democracy." The socialist tinge of the Independence League largely owes its adoption to the active propaganda of Jawarlal Nehru, who has not only taken every opportunity of stressing that socialism must be one of the aims of the movement, but has also provided the movement with a definite theory of socialist reformism, borrowed from the European social-democratic parties, in relation to the conquest of power. Thus, at the Delhi Political Conference in October, he declared:—

Modern developments of warfare had made organised States terribly powerful. It was impossible to combat the Government by violence. In Europe the new methods of seizing power were based not on violence but on peaceful organisation of workers, peasants and others. That was the only way for India also.

No clearer pronouncement could be required of the essentially non-revolutionary character of the new movement. Jawarlal Nehru, S. C. Bose and the new Left Wing of bourgeois nationalism stand forward not as the representatives of revolutionary socialism but as the champions of reformist social democracy, lavish and exuberant with radical phrase-making but very vague and hesitant when it comes to the means by which their phrases shall be put into practice. It is typical of this attitude that the concrete revolutionary character of the developing mass movement is overlooked and unprovided for. Take, for instance, the developing agrarian revolution, the revolt of the peasant masses against the impossible burdens of feudal, landlord and imperialist oppression. Not only is there no sign that the Independence League is now

or will in the future take steps in action to lead the peasants in the struggle, but the fundamental problem of the fight of the peasants against the oppressors is dismissed by the chimerical proposal for the "abolition of landlordism *by indemnification*."

The vacillating, petty-bourgeois character of the Independence League as seen, for instance, in its relation to the All-Parties Conference, has been noted above. It is important to notice also its relation to the existing mass movement. First of all, it should be mentioned that the League, which was constituted as an All-India body for the first time in November, 1928, with Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar as President and S. C. Bose and Jawaralal Nehru as joint secretaries, has the support of many prominent Congress workers, but has no mass membership at all. Secondly, it arises at a time when a big strike movement is taking place among Indian workers, when the Indian masses are beginning to enter the arena as an independent political factor and are throwing off their reliance on the leadership of the bourgeois nationalists and reformists, one side of this phenomenon being seen in the growing support given to the new class leadership of the Workers' and Peasants' Party. The Workers' and Peasants' Party has attempted in action to lead the struggles of the workers and peasants, it has formulated the demands of the masses for economic and political emancipation, it was the first organisation to rally strong popular support for the slogan of complete national independence.

Under these circumstances, it is impossible not to see in the Independence for India League a challenge to the Workers' and Peasants' Party, an attempt to regain the ascendancy of the Nationalist bourgeoisie over the masses, which were in danger of escaping from bourgeois influence. It should be noted also that the leaders of the Independence League have never joined or supported the Workers' and Peasants' Party, and that such typical leaders as S. C. Bose have played a prominent part in liquidating strikes to the satisfaction of the employers.

Hence, a correct estimate of the new development of the situation in India must recognise not only the intensification of the fight against British imperialism but also the growth of the struggle between the Indian proletariat and the Indian bourgeoisie,

a struggle in which the Indian proletariat not only comes into conflict with the Indian bourgeoisie in defence of its class interests, but also fights for hegemony in the national revolution as a whole. The immediate revolutionary tasks which must be accomplished by the Indian masses—the achievement of national emancipation, the destruction of feudalist bondage, the establishment of social and political rights for the workers and peasants—are all tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. There are many stages yet before India can enter upon the socialist revolution. Nevertheless, the present tasks can only be carried out by a movement in which the leading rôle is played by the proletariat. Petty-bourgeois movements, such as that exemplified by the Independence League, start out with a great display of revolutionary fervour but quickly reveal themselves as tied to the interests of the national bourgeoisie, who will always submit to foreign imperialism when threatened by class revolution of the masses, and when the moment of action comes they collapse like the bubble of revolutionary Gandhism. Their part is played if they help to bring the masses into action. When they begin to hinder the development of revolutionary mass action, they are already a counter-revolutionary force.

PRESIDENT HOOVER OF U.S.A.

By JAY LOVESTONE

AMERICA is a country doing business on a big scale. To-day, it is the country of towering capitalist citadels of steel and granite. Even when America engages in a presidential election campaign, this campaign is a monstrous one. Supposing the Workers' (Communist) Party would want to address a single letter, using a two-cent postage stamp only, one letter and no more, to every voter during the entire election campaign, it would cost a million dollars for this postage alone.

When we deal with American capitalist politics of to-day we deal with billions in so far as the policies of the financiers and manufacturers are concerned. And when we deal with the election of a president, we are confronting a problem of selecting an individual who has more power than any czar, king, or monarch ever had. When Mr. Hoover goes into the White House as the symbol of the Executive power of the American ruling class, he has the power of appointing sixty thousand government officials drawing an annual salary of one hundred and twenty-seven and a half million dollars. This is a little kingdom in itself. The class relations in the United States now make imperative the maintenance of such a huge Government bureaucracy and such an uncrowned monarch as Mr. Hoover will be.

The Meaning of the Big Capitalist Nominations

From McKinley, in 1896, to Hoover, in 1928, we have a very good picture of imperialist growth, aggression, brutality and domination. And when we analyse the methods of American capitalist politics, when we analyse the characteristics of American bourgeois politics, we should keep this progress in mind.

The nominations of Mr. Hoover and Mr. Smith in themselves had tremendous significance. What is the meaning for the working class of the nomination of Hoover? The last Republican convention, with its nomination of Hoover, was an index of the prowess, of the supremacy of finance capital in the

United States. Intricate methods were employed by the bourgeoisie to fool the workers regarding the real character of Hoover. For instance, such convention delegations as those from New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, representing the most powerful financial and industrial interests of the country, pretended either to hesitate or even to oppose the endorsement of Hoover's candidacy until the very moment of the first ballot in the Kansas City convention.

Hoover is the outspoken, unhesitatingly ruthless champion of finance capital. He is the best trained, the most capable, the most experienced chairman of the executive committee of the American capitalist class. Coolidge? He was a shadow, a speck, beside Hoover. Wilson? He was a schoolmaster who could take lessons from Mr. Hoover in the art and science of the politics of imperialism. If there ever was a dirty job to perform in China, Mr. Hoover was there to do it. If there was a bloody piece of work to do over in Hungary, Mr. Hoover was there to do that. And if a daring, underhand effort was to be made to destroy the proletarian Russian Revolution, Mr. Hoover was there to try it. In other words, wherever the hand of American imperialism was extended for aggression, covered, of course, with fake humanitarianism—"saving Belgium," even trying to "save the Russian people"—there went Mr. Hoover as symbol of the power of finance capital in the United States.

Concretely, the meaning of Hoover's nomination was the following. First of all, it indicated a growth of the executive power of the American Government. Never before had anyone been placed for the presidency who had not previously held any public elective office.

Second, it indicated the further tremendous merging of big business with the highest Government machinery.

Hoover is a symbol of capitalist rationalisation, of speeding up, of American efficiency and mass production raised to its *n*th degree. Hoover is the president of capitalist rationalisation. The *Echo de Paris* has well said in its comment on the Hoover election :

What a spectacle, one hundred and twenty million Americans grouped behind a mining engineer who up till now has reasoned only in calories and kilowatts. It may be disconcerting.

Mr. Hoover thinks in kilowatts and horse-power. He knows more about horse-power than anything else. For the first time in the history of "this greatest democracy on earth" the United States will have an engineer instead of a lawyer as president. Significant enough for the *Magazine of Wall Street* (November 17, 1928) to comment as follows:—

A business nation at last has a business chief. . . . No wonder the stock market thrilled to the news of his election and met sympathetic responses from all the bourses of Europe! *No hard-boiled business directorate could have chosen more sagaciously.* . . . Political and business leadership are united in the chief executive of the nation.

Of course, it was a hard-boiled business directorate that really made Hoover president. In so far as Hoover is a crass example of an "irregular" party man of the bourgeoisie, it indicates the fact that the bourgeoisie were never so powerful and never felt as secure as it does to-day, to be able so easily to discard the formalities of party allegiance.

Now let us examine Mr. Smith. The nomination of Mr. Smith was the attempt of a new force to assume the leadership of and to reconstruct the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party leadership was in the past based mainly on the Southern plantation owners. These Southern plantation owners have, practically speaking, been driven out of the leadership of the Democratic Party. The leadership of the Democratic Party is in new hands.

What new forces does Smith represent? Smith's ascendancy to the leadership of the Democratic Party is a symbol of the supremacy of finance capital in the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party used to have, and still does have, differences with the Republican Party, but these differences are shrinking constantly. This was especially evident in the last election. For instance, the domination of the Democratic Party by finance capital is reflected clearly in the selection of John J. Raskob, chairman of the Finance Committee of General Motors Company (to-day the biggest automobile corporation in the world, operating on an international scale, particularly after its purchases of the gigantic Opel Motor Works in Germany), as the national chairman of the Democratic Party. Thus one of Wall Street's most

authoritative journals characterised the two big bourgeois parties as symbolised by their candidates:—

It is not an exaggeration to say that he (Hoover) has considered himself and has actually been the director-general of American business. *Never before, here or anywhere else, has a Government been so completely fused with business. He respects big business and admires big business men. . . . There can be no doubt that Hoover, as President, would be without precedent.* He would be a dynamic business president, even as Coolidge has been a static business president. He would be the first business, as distinguished from political, president the country has had. . . .

Al Smith's record in politics is the best possible pledge that he will make a successful administrator of the biggest business of all . . . that of managing the political business organisation of the United States. But how about the Smith policies? They are just the reverse of Hoover in relation to business. Hoover emphasised economics; Smith politics. *Hoover would serve the public by serving business; Smith would serve business by serving the public.*

Find the difference.

A few words about the Socialist Party. The Socialist Party made a very sharp turn to the right in its last April convention. In the election campaign the Socialist Party broke completely with every vestige of working-class traditions and all working-class policy and interests. It is true that the manager of the Socialist Party campaign was not Mr. Raskob. But to-day the Socialist Party is the party of the smaller capitalists. Since the campaign ended, the Socialist Party, through its reverend spokesman, Dr. Thomas, has been appealing frantically for the organisation of an all-inclusive Liberal Party.

Issues in the Campaign

What were the issues in the election campaign?

The first issue was "*prosperity.*" The American bourgeoisie succeeded considerably in getting out of the period of depression in which they were at the close of last year. There still remain certain very serious symptoms of crises in credit, in mass production. So much is being produced and not received by the workers that the bourgeoisie don't know what to do with it. At the same time we still have with us very serious manifestations of unemployment. Certain industries are still in a critical condition. But the recent depression *in its worst form* has gone for the

present. American politics and economics are not separable as the bourgeoisie would have the workers believe, but are very much one and the same, intertwined and enmeshed.

Within this "prosperity" issue there was hidden the issue of *the war danger*. Mr. Hoover repeatedly said in his campaign speeches substantially: "We must go out and have prosperity and if we cannot get prosperity at home, we must go out and fight for it in the markets of the world." Thus the war danger, unemployment, speed up, the right to strike and injunctions were sharply and deeply involved in this issue.

But while capitalists speak of prosperity we find that there are five million workers in the United States whose income is less than one thousand dollars a year. And there are several million farmers in this country who aren't worth the dirt they tread on. At least forty million people in the United States are below the income level of decency, according to the United States Bureau of Labour Statistics. We need only mention the coal, steel, oil and textile towns. Then, last year, twenty-five thousand were killed and four hundred thousand workers were wounded in the manufacturing industries alone. *Of such prosperity Mr. Hoover said not a word.* It was a different prosperity which elected Mr. Hoover and of which he has been boasting.

Now for the tariff. This has been the traditional difference between the Republican and Democratic Parties. But this year, in this election, in the Southern city of Louisville, Kentucky, Mr. Smith threw overboard completely the old traditional Democratic stand on tariff and came out for the highest possible tariff. He did not say he wants a tariff lower than that which is now in force. He said he wants a "scientific" tariff. His complaint against the present Fordney-McCumber tariff law was not its height but what he called its "unscientific character." This is only another reflex of the changed economic basis of the new Smith leadership of the Democratic Party.

The issue of prohibition was not a fake one. It divides very seriously the biggest capitalist leaders. What is the basic difference among the capitalists over prohibition? One group thinks that prohibition is necessary as a disciplining force of the workers, as an insurance of efficiency, to have the workers more easily

adapted to the speed-up system, to the highly organised, huge factories. The other group says prohibition may be good, but you cannot enforce it. When you try to enforce it, you bungle it. A government which has a law on the books which it cannot enforce is only promoting a deep going disrespect and disregard for the law as such. Sooner or later this will serve as a lever to discredit and undermine the whole present system of government.

Neither big bourgeois party has a solution for the farmers. In its acutest form the American agricultural crisis is ended. There is no serious crisis in agricultural production to-day, but there is still a serious crisis for the great bulk of the agricultural masses. The crisis in agricultural production has been relieved temporarily—but only at the expense of brutally driving several millions of farmers off the land.

Some Special Features of the Election

Undoubtedly the bourgeoisie succeeded in arousing a keener interest in the present election campaign than in any previous campaign. The capitalists were better mobilised. A larger percentage of the eligible voters participated—more than 55 per cent. of the total eligible voters participated, ten million more than in the 1924 elections. Practically speaking, about thirty-nine millions have participated. This means greater illusions, greater belief in the fake democracy for larger masses. Proportionately more people participated in this election campaign than in any other election except 1896, when we had the sweeping mobilisation of the American imperialists against Bryan in the Free Silver issue.

The second feature of this election campaign is the impetus given to the rapid progress and huge extent of the merging of the big capitalists parties' organisation machinery with the very machinery of the big trusts. For example, the campaign manager for finances in the Republican Party was Major-General James J. Harbord, president of the Radio Corporation of America. During the campaign he officially resigned his business job, but the morning after election day, he took it back. The chairman of the Democratic Party campaign for finances was Mr. Raskob, of General Motors.

The *Magazine of Wall Street* (October 6, 1928, p. 1081) completes the picture by saying:—

This election will be more like a corporation meeting than any of its forty-four predecessors. Outside of land ownership, the United States is now controlled by corporations.

A Sweeping Victory for Finance Capital

What is the class basis of the new features of the election campaign? Let us examine the main results in this light so as to be able to understand the election campaign.

The Republican Party had a sweeping victory. Capitalist reaction had a landslide in America's 1928 elections. And it was over the heads of the workers. It was a tremendous victory for finance capital. So authoritative an organ of the biggest financial interests as the *Forbes Magazine* proclaimed: "*Finance is satisfied that the Republican Administration will be continued, and is satisfied, moreover, that it will be continued in a way not injurious to business.*"

Never before were the big bourgeois parties in such close agreement on the fundamental economic issues. Never before did so large a proportion of the electorate vote for the big bourgeois parties. 1924 had its petty bourgeois La Follette vote of five million, as against both big bourgeois parties. The Wilson of 1912 was not yet the Wilson of 1918. The Socialist Party of fifteen years ago was a different kind of an animal from what it is to-day. With Debs as its leader it polled a million votes in opposition to the big bourgeois parties. 1928 registered the smallest proportion, in years, of the electorate for the parties that were either frankly revolutionary like the Workers' (Communist) Party, or did not boast loudly about their capitalist character, like the Socialist Party. That is why the stock market thrilled at and hailed Hoover's election as a most happy omen. The new Cabinet will reflect this domination of finance capital beyond a shadow of a doubt. Dwight W. Morrow, a partner of J. P. Morgan, will probably be Secretary of State; blackjack John J. Pershing, one of the most vicious enemies of the working class, will probably be Secretary of War, the notorious Mellon may continue as guardian of the finances; even a powerful ultra-

reactionary Southern manufacturer may be Secretary of Commerce.

The Birth of a New South

The solid South is cracked and cracked wide open. The solid South to-day is vastly different from what it was only a decade ago. It is true, cotton is still king in the South. But the most modern textile factories, the most up-to-date steel plants, the richest coal pits, splendid iron fields, some of the most magnificently developed water-power resources, are to be found in the South. Natural resources of every description are being exploited intensely. The country is being rapidly industrialised. Estimating this situation, the influential Southern bi-weekly, the *Manufacturers' Record* (November 15, 1928, p. 65) says:—

Viewed purely from the material standpoint, the breaking-up of the Solid South politically in the present election campaign will be of enormous value to this section. *It will give increased confidence to the business people of other sections of the country, for the very solidarity of the South in politics has to some extent retarded Southern development, great as it has been. This development can be, and will be, far greater than in the past.*

Paralysing the "Progressive" Coterie

The poor "progressives"! They had a division of labour amongst themselves; some for Smith, some for Hoover. They got nowhere. The "progressives" will play less of a rôle in the next Congress than they have played in many years. Their "grip" on Congress, feeble as it ever was, is now gone. The Republican representation in the House is the biggest that either Party has had since 1855, except in the Sixty-third Congress, when the Democrats had two hundred and ninety, and in the Sixty-seventh Congress, when the Republicans had three hundred.

Likewise, the American Federation of Labour Bureaucracy was in a very unfortunate position this year. "Business" was so bad for them that they could not even sell their endorsement of either candidate to either big bourgeois party.

The Socialist Party lost a good deal of votes, particularly in the working-class districts. Debs, symbol of what was once revolutionary in the Socialist Party, was taboo in the Socialist Party campaign literature and agitation.

The Growth of the Communist Party

This year the Workers' (Communist) Party waged its first national presidential election campaign. In 1924, it was on the ballot in only fourteen States. This year, the party succeeded in overcoming terrific capitalist legal and technical obstacles and in placing its candidates on the ballot in thirty-four States.

Never before did there appear in an election campaign in the United States a party so openly revolutionary, so thoroughly Communist. And the reaction of the bourgeoisie showed this. Communist meetings were broken up and speakers arrested. The radio and the Press, which played so prominent and decisive a rôle in the campaigns of the Republican, Democratic and Socialist Parties, were, practically speaking, completely closed to them. They drew special fire from the capitalist reaction through their emphasis on complete social and political equality for the negro masses. They aroused the particular ire of the capitalists through laying the greatest emphasis on the rising war danger.

The penetration of the solid South, though it was on a small scale, marks a new period in the life of the Party, not only in the all-important task of winning the negro masses for Communism, but in the increasing significance that its work in the South must assume in view of recent rapid industrialisation.

Tremendous Rationalisation Impetus

The election of Hoover, in so far as it means a still further merging of the apparatus of the governmental machinery with that of the biggest business interests, will serve as an impetus to still more terrific rationalisation in American capitalism. In his letter to Mr. Richard H. Edmonds, editor of the *Manufacturers' Record*, on the morning after he was elected president, Mr. Hoover spoke of

the great potentialities of that section (the South). With one-third of the nation's land area, with about three-fifths of its sea frontage, with vast resources in soil, climate and minerals. . . . There are great water powers awaiting development. . . . There are great potentialities in the extension of the intercoastal canal systems, &c. . . .

Special effort will also be made to intensify the rate of rationalisation in such industries like textile, oil and copper and coal, which have been in a critical condition for some time.

Increasing Imperialist Aggression

But the most outstanding result of the election campaign is to be noted in the fact that the Government is redoubling its effort and is increasing fivefold its pace of preparations for war. What else is the meaning of Hoover's "vacation" in Latin America? He is making a visit to nine countries. He is going as a "messenger of peace" on the biggest and most deadly battleship in the American Navy.

What is the meaning of this "gracious pilgrimage of friendship and goodwill"? The meaning of this trip of Hoover, even before he is President, through Latin America, with which the United States has a total commerce of about two billion dollars annually, and an investment of about five billion dollars, is plainly this: when a man is President he cannot do so aggressively certain things that he can do when he is President-elect. *Hoover appears as a salesman, a drummer, a booster of the products of American imperialism—ideological as well as material.* This policy is thus very clearly stated by one of Wall Street's leading spokesmen: (*Magazine of Wall Street*, November 17, 1928):—

The whole power of the Government will be put behind the expansion of foreign trade. As Secretary of Commerce, Hoover has built up the greatest governmental organisation for the promotion of foreign trade that any nation has ever had. With presidential initiative in his hands, it may be confidently expected that our foreign traders will find the Government more than ever the leader in opening channels for American goods the world over.

The present situation marks a new turn, a very sharp turn in the aggressive rôle of American imperialism. This is of world-wide, inestimable significance.

Attacks Against the Workers

The big victory of finance capital cannot but translate itself into sharpening attacks against the workers. Rationalisation of the coal industry means further oppression and further intense exploitation of the miners. Efficiency and speed-up methods in the textile industry will mean a harvest of worsened conditions for the textile workers. The further merging of the Government apparatus with the big business apparatus can only mean a more frequent and more outrageous strike-breaking rôle to be played

by the Government in all its subdivisions. The huge total vote given the big capitalist parties will be interpreted by the bourgeoisie as a mandate for sharpening their attack on the workers' standards, conditions and rights along the whole front.

But let no one fail to view this picture dynamically. There are numerous deep contradictions fraught with mortal consequences for American capitalism, growing out of its very strength, of its very imperialist prowess of to-day. The victory for finance capital means, of course, more aggressive imperialist foreign policy. Intensified competition for American imperialism in Europe means greater aggrandisement by the Yankee imperialists in their drive for world supremacy. This will be resisted by the other imperialist powers. Thus the very strength of American imperialism generates contradictions, conflicts and antagonisms in the bourgeois world.

The outlook for a cataclysmic crash between imperialist powers—between the United States and Great Britain, the serious danger of an attack by a group of imperialist powers against the Soviet Union, is ever more menacing. *American imperialism is still powerful, but in this very heyday of its prowess it is developing the germs of its own destruction. Sharpening class struggles are in sight. Increasing opportunities for development of the Communist Party into a mass Bolshevick Party are at hand.*

CO-OPERATIVE POLITICS

By FLORENCE RANSON

(Women's Co-operative Guild)

THE extraordinary attitude of a Labour man who buys his food from a private trader is in many varying forms to be found throughout the entire Labour movement. Labour bazaars are arranged with stalls selling goods bought not merely from private traders, but from notoriously "sweated shops," and even pronounced Left wing men will admit they are quite agreeable to letting their wives "shop where they like."

The Co-operative movement, except in rare isolated cases, makes no attempt to alter this state of affairs. The Labour Party, on the whole (as one can only expect of such a Labour Party as we have to-day), uses no effort to educate the man politically, merely requiring of him a cross at the next election against the officially correct and calmly acquiescent Labour candidate.

The Labour man, (or more probably, his wife) may even belong to a co-operative society, usually not from any political conviction, but from uncomfortable necessity. He occasionally attends the quarterly meeting to remonstrate if the price of meat has gone up, or to vote in again to the management committee a veteran of forty years' standing.

The average co-operative society accepts him as member as it accepts the Tory agent, without in the least realising how much more valuable he could be and what great use could be made of him if he were politically educated. If any Labour politics are brought forward by consciously political members at a quarterly meeting, they are either severely crushed by the Chairman or, if he does happen to possess a little vision, carefully smoothed over and then decently buried.

A parallel case is that of the Labour man's wife who buys her china at a 6d. bazaar and goes to a sweated drapery shop for her winter's coat.

It is usually argued that the purpose of the co-operative

society should not be political, but economic, and political education should be left to the political councils. Theoretically, this should be so up to a certain point, but beyond that point every co-operative society has a very large and valuable political opportunity which only the smallest proportion ever take advantage of. There also remains the fact that most co-operative societies have no political councils, and even in those few cases where they do exist the turning out of the Left Wing members is robbing them of their greatest political vitality. But while the co-operative society accepts the Tory, it must also accept the Communist, so fortunately there is still the opportunity of political education in the co-operative societies.

It is rather interesting to look into the different sections of the co-operative movement to see how far they are developed politically and how far they could develop along these lines.

First take the Co-operative Union, that massive, ponderous, uninspired piece of machinery, naturally slow-moving and slow-thinking by reason of its method of election and administration. By its combination with other bodies in joint committees, it occasionally arranges political conferences of so tepid and limp a character that it would be better for all if it left these out of its programme altogether.

At its annual Congress it produces, with much pomposity and circumambient vagueness, resolutions of such a flaccid character that they may usually be interpreted by co-operative societies just exactly as they wish, and many of them never result in any action at all.

The C.W.S. is by nature a trading concern. It has nothing of the dual character of Centrosoyus, both economic and educational, but it has always boasted of its complete detachment from politics. One rather wonders how it reconciles these boasts with the fawning attitude of some of its directors to Tory Cabinet Ministers and its nauseating lapping-up of imperialistic "tripe" offered so unctuously by Empire boosters.

Some little while ago it was reported in the *Co-operative News* with something like horror that if the Proprietary Articles' Trade Association was going to boycott the co-operative movement, the C.W.S. and retail societies might even have "to buy from the

foreigner !” The C.W.S. has in fact already shown on which side it stands by buying matches from a capitalist match factory, labelling them C.W.S., and refusing to sell the matches of the U.S.S.R.

They also had the chance of acting as agents for R.O.P., but I understand this was not accepted, and a large number of societies buy enormous quantities of petrol and paraffin from the Oil Trust instead of from the one organisation that curbs its unscrupulous power.

In the Russian co-operative movement, men and women of ideas and vision and single-minded purpose are put at the head. Here, we single out men (and I mean *men*, for now, after sixty years of existence there is only one woman on the Board) noted in their societies for reaction and “gradualness.”

If there were not enormous political possibilities for the International Co-operative Alliance, one would only pass it by with contempt, organised as it is at present. Co-operators (some co-operators) remember with shame its attitude towards Germany and Austria during the war. And to-day this attitude is still present in its patronising tolerance of the U.S.S.R. It prides itself on always having pursued a policy of “neutrality” and in pursuance of this it stands over Centrosoyus with pedagogic birch rod in case any sign of political propaganda should manifest itself too openly.

The Co-operative Publishing Society sits well on the fence, though occasionally overbalancing on the side of Toryism. It might be a most useful medium for co-operative political education, but it prefers to range itself snugly on the side of “the angels,” bolstering up royalty and nobility and “all those divinely set over us.” It has no contact at all with the true spirit and need of co-operation; and with a crudity of journalism that sets the teeth on edge it stumbles along in the wake of the smart up-to-date and honestly capitalist Press. With a ready-made potential circulation of 5½ million people, the Publishing Society has possibilities such as no millionaire-owned press can ever have, so the tragedy of its ineffectiveness is even greater.

The Co-operative Party tends to become an obedient Right Wing of the Labour Party and, as such, cannot expect to grow.

It must also lose half its appeal by the fact that it, up to the present, functions only for the material needs of the workers. Still, it has its uses by being an avenue for the bewildered Liberal towards the Labour camp—and beyond! As a party, it holds firmly to the consumers' form of co-operation and nothing more is required of its apostles—the adopted Co-operative candidates.

It has had to work so hard to establish itself as a party, mainly because of the hostility of co-operative dividend-hunters, that it has had little time to devote to the inevitable battle for a new order. It would, of course, in a real workers' party, act as a very necessary and important section of communal work.

Mr. Bale, in a recent article in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, condemning what is known as the "Consumers' Theory of Society," remarks :—

"Such stuff might seem fit for no more than a contemptuous regard, except for the unpleasant fact that conclusions drawn from such pernicious nonsense are . . . made the subject of lectures to thousands of working women."

It is quite true such stuff is served out, mainly by satisfied members of management committees, to women's guilds, but from long experience of the Women's Co-operative Guild I know that a very great deal of it is not swallowed.

The Women's Co-operative Guild still stands as the one part of the co-operative movement, sincerely desiring progress and honestly trying to make it within the movement. There are many examples of this fact :—its openly hostile attitude to the European war, its refusal to be bought for £400 by the C.W.S., because of its policy on divorce, most of which has now become law, its continued and very real support of the U.S.S.R. since the Revolution, and its whole-hearted promise of allegiance to a Total Disarmament Scheme. A further recent proof also of this was that though co-operative societies were invited to send representatives to the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution, none accepted, but the Women's Guild sent six of its members, each ready to pay the £18 travelling expenses.

The Women's Guild, by its resolution at the Plymouth Congress, virtually excludes all Tory and Liberal women from holding office, though no widespread attempt has been made

to depose such women who were already officers in guild branches.

The Women's Guild has more than once had to fight its vanguard battles within the co-operative movement, and in spite of an apparent calm on the surface there are certain indications that revolutionary thoughts lie behind only waiting to be stirred into action. The Guildswomen who went to the U.S.S.R. for the Tenth Anniversary are not only spreading the political possibilities of the co-operative movement in their guild branches but also in the Labour movement. They saw in the U.S.S.R. their dreams of a fully-developed co-operative movement realised, and they know that even with such a deadened and perverted movement as exists to-day in this country, the same results can be achieved. Even though the Russian co-operative movement is only yet in its first stride, it holds out to those of us struggling here in the British co-operative morass a light and hope that will guide us out to a nearer achievement of co-operation. But we realise that until the British co-operative movement is indissolubly bound up with political life, there can be no real reform or progress. The possibility is there, the realisation is in our hands.

A CO-OPERATIVE MINORITY MOVEMENT

By J. F.

EJ. BALE did the labour movement a great service by drawing attention, in his article in the October **LABOUR MONTHLY**, to the importance of the co-operative movement in the achievement of Socialism. Three chief stages may be distinguished in the workers' struggle for emancipation :—

- (1) The long period of preparation for the overthrow of capitalism, the period of propaganda and organisation of revolutionary forces.
- (2) The period of revolution, when the class war comes to a head, and takes the form of open civil war.
- (3) The gradual building up of Socialism after the conquest of power by the proletariat.

In each of these stages the co-operative movement does (or should) play an important part ; let us analyse each in turn.

(1) The rôle of co-operation whilst the workers are still under the domination of capitalism is partly educational and partly economic. In the first place, it provides the workers with an invaluable training in self-government and administration, incidentally proving their capacity for power ; it is a powerful aid to working-class education, and especially draws women into the political struggle. Moreover, it gives the workers an idea of what Socialist society will be like after the abolition of the contradiction of the present order, as Eccarius pointed out. Secondly, the co-operative movement can provide much needed economic aid in both the political and industrial sides of the class struggle ; it can supply funds for propaganda and support the workers in times of strikes, lockouts, &c.

(2) In the revolutionary crisis the co-operatives, especially in England, are of vital importance, and may well prove the crucial factor in the struggle. For civil war, by its very nature, disorganises production, and unless the workers succeed in establishing in a short time an emergency system of supply, revolution in England might well, as the reformists suggest, mean starvation. This is where the co-operative movement could step in, and with its

ready-made machinery organise the supply of essential foodstuffs to the workers.

(3) The vast and rapid growth of co-operation in Soviet Russia shows its importance after the conquest of political power by the workers. As Lenin said :—

The co-operatives are the only machinery created by imperialist society of which we must make use. Once the power of the State is in the hands of the working class, and all the means of production belong to it, there is really nothing else left to be done but to attract the whole population into the co-operatives.

The co-operatives then become the basis of a large part of the economic life, and form an integral part of the Socialist economy which is being built up.

As Bale points out, however, the co-operative movement in England, instead of acting as an auxiliary in the workers' struggle, instead of performing the important tasks outlined above, is becoming more and more a bulwark of Social Democracy. The propagandist activities of the movement consist in the teaching of the most naïve reformism (justly described by Bale as " pernicious nonsense "), the Co-operative Union has formed a pact with the Labour Party, and during the General Strike of 1926 the leaders of the co-operative movement were, as the *Clarion* proudly proclaimed afterwards, persistently urging the T.U.C. to surrender.

It is obvious that if the co-operative movement fails in its tasks now, in the first of the three stages distinguished, it cannot be expected to act any better when the second and third stages arise. We shall find, if the co-operative movement continues under its present guidance, the workers betrayed in the hour of crisis, the co-operatives failing to rally to the aid of the revolutionary workers. In so thickly populated and industrial country such as England, this would probably mean starving the workers into defeat ; but if, despite this boycott, they gained power, their tasks would be rendered immeasurably more difficult by the lack of support from the co-operatives.

I think that the problem of a reactionary co-operative movement should be dealt with in a manner similar to that which is meeting with increasing success in the trade unions. Isolated, individual action by class-conscious workers is powerless ; the revolutionary elements in the co-operatives should organise themselves into a body analogous to the Minority Movement in the trade unions.

CHARTISM AND THE PRESENT DAY: THE ILLUSION OF REFORMISM

By REG. GROVES

“ War to the palaces, peace to the cottages—that is a battle cry of terror which may come to resound through our own country. Let the wealthy beware.”—(*The Times*, June, 1844.)

ON all sides the seriousness of Britain's industrial position is recognised. The easy optimism of the post-war years has given way to feverish endeavours to remedy a state of affairs more serious than anything previously experienced by British capitalism. The heavy exporting industries (on which British capitalism was built), the Liberal Industrial Report admits “ may be permanently threatened.” Mr. Ben Turner, fresh from the Industrial Peace Conferences which are to “ revive British industry,” gloomily remarks that :—

Trade is really in a rocky condition and one sometimes wonders whether there will be that trade revival so often spoken about in recent months—*Daily Herald*, September 18, 1928.

The Trade Union Bill and the Mond-Turner Conferences are both unmistakable signs that the future is to be a future of mass unemployment, of continual wage-cuts—a future of increasing misery and degradation for the working class. The past seven years have seen the wage-bill of the workers reduced by some £5,000 million, hours worked in industry increased some 211 millions a year, speeding up in the principal industries and attacks on the political rights of the working-class. The decline in production continues, and unemployment, in spite of “ harvesting ” schemes and Baldwin's appeals, is close on two millions. The alternative faces the working class—Capitalism with increasing misery and world war or the working-class conquest of power, a workers' dictatorship which alone offers the real way to reconstruction and to a permanent raising of the miserable standards of the British proletariat.

The Reformist leadership is openly proclaiming its allegiance to capitalism and through a confused mass of "living wage" proposals, of programmes "mainly devoted to the expansion of industry and trade," of fantastic utopias built amid motor car and bicycle factories, one theory is gradually becoming comparatively coherent and is gaining support from "Rights," "Centrists" and "Lefts." From Phillips Price to Citrine, the Reformists are hailing the advent of the "Second Industrial Revolution." The theoreticians of the Second International are outdoing John the Baptist in their proclamation of the coming "new era" of a "Rationalised," "Scientific," "Prosperity for all" Capitalism. Gone is the haunting fear (too often confirmed by facts!) that perhaps the Communists were right. Gone is the danger of civil war. Capitalism is saved and with the salvation of capitalism lies the salvation of a weakening Reformism. Mr. Snowden is a prominent advocate of this theory. As far back as 1926 (on the eve of the attack on the miners) Mr. Snowden was stating that

He did not agree with the statement of some of his Socialist friends that the capitalist system was obviously breaking down. He believed that we were to-day in a position very much like the industrial revolution that took place in this country about 120 years ago.—*Daily Herald*, April 17, 1926.

In defending Mondism, Mr. Walter Citrine at Swansea declared :—

The position of the workers in the post-war period, the effect of that period, the long-continued depression, particularly in the basic industries, have created something which in the view of eminent economists may be compared with the industrial revolution of the last part of the eighteenth century. *We may be even now in the throes of a revolution such as that.*—T.U.C. Report p. 409. [Our emphasis.]

The object of this propaganda is clear. By this means mass unemployment, wage cuts, and anti-trade unionism are justified and explained. All the 2½ per cent. "voluntary sacrifices," the speeding up and mass dismissals, the starvation in the industrial areas, are only a "necessary" and natural part of the transition to the "new era" of national prosperity, in the same way as the misery and degradation of the early nineteenth century was followed by the Victorian era of industrial peace and prosperity.

There is in this picture of suffering as the prelude to the "new era" an element of truth (conveniently ignored by the

reformists) in so far as the breakdown of capitalism and the consequent misery heralds the rise of a new class to power. In the days of the first industrial revolution it was the industrial bourgeoisie that was rising to power ; to-day it is the industrial proletariat.

Upon the basis of their belief that to-day we "are in the throes" of a second industrial revolution the Reformists calculate that the new era of rationalism and international agreements (in the place of wars!) will smother the revolutionary movement of to-day as the Victorian era smothered the revolutionary movement which sprang from the starving workers of early capitalism. An examination of this belief is necessary before an estimation of its value can be given and its real nature revealed. Three points call for special attention.

1. The nature of the revolutionary movement of the early nineteenth century ; its rise and decline.
2. The possibility of a revival of British capitalism through Rationalisation.
3. A comparison between the revolutionary movement of the first industrial revolution and the movement of to-day.

The Industrial Revolution and the Workers

The revolt of the workers in the early nineteenth century developed and gained strength as capitalism developed and strengthened. The genesis of the capitalist system was also the genesis of the modern working-class movement and the effect of the vast changes that took place in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was seen most clearly in the rising working-class movement. The workers' revolt developed from the Luddite movement, the first blind instinctive outburst against capitalism typified for the workers by the machine, through early trade unionism, through political societies, "Jacobin" clubs and secret conspiracies ; taking its form from the circumstances in which it arose, first struggling against the ruthless introduction of machinery, then against anti-trade union legislation ; against child labour in factory and mine ; against the barbarity of the new Poor Law ; struggling for Trade Union rights, for shorter hours and for an untaxed Press. So through the first thirty years of the nineteenth century, often in alliance with the middle class and

nearly always led by middle-class leaders, the proletariat of England struggled *sectionally* against the exploitation and misery of industrial capitalism. The struggle advanced to a higher plane when the industrialists and the workers unitedly swept into effect the Reform Bill of 1832.

The achievement of a controlling part in the guidance of national affairs satisfied the middle classes; with the vote extended to them they elected their own government and ruthlessly disowning their former allies the workers, and even many radical bodies, they proceeded to break up the remaining obstacles to successful capitalist development.

The first effects of the Reformed Parliament fell heavily on the working class. A new Poor Law Act was introduced, framed ostensibly to remedy the abuses of the old system, but in reality a terrible attack on the masses of workers who, unable to gain a livelihood under the new system, were dependent for their existence on a starvation rate of relief or on degradations of the workhouse. The real reason for the new Bill was that the old laws of settlement (*i.e.* paupers confined to home district, &c.) made impossible the complete mobility of labour needed by the growing industrial system, and that the low wages of the hand-loom weavers were supplemented by relief enabling them to compete with the new factories. Its chief clause was the one by which, according to Dr. Kay, the workhouses were "made as like prisons as possible" (*Hansard*, vol. xli., p. 1014). Engels has graphically described the horrors of the Poor Law system and an examination of the various Commissions investigating during that part of the century completes the picture of misery and degradation. "They have built the wretched union gaols where King Starvation reigns supreme," declared M. Harcourt, a contemporary poet in 1837, whose poetry, like most of the literature of the day, is permeated with indignation.

This Act and the subsequent industrial depression that spread like a plague from town to town added to the fury of the working class. From the sea of misery, handloom weavers, proletarians and landworkers began to seek ways of ending their misery. Out of their discontent arose two great movements, the *Grand National Consolidated Trades Union* and the *Chartist Movement*.

The "Grand National" and Chartism

The G.N.C.T.U., formed by Owen in 1834 from the wreckage of previous attempts on the same lines, rapidly gained strength and in less than a month had a membership of over half-a-million—unprecedented in the whole history of Trade Unionism. Its life was short. Whilst Owen dreamed of the millennium, the left-wing of the Executive, Smith and Morrison, declared the Union to represent the new form of government and mobilised the workers for action. The reply of the employers was crushing. Lock-outs were resorted to in order to starve the workers into abandoning the Union. The Government announced a new Bill to make such a Union illegal and in the meantime struck relentlessly at the G.N.C.T.U. by conviction and barbarous sentences. Defeat followed defeat, funds began to show serious signs of depletion, and for a few months the Union's fate hung in the balance. A rally might have saved it, but Owen crushed the hopes that many entertained by dismissing the two men, Smith and Morrison, who showed the ability to lead the movement to victory. Temporarily the attempt to unite the workers on the industrial field had been defeated. The workers fell back into their old state—fighting on different fronts with different objects. A party was needed to unite the whole working class for the struggle, and its formation was not long delayed. All over England workingmen's associations and clubs sprang up with great rapidity, with their membership open only "to members of the industrious classes." (Radicals, middle-class reformers and others were admitted in some cases to honorary membership.) The issuing of the Charter provided the means to unity. On the slogan of "The Charter and nothing but the Charter," the hosts of workers' political organisations became united. The agitation for the "Charter," universal suffrage and electoral reforms speedily embodied within itself the struggle for an untaxed Press (which in practice then meant a workers' Press) for Trade Unions rights, for better conditions, for a repeal of the new Poor Law and gathering up these issues as an independent revolutionary movement the proletariat advanced against capitalism itself. *Thus, the rising proletarian movement engendered by the first industrial revolution culminated in Chartism, the first class party of the workers which for*

a decade thrust the issue of class power to the front and shook the rising capitalist system to its foundations.

Between 1838 and 1842, the great years of Chartism, the Chartists passed from stage to stage of the workers' struggle. Parliamentary Petition was followed by an attempted general strike, by propaganda to the troops, by mass demonstrations, by international organisations and by armed revolts. The temper of the workers was clearly in favour of revolution. In Birmingham, for instance, in July, 1839, the workers carried on street fighting for nearly a week with both police and military, only being disarmed in the end by the "centrists" of Chartism. In Kent, the land workers revolted and, arming, attacked Canterbury in 1838. The Newport rising, two years later, and the fights all over England against both police and military show clearly that the workers were ready for civil war, and had the mass been moulded together for a national struggle *capitalism would have reaped as the fruits of the first industrial revolution a workers' revolution.* Yet Chartism failed and its disappearance in 1853 saw the disappearance of the revolutionary movement for nearly half-a-century. What was the reason for this collapse?

The Cause of Chartist Decline

The main reason is to be found in the actual conditions that created Chartism. The *rising* capitalist system with the accession of the industrialists to power gradually eased the conditions of the workers and diminished the antagonism between themselves and the industrial workers who were the only section of the movement that could lead it to a successful conclusion. The three greatest periods of the agitation, 1838, 1842 and 1848 reveal only too clearly the effects of the expansion of capitalism. After the mass movement of 1838 which culminated in 1840 in the Newport rising and the imprisonment of over 500 prominent Chartists, the movement under the effects of the increasingly severe industrial depression revived quickly, and 1842 saw the second national petition with over three million signatures and the mass strike of August for the Charter. This mass strike revealed to the owning class, which up to then had been divided, the real strength of Chartism. *The Times* of August 12, 1842, said that never

before had Chartism shown its organisation so powerfully. The owning class united, defeated the strike and with the defeat of the strike the decline of Chartism commenced. The third revival in 1848, a reflection of the crisis of 1847, was short and revealed openly the weakness and internal disintegration of the movement. From that collapse it never recovered.

The extent of capitalist development can be gauged from the following facts. The value of exports for the years 1836-40 averaged £50,012,994; in 1842 it fell to £47,634,623. In 1843 it was £52,279,709; in 1843 it rose to £60,111,082, and after the crisis of 1847 rose steadily until in 1855 it reached £98,933,781. Between 1842 and 1845 542 new factories were built. The retail price of foodstuffs began to fall, wages began to rise. The following wage figures from Bowley's *Wages in the Nineteenth Century*, illustrates this. The average wages figures for the London artisans in 1833 was 28s. od.; in 1867 it was 36s. od. For town labourers in 1833 it was 14s. od.; in 1867 it was 20s. Agricultural labourers wages during this period rose from 10s. 6d. to 14s. od. Between 1842-48 average wage increases of nine grades of labour in the ironworks of South Wales were 49 per cent. The building trades between 1839-1849 increased their wages by 6 per cent., and the glassworkers by 15 per cent. Pauperism decreased; thus in 1846-47 percentage in receipt of Poor Law relief was 10.1; in 1852 it was 4.8. Conditions in the factories were investigated by several Acts passed between 1842 and 1848. The new Poor Law Act was partly remedied in 1846-47. The cotton workers' wages began to rise slowly after 1842. The woollen hand-loom weavers, who were a tremendous tower of strength to Chartism, were slowly exterminated by sheer starvation and their numbers declined enormously between 1838 and 1850. Thus a revival of Chartism was undermined by the steady improvement of conditions that set in after 1842.

"Revival" or Revolution

A serious examination of the actual nature of the "depression" of to-day will show that the decline thus manifested so strikingly since the war is a decline of capitalism itself and not a production "crisis" similar to those of the Chartist period. The belief that

a similar era of prosperity can be embarked on by modern capitalism as the period that capitalism enjoyed after the Chartist epoch is not borne out by the facts. Then Britain enjoyed a monopolist position, had unlimited prospects of expansion and was faced with little or no competition abroad. To-day newer and fresher competitors are in the field, the markets of the world are diminishing and British capitalism, dependent as it is on its exporting industries, is facing a situation from which there is no escape. So far, the attempt to meet the changed situation has consisted entirely of wage-cuts, longer hours and mass dismissals. New Reformism seeking an alternative to the class struggle and its culmination in the overthrow of capitalism is urging rationalisation, as in Germany and America, to save capitalism and at the same time themselves. To discuss the possibility of rationalisation is to tread on familiar ground and although the impossibility of rationalisation *a la* Germany in this country is quite clear yet, as some still find reasons for this possibility, it is necessary to briefly state the reasons why such a process is impossible. R. P. Dutt in his *Socialism and the Living Wage* states clearly one reason why technical reorganisation has been able to take place in France (to a limited extent), Germany (assisted by foreign capital), and America and not in Britain. The reason, Dutt states:—

Lies in the older historic growth of British capitalism. The priority which was once an advantage is to-day a handicap. The newer capitalist countries were able to start later and more rapidly with a more modern technique and a relatively more planned organisation. The new colonies outside Europe were free from feudal remains. In France and Germany the semi-revolutionary effects of war and inflation cleared the ground for reconstruction. On the other hand British capitalism is tied and fettered with an accumulation and network of individualist, sectional and vested rights and interests. In its earlier days capitalism would have struck these obstacles out of its path as the rights of the landholders were overridden by the advancing railways. To-day British capitalism is too enfeebled to take a strong line; the bourgeoisie is no longer an advancing class but is menaced by the advance of the proletariat; the whole social and political situation is too delicate for any endangering of the social fabric and every supporter of the existing order, however reactionary and parasitic, has to be preserved . . . only the working class dictatorship can reorganise British industry (Pp. 60-61).

What then is the meaning of the tremendous advances made in productive power? Far from marking a revival of capitalism

these advances mark an intensification of the struggle for markets, a worsening of the workers' conditions on a world scale and the next world war.

The chief difference between the workers' movement of the early nineteenth century and that of to-day is the difference of an epoch of struggle and growth. This is illustrated most strikingly by the Chartist general strike of 1842 and the general strike of May, 1926. Then the strike was only concentrated in the textile areas of the North ; then only a few hundred thousand workers took part in the strike. In May, 1926, 4½ million workers answered the call and stood solid defying the State and its troops, tanks and police persecutions. The discipline was perfect, the solidarity unshakable. After the defeat of the Chartist mass strike the decline of the revolutionary movement commenced, but to-day it is precisely May, 1926, that marks the turning point in the struggle for the leadership of the British workers. Already the broken threads of proletarian solidarity are being joined and new weapons of struggle are being forged as the movement gathering its strength, slowly leaves Reformism behind and gathers under the banner of social revolution. With the pressure of the capitalist offensive making itself felt increasingly, the working class is slowly gathering its forces for the future mass struggles. Sidney Webb has declared that British Socialism began not with Marx but with Owen and that Owen's Utopianism is the real basis of British Socialism—the class war is an alien doctrine. The Chartist movement showed in embryo that the development of the class-struggle brings a corresponding discarding of Owenism and an approach to Marxism. In the same way the contemporary British working class will through defeat and victory, in the day-to-day struggle, and awakened to consciousness by the Communist Party, learn the lessons of Chartism and march forward to the overthrow of capitalism.

Chartism, long dead and buried by Reformists and capitalists alike, has risen in a stronger, clearer and more powerful form. The "Second Industrial Revolution" which in reality is the increasing socialisation of the methods of production, is the revolutionisation of the methods of production and consequently the revolutionisation of the whole system of society ; in so far as it indicates the

process taking place, and emphasises the differences with the first industrial revolution, it can only mean the growth of the revolutionary forces in Britain. Engels points this out in connection with the first industrial revolution saying, "Here in Britain the class struggles were more virulent *during the period of the development of big industry. . . . It is precisely the revolutionisation of time-honoured conditions which revolutionises people's brains*" (Engel's letter to Sorge, December 3rd, 1892 ; our italics). The process now taking place is the "revolutionisation of time-honoured conditions" and the effect is to be seen in the developing class-struggle of the British workers.

THE CENSOR IN AUSTRALIA

The Ban on Working-Class Literature

By E. M. HIGGINS

THE LABOUR MONTHLY (April, 1928) was the first English periodical to draw attention to the fact that the Bruce Federal Government of Australia is systematically banning every book, pamphlet, magazine or newspaper from overseas which gives an honest working-class picture of the international workers' movement.

This ban is something of direct interest to English readers, because it is operated in a country, which boasts of "British Democracy," by a Government which is working in concert with the Baldwin Government in an effort to make Australia a more profitable source of exploitation to the allied British and Australian capitalisms.

In December, 1927, a list of 128 publications, which are "prohibited, seized and forfeited," was supplied to the Federal Parliament by the Minister for Customs. This list actually included far more than 128, for item 3, for instance, read: "All propaganda issued by the Red International of Labour Unions," and item 4: "All propaganda issued by the Communist Party of Great Britain." During 1928 there have been at least forty additional publications put on the index.

The banned books even include *The Communist Manifesto* and such familiar Socialist text-books as Mary Marcy's *Shop Talks on Economics* and Daniel De Leon's *Two Pages from Roman History*.

Trotsky's *Where is Britain Going?* (published by an eminently respectable English firm), Bishop Brown's *Communism and Christianity*, and, of course, all Lenin's writings and books on Leninism are on the list.

Soviet Russia To-Day (the Report of the British Workers' Delegation which visited Soviet Russia for the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution), W. Z. Foster's *Russian Workers and Workshops*, pamphlets issued by the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. on unemployment, social insurance, &c., are banned lest they should offset the war propaganda of the capitalist Press.

English periodicals banned include: the LABOUR MONTHLY, the *Sunday Worker*, the *Socialist Standard*, the *Worker*, *Worker's Life* and the *Communist*.

In addition, the list includes *The Correspondence of the Farmers' International*, *International Press Correspondence*, *Internacia Socia Revuo*, *The International of Youth*, the *Communist International*, and also *Rote Hilfe Pressedienst*, *Der Rote Helfer* and every publication of the International Red Aid or its sections.

Every one of the banned books, pamphlets and periodicals is on open sale in Great Britain and the United States.

The ban even extends to literature published in Italian, including translations of Marx and Lenin, Louise Michel's *The Paris Commune*, Arthur

Greenwood's *Theory and Practice of Trade Unionism*, a history of the Italian Socialist Party, Paolo Valera's *Fascism*, reports of working-class congresses, reprints of Labour songs, the periodical *Rationalist Doctrines*, and a few anti-religious pamphlets. All but four of the confiscated Italian publications have been printed legally in Italy; the four exceptions were printed legally in the United States. What is permitted even by Mussolini is banned by Bruce, the "British Democrat."

"Democracy" works like this: the Customs Act gives power to the Minister for Customs to prohibit the import of goods by proclamation. The Minister has "proclaimed" that "seditious" literature may not be imported under a penalty of £100. Customs officials, under the supervision of the Minister, label any publication they please "seditious" (even future issues of periodicals, before they are printed) and seize it. When the injured party makes a claim against the seizure, he is shown the Customs Act and is ironically informed that "if action has been taken which was not in accordance with law, the owner of the property will have the ordinary legal remedy."

The Communist Party has thus been robbed of hundreds of pounds' worth of books and periodicals. The Victorian Labour College and the Workers' Educational Union of West Australia have also suffered.

This ban on working-class literature is one of the moves of the Bruce Government, which is working in close alliance with the British Imperial Government, to weaken the resistance of Australian workers to the offensive against wages and conditions and to the war plans of British Imperialism. While the employers are pressing forward their campaign for rationalisation and reduced production costs at the workers' expense, the Government is, on the one hand, flooding the labour market with "surplus" workers from Britain and Southern Europe, and, on the other hand, imposing all possible legal shackles on the trade union movement. For the purposes of British and Australian capitalism, it is of particular importance that Australian workers should be cut off from a knowledge of the progress of the working-class movement in countries where the lines of the class struggle are less blurred, and from discussion of the theory of working-class emancipation.

Hence the fight against the literature ban is one of the central issues in the struggle of militant workers against the employers' drive for lower wages and their preparations for war.

Following a vigorous campaign in the Communist Press, the 1927 All-Australian Trade Union Congress unanimously called on all trade unionists "to take up a campaign against the ban on their literature and to prosecute it until they have won complete freedom of knowledge for their class."

Forty New South Wales unions have carried resolutions of protest. The New South Wales Labour Party Conference this year instructed Labour Members of Parliament to fight the ban.

Protests have come from the Victorian State Teachers' Union and from Professors Anderson and Bruce, of Sydney University, who have kept the question alive in the daily Press, pointing out that the ban is depriving them of necessary material for the study of the most significant developments of the age. It is to be hoped that working-class organisations and other enemies of capitalist dictatorship in Britain will join in the protests.

The World of Labour

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GERMANY

End of Ruhr Iron and Steel Lock-out

THE Ruhr lock-out came to an end on Sunday, December 2, when representatives of the various metal unions agreed to accept the arbitration of Herr Severing, Socialist Minister of the Interior, and an ex-official of the Deutsche Metalarbeiter Verband.

This decision followed on the deadlock produced by the employers' refusal to honour either the original award of the Minister of Labour or the verdict of the State Labour Court given at Duisburg on November 24, which reversed the decision of the local Labour Court (cf. December *LABOUR MONTHLY*). While appealing to the Supreme Court at Leipzig, the employers exercised political pressure on the Social Democratic machine by threatening to mobilise the forces of the *Volkspartei*, the party of the big industrialists. Opposition from such a quarter would have meant the loss of the Socialists' Parliamentary majority, and the probable fall of the Government. Yet the issue was a vital one, not merely as a matter of government prestige, but for the future of the whole cherished Arbitration system. Never before had either side refused to accept a binding award, and the *Manchester Guardian* of November 14 describes the employers' action as a challenge to the authority of the German State.

The employers opened up another line of attack in denying the validity of the regulations issued by the Prussian Government for the payment of allowances to the locked-out workers on the lines laid down in the Reichstag, and Dr. Curtius, Minister of Economic Affairs, pressed this objection strongly in the Cabinet.

The employers, in fact, were attacking all along the line, and the Government was forced on to the defensive. In its weakness it turned to the unions to get it out of its difficulties. The Christian unions, which include the majority of the organised workers, gave their unconditional assent to the compromise proposed, and so, naturally, did the employers, since it provided them with an indemnity for their illegal actions. The D.M.V. Executive declared that it must "consult" its delegate meeting, but "coerce" would perhaps have been the better word, for only under pressure and after a very stormy meeting did they persuade the majority of the delegates to accept their resolution.

This resolution threw the blame for their decision on the employers for their illegal action in refusing to abide by the award, and on the Government for

failing to enforce it, and renounced all responsibility for the consequences. It declared that the Union was unable to refuse the pressure of the Government when it urged them to accept Severing as arbitrator, since it trusted him to support the workers' claim.

It is, however, rumoured that in secret negotiations with the owners, the union leaders had offered a revision of piece rates which would actually have brought wages down lower than before the lock-out, provided that their faces were saved by the preservation of time rates, which would place their protest in a less favourable light.

The programme of the unofficial strike committees on the other hand provided for an extension of the struggle by the calling out of transport, electric and building workers and, if necessary, the proclamation of a general strike. These committees were a powerful factor in preserving solidarity, but the negotiations with the Government and the employers were carried on behind their backs, and without their ever being consulted, although they represented thousands more workers than the 25,000 members of the Social Democratic Metal Union.

The effect of the lock-out on Ruhr industry was disastrous. In the first fortnight in November unemployment increased by 140,000 or 20 per cent. ; while in the first week the daily average of idle shifts in the mines rose from 7,500 to over 30,000. When the lock-out came to an end some 25,000 metal workers found that there was no work for them, and ever since the employers have been taking advantage of their position to lower wages and alter conditions, cynically acting on the knowledge that the Government and the industrial leaders have admitted them to be a law unto themselves.

U.S.A.

Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour

THE forty-eighth Annual Convention of the A.F. of L., which was held at New Orleans from November 19 to 28, recorded no startling change of policy or personnel. All the old officials were re-elected, except for the treasurership.

In his presidential speech, William Green represented the Federation as holding the balance between the Manufacturers' Association and the Communists. The Association had accused it of being a menace to American institutions, but he wanted to "hurl their challenge back in their teeth," and he declared that "in carrying out the policy of expulsions (of the Communists), the Federation had shown itself the great bulwark of Americanism." On the other hand, the A.F. of L. stood for the raising of the standard of life and the right of labour to give or withhold service, a right which the A.F. of L. would see was not destroyed—a reference to the campaign against injunctions, which was the subject of a mild resolution of protest passed during the Conference, containing no proposals for resistance or effective opposition.

Similarly, though the Annual Report put forward the doubling of the membership in 1929 as the major task of the Federation, no definite plans were laid for the organising of the unorganised, and the doubled membership is likely to remain a pious aspiration. The need for extending the organisation was emphasised later in referring to the progress made by the Eight Hour Day

campaign since 1919. There are now 20 International unions and 514 local unions working the five-day, forty-hour week, covering a membership of 167,479. But as the report admits, the benefits of the shorter working week have not been extended to the unorganised workers who form the overwhelming majority of American labour.

Resolutions were passed demanding the further restriction of immigration, particularly from Canada, Mexico and the West Indies, because of its effect in depressing wages.

It was announced that an "American Wage Earners Protective Conference" had been arranged with the object of raising the tariff on glass, shoes, pottery, books, paper, &c. A special session of Congress was demanded to discuss these higher rates, but no safeguards were proposed to secure that wages should be raised at the same time as the tariffs.

Kennedy, of the mine workers, proposed the building up of a gigantic fund for use in future industrial struggles. He declared that the mine owners had lost over \$5,000,000 in strikes during the last few years, and suggested that some of this had been spent in financing attacks on the Lewis leadership, but omitted to mention the frequent charges which suggest the much greater likelihood that the money had been used in bolstering it up.

The action of the E.C. in informing the affiliated organs of the A.F. of L. that they should no longer contribute to the support of the Brotherhood Labour College, gave rise to considerable discussion. The College had been condemned without a hearing, on the ground that the subject of Communism was discussed there. Some supporters urged that it was necessary to discuss Communism in order to fight it, but the Vice-President of the Federation, Matthew Wall, who led the attack, declared that the only method of dealing with it was the boycott, and so the matter stands.

The big event of the Convention, however, was the enthusiastic acceptance of the Hoover proposal to create a three-billion-dollar Government Construction Fund for the stabilising of capitalist prosperity. The scheme appears to contemplate the "storing up of a reserve of construction projects equal in cost to two years' normal expenditure on improvements, and the release of this reserve at times of unemployment." Such a fund would be a form of insurance against national panics, and consequently a bulwark against revolution. It is regarded by naïve supporters of the A.F. of L. as "a dramatic coincidence of events" that "the trio of great social, economic and political forces—Labour, the States (at a Conference of State Governors then in session at New Orleans) and Washington were in unison" in support of the scheme as a solution of the unemployment problem. It was sponsored at the Convention by John P. Frey, secretary of the Metal Trades Department, which has recently endorsed the Government's bigger War Navy Bill, providing for the construction of fifteen new cruisers, and was described by him as a turning point in the history of American industry. Its acceptance is undoubtedly a decisive gesture of class collaboration, or in the words of the report, of "that sharing of interest in production that is the essence of partnership."

The convention closed with an address from James Davis, the U.S. Secretary for Labour, which elaborated the same theme of co-operation and harmony. He declared :—

Our interests are now so interlocked that we have to count the cost before we strike. . . . During my term of office the number of strikes and lock-outs has shown a decrease due to the rapid rise in industrial intelligence. . . . Labour cannot afford it (striking); the pay envelope is too fat, and he misses it too much. . . . Prosperity is not a product of the classes, but a product of the masses. . . . To-day well-paid workers share the wealth which is being produced and thereby help to create prosperity. . . . We can rely on progressive business men of America to voluntarily raise the wages of the workers.

After this panegyric it was a pity that he should have had to return to earth and admit that there was "room for improvement" in the basic industries of textiles, boots and shoes, and soft coal, thus revealing the rotten core of capitalist prosperity in America.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Slum Problem.* By B. S. Townroe. (Longman, Green & Co., 220 pp., 6s.)
- Politics of Reason.* (Public Life, Manchester, 19 pp., 3d. each.)
- No. 1. *The Just State.* By Gerhard Kumbledon.
- No. 2. *The Better Security.* By Leonard Nelson.
- No. 3. *Justice in Industry.* By Gerhard Kumbledon.
- The People's Papers.* (C.W.S. Publicity Department, 15 pp., 1d. each.)
- No. 1. *Madam for Whom the World Goes Round.* By Prospero.
- No. 2. *The Co-operation of Consumers.* By Thomas Tweddell.
- No. 3. *World Co-operation.* By Sir Thomas Allen.
- No. 4. *Mitchell the Leader.* By Prospero.
- Labour and Farmer Parties in the United States, 1828-1928.* By Nathan Fine. (Rand School of Social Science, 445 pp.)
- An Introduction to the Study of International Organisation.* By Pitman B. Potter. Third Edition enlarged and revised. (G. Bell & Sons, 587 pp., 16s.)
- Slovakia, Past and Present.* By C. J. C. Strut. (P. S. King & Sons, 64 pp., 1s. 6d.)
- A British Index of National Prosperity, 1920-1927.* By G. D. Rokeling. With a Foreword by Sir Josiah Stamp. (*The Economist*, 40 pp., 2s. 6d.)
- Republican Germany: A Political and Economic Study.* By Hugh Quigley and Robert T. Clark. (Methuen & Co., 318 pp.)
- The Economic Advance of British Co-operation, 1913-1926.* By H. J. Twigg. (Co-operative Union, Ltd., 15 pp., 4d.)
- Trade Rings Round the Farmer.* By George Walworth. (Co-operative Union, Ltd., 15 pp., 4d.)
- Capital.* A new translation by Eden and Cedar Paul, based on the Fourth and Definitive Edition, revised by Engels after Marx' Death. (Allen & Unwin, 927 pp., 12s. 6d.)
- The Money Game; How to Play It.* By Norman Angell. The cards for the game are in the book. (J. M. Dent, 12s. 6d.)

BOOK REVIEWS

CHINA FROM OUTSIDE

The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution. By T. C. Woo.
(Allen & Unwin, 15s.)

China in the Family of Nations. By Henry T. Hodgkin. (Allen & Unwin,
7s. 6d.)

THE National Government of China, formally established last October under the presidency of Chiang Kai-Shek, is nominally responsible to the Kuomintang. Actually it is kept in power by foreign imperialists, while the Kuomintang itself has become little more than a group of ill-assorted militarists, quarrelling among themselves and agreeing only on the policy of repressing the peasants and workers of China.

To see how this situation has followed so quickly on the tremendous advance of the revolutionary movement of 1925 and 1926 it is important to review the principles of the Kuomintang and to relate them to the forces that were at work in the actual course of the revolution and counter-revolution.

T. C. Woo, whose book deals with the position up to the end of 1927, joined the Kuomintang in 1926, and was in the Nationalist Foreign Office under Eugene Chen. After the split in the Kuomintang in 1927 Mr. Woo (according to the Publisher's Note), with Madame Sun Yat-Sen, Eugene Chen and others

who were unwilling to lose their heads on behalf of a Communism in which they did not believe, or to lend their countenance to what they considered a travesty of the principles to which the Kuomintang was committed, escaped to Moscow.

Mr. Woo is now a research student at the Sorbonne. These facts give the key to the view that is presented of both the past and the future of the Chinese revolution.

The book divides itself into three parts, the first dealing with the early principles and history of the Kuomintang, the second with its actual policy from 1924, and the third with the situation at the end of 1927 and the prospects of the nationalist movement. The first part is mainly an exposition of the doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen from the point of view of one who accepts wholeheartedly the "Three Principles" and conscientiously tries to defend them as a non-Marxian theory of society.

Dr. Sun's view was that since the time Marx wrote conditions have changed.

He was not opposed to Marxism as such, but held that it would not be applicable to the China of to-day.

And so on. It is a pity that no dates are given for the quotations from Sun Yat-Sen, and that the alterations that actually took place in his social theory are not made clear.

The second part contains extremely interesting and valuable material on the policy and activities of the Kuomintang from its reorganisation in 1924 up to the first split and the abdication of the left-wing leaders in August, 1927. At the Kuomintang conference of 1924 three "corner-stone policies" were laid down: Co-operation with the Chinese Communist Party, co-operation with Soviet Russia, and the organisation of the workers and peasants. The basis of each of these policies is discussed, and in one sentence after another

it is plain that the author finds a difficulty in keeping his mental balance between his admiration of the Chinese Communists, his half-recognition that they were following the true revolutionary line, and his traditions as a disciple of Sun Yat-Sen (and of an American University). He says :—

The Communists stand on the class basis which is the starting point of their politics, and the theoretical discussion whether there is any class distinction in the present-day China does not interest them.

His own uneasy attitude comes from his refusal to stand definitely on the class basis and his efforts, at one moment, to maintain that in China there is no class struggle because modern capitalism has not arisen and, the next, to admit that

every revolution is carried on by some classes of society. In the Chinese Revolution to-day the struggle is between certain sections of the people as represented by the Right Wing of the Kuomintang, who wish to turn the Revolution to their own benefit, and those who wish to see the Revolution carried on in the interests of the great masses as represented by the Left Wing of the party.

He sees the conflict of Right and Left as the difference between "two types of mind," but recognises that within the Kuomintang "there was a bourgeois element who had a controlling influence." The economic basis of the struggle is not made clear. But the story of the growing power of counter-revolutionary militants is fully told, from the arrest at Canton in March, 1926, of naval officers who were suspected of Communism by Chiang Kai-Shek, without consulting the Nationalist Government, to the wholesale killing of Communists, students, and Labour leaders under the Nanking Government, Yet though

Communists may be killed and the present organisation of the Chinese Communist Party may be destroyed by force, the root of Communism in China cannot be eradicated in this way. The masses of Chinese labour and peasants remain.

The author reaches the conclusion that if there is no single class in China strong enough to combat militarism and imperialism single-handed, then

the irresistible logic is that all the classes in China, whether bourgeois or proletarian, should combine themselves and form a united front.

Yet the united front of 1926 was broken because the struggle against imperialism inevitably brought the revolutionary movement into conflict with those sections of the Chinese—landowners, merchants, and industrial capitalist—who were or became the tools of imperialism and militarism. They declared themselves in the betrayal of 1927, and to rebuild the united front on the old basis can only be the dream of those who have indeed escaped from the revolution.

Dr. Hodgkin, secretary of the National Christian Council of China, carries on the historic rôle of missionaries in his effort to show that British intervention is for the good of the natives, and that the Chinese should be treated with a certain amount of decency to save them from revolt. As an example of his method, he says of the Shanghai massacre of May, 1925, that:—

what was, at the worst, a serious blunder by a petty official, and culpable negligence by a public body, was exploited in the interests of a certain propaganda.

The bibliography, though it is confined to bourgeois publications, gives some useful references.

El. B.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

British Economic Perspective—Meaning of Decline—Old Errors Abandoned—New Errors—Distortion of Theory of Decline—Lenin on Decline of Capitalism—The “Third Period” —Sharpening Contradictions—Revolutionary Understanding — 1928 — Baldwin Government Policy — New Possibilities — Labour Government Role — Tactical Consequences — Revolutionary Line —Fight Against Labour Government — Perspective.

FOR the period now opening, a fresh examination of economic tendencies and perspectives in Britain is strongly necessary. Nearly a year ago, in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* (April, 1928), Comrade Varga raised the question of the possibility of a temporary break in the process of industrial depression in Britain, through a period of reconstruction in connection with rationalisation. He suggested that during the actual period of reconstruction there might take place “a break in the decline of British industry” and even a “boom,” directly caused by the stimulus of the new construction. At the same time he made clear that this improvement could only be in question during the actual period of new construction, and that the results of the process would not in any sense mean the end of the process of decline in British capitalism or the solution of unemployment. Within these limits, and on this basis, he foresaw the possibility of a “temporary improvement in the position of British industrial capital, lasting about two or three years.” The suggestion of a fresh line of thought here opened out fell in the main upon stony ground. The succeeding discussion from some half a dozen leading British contributors (May to September, 1928) was almost entirely negative and sceptical in character, insisting upon the heavy obstacles in the path of effective rationalisation in Britain, and pointing with more or less emphasis in every case to the conclusion, if not of the impossibility, then of the extreme improbability of such a break as Varga indicated.

Such a negative treatment of the problems raised, however, carries with it considerable dangers ; and it is necessary to return to the question, all the more in view of the prospect of a Labour Government or Liberal-Labour Government and its consequences.

IN order to approach this question correctly, it is necessary for a moment to consider more precisely what is meant by the decline of capitalism. The prolonged special crisis in Britain, the eight years' still unbroken large-scale depression, mass-unemployment, production and trade below pre-war, and cut wages, with its especial incidence in just those basic industries of mining, engineering, shipbuilding, and textiles which were the former strongholds of the aristocracy of labour and the organised workers, and with the consequent mass-misery in those industries, and among those workers, most powerfully exemplified to-day in the barbaric cruelty of capitalist anarchy in the coalfields—all this experience has produced a profound impress on the mind and outlook of the British working class. The elementary force of facts has in one sense made easily obvious, driven home and reinforced the revolutionary working-class analysis of the decline of capitalism in Britain, so that to-day none can escape the issue raised. This experience has produced a process of revolutionisation, which reached its strongest expression so far in the General Strike, and which still goes further forward to-day through new forms in the intensified differentiation within the working class. Behind this process of revolutionisation lie many forces, which are the outcome of a whole period ; but the strongest in immediate consciousness is this eight years' experience of breakdown of old standards, stability, traditions and leadership. It is a powerful experience, a powerful driving force of direct and bitter experience, which lies immediately behind the process of revolutionisation. But this same immediate experience, though a powerful driving force to revolutionary consciousness, nevertheless in the realm of theory, if taken too narrowly, and not amplified and strengthened by correct Marxist theory, can provide a too narrow basis for the correct understanding of the complicated path in front, for the correct understanding of the real process of imperialism and capitalist decline and the consequent path of revolutionary advance. And

precisely here lies the danger. The capitalist decline has seemed so obvious in direct and immediate experience that it has become in danger of not being correctly understood in its full meaning.

THE eight years industrial depression, which constitutes the overmastering background of all economic and political discussion in Britain to-day, has also, it may further be noted, had its effect upon the outlook of the bourgeoisie. The original error of facile short-term expectations of a return to "normalcy" after the "post-war unsettlement" has long ago been admitted and abandoned. Seven years ago the *LABOUR MONTHLY* and the other organs of the revolutionary working class were almost alone in insisting, in opposition to the official expressions of the Governments, Supreme Councils, bourgeois politicians and economists, that the crisis which opened in Britain in the winter of 1920-1921 was not a temporary disturbance consequent on the war, but that its causes lay deeper in basically changed conditions of British capitalism in relation to world economy, which would continue to operate even if, and after, the immediate post-war unsettlement was overcome. At that time the dominant outlook still looked for a rapid return to "pre-war"; the reformists were still talking sapiently of the alternation of booms and slumps, as if it were a question of the old pre-war trade crisis. The prevailing outlook was recently expressed by Mr. Baldwin:—

For the last six or seven years, in fact during the whole period in which unemployment has been rife, since the collapse of the boom that followed the peace settlement, most people, certainly one Government after another, thought that unemployment was due, as it was very largely, to the general upset of credit and of interruption of trade channels between country and country, and that it would merely be by the process of time—some estimating it as a very long time, and some as a very short time—before business would return to the normal. (Mr. Baldwin in the House of Commons debate on unemployment, *The Times*, July 25, 1928.)

THIS error has long since been abandoned. In this, as in a hundred issues ever since the early days of capitalism, the Marxist analysis has been proved correct by facts; and the bourgeois economists and politicians have had to yield to obvious realities, and make a partial admission and correction of

their error after the event. But the fact that the bourgeois theorists and spokesmen have had to yield and adapt themselves to obvious realities does not for a moment mean that they have yielded to, or understood, or for the matter of that even heard of save in caricature, the Marxist analysis. They have simply recognised the obvious fact that the relations of British and world economy have changed, and that the old world-monopoly is permanently gone ; and they have set themselves to work to find ways and means to adapt capitalist production in Britain to the changed situation. This recognition is the commonplace of discussion to-day ; it is no longer the point at issue. For they see this fact merely as an isolated fact, and not as a part of a whole process of capitalist working out and decline, of which this particular phase is no more than one offshoot and example, and which their schemes of capitalist reconstruction can in the end only hasten. And just as it was necessary seven years ago to combat the reformist illusions and deceptions within the working-class movement, which followed in the tail of bourgeois ideology and saw the crisis simply as a normal trade crisis or post-war unsettlement, so it is necessary to-day to combat the reformist illusions and deceptions which follow equally in the tail of bourgeois ideology, and recognise indeed at last the changed situation in Britain, but only to see the solution in schemes of capitalistic reconstruction. But this combat can only be successfully conducted on the basis of a wider understanding of the whole process of capitalist decline, and not on a mere insistence on the obvious facts of the existing depression, the changed situation in Britain, and the negative factors of British capitalism.

FOR if the eight years of overwhelming depression has in one sense facilitated and reinforced the Marxist analysis of the decline of capitalism, it has in another sense led to the danger of over-simplifying it and obscuring its real force. The decline has seemed so obvious as to need no explaining ; who so would question it, need only look around. In this way, as often happens, the particular phase which is easy and obvious to view has come to be identified with the general principle, and even to appear to replace it, while the principle is lost to sight. The decline of capitalism comes to be loosely identified with the existing industrial

depression, and even to appear as no more than a high-sounding synonym for it. Its demonstration comes to turn on the manifold detailed figures of trade and production below pre-war, which are already trundled out in abundance by the bourgeois economists. Wherein lies the special danger of this vulgarisation? It lies in this: that the decline becomes misconceived as an automatic unbroken line of descent or stagnation in production and trade, and the suggestion of facts or possibilities at variance with this appears to endanger the whole conception of the decline. Thus, when a hypothesis is put forward of new or alternative variations within the process, the instinct of conservative routine thinking comes at once to repel it as a danger to the whole revolutionary understanding of the period, and to pile up arguments to demonstrate its impossibility, rather than quietly to think out first its possibility and the consequences that would follow. Such an instinct and outlook is obviously far removed from Marxism.

WHEN Lenin defined imperialism as the epoch of capitalist decline or dying capitalism, he did not in any sense mean by this that it was an epoch of declining production, although in the last resort the factors analysed would in the end lead to this also. But the essential analysis was consistent with the most rapidly rising production, and indeed drew no little of its force from just such a condition in the period preceding the war. The essence of the decline lay in the fact that capitalism had reached the limit of the possibility of its free expansion, and passed into its final stage of antagonist world monopolies, whose outcome could only be intensified destructive conflict and war, inner decay and parasitism, and revolutionary proletarian and colonial struggles, leading up to the victory of the world socialist revolution. Putting the conception in its most abstract form, we might say that the essence of the decline of capitalism consists in this: that the contradictions of capitalism have become stronger than its possibility of further development, so that whereas in the classic period of capitalism the contradictions and consequent crises are a driving force to its further development, in the declining period the contradictions are a driving force to its destruction, because the only further development possible is along the path of the socialist

revolution. The productive forces have grown stronger than the power of capitalism to organise them ; so that relative to productive power the actual production realised does become a diminishing ratio. In this process many factors can lead also to an absolute diminution of production (destructive wars, monopolist restriction of production, intensified class struggles). But whether at a given time or in a given country there is an absolute diminution of production is obviously a special detail question, and not itself a primary question of the decline. Increases in production, new technical developments, reconstruction and rationalisation, can be powerful driving forces in the total process of decline.

IN this connection a valuable guidance and line of thought for treating the problems of the present phase is afforded by the conception of the "third period" worked out at the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International. It was pointed out that the line of development since the war may be regarded as passing through three phases : first, the post-war revolutionary wave, during which capitalism was shaking ; second, after the defeat of the Western European proletariat, the rebuilding or stabilising of capitalism, during which production was still below the pre-war level ; third, the present phase in which production and technique are already well above the pre-war level, and new contradictions pointing to the second world war are developing with great rapidity. This analysis, it need hardly be pointed out, is not merely schematic, but provides the basis for clearly marked stages of the main tactical line : for the first phase, the line of the revolutionary offensive ; for the second phase, after the defeats, the strengthening of contact with the masses through the united front ; for the third phase, the new line in conjunction with the united front from below, that is, the strengthened independent revolutionary leadership for the new struggles developing, and intensified fight against social democracy which has now become an integral part of reconstructed capitalism and its war preparations.

THE special significance of this analysis for our present purpose lies in the distinction between the second and third stages. In the second stage, stabilisation was partial

among other reasons because capitalist production had not yet been successfully brought to the pre-war level. In the third stage, stabilisation is partial in a deeper sense, because the very advances in production, technique and productive power have led to new and intenser contradictions (impossibility of fully utilising the increased productive power, intensified market problem, ever more rapid waves of crisis and mass unemployment, acceleration of war advance). Thus, while to all appearance, to the satisfied outlook of the bourgeoisie, stabilisation has grown stronger, in reality the contradictions which are defeating stabilisation have grown stronger. But the situation is no longer the same as the second stage, and cannot be treated in the same terms. To-day, although Britain still lags behind, world production and trade has in the main been brought above the pre-war level, although with far more violent and sudden ups and downs and accompanying mass unemployment than before the war. The instability of stabilisation consists precisely in the new contradictions that are brought into being by the very increase of production and advance of technique.

IN consequence, the focus of our viewpoint, the focus of revolutionary understanding, needs to be concentrated, correspondingly, no longer merely on the negative aspects of the incompleteness of the capitalist restoration, but above all on the positive new contradictions arising from the very successes, such as they are, of the capitalist restoration. This necessitates a fundamental re-survey of the new situation and its tendencies, in order to understand correctly the problems of the present period and the consequent necessary new tactics. Such a re-survey is important for Britain no less than elsewhere, although the rate of development is here slower, and a development at all corresponding to, say, Germany or the United States is for practical purposes out of the question, nevertheless in order to keep a clear view of what developments are possible and be prepared for the consequent tactical conclusions. It is not here a question of the permanent factors of the capitalist decline, whose character and special application to Britain are fully established, but of the particular variations within the process and their significance. The capitalist

decline continues, but it develops through ever new forms ; and it is precisely these successive forms that are important to distinguish correctly at each stage.

ON the face of it, the economic situation in Britain, if we were to base our examination on the available figures for 1928, shows no great change on preceding years. The trade figures show a slight advance on 1927, with an increase of £14 millions in exports, despite the fall in coal and textiles (the increase being mainly in means of transport and machinery) ; but this increase still leaves the export total £50 millions below the level of 1925, and £78 millions below the level of 1924, while the apparent adverse balance of trade of £353 millions is £17 millions more than in 1924, despite the heavy reductions in the imports of food and raw materials (reflecting cut wages and increased industrial depression). Further, the advance belongs mainly to the beginning of the year ; the subsequent period showed increased depression, and the official record of registered unemployment rose by the end of the year to one and a-third millions, or some two hundred thousand above the end of 1927. The various available estimates of production still show a general average some 15 per cent. below pre-war, and exports some 20 per cent. below the pre-war volume. Profits remained at about the same rate, or a little higher. Wage-cuts have continued yet further, and reached a total net decrease of some seven or eight million pounds a year, covering one and a-half million workers (part of the bill the workers have to pay for the General Council's Mondism). All this repeats in general the picture of preceding years. There is here no indication of any important change of direction. So far as the existing facts go, they only indicate the continuance of the depression and the belying of the conventional prophecies of recovery.

IT is also true that the Baldwin Government has not pursued any important constructive policy in relation to home industry. During the past year the process of capitalist financial reorganisation, amalgamation, and also to a certain extent technical rationalisation, has gathered momentum, and is rapidly advancing. But there is no sign yet of any such large-scale new construction

work as has taken place in Germany, the United States or France. The concentration of the Baldwin Government, as the leader and representative of British financial capital interests, has been primarily on the international financial position, on the establishment and maintenance of the gold standard ; its principal success is reflected in the raising of the income from foreign investments to £270 millions in 1927, or three times the value of 1920, allowing for the change in price levels. The cost of this in home policy has been the restriction of industrial development, the cutting of wages and the concentration on the inner fight against the working class. The home policy of the Baldwin Government has been in consequence a policy of holding in expenditure, cutting wages, cutting social services, and repressive anti-labour legislation. During the past year, with the completion of their victory over the working class registered in Mondism, and with the successful passing of the immediate crises over the establishment of the gold standard, there have been signs of growing concentration on the home industrial situation, and the beginnings of a policy in derating, the extension of tariffs, and direct encouragement of amalgamation and rationalisation. These developments, however, do not yet go far. A tendency of importance is to be observed in new capital issues. Of a total of £285 millions, excluding British Government loans, the proportion recorded for "home" use was not less than 63 per cent., as against 49 per cent. last year and 34 per cent. in 1912. (*Economist*, December 29, 1928.) Even this indication, however, is only of partial value ; not only because capital issues afford an incomplete picture of the actual movement and expansion of capital, and the classification of "home" purposes includes a large proportion of capital operating abroad or for purposes not directly connected with productive industry at home ; but also because, even of the balance estimated as going to home industry, a considerable proportion represented only the process of financial reorganisation or new financial flotation of previously existing enterprises. The final balance of new capital going to actual new construction at home would thus appear to be small so far as can be estimated, and, in relation to heavy industry or the basic industries, extremely small.

IF this were all, it would not be much ; and there would appear no adequate evidence or indication yet, so far as existing facts go, to justify an inference of the possible approach of a new constructive boom, such as was suggested by Comrade Varga. But the hypothesis of Comrade Varga was primarily based, not so much on the-already evident facts save so far as these were necessary to show that a process of rationalisation had begun and to determine the conditions of the problem, as on the possibilities latent in the situation. And the fact that little has yet been done should not blind us to these possibilities, even though the odds may still be against their realisation. The important point is that there is no theoretical *impossibility* for British capitalism to undertake a very much wider measure of reconstruction and new equipment, given certain conditions. The capital is there in abundance, even though it does not yet find it economically profitable to attempt much, in view of the dead capital it would have to carry. Contributors to the discussion rightly laid stress on the practical character of the obstacles (not merely ideological) inherent in the existing structure of British capitalism, in the debt burdens and dead capital to be carried, which make difficult large-scale new enterprise, unless drastic writing down can be carried through on a large scale. But, as several contributors pointed out, these obstacles could be at any rate in great part overcome if there were a sufficient driving force to hasten the pace of development, and above all to mobilise new capital for constructive purposes. Such a driving force could be provided by the organ of the capitalist class as a whole, by the *State*. If the State were to undertake an active policy, it could carry through a large measure of capitalist reconstruction, which would temporarily stimulate industry and employment during the actual process of construction. The example of war-time is the most extreme and obvious example of the possibility of State action to give a temporary artificial stimulus to production. Analogous action to anything like the same degree is obviously out of the question, so long as the gold standard is to be maintained. But even a limited programme of new construction and encouragement to new construction could have its marked effect. The ultimate effects of such reconstruction would obviously be, not to solve the crisis, but to intensify it on a world scale and hasten the

approach of war. But its short-term effect could be an apparent improvement. And here arises the possible significance of a future Labour Government or Liberal-Labour Government.

THE rôle of a Labour Government or Liberal-Labour Government, if such were to come into office in the near future for any considerable length of time, might very well be precisely to perform such a function for British capitalism at the present stage of its development. The whole character of the current Liberal programme and Labour programme alike points openly in this direction. The essence of these programmes, and not least of the Labour programme, is the attempt to solve the capitalists' own problems for them, to show the way forward for an "enlightened" capitalism. Just as its foreign task becomes to cover the preparations for coming war, so its home task becomes to carry through a programme of capitalist reconstruction, to intensify British capitalist competitive capacity in the world market, and to deceive and trick the workers by an appearance of improvement into passive acceptance of rationalisation and the advance to war. There is no question here of any real solution of the crisis or stopping of the decline; on the contrary, any measure of reconstruction carried through and increased productive power will only intensify the crisis. But there is the possibility of a temporary break in the degree of unemployment and visible decline, through the actual process of new construction (comparison may be made of the present discussion of the effects of such schemes as the Channel Tunnel proposal or the £100 millions road development scheme); and just such a break would provide the basis for a Labour Government to appear to be riding the crest of the wave, to conceal its true rôle, and to attempt to maintain and extend its hold upon the workers. For such a possibility, and the tactical consequences arising therefrom in the task of exposing the true rôle of the Labour Government under such conditions, it is necessary to be prepared.

IT is here in the tactical problem involved that lies the special importance of this question of the economic perspective. If such a temporary break in the visible process of decline were to be achieved, it is obvious that it would lead for a while to a wide-

spread extension of reformist illusions in the working class. At the same time, the favourable aspects of such a break would clearly affect only a section of the workers, while the consequences of rationalisation would continue to affect adversely large sections of the workers ; and in addition, any even relative improvement in the economic situation would provide stronger possibilities of working-class struggle and of a renewed offensive. Thus we should have a double process to determine the conditions of our tactics : at once, new and grave dangers of an extension of reformist influence, and at the same time new ground and opportunity of a sharpened struggle. It is necessary to be prepared for the possibility of a temporary large-scale reformist wave alongside the process of revolutionisation ; not only the immediate reformist wave in connection with the election humbug and hopes of a Labour Government, but also continuing and even for a period extending itself after the establishment of a Labour Government. The conception is often expressed that a Labour Government, so soon as it is established, will very rapidly expose itself before the workers by its whole character and activity. On this basis it was argued, in opposition to the revolutionary new line, that the revolutionary task was to help to " push " a Labour Government into power in order to hasten its exposure. Such a conception in existing conditions is obviously dangerous in the extreme, leading to revolutionary passivity and an attitude of " waiting our time," in the expectation that objective events will do our work for us. The roots of this, which underlie the whole right danger, need to be actively combated and extirpated. A Labour Government will *not* automatically expose itself. On the contrary, if it is able to provide even small concessions and gains for the workers, it will for a period be likely to be able to extend its influence. The fight against it will be in the first stages an uphill fight. The rapidity of its exposure will depend, not simply on objective events by themselves, but on the strength of the independent revolutionary fight to utilise those objective events to expose its true character and open the eyes of the workers.

AND it is in this tactical question, in the question of the tactical conclusions to be drawn, rather than in the economic analysis itself, that one may criticise the line

expressed by Comrade Varga. Comrade Varga originally raised his question of the economic perspective in connection with the discussion of the revolutionary new line. He suggested, on the basis of his economic analysis, that we should not reckon on any rapid move forward of the British working class, that we should therefore move cautiously and on the question of the inevitable break possibly "wait a little," and that, even if we decide to put up revolutionary candidates, we should still in the majority of constituencies, where we have no revolutionary workers' candidate, put forward the slogan "Vote for the Labour candidate" on the grounds that the Labour candidate "is 90 per cent. nearer to the British workers than any Liberal or Tory candidate" (Ninth Plenum discussion). Such an outlook is wholly unacceptable, in view of the real rôle of the Labour Party in relation to the working class. But it is no answer to this line of argument merely to deny the economic analysis and the possibility of the perspective held out. On the contrary, we should fully accept the possibility of this perspective, whatever our estimate of its probability, and show that, precisely if this perspective were correct, it would make all the more urgently necessary the strongest independent revolutionary fight against the Labour Party and against the Labour Government.

FOR what would the position mean? The Labour Government is, we may suppose, giving small concessions to the workers, registering small improvements in the immediate economic situation and the degree of unemployment, and on the strength of these is endeavouring to blind the workers to its real rôle. It is the old question of the Liberals once again in a new form; and the basic working-class fight which we will have to lead against this deception is stronger and clearer than ever, all the more because of the far more developed and acute stage of the revolutionary issues of the present epoch, as contrasted with the conditions of the heyday of the Liberals. Under cover of these small concessions, the Labour Government is enslaving the workers, enforcing industrial peace and rationalisation, intensified international competition, colonial oppression and war preparations. It is the task of the revolutionary workers from the first to tear down the veil of the small concessions, to fix the eyes of the workers on

the big issues and the real perspective in front, and to arouse the fighting spirit of the workers to renewed offensive struggle, against industrial peace, against capitalist rationalisation, against the war preparations, and against the Labour Government which is the instrument of all these.

THE perspective here discussed is only one of many possibilities. What is important is not the question of prophecy, what will or will not happen, but correct analysis of different possibilities, and full preparation for each. Alternative possibilities can easily be suggested. Keynes has recently declared that the international scramble for gold now taking place, with the increasing number of countries returned to a gold basis, may lead to even intensified depression, unless a change in policy is adopted. The possibility of international economic depression, suggested by the present rapid growth of unemployment in Germany to record heights, may react unfavourably on the chances of reconstruction in Britain. Again, the sudden development of a war crisis can at any time transform the whole world situation. Or again, the Baldwin Government may still return with a diminished majority, and continue on its path of limited reorganisation, cutting still further into the standards of the working class, and leading to renewed intensified class conflicts. For all these possibilities it is necessary to be prepared. What is important is to widen the horizon of our outlook, to avoid mechanical views of the situation as developing along a single line in which the future merely repeats the past, and to strengthen the revolutionary understanding of the present period and our tasks by concentrating on the successive ever new points of sharpening contradictions, which provide the conditions of revolutionary advance. Above all, it is necessary to prepare the workers for the inevitable future fight against the Labour Government, whether coming in the next few months or in the near future, as their enemy, even when it appears to make concessions, and to clear the revolutionary perspective of the period in front.

R. P. D.

DELHI AND KABUL

By W. N. EWER

THE abdication of Amanullah was a big victory for Anglo-Indian Imperialism. The British papers for the most part have been wise enough to conceal their exultation. But the *Morning Post*, whose self-control is not its strong point, burst into exuberant joy, and, with the exquisite manners so characteristic of the English gentleman, compared Amanullah, on whom it was fawning only a few months ago, to Jezebel.

London and Delhi had never forgiven Amanullah for snatching recognition of full independence from them in the dangerous days of 1919. They could not forgive his friendship with the Soviet Union. They dreaded the prospect of his building a strong, independent and progressive State on their borders—an example to the Moslem population of India. They learned uneasily of plans for the formation of a Turco-Persian-Afghan alliance.

For ten years Amanullah had been a thorn in their flesh ; their hope that he would be overthrown by his subjects vanished when the Khost rebellion of 1925 was suppressed. Then, three years later, came a new hope. Amanullah, who had seen no city larger than Kabul, decided to visit Europe. If he could be properly impressed with the power and wealth of England : if he could be seduced by flattery and fine gifts ; if, above all, he could be tempted to accept a loan, all might even now be well. There had never yet been an Oriental monarch who had been immune to such temptations. Temptation, extravagance, loans, control, occupation, was the regular programme. It had taken the British to Cairo : why not to Kabul ?

But Amanullah may have heard of the history of Ismail while he was in Egypt. He listened politely to the flattery. He saw the aeroplanes and tanks and submarines, and drew his own conclusions. He accepted hospitality and gifts. But—as shopkeepers of Bond Street and the Rue de la Paix angrily complained when presenting Foreign Offices with unpaid bills—he would not squander his money. He smilingly declined the offer of a £10,000,000 loan. And he was politely deaf to hints that it would be unwise to return

home via Moscow, or that he would find British "advisers" helpful in his work of reform.

The visit, from the point of view of the British Government, was a terrible fiasco. And such high hopes had been built upon it. If only he had been amenable such great things might have been possible.

Nawab Sir Zulfigar Ali Khan, K.C.S.I., M.L.A., one of the Viceroy's nominees to the Committee which is to co-operate with the Simon Commission, has indiscreetly put into public print what Delhi had been privately thinking :—

It cannot be forgotten that Afghanistan has the greatest scope for expansion towards the North and North-East. She must reclaim her fertile province of Merv from the Russians, who, by annexing this great province, have come within dangerous proximity to her frontiers. British statesmen would be relieved of a gnawing anxiety if the Russian frontiers are pushed back behind the Caspian Sea and the Afghans can incorporate all this vast territory into their own State by skilful diplomacy and organised strength.

The Moslem populations under China in Central Asia can no longer remain in servitude, and the Afghans would be rendering them great service if they bring about their reunion with their Tartar brethren under the Russians.

A magnificent conception. And it collapsed because of Amanullah's obstinate unwillingness to play the rôle which Delhi had assigned to him. Small wonder that from the moment of his return he was regarded as an enemy whose fall was decidedly to be desired.

Amanullah reached home in June. In July there were reports in the Press that Indian Government agents were at work in Afghanistan trying to stir up unrest by inflammatory propaganda on the question of the unveiling of women. The reports were officially denied.

In August unrest began to develop in the districts near the Indian frontier. The unveiling of women was denounced by itinerant mullahs. Many of them were arrested. The notorious Ahdur Rahman, Hazrat Pir Sahib and others were reported to have been shot.

In September came the news that "Lawrence of Arabia," serving as "Aircraftsman Shaw" at Miranshah, a few miles from the frontier, had developed strange habits of absenting himself

suddenly from duty and of returning weeks later as suddenly and mysteriously as he left.

Colonel Lawrence (said the *Daily Express*, on September 30) is making an intimate study of the views of the hillmen, the merchants and the peasants. He is living with them, concealed beneath a mocha stain and the turban and robes he knows so well.

October saw new rumours of trouble brewing in the frontier districts. And then suddenly at the end of November the storm broke around Jalalabad.

There is no need to trace its progress. But it may be noted that from the beginning the news from India was weighted against Amanullah, and that the London Press began to mention with obvious pleasure that the rebel movement had an anti-Russian character, and that hints were dropped that after all Amanullah was only a usurper and that his brother, the easy-going Inayatullah, was the rightful heir. Even for legitimists the point is in fact a nice one. Inayatullah was the eldest son of Habibullah, but Amanullah's mother—an important and powerful personage—was the principal wife of the dead Amir, and as such could claim precedence for her children.

As the revolt went on possibilities of actual intervention began to be canvassed at Delhi. There were two possibilities. If Amanullah were going to win, it might be advisable to offer him help, so as to have a claim on his gratitude. On the other hand if he were going to lose, it would be better to wait for the event, and to keep on good terms with the rebels. The chaos that would probably follow might always provide opportunity for action.

So Delhi for the time being temporised. Amanullah's permission was asked for the despatch of aeroplanes to Kabul, and Sir Francis Humphrys was instructed to keep relations with the king as friendly as possible. But at the same time the 'planes scattered proclamations on their way assuring the tribesmen of their friendship; and, as *The Times* tactfully phrased it, "there was reason to believe that at an early stage some communications passed between Sir Francis Humphrys and the rebels."

The rebels took Kabul. Amanullah abdicated. Delhi was delighted, and exultant reports came that the rebel leader, Bacha-i-Sago, was by no means unfriendly to Great Britain, while he

detested Russians like poison. He proclaimed himself Amir as Habibullah Khan, and the British Minister at once entered into relations with him. All was going splendidly.

And then came disappointment. Amanullah's abdication, it turned out, was only a ruse. It enabled him (Bacha being a somewhat slow-witted gentleman) to get clear away to Kandahar and there to rally his forces for the recapture of Kabul. And the tribesmen—even in the discontented Kabul-Khyber area—began to turn against Bacha, a foreigner himself (he is Persian by race) and now reputed everywhere to be the agent of a foreign power.

There, at the moment of writing, the position stands. Amanullah is strong in his following and in his prestige, but he lacks munitions and he lacks money. Bacha captured the arsenal and the treasury. Within the next two months anything may happen. Amanullah may come back : Bacha may (though it is very doubtful) win the rubber : there is, somewhere in Afghanistan, the pretender, Omar Khan, of the elder branch of the Durani house, who escaped so conveniently from Allahabad. Anything may happen : and Delhi, puzzled and a little dismayed, is hesitating to act.

But if it is hesitating to act, Delhi took care to make all preparations for action. The calculation of the military is that two divisions would be required, in addition to the Air Force. The two divisions have been quietly got ready : Air Force units are held in readiness at Peshawur and Miranshah. Reinforcements have been sent both from Iraq and from England. In the north fresh troops have been sent to Gilgit and Chitral to watch the passes of the Hindu Kush.

Everything is in readiness for immediate action if intervention should be thought desirable. And nobody can tell from day to day if and when the moment will come.

RAILWORKERS & THE COMING STRUGGLE

By STEWART PURKIS

THE General Strike of May, 1926, was the great turning point in the class struggle for us : that event answered the question "Where is Britain Going?" May, 1926, was the point at which the capitalist class decided that the attack on workers' wages *must* be persisted in—even at the risk of civil war—if British capitalism was to survive. May, 1926, was the point at which it was proved in conflict that not only the struggle to win wage increases, but the struggle merely *to maintain the wage-levels* in large-scale industry endangers the very existence of capitalism. May, 1926, proved that *every large-scale defence of existing standards becomes a revolutionary issue*. This revolutionary view of the class-struggle lay at the root of the discussions of the recent National Conference of Railwaymen called by the National Minority Movement.

In the mining industry, it is now evident that resistance to wage reductions would menace the continuance of capitalist control of the industry. It is, however, not yet so obvious that this position is now being reached in the railway industry. (Even Left-wing industrial journalists indulge in such headlines as "The Railway Companies Can Pay.") The discussions of the militant railworkers, however, were not based on this facile but futile type of propaganda; they were based on a realisation of the present economic position of the railway companies : a position of great difficulty resulting from (1) the declining receipts of the companies, (2) the falling share-values, and (3) the cost of the imperatively necessary large expenditure of capital which the process of rationalisation renders necessary.

The conference took the view that, *if railway companies are to continue the payment of dividends, 2½ per cent. wage cuts and further wage-cuts are inevitable, or it will be impossible for the renewal and improvement of the plant of the railways to be carried through.* Wage-cuts were agreed to be the methods by which the companies

are raising and, unless opposed, will continue to raise capital for the plant which is to reduce working costs.

It was also agreed that the balance of railway capitalism has now become so sensitive that the employers dare not risk the upset which the workers' opposition to rationalising methods and to wage-cuts would entail; hence their new device—Mondist Rationalisation—the form of rationalisation which is carried through *with the active co-operation of the Trade Union leaders.*

Despite all the efforts to secure smooth working, railway rationalisation is proving a tremendous strain on the successful working of the railways: the recent succession of railway disasters cannot be dismissed merely as a series of coincidences; they are not to be viewed reverently as "Acts of God": they are for the main part the direct consequences upon men and machines of the speeding-up processes. *Railway disasters are the consequences of railway rationalisation. Railway rationalisation is also creating unrest among all grades of railway workers.*

The three railway strikes that have recently taken place have been unofficial strikes: indeed, anti-official strikes in that they are opposed to the whole industrial peace policy of the leaders. They have been the direct reply of the depots to the policy of rationalisation.

The Conference itself—despite the official opposition and embargoes of union executives—was the most successful unofficial railway conference yet held (sixty-two delegates, of whom forty-seven were provincial delegates, is a marked contrast to the twenty delegates who were gathered together at the All-Grades Movement Unofficial Conference in 1924). The success of the Conference is an indication of the movement developing against railway capitalism and its servant the official leadership of the railway unions.

These three phases of growing tension (disasters, strikes and unofficial conference) all point the moral that an opposition is developing in the railway shops, depots and engine-sheds, which cannot fulfil its defensive and offensive purpose without becoming revolutionary.

The two main organisational issues around which the Conference debates ranged were settled on lines which the casual

observer might judge to be a triumph of reformism over revolution : but close analysis shows that the decisions were in correspondence with the needs of the developing revolutionary struggle.

The outstanding organisational issues were (1) Shall we repudiate the negotiating machinery of the Sectional Councils by ignoring it ; or shall we attack the machine from within and build up against it from without by the creation of new machinery which can serve the workers' needs ? (2) Shall we drop our demand for one union for all railway workers ; a united militant policy for all grades ; and the formation of a joint National Committee and joint local committees to lead united action by all sections of road-workers, or shall we go forward with one union for all transport workers.

The case against the Sectional Councils of the negotiating machinery was emphatically stated : it was shown that the machinery worked slowly ; it was shown that it was viewed with disgust by the railworkers, but it was also agreed that the reformists are still in almost complete control of the machinery. The arguments advanced for the immediate decision to ignore the machinery were not that it was agreed by all to be bad machinery, but that it was known by us to be bad machinery, and agreed on all sides, was working badly. It was only after vigorous debate that the conclusion was reached that, though the machinery is bad for the workers, it is good for the railway companies and is working remarkably well for them.

The best evidence of this is that of Mr. W. Clower, Chief Officer for Labour and Establishment, L.M.S. Railway Company, who speaking of the joint machinery working in his own Group, said on January 4, 1929 :—

The staff had certainly developed a new outlook on the problem of railway business. . . . During 1928 there were 1,450 meetings of local committees ; three times as many as in 1927. The real significance was in the fact that the meetings in 1927 were mainly concerned in discussing the alleged grievances of the men, while those held since the development of co-operation had been devoted to the question of making co-operation increasingly successful. The men had pointed out numerous ways in which business could be managed *with greater economy* and since the adoption of the plan for receiving personal suggestions over 8000 of them had been received and considered. Many of them had proved to be of particular value and had been adopted with the direct result that *thousands of pounds were being saved to the Company annually.*

On this issue, despite the temptation to be dramatic and to indulge in sensational and futile repudiations, the Conference resolved to bring every pressure on the machine ; to expose its real nature *by making upon it the genuine working-class demands which it cannot serve* and which it is intended to frustrate ; thus exposing the local leadership wherever it is corrupt, and also exposing the fallacy of co-operation at the same time.

But the decision was not merely to effect the exposure of negotiating machinery and leave it at that, but to follow the exposure and rejection of this sham workers' machinery with its replacement by the genuine workers' machinery—the shop, depot or station committees. This decision commits the railwaymen to the unofficial strikes and struggles which will undermine not only the reformist leaders, but also railway capitalism. On the other issue of one union for all transport workers, the same realism and the same trend of organisation was shown. The Conference turned away from the proposals advocating the type of organisation which appears most “Left” and most logical and faced the realities.

To have concentrated agitation round fusion of all transport workers *as a principle* would have ignored the vital question of what unity can be secured, by uniting *from the top*, unless there has first been secured a *basic* unity. The railway workers made real steps towards basic unity in the nine days of common struggle in May, 1926 : that has brought a desire for unity so basic that it justifies the demands for one railway union at the moment.

But the demand for one transport workers' union has not yet been created in common struggle. So the Conference turned to the practical tasks of devising means to further the end of securing the unity of rail and road-workers *in the local councils which can be created in and for local struggle* : a unity which the efforts of officialdom cannot bring to nought because it is essential to the road and rail-workers in the joint struggles with which they are faced.

The proposals were accepted in the resolution on organisation and read :—

The Conference, therefore, declares that one industrial union for railwaymen with a united militant policy for all grades, is an immediate necessity, and urges the workers in the three existing unions to bring the necessary pressure to bear on their E.C.'s and

annual conferences in order to secure complete amalgamation. The Conference further considers that in view of the position on the railways and of road transport, the formation of a joint National Committee and of local committees to lead united action by all sections of workers involved is an immediate necessity.

So on both the organisational issues, the Conference proved itself to be realist. The Railwaymen's Conference responded to the lessons of the General Strike. It accepts the fact that the struggle ahead is a revolutionary struggle ; it is not prepared to look to the linking-up of reformist trade-union officials to lead that struggle, but is planning to work in the sphere of struggle—the shop, the depot and the yard—the places in which it can best take the leadership out of the hands of the Mondist leadership and keep it in the hands of the men on the job.

In these places of local struggle, railway capitalism is increasingly vulnerable : it cannot face a succession of such minor conflicts. But local struggles are arising naturally and inevitably ; and railworkers are now consciously seeking to develop and extend these struggles that they may lead to the overthrow of capitalism and the setting up of a revolutionary workers' government.

The recognition of practical possibilities in these struggles is good revolutionary tactics. For railway capitalism there is danger ahead.

WHAT IS THE I.L.P. DOING IN SOUTH AFRICA ?

By EDWARD ROUX

MR. W. BALLINGER, of the Motherwell Trades and Labour Council, Right-Winger, and emissary of the I.L.P. to the native labour organisation, the I.C.U.,¹ has now been some months in South Africa, where he is attempting to re-organise the native trade union movement which is at present in a hopeless condition of collapse and disintegration. He is determined however to bring this about on a strictly reformist basis and to continue the exclusion of Communists and other militants from the I.C.U.

Less than a year ago the I.C.U. claimed over 100,000 members. The organisation at first continued to grow during 1927 in spite of (the *New Leader* said "because of") the expulsion of the Communist members. In 1927, the preliminary arrangements were made for the visit of a British trade unionist to South Africa. In less than a year from that date the I.C.U. has lost three-quarters of its members. The Natal branch, containing the majority of the remaining financial membership, has seceded and is now an independent body. There is a spectacle of secretaries bolting with cash, the union's furniture being sold up to pay lawyers' fees, a "clean administration" group accusing Kadalie of mismanagement (an obvious collection of pots calling the kettle black), Kadalie appealing for another five-shilling contribution from all members to save the I.C.U. from bankruptcy, and so on.

The Communist prediction of "decay and ultimate decline" if the opportunist and corrupt policy of the leadership were persisted in has come true with a vengeance. The I.C.U. has collapsed in spite of the fact that Africans are able and willing to join any organisation which will fight even timorously on their behalf, it has collapsed in spite of the fact that it has not become illegal.

¹ For an account of the earlier history of the I.C.U. (Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union) see an article in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, January, 1928.

What has happened to the enthusiasm of the rank and file? And what has become of the enormous bank balance which Kadalie boasted of in December, 1927? The enthusiasm has been damped by the failure to struggle, the exclusion of the militants and of all who threatened Kadalie's hegemony on the Executive, the failure of the leaders to re-organise the union on a real trade union basis, the repudiation of native strikers, the constant demand for money and yet more money by the leadership. The money has been squandered on motor-cars for officials and goodness knows what else besides (the Natal branch claimed that it contributed £600 towards the expenses of Kadalie's European tour).

And as a background for all this it must be remembered that the subscriptions come from native workers who earn two to three shillings a day.

Comrade John Gomas was I.C.U. organiser for the Western Cape Province and a member of the Communist Party. He is admitted to have been one of the most enthusiastic, efficient and trustworthy organisers which the I.C.U. has had. He naturally refused to leave the Communist Party after Kadalie's anti-Red decision in 1926, and in consequence was expelled from the I.C.U. His place was taken by a man who had been suspended some months previously for "inefficiency." To-day the I.C.U. in the Western Province has practically ceased to exist.²

Mr. Allison W. G. Champion is one of the villains of the piece. He joined the I.C.U. in 1925, having previously been secretary of the Native Mine Clerks—a company union financed and controlled by the Chamber of Mines, the big gold and coal mining trust, which, since the days of the Jameson Raid, has kept a watchful eye on political movements. His entrance into the I.C.U. was regarded by the Communists at the time as a sinister event, and such it has certainly proved to have been.

Champion soon became one of the "leading lights" in the I.C.U. He it was who moved the resolution in the Executive in 1926 which purged the union of Communists. As a Zulu and organiser for Natal, where the population is predominantly Zulu, he rapidly came to exert a controlling influence in the organisation

² A new native union has now been formed in Capetown on an independent basis. It recently passed a resolution of "no confidence" in Kadalie.

as a whole; for Natal was a virgin field with a large native population hitherto untouched by the I.C.U. The natives came flocking in as they always have done when the I.C.U. has gone to a new district. They were paying up well too, expecting an immediate rise in wages and the abolition of the Pass System. This was in 1927.

Kadalie, who had as a rule maintained his personal control of the union by appointing all paid officials himself and by dismissing anyone who threatened his rule, found Champion rather a difficult problem. It was obvious that the Zulu was becoming a rival for the leadership. It was equally obvious that the growth of the movement in Natal provided a steadily increasing source of revenue, and that Champion's services were exceedingly valuable. To get rid of Champion and keep Natal was the problem. Early in 1928 Kadalie took the bull by the horns; but the bull proved too strong for him. Himself a native of Nyasaland and unable to speak the South African native languages, Kadalie found his ability as an orator in English of little use when matched against Champion's appeals to the Zulus in their mother tongue.

Champion was summoned before a disciplinary tribunal appointed by the Executive to carry out a wholesale "cleansing" of the I.C.U. He was removed from his post pending the next annual conference of the union. But, unfortunately for Kadalie, Champion showed no intention of waiting for the conference. The Durban branch backed Champion. A mass meeting of the Pietermaritzburg branch was called and Kadalie was summoned to defend his action before the branch. The story is told of a motor-car that broke down on a veld road, thus preventing Kadalie from attending the meeting. Another version has it that Kadalie fled in his car from Pietermaritzburg in order to escape the wrath of the I.C.U. members. It is known that Kadalie was not there and that Champion so inflamed the tribal feelings of the audience that they shouted for Kadalie's blood. Kadalie evidently decided that discretion was the better part of valour, for he returned immediately to Johannesburg.

The majority of the Natal branches immediately followed Champion's lead and seceded from the head office. At first there was some talk of demanding "financial autonomy" while

remaining in the I.C.U. It was obviously "the spoils of office" that were at stake. However, with the coming over to his side of the remaining Natal branches, Champion was able to establish the "I.C.U. of Natal," a completely independent body with himself in control.

Since the beginning of 1928, while the I.C.U. leaders have been quarrelling over the division of the spoils of office, the Communist Party has been busy organising native trade unions on the Witwatersrand. As a result of this work there at present exist half-a-dozen unions which have combined to form the Native Trade Union Federation, now affiliated to the R.I.L.U. A number of important strikes have been conducted on strict trade union lines (with pickets, &c.). At Germiston the Native Tailors' Union took part in a successful strike together with the Witwatersrand Tailors' Association (the white union), this being the first occasion in the history of the Transvaal when white and native workers have taken joint trade union action in an industrial dispute. There followed another event of great political importance in the recent amalgamation of the native and European laundry workers' unions (with a membership of 700 and 400 respectively), the result of joint action by native and European Communists. The white section was already affiliated to the T.U.C. Thus this amalgamation has raised in an acute form the question of native workers' participation in the T.U.C., which last January refused to accept the affiliation of the I.C.U., though agreeing to joint meetings between the two bodies.

In building real trade unions and in initiating strike action among native workers in the Transvaal, the Communist Party has to a large extent cut the ground from under the feet of the I.C.U. leaders. These gentlemen were quite content for the I.C.U. to remain a loose political organisation, for a number of reasons. Building a trade union means hard work; it was much easier to develop a mass membership, rake in the subscriptions and not bother about organising the workers in the different trades and industries and in putting forward specific demands. By retaining the organisational form of a political party with an individual membership it was possible to continue the policy of excluding the militants. Even without the Communists it would

have been almost impossible to prevent militant action if the I.C.U. had been reorganised in industrial sections; for the native workers would have struck if any such lead were given. That has been demonstrated during the last eight months; it did not require any Communist persuasion to bring the natives out on strike once the unions were formed. The present chronic shortage of native labour—a shortage which grows more acute every day—provides a basis for native reformism. But, on the other hand, strikes are almost bound to be attended by success, and once the “strike habit” becomes fashionable among native workers it will take more than the I.C.U. or the Government to stop it.

It must be understood that the new unions have in no real sense “poached” on I.C.U. “preserves.” It is true that the I.C.U. claimed to be the One Big Union for native workers. But it never attempted to fulfil this claim by organising the workers as such, and it excluded those elements (the Communists) who were prepared to start this work. The Communists had, therefore, every justification in building the new unions. The remarkable response of the native workers shows how great was the demand which the I.C.U. continually ignored.

Now Mr. Ballinger has come out and is seeking to revive the I.C.U., and Kadalie is trying by all means in his power to regain his old prestige. (He even addressed native strikers in the Communist hall in Johannesburg last June—the same Kadalie who had renounced the strike weapon and declared war upon the Communists.) The new situation demands a change of tactics and Kadalie and Ballinger are trying feverishly to set up native unions. But in this they are definitely adopting splitting tactics. The existing Red unions have in many cases nearly 100 per cent. membership. They are open to all workers in the trade or industry concerned and there is no bar on members of the I.C.U. or any other political organisation. In many cases they have fought successful strikes. For the I.C.U. to set up rival unions here (as it attempted to do under Mr. Ballinger’s leadership—we wonder what I.L.P.’ers like Maxton will say to this) is as mean a thing as could possibly be perpetrated by the worst reactionary.

Mr. Ballinger’s opening meeting in Johannesburg gave some

indication of the forces which are now helping to mould the destiny of the I.C.U. There appeared and spoke the following white men: Mr. Ballinger, of the British I.L.P.; Mr. Rheinalt Jones, a well-known negrophile, but a Conservative and an anti-Socialist; Mr. Howard Pim, of the Chamber of Mines (1). Professor Brookes, of Pretoria University College, the foremost exponent of "segregation," sent a telegram of encouragement and advice. There were no white trade unionists present. Mr. Ballinger told the meeting that his salary was being paid not by the I.C.U., but by "friends."

On entering the country, Mr. Ballinger had considerable difficulty about his passport. He was originally admitted only for three months, but has now been given to understand that he may stay as long as he pleases, provided he behaves himself. He has already convinced the Government that he is not as Red as he was painted (in fact he has been at pains to show that he is distinctly anti-Red); and so successful has he been that General Hertzog, the Prime Minister, recently expressed the opinion "that far from there being any reason for expelling Mr. Ballinger, he was, perhaps, to be welcomed." The word "perhaps" is significant. In particular it is a hint to the I.L.P'er to continue to be a "good boy." In general, it shows that the Government is continuing its zig-zag policy of alternate recognition and non-recognition of the I.C.U. The farmers remain firmly opposed to any sort of native trade unionism whatever. There seemed some possibility of a change of attitude when the Vereeniging Farmers' Association agreed to hold a joint conference with the I.C.U. to discuss the wages and conditions of agricultural labourers. The meeting, however, ended in a racial outburst on the part of the white farmers, who refused Ballinger a hearing. On the other hand, certain petty bourgeois elements and the white Trade Union Congress continue to press for the recognition of the I.C.U. A number of Anglican bishops have given the revived I.C.U. their blessing and have testified to the fact that it is now purged of revolutionary elements.

At Bloemfontein, a minimum wage for native workers of three shillings a day was granted by the employers' association. But when natives went on strike at the Government experimental farm at Onderstepoort they were sent to prison under the Master and

Servants Act ; and General Kemp, Minister of Agriculture, stated that on no account would he recognise the I.C.U. When Mr. Madeley, the Labour Minister of Posts, received a deputation from the I.C.U. to discuss the conditions of native postal workers, he was dismissed from the Cabinet, and his plea that it was not really the I.C.U. but the T.U.C. (who chaperoned the interview) that he had met, and that Kadalie and Ballinger had merely acted as " advisers " to the T.U.C., did not save him.

Thus, in spite of Ballinger's reformist creed, the basic revolutionary character of the native trade union movement continues to reveal itself. It is still necessary to appear revolutionary to get the support of the masses. According to *The Times*. (December 27, 1928.)

So far as he can, he (Kadalie) restrains his fiery tongue. When recently he broke out and attacked General Hertzog fiercely, he was advised by his European friends to apologise, *and he did*.

It is, nevertheless, fairly certain that without the assistance of Kadalie's " fiery tongue," Ballinger would find himself completely stranded. It is Kadalie's job to win the masses with fiery phrases, Ballinger's to see that no departure is made from the principles of " sane trade unionism." No doubt they are well suited for their task. But it is doubtful whether they will succeed. Referring to the earlier growth of the I.C.U., *The Times* says :—

The genuine grievances of the South African natives provided the hotbed in which the I.C.U. flourished. Rack-rented natives in the urban locations, underpaid natives in Government employ, badly treated natives on European farms, flocked to join the movement.

These conditions still remain. Any effective change will involve a complete revolution in economic, political and social relations in South Africa. To attempt to confine the movement to the narrow, legal, " non-violent," reformist channels of British social democracy is a task well-nigh impossible. In practice, such a policy will lead to endless splits, until such time as a strong revolutionary native leadership has been developed. When that stage is reached the Kadalies and Ballingers will be swept aside by the mass movement. The training of leaders is thus the main task of the revolution in South Africa to-day.

ON ENGELS' "ANTI-DÜHRING"

By D. RIAZANOV

[The following article has been specially translated for the LABOUR MONTHLY from the preface by Professor Riazanov, head of the Marx and Engels Institute in Moscow, to the new complete edition of Engels' *Anti-Dühring*, published in Moscow last year on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its first appearance. When we reflect on the "low Marxist level" of German Social Democracy at that time which led to the first unfavourable reception accorded to Engels' work, so graphically described by Professor Riazanov, it is necessary to remember that even to-day there does not exist any English translation of this fundamental Marxist classic, and that only some mutilated fragments from it have ever appeared in the English tongue. This is a record of which no Marxist in this country can be proud.]

FIFTY years have passed since the appearance of *Anti-Dühring* as a separate book. The Preface to the first edition was signed by Engels, June 11, 1878. This date, however, is not quite accurate. The articles against Dühring were first printed in *Vorwärts*, the central organ of united German Social Democracy. The first article appeared on January 3, 1877. The first section of the book, "Philosophy," was published in nineteen issues ending May 13, 1877. After this there was an interruption. The second section, "Political Economy," began to appear on July 27, occupied nine numbers and was finished on December 30, 1877. The third section, "Socialism," followed after a considerable gap lasting more than four months. It was published in five numbers, beginning May 5 and ending July 7, 1878. Thus, the last chapter was printed in *Vorwärts* a month later than is shown in the preface.

When we speak of the significance of *Anti-Dühring* it is necessary to bear in mind the position of German Social Democracy at that time. It is well known—especially to those who have studied the disputes around the "Gotha Programme"—how

inadequate was the Marxist equipment of German Social Democracy in 1875. The disputes which took place around this compromising project of a Programme are well known. But this still does not give a complete picture of the extraordinarily low Marxist level which at that time was characteristic of German Social Democracy. In one respect, Mehring was right. If Marx and Engels were dissatisfied with Liebknecht because of the compromise which he concluded with the Lassalleans in the sphere of programme and tactics, it was because they over-estimated the Marxist understanding in the ranks of the "Eisenachers," *i.e.*, in the ranks of that Party which considered itself Marxist. If we take the central organ of Social Democracy, even after the union, we find there nothing more than an incredibly confused, almost vulgar, socialism. It was a monstrous mixture of some propositions of Marx, with some of Lassalle, and with a whole series of theses, the origin of which is to be found in contemporary bourgeois literature. It is sufficient to remark how from 1873 onwards the authority of Dühring grew greater and greater.

Comrades acquainted with *Anti-Dühring* usually have an impression of Dühring as almost an absolute cretin. But Dühring was no idiot. He was a big figure. He had in him that which makes many such active men immediately attractive to youth, namely, the qualities of a man with an encyclopedic education, who could orientate himself unusually freely in questions of natural science, philosophy, political economy, and socialism. He was a man who could give to the younger generation, in the old popular term, "a system of truth." He gave a complete system of world outlook, he gave answers to all the troublesome questions. Moreover, he was a man known to the younger generation by his hatred of the professors, and in his personal life not especially happy, as might be expected from a man who lost his sight at the age of twenty-eight, and was compelled to acquire all his knowledge with the aid of other, almost accidental, persons. He was a man living in great poverty. All this created sympathy towards him.

The chief apostle of Dühring in German Social Democracy was Bernstein. We have, at least, five separate recollections of Bernstein's on this interesting phase of his life. Each time he acknowledges that he was a very zealous and fervent disciple,

He infected Fritsch, Most, Bebel, and Bracke with "Dühringism." He writes that in 1873 he never missed an occasion of hearing the lectures of Dühring and he carried with him in his enthusiasm a whole series of comrades, including foreigners, for the most part Russians. He gave Dühring's book to Bebel, then in prison, and Bebel wrote from prison in March, 1874, an article entitled "A New Communist."

Bebel ends his article in the following fashion :—

All our considerations against Dühring's conception do not militate against his fundamental views. We consider them irreproachable, and regard him with complete approval. And we will never hesitate to declare that after Marx's *Capital*, the new work of Dühring belongs to the best that the new era has produced in the economic sphere. We, therefore, heartily recommend the study of his book.

This was the response of Bebel, who was dissatisfied with the Gotha unity, with the Gotha compromise. It can easily be imagined how this article was received in London. We have evidence that Engels immediately sent a request to Berlin as to who wrote this article. Liebknecht hastened to re-assure Engels (June 13, 1874):—

Of course, it is impossible to avoid foolishnesses, but as soon as they are recognised they are, as far as possible, corrected. Have you any basis for believing that Dühring is worthless or a hidden enemy? Everything known to me about him strengthens me in the belief that, although he is confused, he is indubitably honest and stands unreservedly on our side. The article denounced by you was not altogether correct and was written with an unbounded measure of enthusiasm. In any case the intentions of the author were certainly good and the article has not produced a bad effect.

Somewhat later Bloss declares to Engels, writing from prison : "In regard to Dühring you are right . . . in his *Critical History of Socialism and Political Economy* he wrote much stupidity. I have only now read this book."

After Liebknecht and particularly Bloss had become more acquainted with Dühring, Liebknecht sent a request to Engels on February 1, 1875, that he should write an article about Dühring. Unfortunately, there are no letters of Engels and Marx in regard to this, but, obviously, they had created no little disturbance. Liebknecht writes :—

When will it be possible to receive from you some work on Dühring, who in the second edition of his *History of Political Economy* has again repeated all his numerous stupidities about Marx? I was

attending the lectures of this man before Christmas. Megalomania, and at the same time a furious hatred of Marx, that is all. But he has entrenched himself very strongly among our people, especially in Berlin, and consequently it is necessary to examine him fundamentally. You probably have the second edition. If you have not, we will send it to you.

In a second letter, not immediately to Engels or Marx, but to Engels' wife, Liebknecht adds, "You must tell Engels that he must deal with Dühring fundamentally, but it is necessary to remember one thing: Dühring is literally dying of hunger."

Engels did not agree particularly willingly. He resisted for a long time. From his correspondence with Marx we know that this task did not particularly attract him, the more so because just at this time he was in the full fervour of his occupation with natural science. It was only shortly before that he had communicated to Marx and to Schorlemmer the basic theses of his dialectics of nature. He was about to expand them in a special work, and he did not wish to throw aside this labour and occupy himself with a polemic against Dühring who was better known to him than to Liebknecht. Marx and Engels had already finished with Dühring. The latter had interested them as early as the sixties, when he wrote one of the first criticisms of *Capital*. They had already found out at that time that he was a "privat-docent" in political economy and a collaborator of the official newspaper *Staatsanzeiger*, to which Marx had definitely refused to contribute, and that Dühring had had a lawsuit with the well-known Privy Councillor Wagener in regard to the authorship of a certain production, a memorandum report written for Bismarck, on how to settle the socialist question. Wagener thought that he had to do with an ordinary "privat-docent" and put his own signature to the report. Dühring brought a lawsuit against him and won it. Marx and Engels were aware that Dühring in the sphere of political economy was a great worshipper of Cary and List, which was not known to the so-called young comrades.

Accordingly, Engels, who had just begun to take up a more interesting subject, was very unwilling to occupy himself with Dühring. And from the correspondence it is possible to see how much pressing was needed on the part of Liebknecht before Engels finally undertook the work.

In 1875-76 the cult of Dühring became stronger and stronger. "Instead of the fighting slogan 'Lassalle or Marx'", writes Bernstein in his latest autobiography, "it seemed that there was put forward a new slogan 'Dühring or Marx and Lassalle.' And in all this I was not a little to blame." Attempts were made to use the *Vorwärts* to advertise Dühring. In fact, Liebknecht had to carry on a stubborn struggle, once having permitted this error on the part of Bebel, in order not to allow *Vorwärts* to be converted into an organ which exalted Dühring as a thinker on a level equal with Marx. The matter became more complicated still when Most wrote a big philosophical article on Dühring and sent it to Liebknecht. In 1876, Most even exceeded Bernstein in his Dühring worship; as an energetic worker and a magnificent agitator, he won for Dühring great popularity among the Berlin workers, the *Berliner Freie Presse*, the organ of the Berlin organisation, being greatly under the influence of Most.

On receiving Most's article, Liebknecht purposely sent it to Engels, because he presumed that Engels after reading it would understand that, whether he liked doing so or not, it was necessary to set to work about Dühring. Engels finally agreed to write a series of articles on Dühring and began the task.

I will not dwell in more detail on this point, because the correspondence of Marx and Engels gives a whole series of indications of the unwillingness with which in the beginning Engels addressed himself to this subject. In any case, he was not able to dispatch the first article before the autumn of 1876. This was the first section, on Philosophy.

But here there occurred a little mishap: Liebknecht had not expected that Engels would send his article so late. He expected them earlier, at the beginning of the electoral campaign—the elections took place in January, 1877. It is understandable that Liebknecht and a number of other comrades were extremely occupied with the electoral campaign, too much so to pay attention as to how Engels' articles would be printed. It is clear that Engels was fully justified in his dissatisfaction. It would have been impossible to make use of Engels' articles in a worse fashion than was done by *Vorwärts* during January, 1877. The chapters of the section on Philosophy were printed with the most abundant

printer's errors, and were divided up senselessly without any basis. Receiving his articles in this shameful form, Engels was nearly beside himself and thundered at the editors in his letters, seeing in all this almost an intrigue of the Dühringites. Such a thought would, in fact, very naturally occur to anyone who sees how this section of *Anti-Dühring* was printed.

Finally, Engels wrote one of his fiercest letters to Liebknecht. Engels' letters to Liebknecht were always in very sharp terms, but this was an extra sharp letter. Engels accused Liebknecht of all the mortal sins. But Liebknecht always showed great patience in relation to the "old man." He explained to Engels that it was all due to the electoral campaign, and finally peace was made between them, but this was immediately followed by a new incident, that of the famous Gotha Congress of 1877. The last portion of the part on Philosophy was printed on May 13, 1877, and the Gotha Congress took place on May 27 to 29, 1877. Let us see how the history of this Congress is given by two authors. We will first of all hear Mehring :—

How greatly Engels' book was necessary was shown perhaps in the most striking fashion by the rather unfavourable reception that it received from the Party. Most and others were not far removed from closing the columns of the *Vorwärts* to it, thus giving to the heretic Engels a similar fate to that already dealt out to Dühring by the official university clique. Fortunately, the Congress of 1877 did not take this step. Solely on the basis of agitational and practical considerations, it decided to continue the publication of this purely scientific polemic in its paper, but only in a scientific supplement to the central organ. Not a few sharp words, however, were said. Neisser accused the editorial board of *Vorwärts* of not making sufficient efforts for a proper supervision of Engels' work, and Walteich remarked in his arrogant manner, which had already antagonised Lassalle, that Engels' tone was bound to lead to the ruin of literary taste and because of him the spiritual fare provided by *Vorwärts* was becoming absolutely uneatable.

This is Mehring's account. Now let us turn to Bebel's story :—

Still more unpleasant were the debates provoked by Most on the subject of Engels' articles in *Vorwärts* directed against Dühring. The latter had succeeded in getting on his side almost all the leaders of the Berlin working-class movement. I was also of the opinion that for the purposes of agitation it was necessary to support and utilise every literary tendency which, like the works of Dühring, sharply criticised the existing social order and declared in favour of

Communism. From this point of view, I had already in 1874 written from prison for the *Volkstaat* two articles under the heading "A New Communist," in which I examined the works of Dühring. They had been sent to me by Edward Bernstein, who, at that time, together with Most, Fritsch, &c., belonged to the most fervent admirers of Dühring. The circumstance that Dühring had very quickly come into conflict with the university authorities and the Government—a conflict which ended with his dismissal in June, 1877, from Berlin University—still more raised his prestige in the eyes of his followers. All this led Most to introduce the proposal that for the future such articles as those of Engels against Dühring, which did not present any interest for the great mass of readers, or evoked the dissatisfaction of the readers, should not be published any more in the central organ.

Both Bebel and Mehring, however, do not quite accurately represent what took place at the Congress. There were even more unpleasant things. Neisser's remarks have already been given by Mehring. Liebknecht waxed indignant against Neisser. Then Most and his comrades introduced a resolution that the Congress should declare that "articles such as the recent articles of Engels against Dühring are entirely devoid of interest for the readers of *Vorwärts*, and should be removed from the central organ." Liebknecht, of course, wanted to protest, but there was immediately introduced another proposal by Kleimich and his comrades, that "discussions on the proposal of Most, and on other proposals relating to Engels' articles in the *Vorwärts*, should be introduced only from the point of view of material expediency and not in any case from the point of view of principle or of science.

This resolution of Kleimich was passed by thirty-seven votes to thirty-six. After this, Liebknecht declared that the discussions lost all significance if on this question it was possible to speak only of material expediency. Then Bebel and his comrades introduced a resolution as follows:—

Taking into consideration the *length* (!) of the articles of Engels against Dühring and presuming that in future they will become even longer, and taking into account that the polemic which is being conducted by Engels in the columns of *Vorwärts* against Dühring or against his adherents will give to the latter or his adherents the right to apply with equally lengthy articles and in this way to take up excessively the space of *Vorwärts*; and taking into account that our cause has nothing to gain from this, since it is a matter of a purely scientific dispute, the Congress resolves that the publication of the articles of Engels against Dühring in the chief portion of

Vorwärts shall cease, and that all these articles shall be printed in the scientific supplement of *Vorwärts* or as a separate pamphlet. And in the same way all further debates in regard to this special subject must be removed from the main portion of *Vorwärts*.

This resolution was accepted by the Congress after Most had withdrawn his resolution and identified himself with the proposal of Bebel. Thus, Bebel at this Congress played a part considerably different from that described in his memoirs.

Liebknrecht, in one of his letters to Engels, writes that, unfortunately, he had not had a chance of talking things over with Bebel, and Bebel committed this blunder. At any rate, the whole of this episode concerning Dühring and Engels' articles in the central organ, the chief editor of which was Liebknrecht, and in which Bebel had great influence, is very characteristic of the intellectual calibre of the German Social Democratic Party at that time.

The police and the university authorities again came to the assistance of Dühring. The Congress ended in May, 1877. Engels had to take up the continuation of his articles. Just at this period, Dühring reached the zenith of his popularity. The Ministry for Education raised the question about Dühring's dismissal from Berlin University. This was one of the great sensational events in Europe at the time, and was not less attentively followed in our own fatherland, where already prior to this people had begun to be interested in Dühring. Mikhailovsky wrote a lengthy article in *Notes of the Fatherland* on the "Scandal in Berlin University." *Vorwärts* and Liebknrecht were also compelled to come to the defence of Dühring, for it was impossible to leave him at the mercy of the university authorities. A series of articles appeared in *Vorwärts* in defence of Dühring, and this time not as the author of a definite system, but simply as the defender of the freedom of science which it was necessary to defend in the Prussian police state. The *Vorwärts* also even printed poems and odes in honour of Dühring, just at the time of the gap between the printing of the first and second sections of *Anti-Dühring*. Many young students—Schippel, Emmanuel Wurm, Firek, Manfred Wittich—came to the defence of Dühring together with Fritsch and Most, the last named arranging workers' meetings, &c. The others on their side organised a series of students' meetings, where Dühring was defended as a representative of oppressed science. Mehring

declares in his *History of German Social Democracy* that this was the last idealistic movement among German students.

Dühring, however, who attracted sympathy for himself as a State-persecuted savant, drove away almost all his adherents by his unbearable character. Just at the moment when he had achieved his greatest success in coming close to the Berlin workers and their leaders, he committed a series of acts which made any kind of joint work with him impossible. Thus, to the State university he wished to oppose a free academy, and he drew up regulations for this academy, but of such a kind that he disgusted the Berlin social democrats. He opposed his free academy to the idea of a labour university, which he refused to consider, for he did not intend, as he wrote, to give anyone an opportunity to exploit him. Bernstein suspected Dühring, as he writes in two variants of his memoirs, of having together with Most organised the campaign against Engels at the Gotha Congress. For this suspicion he had certain grounds.

The *Berliner Freie Presse*, in which Most and his comrades participated, as late as October, 1878, was still defending Dühring *in toto*. But by the beginning of November a complete rupture had taken place. Dühring definitely came to the conclusion that Most and his company were intending to sacrifice him to Liebknecht, and that they did not fulfil their promises, in that they did not succeed in securing the cessation of Engels' articles in *Vorwärts*. So Bernstein writes. Dühring declared that the social democrats simply wished to utilise him for their party, and thus to ruin his scientific career.

Bernstein, in another variant of his memoirs, writes: "It was not Engels who killed Dühring, but Dühring who killed himself."

The same idea is to be found in a letter of Liebknecht's to Engels. Naturally, this is an exaggeration. Dühring had lost personal prestige, but the cult of Dühring was still unvanquished; it was still necessary to fight him, and this was shown most clearly precisely in 1878. A new journal 'The Future' was founded, the predecessor of which was the scientific supplement of *Vorwärts*. The programme of this paper, which was intended to serve as the central scientific organ of the party, constituted such an eclectic

mixture that Engels could write to Marx with full justification that there was developing in Germany a new German vulgar socialism, which was worthy to rank with the "true socialism" of 1845. Consequently, Engels wrote the subsequent articles against Dühring, those of the sections "Political Economy" and "Socialism," in a different manner. He struck at Dühring, but he aimed his blows at Most, Fritsch, Liebknecht, and Bebel. In some places, Engels directly polemises against them, although he does not mention them by name.

(To be concluded)

RESISTING RATIONALISATION

By JOHN A. MAHON

IN a previous article¹ a description was given of the new rationalisation offensive in Great Britain and of its effect in changing the conditions of labour of British workers. It is necessary now to study the reaction to this process on the part of the trade union leaders and of the mass of trade union workers.

Under the pressure of this continuous offensive the workers have displayed a growing tendency to resort to direct action, such action in the majority of cases having been taken not only without assistance from the official union machinery, but in the teeth of its opposition. Official statistics published by the Ministry of Labour show an increase in the amount and duration of such disputes during 1928.

	Working days lost	Workers involved
First 11 months, 1927 ..	1,136,000	109,000
First 11 months, 1928 ..	1,375,000	121,000

These disputes have occurred in a most varied number of trades and areas as is indicated by the following far from complete list :—

December 9, 1927: Weavers' strike at Nelson on behalf of victimised workers. January 6, 1928: Herithwaite (Lancs) miners strike against 2s. per day reduction, forced to accept. January 27: Bolden (Durham) miners strike against reduction, owners close pit. February 9: Scottish plasterers strike against 1d. per hour reduction. February 14: 160 glassworkers in North London strike against 10 per cent. reduction, and win. February 17: Waterproof garment workers at Manchester strike against employment of non-unionists. Harton (Durham) miners strike in sympathy with Bolden, persuaded to return by their officials. March 9: Ashington miners strike against reduction; Bunddon and Hazelrigg miners strike against reduction, eleven pits idle; Stanley South Moor and Hadley miners (Durham) strike. March 16: Stalybridge textile workers strike against longer hours, and win. March 23: 12,000 Durham miners out against big wage cuts, persuaded to return by officials. March 30: 600 Blantyre miners strike against reduction, win after three days. April 1: 100 aircraft workers in Yorkshire strike for trade union recognition and win. April 6: 800 Bradford wool workers strike against increased hours, persuaded to return by their officials. April 6:

¹LABOUR MONTHLY, December, 1928, p. 738.

Heywood weavers strike against bad materials, persuaded to return by officials. April 21 : assurance workers out for nine weeks, gain T.U. recognition. May 20 : Ashton spinners strike against increased hours. May 21 : Radcliff (Lancs) and Chorley (Lancs) textile workers strike against longer hours. May 22 : Scholefield Mill (Lancs) workers strike against victimisation, owners reply by lock-out affecting all mills in Nelson. June 1 : Gorseinon tinsplate workers strike for re-instatement of dismissed man, and lose. June 15 : All mill workers, Oldham, strike against non-unionism. June 22 : London busmen "go slow" against new schedules, and win. Southampton painters strike against non-unionism. June 29 : Fife miners strike for payment for time lost through mechanical break down. July 1 : Glasgow smelters strike against reduction, E.C. refuse recognition. August 10 : Pantyffynon miners (South Wales) strike against reduction, owners close pit. August 31 : 100 miners sacked at Panteg (South Wales) for refusing to accept a wage cut. September 7 : London busmen terminate agreement. September 28 : 3,000 miners strike at Bellshill against overtime, persuaded back by their officials. October 12 : Rego garment workers strike for T.U. recognition, Executive Committee refuse endorsement, girls win after ten weeks. November 2 : Romford busmen strike against speeding up, persuaded back by officials; Zinkin furnishing trade workers strike for re-instatement of dismissed man, and win. November : Peterborough and Norwich artificial silk workers strike.

Another indication of the growing demand for militant action is the insistence of the rank and file upon a revision of the present wage agreements, a number of which terminate in the winter, 1928-29. In every case the reformist trade union leadership has desired to obtain a renewal of the agreements upon the same terms, but in several instances rank-and-file pressure has compelled them to move otherwise.

The example of the London omnibus men is of particular interest. No fewer than three delegate conferences were held, with the bureaucracy trying their hardest to break down or side-track the demand for a new agreement. Unable, in spite of all their efforts, to secure a majority that would stand examination, the officials were compelled to put the question to a ballot vote. The result showed a large and decisive majority in favour of the demand for a new agreement. This was rapidly followed by the district delegate organisation of the men formulating the new demands and putting them in the hands of the Executive for the approach to the company. Similarly the London District organisation of the tramwaymen, also organised in the T. and G.W.U., has for several

months been fighting the central officials on its demand for better condition for the London men. The central office sent its representative to try and cajole or bully the committee into dropping the demand for the withdrawal of London from the National Joint Industrial Council, and for the formulation of a new London agreement giving the men reduced hours and an increase in wages. The committee stuck to its demand, and decided to take a ballot on the question.

At the time of writing the Executive is making renewed efforts to damp down the demand and has sent the National Passenger Group Secretary to get the ballot dropped.

In the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, the leadership of which has on many occasions maintained a left wing attitude, the ballot in favour of strike action in support of the demand of the ship joiners for 3s. per week increase showed a large majority.

Further evidence of the growing militancy of the trade union masses is shown by the growing delegations sent to the Minority Movement Conferences and by the figures of votes cast for candidates in trade union elections who stand on the policy of the Minority Movement.

The rationalisation offensive, as it may be called, exhibits certain characteristics very different from the attacks in the period immediately following the war. Then the demand was for a national reduction of so many shillings a week or pence per hour, the crisis was acute but brief, and a period of stabilisation at the lower rate followed.

Now the attack is continuous. The worker is never free from the pressure from one week to another. New methods, new technical arrangements, time saving, speeding-up, new machines, still more re-arrangements, each accompanied by dismissals and cuts, short time and intensive piecework, until not even the most conservative craftsman can have the old feeling of security in his job. A few shillings a week difference on the craftsman's rate does not after all matter so much—as long as he is sure of it—but the rationalisation offensive is everywhere aiming to cut out the craft processes and bring on the semi-skilled and unskilled man.

Another feature of the present offensive is that it breaks up the homes of the workers and sends them perhaps hundreds of

miles away to make a fresh start. Railwaymen, for example, have, by the thousand, been confronted with the choice of losing their jobs or being transferred to some other station or depot. Miners by the score of thousand have tramped from the old coalfields to the newer areas or to the big industrial centres and the metropolis to take a job on any terms it can be got. The growing thousands engaged in the road transport services have practically no home life at all owing to the number of hours worked per day and the distances travelled.

Thus, the rationalisation offensive penetrates every section of the working class, undermines every little vestige of security, breaks up the union, puts one district into competition with another, and *is ever more rapidly breaking down the foundations of stable trade unionism upon which the reformist bureaucracy have built the machine which maintains them in power.*

What is the attitude of the bureaucracy towards the situation in the districts? In general, with a few honourable exceptions, the union officials acquiesce in the policy of the General Council and concentrate their energies on endeavouring to prevent any of the discontent in the factories and branches from penetrating into the head offices of the unions. What is the declared policy of the General Council toward the rationalisation offensive? It completely ignores the devastation in the districts, the rapid break up of the union organisation and the sufferings of the membership, and concentrates its energies on painting a picture of industrial peace during which it will extract from the mesmerised employees a series of concessions such as no strike could gain—recognition of unions, guarantee against victimisation and a steady march towards workers' control.

While this roseate picture is being painted, the real policy of the General Council becomes clearer and clearer. Realising from the experience of 1926 that any struggle for the defence of the class interests of the trade unionists means an open break with the capitalist State, and leads straight to the revolutionary struggle for power, the reformist leadership plays on the industrial field the same rôle as Social Democracy in the electoral field. It aims at converting the trade union into a recognised part of the official apparatus of capitalism, with the leaders acting as labour masters

for the big combines, and carefully smoothing out resistance of the workers which might impede the steady rationalisation of industry, a rationalisation which is the essential preliminary to the further development of Britain's world wide struggle against the U.S.A. and thus leading directly towards war.

This policy of the General Council is clearly defined by its leading spokesmen.

Mr. Citrine at the Swansea Trades Union Congress, September, 1928 :—

World Trade Unionism stands at the present time for the voice of the worker in the administration and control of industry to be heard *in the councils of the employers*, and I say emphatically to talk about exercising control of industry without meeting the employers to discuss that control is a figment of the imagination. If control is one of our specific objects, we are most likely to give effect to it by seeing a body of employers, and trying to get them to admit our claim, and try to come to some arrangement.

Mr. E. Bevin at the Swansea Trades Union Congress :—

Therefore on rationalisation we have faced them fairly and squarely across the table. It is said that what we did wrong was in welcoming it. I do welcome rationalisation, and I make no apology for so doing. This hybrid state of the small employer and the combine fighting each other over a long period and fighting against the threatened bondage of bankruptcy is causing penury and trouble among the whole of our people. I would rather see a real organised attempt by rationalisation than I would see a long-drawn weary road from the small employer to the big. If you will look down the agenda which has been accepted, the bulk of which has been drawn up by the General Council, you will see, if you allow us to go on, we shall be facing them with every problem that has been agitating Labour's mind for some time . . .

Mr. Citrine, in the *Labour Magazine*, December, 1927 :—

I believe that clear thinking along with a clear view of the evolution of trade unionism, of the motives that animate it, and of the methods which it has used, will suffice to show that the lines of its future development run in the direction of making the workers' organisations an integral part of the economic machinery of society.

Mr. Ben Tillett, President of the T.U.C., in an article in the *Review of Reviews*, quoted in *Industrial News*, November 20, 1928 :—

The trade unions will have to play a much greater part in the organisation of industry in the future, and the future trade union leaders will be compelled to undertake the most exhaustive examina-

tion of industry, and will be forced to an educated understanding of the "wage system" and its related factors associated with the capitalist manipulation of industry. There is no school of capitalists, no profession of economists, no body of practical captains of industry who can explain the related movements of industry and no State department which deals with the vast and intricate scope of industry, and trade as a whole. The Mond joint organisation of research and council with the T.U.C. is a sign of the times.

Mr. Citrine, broadcasting on November 16, 1928 :—

The trade union attitude is determined by a sincere desire to get to grips with the serious problems which confront British industry. Their problem is how, in this period of vast change, they can contribute to the general efficiency and prosperity of industry whilst at the same time adequately safeguarding the interests of the workers.

Mr. Herbert Tracey, referring to a speech of an American bureaucrat, and quoting with approval, *Industrial News*, October 23, 1928 :—

Formerly union leaders were mainly concerned with the settlement of strikes and the adjustment of disputes. They spent much time travelling from place to place to deal with local grievances. To-day the leaders and officers must be men of a different type with executive abilities of a high order. They must know something about business and office management, about the value of property and real estate, about investments and the stock market, about banking, about insurance . . . Union leaders have to develop the qualities of the lawyer, the statistician and the economist in handling these matters.

This kind of policy obviously cannot be reconciled to the interests of the mass of union members. The bureaucracy therefore is taking steps to protect itself against the growing revolt by barricading itself from the forces leading against the resistance to Mondism—the Communist Party and the Minority Movement. In some unions, so great is its feeling of insecurity that it is compelled to abandon all pretence of democracy and resort to arbitrary dictatorship in order to prevent itself being supplanted by new leaders whose militant policy expresses the feeling of the workers.

In the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants, the Boilermakers' Society, the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks, the Dundee Jute and Flax Workers, the Bakers and Confectioners, and the Liverpool Carters and Motormen's Association, no member of the Communist Party or the Minority Movement is allowed to be a candidate for any

office in the organisation. Branches which endeavour to maintain and exercise their rights, granted to them by union rule, to elect their own officers and delegates and to nominate whom they choose for national and district positions, are dealt with in a disciplinary manner, the bureaucrats not hesitating to call the capitalist courts and the employers to their aid. Individual members of the Communist Party or the Minority Movement who defy the restriction imposed upon them and assert their rights to express their opinions and put forward their point of view are suspended or threatened with expulsion and have in some cases actually been expelled.

A large number of other union Executives and headquarters officials have conducted vicious propaganda campaigns against the Communist Party and the Minority Movement.

Under these conditions what are the prospects for successful revolutionary work in the trade unions ?

The development of the rationalisation offensive will inevitably produce widespread rank-and-file movements in the unions in opposition to Mondism, especially in the craft organisations. The revolutionary struggle against the bureaucracy must be conducted in a manner which will secure the leadership of this revolt and direct it against both reformism and capitalism.

To do this needs a far greater concentration upon questions of wages and conditions, a study of wage agreements and a specialisation on the situation in each particular industry and union than has hitherto been the case. A definite alternative leadership inside every union dominated by the reformists must be organised and must function, giving the revolutionary policy day by day on each issue before the union membership. In this direction the development of the various union Advisory Committees under the auspices of the National Minority Movement, with their information bulletins and specialised papers, are a most hopeful augury. The first Minority National Conference of Railwaymen demonstrated both the existence of an alternative leadership in the railway unions, its capability of producing a practical policy and existence of widespread rank-and-file interest and support.

The ability of the revolutionary forces in the unions to extend and develop this work of organising and training a functioning militant leadership, working out its correct policy, integrating the

work of revolutionary propaganda and day-to-day leadership of the workers' struggle and establishing organisation connections with the mass of the workers beginning to move against rationalisation and Mondism, will be the decisive factor in the struggle to wrest the trade unions from the hands of the reformist agents of capitalism.

This development obviously cannot be confined within the limits of trade union constitutionalism. When the revolutionary local and district leaders are elected to branch and district positions, they will necessarily have to make it quite clear that they will not be bound, and will not allow the militant membership to be bound, by head office discipline.

CAPITALISM LOOKS AT ITS SERVANTS

By G. GORE GRAHAM

THE "revivalist" propaganda of sham leftism in the Labour Movement puts forward the argument that the present-day leadership of the Official Labour Movement has suffered a recent change from a fundamentally class basis to a capitalist and Liberal one. No revolutionary worker needs, nor would space allow us to give, an historical survey of the Reformist Labour Movement in order to prove this to be false. The fact is that as capitalism changes so does the activity of the Reformist party living within its boundaries; hence the changed tactics of the Reformist leadership. One recent quotation alone is sufficient to expose the true rôle of Reformism in the capitalist State. Lord Thomson, of the late Labour Cabinet, writes as follows in a Fascist weekly (*Britannia*, January 26, 1929) :—

Although the ultimate aims of Labour, more especially as announced by the loud-speakers of that party, may have appeared to Radicals as Utopian, when they were not dangerous, so far as immediate programmes were concerned, Radicalism compared with moderate Labour policy was, and still is, as Tweedledum to Tweedledee.

That is not, of course, news, but it is useful to be told by a Labour Minister that :—

In 1919 the rank and file of the Labour Party consisted mainly of class-conscious workers, to whom an outlet for their political emotions was essential as a safety valve.

The object of the Labour Party was to fulfil this function, for, Lord Thomson continues :—

It will be a bad day for the country if and when the workers resort to more violent methods, and these, in the long run, are the most probable alternatives.

In 1919, the bourgeois State found it expedient to declare that it would not use the troops in the railway dispute as it had in 1912. But thanks to Reformism such conditions did not last long. It is worth while to consider the new era of capitalist decline with the correspondingly new rôle of Reformism in it, as reflected in typical estimates given by class-conscious spokesmen of the bourgeoisie.

No one denies the presence of a new era. To the revolutionary it is the era of imperialist decline, of increased working-class struggle for proletarian dictatorship. The new era to the capitalists is one calling for an attempt to recover former prosperity by means of rationalisation and increased suppression of the workers (development of Fascism, E.P.A., Audits Bill, reform of Local Government, proposals for Second Chamber Reform, O.M.S., militarisation of the police, &c., &c.). And the new era to their allies, the Ben Tilletts, is one in which (in Ben's own words) capitalism must be assisted to "*organise British trade on a competitive basis against the world. This cannot be done without the high intelligence of trade union leadership . . .*"

And what did the authoritative *Times* think of the Mond Conference, and its decision to form a permanent joint economic council? It regarded it as a splendid reply to those who thought the purpose of the Labour Movement was to overthrow capitalism. The Labour Movement was based, *The Times* said, upon the attitude which—

looks for the prosperity of the wage-earners as an outcome of the prosperity of the industry.

Mr. Citrine boasts of the respected position held by the trade union movement. He is echoed a little more revealingly by the *Observer*, which declared—

A century ago the law forbade the existence of trade unions. To-day the wheel has come full circle, and they are invited to take their place as essential parts of the country's economic system [*i.e.*, capitalism].

The present position of capitalism requires that the trade union movement should be harnessed to the capitalist State machine. The most important function of the Mond-Turner permanent council, wrote the *News of the World* (July 15, 1928):—

. . . will be the prevention of strikes and lockouts, and the Council will set up Conciliation Committees to investigate any threatened trade disputes that may be referred to, though *at present* compulsory arbitration of such disputes is not suggested. *This part of the work of the Council would automatically supersede the conciliation work of the Ministry of Labour.*

In the words "automatically supersede the work of the Ministry of Labour" the Revolutionary's t's are crossed and i's dotted. "Efforts have been made to wreck the plans of the council," continues this capitalist writer, "but these have failed."

The best brains have gone into the business with a determination to recapture Britain's trade supremacy, and to restore prosperity to both workers and employers alike.

The average worker, particularly if he is in an industry where the Reformist treachery has recently meant a distinct worsening of his conditions, knows that the bosses place great reliance in their Labour lackeys. But he would need to have opportunity to study the responsible capitalist newspapers before he realised fully what the Reformists mean to them.

It is true that the capitalists realise that the Labour leaders cannot do everything. They had not the power to prevent the General Strike, although they had the power to destroy it. Consequently, the capitalist class decided, through the Fascist Trade Union Bill, to make provision for the necessary additional preventives. This by no means implies a fundamental antagonism between capitalism and its servants.

Our bourgeoisie is old in the art of ruling. To give an example of its cleverness, it recently advised the Labour leaders not to go too fast in the process of silencing the militant workers. The particular spokesman who gave this wise advice was afraid that the Reformists might go over towards reaction to such an extent that they would separate themselves too far from the rank and file. And unofficial strikes, continued this individual, could be very harmful to capitalism. Responsible voices of the bourgeoisie, like *The Times*, take great comfort in anti-red votes at the Trades Union Congress. But Lord Birkenhead, with the characteristic frankness of an extreme reactionary, sees things a little differently. This is what he has said (June 21, 1928) :—

The Labour Party [which means also the whole of the Reformist leadership] is in a difficult position. It has a number of experienced and moderately-minded leaders, who, in their general outlook on public affairs, did not differ very considerably from himself or his hearers . . . and the result of the fact that the leaders had for some years followed a reasonable and patriotic course was that they had now lost their followers.

However, as we have said, the view of Lord Birkenhead is not universally held by the bourgeoisie.

There is never any suggestion but that, whenever a dispute or crisis occurs in any part of the capitalist world, the Communists

are responsible for it. And there is always a cry now of "All power to the Reformists' elbow."

India is an example. The practical assistance given by the authorities to visitors from Transport House is endorsed by *The Times* leading article, which lamented the fact that the Indian workers were not yet lassoed on behalf of capitalism by a bureaucracy of Clyness, Thomases, &c. It said :—

The interest which the British Trades Union Congress has lately taken in Indian labour conditions may be very beneficial if it leads to the better organisation of Indian labour unions, to the expulsion of the Communist elements. (*The Times*, June 14, 1928.)

Completely in line with these capitalist desires was the recent visit of Purcell, on which he busied himself attacking the R.I.L.U. and the Communists. Capitalism would like to have the Indian workers always safely dragooned by a Reformist leadership, which would break the Lillooah strike far quicker than starvation did, which would hold workers outside the Communist Party by the threat of expelling them from the unions, and depriving them of the financial benefits, &c., &c. Unfortunately for them, the Indian workers already have learnt to burn the effigy of Ramsay alongside that of Sir Austen Chamberlain.

All over the capitalist world the Reformist leaders are valued servants of capitalism. The news items in *The Times* dealing with the class struggle in various parts of the world all bear testimony to the fact that social democracy is the strike-breaker, and that "Moscow" is the villain who disturbs capitalism's multifarious plunderings. From Antwerp to Greece, from Greece to Brisbane, from Brisbane to Shanghai, from Shanghai to Lanarkshire, from Lanarkshire to the American coalfields, the rôle of Reformism is the same—strike-breaking, industrial peace, dictatorial anti-red drives. Such is the rôle of Reformism in the era of imperialism. It shares with Fascism the honour of defending capitalism in its crisis-ridden decline. Therefore, to find a Labour Minister's friendly article in a Fascist weekly is no accident, but a true indication of fundamental political alignment. Beneath all the inevitable wordiness of capitalist politics there can be found in leading bourgeois opinion a correct appraisal of Reformism.

The World of Labour

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THE MASS STRUGGLE IN JAPAN

THE general election held in February, 1927, was of great significance in the history of the Japanese proletarian movement. This was the first election based upon the newly introduced so-called "general suffrage" (those persons over twenty-five years of age were given franchise with various limitations and excluding women). The social democratic parties and the other "proletarian" parties which had no chance formerly to participate in the elections got the opportunity to organise an election campaign. The Communist Party, which had remained a small underground Communist group, openly appeared before the masses with a definite Bolshevik platform and slogans. The Party supported the Workers' and Peasants' Party (Rodonominto), and put up its own candidates through the latter.

The Rodonominto, which was based upon the affiliation of Left wing trade unions with a membership of 80,000, and of a Left peasants' union with a membership of 60,000, besides 20,000 individual members, showed special militant activity in this campaign, thanks to the Communist leadership. It received 192,000 votes, in contrast to 112,000 votes of the Social Peoples' Party (Shakaiminshuto—a Right Social Democratic Party) and 90,000 votes received by the Japanese Workers' and Peasants' Party (Nihonronoto—a Left Social Democratic Party). Apart from this, the Communist Party independently carried out illegal propaganda and agitation during the campaign for the fight against the new imperialist war, for the overthrow of the capitalists' and landowners' power, for the abolition of the Monarchy, for the defence of the Soviet Union, and in connection with the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, by means of secret meetings and the publication of an enormous amount of illegal literature. As a result, the masses, especially the militant revolutionary workers, who knew the existence and the political platform of the Communist Party, began rapidly to rally around it. The slogans raised by the Party, especially the slogan of "The Workers' and Peasants' Government," became practically the slogan of the masses. Thus, the Party not only won great political influence but also rapidly grew up organisationally. In this situation, the Government turned to more decisive attack upon the Party.

The Mass Arrests of Communists and the Situation Following It

The Government, who did not dare to act during the election campaign, forced at last by the intense fighting mood of the masses, made mass arrests of Communists during March–April, 1928. More than 1,500 active leading persons in the Rodonominto, Left trade unions and legal young proletarian organisations were arrested, and out of them about 500 were tried according to the “Peace Preservation Law,” the special anti-Communist law introduced at the end of 1925. The Party openly raised the slogan “Defend the Communist Party, the leader of the working class,” “Liberate the arrested, the devoted fighters who have been fighting in the forefront of the proletarian movement,” &c. Upon the call of the Party, the revolutionary masses rose up, and meetings and demonstrations were held in many places. In such prefectures as Dshikawa, Mie, Akita, several hundred persons gathered and surrounded the police offices and liberated the arrested. In Tottori, 2,000 peasants (led by members of the Peasant Union) gathered for the purpose of attacking the police office and taking back their leaders.

The reactionary Tanaka Government, panic-stricken owing to the unexpected militant action of the masses, ordered the dissolution of the three most powerful revolutionary organisations—the Workers’ and Peasants’ Party, the Japanese Trade Union Council, the Young Proletarian League—on the pretext that they were under Communist leadership. It mobilised large amounts of police forces throughout the country in order to close down the head offices as well as the district and local branches.

Immediately following this, the Government revised the “Peace Preservation Law,” making it still more stringent. According to this new anti-Communist Law, the members of an organised association, aiming at the change of the present State system, can be imprisoned for unlimited periods of five years or over, and its leaders can be sentenced to death or imprisonment for life. Those who are affiliated to an organisation aiming at the abolition of the system of private property can be put into prison for more than two years and its leaders condemned to seven to nine years’ imprisonment. Thus, advocacy of abolition of private property costs nine years’ imprisonment, while advocacy of abolition of the Monarchy costs a death sentence.

The Communist Party and legal revolutionary organisations received great damage by this mass arrest and dissolution. But this temporary damage was not only rapidly recovered soon, but the Communist influence is still growing. Notwithstanding its numerical weakness in membership, the Party had too wide mass basis for it to be destroyed by such repression. The Party could utilise the militant mood of the masses raised by the repression for rallying them around the Communist Party itself not only ideologically, but also organisationally. In spite of the anti-Communist Law, the revolutionary workers have been expressing their will not only to support the Party, but even to enter the Party.

The Party issues its illegal central organ, *The Red Flag*, several times a month, in a larger number of copies than ever before. The legal paper, called *The Proletarian Press*, issued by the Party, which has suffered from

severe persecution at the hands of the police, is energetically supported by the masses.

The plan of turning this paper, which is issuing 40,000 copies once in five days, into a daily press, has met with the ardent support of the masses, and the workers are collecting funds for this purpose.

The Party organised campaigns for the abolition of the anti-Communist Law and for the liberation and relief of the arrested Communists. Many protest meetings were held. A "Mopr" organisation was formed. In spite of the barbarous suppression of the relief movement from the side of the Government, which quite often arrested the active workers in this movement and even dissolved the family meetings of the arrested, the relief movement grew, and individual members of a "Mopr" organisation (without counting the collective membership) amounted to 9,000 by September, 1928.

When the mass arrest of the Communists was over, the Government sent enormous bodies of troops to Shantung and occupied that part of China. A similar increase of armed forces was made in Manchuria. The Party issued illegal proclamations against the Shantung occupation and on the Chiing-nang incident. Large numbers of handbills, leaflets and posters were distributed in workers' districts, and handed to soldiers starting to China (especially in Osaka).

The membership of the dissolved revolutionary organisations is again becoming active. A "Preparatory Society for the formation of a new Party" was formed by uniting the former members of the Rodonominto. About 200 local branches were created throughout the country. Further, workers' conferences, peasants' conferences and workers' and peasants' conferences are being called, which include the militant elements in the Right and centrist organisations as well as the unorganised.

With the participation of the masses in political life, the Social Democratic parties are also growing and consolidating their organisation. At the same time, however, the Left trend of the Social Democratic masses can be seen clearly, especially in the Left Social Democratic Party. Some local branches of the Nihon-ronoto (the Left S.D. Japanese W.P. Party) formed joint committees with "The Preparatory Society" for the future common struggle against the will of the Social Democratic leaders. The demand for joint work is also expressed by some Right Social Democratic Party members. But as the leader of the Left Social Democratic Party is swinging nearer and nearer to the Right Social Democratic Party, the gap between the masses and its leaders is growing, and the leaders are in a difficult position.

There is still another group of Social Democrats. This third group is led by the "Rono group" (workers' and peasants' group). This "Rono group" is formed by the liquidationists expelled from the Communist Party. Under the initiative of this "Rono group," the "Musantaishuto" (the Proletarian Mass Party) was formed. This Party aims at combating the influence of the Communist Party and the "Preparatory Society," and is calling upon the masses to concentrate their work in the legal activity and for the unity with the Social Democratic parties. This Party, however, remains up to the present a "mass" party without masses.

The Labour Monthly

The Trade Union Movement

At the end of June, 1927, the number of organised workers in Japan amounted to 316,900 out of a total of 4,576,666 industrial workers. These organised workers, however, are dispersed in separate national confederations of Left, Right and Centrist and into small independent unions. As the Left wing trade union organisation, there was the Japanese Trade Union Council (Hyogikai) which unites most revolutionary trade unions.

This trade union council organised the "Trade Union Unity League" (Toitsu-Domei), including Left trade unions standing outside of it. The total membership of this League reached 80,000. It supports the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat and fights against the League of Nations' International Labour Conference. This Trade Union Council (consequently also the League), however, was dissolved on April 10 by the Government. The Left independent local unions which were deprived of their national organisations began to reorganise themselves into national industrial unions, and with the participation of even some Centrist unions "The Committee for the Formation of the All National Electrical Workers' Union" was formed, uniting Left independent unions. Similar committees are being organised in chemical, metal, wood, printing and transport industries.

At the same time, an attempt has been made to create one single national Left trade union federation, and a special preparatory committee was formed for that purpose. The Trade Union unity movement is also proceeding. The Osaka Trade Union Conference proposed to form an All-National Trade Union Conference. Under the pressure of the masses, the Centrist Confederation (Japanese Confederation of Trade Unions) was also pushed in this direction. In August, the representatives of the Left and Centrist trade unions met in Osaka and discussed the formation of a National Trade Union Conference as the first step for achieving trade union unity on a national scale. They elected small standing committees for this work. But the convocation of the National Conference was postponed to the end of October by the sabotage of the Centrist leaders who insisted that the conference should be held only with the participation of the Right unions. The Japanese Federation of Labour (The Right reformist union, with Suzuki as president) attempted to form a united general Right trade union Federation canvassing the other reactionary unions and also to convene an All-Asian Trade Union Conference against the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat. But this attempt did not meet with success, partly owing to the pressure of the masses and partly to the disagreement between the reformist leaders of various Right unions. The visit of M. Albert Thomas to Japan at the end of 1928 was intended to arrange these matters.

The Peasants' Movement

One of the most striking events in the peasant movement since March, 1928, is the unity of the two big peasant unions. Formerly there was one big peasant union, called the "Japanese Peasant Union," as the only real mass organisation. The Centrist leaders split off and went away from this union and formed the "All National Japanese Peasants' Union" in the beginning of last year, when the union came under the leadership of the Communists, and they supported the Left S.D. Party. Thus two Left and

Centrist unions existed quite independently (there are still Right unions, but they are very weak). The Left Union, however, influenced the masses of the Centrist Unions in the direction of joint struggle. Many joint committees were formed for joint action, on a local as well as on a district scale. The leaders of the Centrist Union tried to prevent it, but could not succeed, and they were pushed forward by the masses. At the end of May, 1928, a unity congress of the two unions was held, forcing the hands of the reformist leaders. Before the conference, the Centrist Union had 25,000 members and the Left Union had 60,000 members. The new Peasants' Union, which has increased its fighting capacity by the fusion, called a conference of all peasants' unions and organisations in order to prepare an offensive against the landowners.

GERMANY

Ruhr Iron and Steel Arbitration Award¹

THE arbitration award of Herr Severing, Socialist Minister of the Interior, who was accepted as arbitrator in the Ruhr iron and steel lockout, was issued on December 21. After three weeks of deliberation, investigation and consultation with the employers and union leaders, he produced what is described by *The Times*, of December 22, as a "delicate compromise," but what is generally recognised in Germany as a triumph for the employers. The *Vossische Zeitung* on December 22, for example, remarks that the iron industry is—

thoroughly satisfied with the decision . . . The chief thing is that industrial peace is assured for a long time, the iron industry is once more working and one of the most disastrous conflicts in German industry is finally settled.

The *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, the organ of heavy industry, refers to the Minister's "legal alteration of the award" as "by no means unsympathetic."

Vorwärts alone appears to claim the award as a victory for Social Democracy. In a leading article on December 23, headed "Power without Violence," it speaks of the lockout as "one of those trials of strength which accompany the evolution to Socialism," and describes it as "an act of the class war in modern form, with modern means."

The terms of the award grant an increase to time workers of an allowance ranging from one to six pfennigs an hour, on the principle that the higher the wage the smaller the increase. In practice most of the workers only get the lowest advance.

In the previous award, the highest award was granted to all workers. Piece-workers, who received two pfennigs previously, now receive practically no advance, and the guarantee of 15 per cent. above day rates is pure window-dressing, as this had already been assured under a previous agreement.

Herr Severing also intervened in the matter of hours, which were not dealt with in the Jötten award, but which would have come up in any case at the end of the year. Those who were working sixty hours a week have their hours reduced to fifty-seven, but this concession affects only a small

¹ See LABOUR MONTHLY, December, 1928, and January, 1929.

minority and leaves hours in the industry still disgracefully long, while enabling Herr Severing to pose as the man who shortened the hours of the workers in the Ruhr. Further, overtime can be imposed.

In order to cloak his surrender to the employers' claims, Herr Severing makes a curious gesture "to maintain respect for the arbitration system, which although imperfect in some respects, must not be disregarded." This "pedagogical lesson," as he calls it, consists in enforcing the terms of the original award from the time of resumption of work on December 2 until the end of the year. As most firms hardly started work before the New Year, the gesture was a farce, but it was interesting in its admission that the new award was less favourable to the workers.

If any confirmation of this were needed, it would be provided by the report of a German news agency, quoted in the *Sunday Worker*, January 13, which states that "in addition to assuring peace for two years," the award "represents a substantial gain for the steel companies in comparison with previous demands." Whereas the original claim would have meant a wage increase estimated at 30,000,000 marks per annum for the United Steel Works, and the Jötten award an increase of 10,000,000 marks, the Severing award represents an additional outlay of only 3,000,000 marks annually, *i.e.*, one-tenth of the workers' demand, and less than a third of the award flouted by the employers. The report adds that there are expectations of a revival of trade.

End of the Shipyard Strike ³

The strike in the German shipyards came to an end in the first week in January, after a protracted campaign of fourteen weeks, during which time work at most of the Baltic and North Sea ports was at a standstill.

After twelve weeks of struggle, the trade union opposition was so strong that the reformist leaders did not dare to recommend acceptance of the new arbitration award, issued on December 21 by Herr Grabain, the arbitrator appointed by the Minister of Labour. This award granted an increase of five pfennigs an hour, but abolished the overtime rate of one pfennig above ordinary time rates, and reduced hours from fifty-two to fifty until October, 1929, and forty-nine from November 1 onwards.

When the award was put to the ballot it was rejected by over 90 per cent. of the organised workers; the unorganised, who were under the leadership of the revolutionary opposition, were excluded from voting or the percentage would probably have been even higher.

The employers also rejected the award, but having already lost 12,000,000 marks in the course of the struggle they were quite prepared for Herr Wissell to settle the matter for them, which he did by declaring the award binding on January 3. The reformist leaders were equally relieved, and so once more the workers have been forced to relinquish their demands and submit to a system of arbitration which delivers them into the hands of their employers. That the fighting spirit is present is attested by the voting against the terms, but not until a revolutionary leadership is established will the workers be in a position to achieve their demands.

³ See *LABOUR MONTHLY*, December, 1928.

BOOK REVIEW

BRITISH PSEUDO-MARXISM

The Economic Problems of Europe: Pre-war and After. By M. Philips Price, with a foreword by the Rt. Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P. (Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 211 pp., 8s. 6d. net.)

MR. PHILIPS PRICE has shouldered an ambitious task in this book, viz. to survey the economic problems of Europe and to forecast the future. Such a work requires not only an abnormal power of assimilating facts, but also a sufficiently strong technique of theory. In neither of these requisites does the book fulfil its ambitious promise.

The main argument and purport of this book can hardly be mistaken. Capitalism before the war, it is alleged, with its growing accumulation of capital and its export of investments to colonial regions, was moving, not along a road of increasing crises and contradictions, but towards a progressive harmonisation of interests and towards orderly, planned control. International finance, which is pacific in tendency because it "is always the loser by wars and inflation which comes with wars," was extending its influence over industry, and was replacing the anarchy of *laissez-faire* by consortiums and agreements, by a conscious and amicable allotment of quotas, in the division of markets and spheres of investment.

War came in 1914, not as a result of monopoly capitalism, but in spite of it; it came because three important countries, Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary were still semi-feudal and consequently followed national lines of development which were withdrawn from the unifying influence of finance-capital. Not imperialism, but "Russo-Austrian Cæsarism" caused the war.

Capitalistic economy was beginning to reach a stage where international agreements over colonies might have gradually superseded the stage of economic competition and nationalistic wars. . . . But the disturbing factors were the semi-feudal, theocratic Empires in Eastern Europe, Austria-Hungary and Russia. It was their quarrel over Balkan claims and spheres of influence that scotched for a decade the tender plant of supernational economy that was beginning to grow in the industrial States of Western Europe. (P. 86.)

Since the war (the argument runs) this unifying tendency has again asserted itself, largely under the ægis of Wall Street. The Dawes Scheme and the return of gold signalled the tendency for "the bankers to get the upper hand" both in America and in Europe. The growth of international cartels, the Geneva Economic Conference, market agreements between oil combines, all illustrate this tendency to replace competitive rivalry by agreement. The "new industrial revolution," promoted by rationalisation and improved technique, if it is combined with a "rational colonial policy," will suffice to set capitalism again on an ascending curve.

Here we have the Kautsky-Hilferding doctrine of pacific super-imperialism explicitly outlined in England. And, since in our English movement Marxism still struggles for recognition, and since the book borrows much of the phraseology of the social-democratic Marxist, the work may

appear to many in a "Left" guise. And this is the book's essential danger. It attempts to canvass reactionary ideas in Marxist phrases.

Actually, this doctrine of "super-imperialism" leads to a bourgeois-liberal conclusion. If capitalism continues to thrive, to solve its own contradictions, to become ever more idyllic and peaceful, what motive is there to end it? What cause to be a Socialist? Mr. Price, indeed, in effect draws this conclusion, though he does not admit his burial of Socialism in so many words.

The conclusions of the book, indeed, do not go even so far as State capitalism. "It is not necessary," runs the concluding sentence, "to postulate catastrophe in order that mankind shall work its way out of the disorders of unregulated production and distribution to a more rational system of economy in the world after the Great War." Such a "rational system" can quite well be reached merely by encouraging tendencies which are already at work within capitalism itself. "International industrial agreements" can be made to eliminate that "disequilibrium between 'construction' and 'consumption' industries" on which the Communists lay stress. Europe in general, and Britain in particular, should be developed by:—

(1) Re-establishing the home market by raising the purchasing power of the masses; (2) pushing of export trade by assisting the rise of the standard of living of the Asiatic and African coolie populations; (3) the acceleration of the industrial revolution at home by a judicious application under State control of a portion of the nation's savings in new schemes of internal development. (P. 195.)

Following the Liberal Industrial Report, it is said that "everything seems to point towards small specialised industries, rather than large mass-production, as the most effective means of providing for the export trade of Britain" (P. 194); and with suitable control of investment by the State "the internal capital market of Britain could be profitably employed for some years in supplying the financial means for carrying out the new industrial revolution."

With regard to the colonies,

review of the colonial markets does not seem to suggest any catastrophic crisis confronting the West European economic systems, owing to an absence of expanding possibilities for capital and commodity export. (P. 172.)

Hence, imperialist exploitation is not to be abolished, only rationalised so as to evoke native resistance to the smallest extent; and, citing the Conservative Ormsby-Gore approvingly, Mr. Price declares that "the absolute condition of this development (of Africa) is the absence of predatory capitalistic exploitation of the African native and a sympathetic attitude towards the native social problem" (P. 167)—exactly the policy alike of the Labour Party, the Liberals and of Mr. Ormsby-Gore. "Only a sympathetic attitude towards the native national movement in Asia," he reiterates, "and the colour problem in Africa will ensure for Great Britain any substantial share of the export trade and developments requiring capital in those colonial areas of the world."

The keynote of the book is contained in the following sentence, striking

the antithesis, not of Socialism *v.* Capitalism but of regulated monopoly-capitalism *v.* *laissez-faire*.

If order is to be created in industry there must be interference with the crude operations of the law of supply and demand. . . . International agreement and regulation of the amounts of import and export between nations, according to a definite plan, based on consumers' needs, the establishment of the quota system in international trade—all these constitute interference in the freedom of trade, but are some of the means by which industry can overcome the post-war production crisis. (P. 125.)

This theory, true to the type of all revisionism, reaches its conclusion by a superficial reading of events which sees only elements of harmony and is blind to elements of conflict. The picture of the pre-war world all but knit completely in angelic harmony by finance can only be described as fanciful. "Semi-feudal" dynastic ambitions doubtless played some part in Russo-Austrian rivalry in the Balkans; but they were hardly alone in causing such rivalry. It was not these, but rather nakedly capitalist rivalries—the Deutsche Bank, oil-prospecting syndicates, mining companies and concession-hunters—which played havoc round the Bagdad railway, in Persia, in East Africa and Morocco, and produced that quickening series of crises between 1906 and 1914 which made the ultimate declaration of war a surprise merely that it had not been precipitated before.

As for international cartels, the only important example which the author can adduce is the steel cartel; and this is a particularly bad example to choose for the purpose, since acute rivalry persists inside the cartel over the question of quotas—a quota-war supplanting a direct price-war, that is all. The "unequal development" of capitalism in different countries, accentuated rather than lessened by the war and the peace settlements, prevents different countries from conforming or synchronising in their developments, and places them in an "isolation" from one another more important than that caused by semi-feudal traits.

Further, it is significant that the author does not mention exploitation and surplus-value, and hence neglects the key to the essential contradiction which afflicts monopoly-imperialism. Much is said about the need of industry for "new markets," of finance for new spheres of investment. But there is no indication of the crucial point—that it is spheres of investment at a "reasonable" profit and markets where goods can be sold at a "reasonable" profit that are desired. The fallacy of this neglect is seen in his suggestion that extended colonial development can be combined with "a raising of Asiatic standards of life." Such a combination can only be achieved within the limited range where a higher standard of life would make Asiatic labour-power more productive of surplus—the *rationale* of liberal social reform. Apart from this, how is imperialism to continue to draw super-profit at the old rate, let alone *increase* that exploitation, if it has to *give* more to colonial workers and peasants in exchange for the products it *gets* from them in return?

The same fallacy applies to the Hobson-Mosley-Wheatley doctrines of "under-consumption" which Mr. Price implicitly espouses. How are capitalists as a *whole* (apart from particular individuals) to gain from increased

working-class buying of goods in the home market if they have to pay out an increased wages bill to an equivalent extent? What they gain on the swings of sales-prices they will lose on the roundabouts of costs. Short of an *increased rate of exploitation* somewhere, "new markets" at the *old* rate of profits do not exist. This is the basic contradiction on which Mr. Price's attempt to straddle the two horses of reformism and monopoly-capitalism must (like all reformism) ludicrously collapse.

In addition to the central fallacy, which is definitely misleading and dangerous, there are several minor points confusing to the reader. The formula on pp. 145-6—to explain the relation between prices and the internal debt—seems quite meaningless to the reviewer, if not definitely wrong. The references to Russia are seriously inadequate; and the statement on page 174 that "her present rate of accumulation can hardly do more than replace the wear and tear of old industrial plant," though probably true of 1924 (the latest date for which the author apparently has any information) is quite untrue to-day. The statement on page 128 that investors to-day "are less inclined" to invest in gilt-edged than in industrial securities seems contrary to the figures of the Colwyn Report, and, indeed, seems to be inconsistent with a statement on the following page.

M. H. D.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*Towards New Economic Struggles—From Defensive to Offensive—
More Output and Less Wages—Basis for Offensive—
New Stage of Struggle—Effects of Rationalisation—
International Strike Wave—Lessons from Abroad—
Strike Committees—Against Reformist Machine
—Rego Strike Lessons—Revolutionary
Leadership — Mondism to New
Surrenders—Labour Govern-
ment and Class Struggle.*

SIGNS of the new wave of wage struggles approaching, which will develop in character from sporadic beginnings to the stage of mass struggles, are now gathering force on many sides. The numerous local disputes, the Rego strike, Nine Mile Point, the situation in engineering, cotton spinning, wool textiles, and iron and steel, the railwaymen's minority conference, as well as the employers' direct rejection of the Mond terms in order to secure yet more humiliating servitude from the General Council, all these are evidence of the new stage developing. The gathering leftward wave of the workers, which, as has been repeatedly emphasised in these Notes ever since the General Strike, has been all the time *beneath the surface*, the all-important gathering reality behind the visible extreme depression and reformist triumph, is now pushing forward to ever stronger manifestations. The justification of the revolutionary new line, which built on this and sought to voice and lead and stimulate the new fight instead of giving way to passivity before the depression, is now becoming visible to all. There was never such ground for confidence, for rapid advance in the period in front, given a strong independent revolutionary leadership to voice and realise the demand of the workers for a move forward. *But the new stage of struggle develops under basically new conditions.* It will require new tactics. The correct understanding of these new conditions and new tactics is of vital importance.

SINCE 1921 the working-class movement has been on the defensive. The capital offensive has dominated the situation. This phase has been common to Britain and to the European capitalist countries since the final point of the German defeat of 1923. The defeat of the revolutionary offensive after the war gave place to a long process, the process of the capitalist offensive and the policy of stabilisation, in which capitalism sought to rebuild itself by the attack on the workers and with the aid of the treachery of social democracy and the reformist trade union leaders. But the culmination of this process, with its final stage of rationalisation, has brought a new stage. On the one side, capitalism has built itself to a higher technical level, to more centralised and concentrated organisation, to a stronger repressive class-war front against the workers. But in doing so, it has not won stability; on the contrary, it has created new problems, intensified world competition, and brought the necessity of new struggles with the workers and colonial peoples. On the other side, the long and defeated defensive fight of the workers has been at the same time a process of deepening revolutionisation. In place of the old pre-war type of ups and downs of sectional struggles, basic class issues have been laid bare, the State has come out into the open as the direct leader of the capitalist forces, the massed forces of the working class have been brought into direct struggle with the organised State and employers. This process of mass defensive struggle, still under reformist leadership to betray it, but with revolutionisation going on beneath, reached its culmination in Britain in the General Strike of 1926; then the revolutionary line was reached, and it could go no further in the old form. From this point the reformist leadership could only ally itself openly, directly and organically with capitalism, and direct all its efforts to strangling any further development of the struggle. Industrial Peace and Mondism replaced Red Friday and the Anglo-Russian Committee. But this laying bare of the capitalist essence of the reformist leadership, parallel to the laying bare of the capitalist essence of the State, does not mean that the struggle has ended, or that the process of revolutionisation has suddenly begun moving in the reverse direction. On the contrary, the whole conditions of rationalisation lead

to sharper conflicts. But the struggle has now to take new forms.

FOR what is the present situation from the point of view of the wage struggle, of the immediate economic struggle? The technical side of production has advanced with giant strides. Capitalism has under its control far greater productive power, is on every side obtaining more output with fewer workers. But the share of the workers has not risen with the increase of their output, has even absolutely gone down. Taking first the Census of Production of 1907 and 1924, we find that the net output per worker has increased from £100.9 to £210.8 or 109 per cent., or in industry apart from the special case of coal, from £97.2 to £217.6 or 124 per cent. Allowing for the increase in wholesale prices of 88 per cent. for the same period, according to the Board of Trade figure, this makes an increase in net real value produced per worker of 11 per cent. or 19 per cent. respectively. In the same period, between 1907 and 1924, the real wage of the workers has fallen, on the basis of 1900 as 100, from 97 to 86.4 or 11 per cent. (Labour Research Department Index, calculated from official returns; see the article in their *Monthly Circular* for January, 1929, where it is shown that this figure is certainly too high, since the Government returns of wage rates, cost of living and employment are strongly open to criticism). Thus with an increase in net real output of 11 per cent., and a decrease in real wages of 11 per cent., *the worker's share in the product of industry has fallen by 20 per cent.*; and the real figure is certainly higher. In the same way, even the American Federation of Labour has recently pointed out that the average output per manufacturing worker in 1927 was 51.55 per cent. above the level of 1899, but that the average real wage was only 22 per cent. above. But all this process has gone very much faster in the last few years with rationalisation. In Germany, in the past four years, there has been an enormous increase in output, together with a fall in real wages (the present unemployment figure, according to the Social-Democratic *Vorwärts*, is three millions). The German Social-Democrat, Herr Heinig, has declared that the Ruhr coal industry is employing 87 per cent. less workers than before the war, but the

output per man per shift has risen 28 per cent. (*Daily Herald*, February 2, 1929). And on the British railways, our contributor, Stewart Purkis, has shown in last November's issue, how the number of railworkers employed has decreased between 1921 and 1927 from 736,000 to 683,000, or a drop of 53,000, while the number of engine miles run has increased in the same period from 466 millions to 603 millions, or an increase of 137 millions.

TO what does all this point? In itself, it shows merely the intensified exploitation, longer hours, speeding up, as well as technical development, which has taken place. But its importance for our present purpose is as an indication that, so far as the conditions of production go, *there is the objective basis, not only for the defensive fight, but for a successful offensive fight in the economic field.* The new stage of rationalisation increases the basis for the offensive at the same time as it increases the attack upon the workers. On the one side, rationalisation, by increasing production or productive power, intensifies world competition, leads therefore to a frantic endeavour of the capitalists of each country to reduce costs, leads therefore to renewed attacks on the workers. On the other side, rationalisation, by increasing production and productive power, so that in most countries it surpasses pre-war levels, increases the basis for the economic offensive of the working class. This is the basis of the gathering strike wave of the past year in Europe and the world, which has been particularly marked by its *growingly offensive* character (strikes for *increases of wages* in Poland, Northern France, the Ruhr, Hamburg, &c.), at the same time as the employers' offensive goes forward alongside (Ruhr lock-out).

BUT the struggle this time takes on a new and intensified character. First, because the intensity of world competition makes the employers far less ready to grant even slight concessions (the Ruhr employers' revolt against the arbitration award of a trifling increase, which was made only to stem the movement of the workers for a real increase). Second, because the trinity of employers, State, and reformists is now far more

closely knit together into a single machine as never before, and is brought to bear on every issue, however small. The new stage of struggle, in consequence, has to face from the outset a wider range of issues, in which the economic and the political are intertwined; and has from the outset to advance in battle with the reformists no less than with the State and employers, because these are all parts of a single machine. It is no longer a question of the isolated treacheries of the reformists, which have confronted every strike movement; it is now a question of a systematic machine of disorganisation and corruption in the working-class movement, out to prevent any struggle and to enforce industrial peace. In consequence, the new strike movement can only be led by a new revolutionary leadership which is directly voicing the mass of the workers. In this way, the new stage calls for and *compels* the new independent revolutionary leadership which it now becomes the task to realise in action.

THE understanding of this new stage and its positive tasks is the central revolutionary question at the present time. There are two types of error in regard to the question of rationalisation. The first is the gross and obvious reformist error, that rationalisation is a solution of the capitalist contradictions, that it can remedy the decline and provide a path of peaceful progress for the workers. On the contrary, rationalisation intensifies every capitalist contradiction, and intensifies the attack on, and exploitation of, the workers. The second is the more subtle type of conservative or routine revolutionary error, which we had occasion to analyse last month, which sees only the negative aspects of rationalisation, its obstacles, hindrances, and failures, and which does not see its positive consequences and possibilities, and all-important positive conclusions for the new stage of our struggle. This type of outlook leads to a dangerous passivity, to waiting for existing forces to expose themselves, and particularly for a Labour Government to expose itself by its obvious failure to deal with the decline. But a Labour Government will not automatically expose itself. On the contrary, it is necessary to bear in mind the possible perspective, as was pointed out last month, that a Labour Government of rationalisation, if

able to carry out even a moderately reconstructive policy with the aid of the big capitalists and the State apparatus to facilitate it and mobilise capital and credit, *might* be able to point to certain positive aspects of rationalisation affecting favourably some limited sections of the workers, even at the same time as other sections are attacked, might even be able to point to a temporary improvement in employment during an actual new construction drive, as suggested by Comrade Varga, and on this basis would attempt to lead a new reformist wave. (This, it must be repeated, is only one of several possible perspectives.) The exposure of the Labour Government will depend, not on any automatic course of events, but on the most active fight against it, and on the direct raising of the class interests of the workers against its policy at every point. *And the key to this lies above all in the development of the economic struggle arising out of the conditions of rationalisation.* The correct treatment of rationalisation turns on the recognition of the new stage of struggle to which it gives rise by the very contradictions that it creates, by its successes no less than its failures.

THE new wave of economic struggles developed internationally in 1928, particularly in the second half, and shows every sign of developing further. In Britain the process is slower, corresponding to the slower process of rationalisation; but it is unlikely that the records of "industrial peace" (*i.e.*, of unchecked intensified exploitation) of 1927 and 1928 will be repeated in 1929. In a number of other countries, however, notably in Germany, Poland, France, Belgium, and also in India and Australia, 1928 was already a year of large-scale industrial struggles. The position of India, which became the principal and most militant immediate battlefield of the proletariat in 1928, is a special one (the number of working days "lost" through industrial disputes in India in 1927 and the first nine months of 1928 amounted to thirty millions, as against two millions in Britain for the whole of 1927 and 1928—in face of this, it is not surprising that the General Council is busily turning its attention to the task of "organising" the Indian workers). The colonial status of India, however, the closer unity of the economic and political struggle, the imposition of a new industry on a basically

agricultural population, the absence of any deeply-rooted trade union organisation, the more elemental character of the mass-movement, and the greater weakness of the reformists, all make the situation a special one which can only be studied in its own context. That the meaning and character of the Indian workers' struggles should be made more widely known to the English workers is manifestly of transcending importance, marking out the future lines of the world class struggle, and destroying the old limitations of outlook. But for our immediate purpose it is the struggles in the European countries, and to a certain extent in Australia, that are especially significant because of the close analogies of conditions and problems. It is very necessary that the experience of these, and the lessons learnt from them, should be studied and assimilated in Britain.

THE narratives of the Lodz general strike, of the Ruhr strike and lock-out, of the Hamburg strike, and of the Australian waterside strike may be studied in the **LABOUR MONTHLY** of last December, January and February. What do these experiences show? They show, in the first place, the character of the economic struggle in the new stage: (1) the close unity of the defensive and offensive, and increasing trend to the offensive, as already noted; (2) the close unity of the economic and political aspects of the struggle, direct intervention of the State and central government, police action, suppression of strike organs, direct rôle of the reformist and revolutionary parties and their struggle for leadership, so that it is no longer simply the old question of the trade unions on one side and the employers on the other, but a far more advanced complex of forces, and increasing importance of the issue of compulsory arbitration as the attempted means to stop the action of the workers; (3) the rôle of the entire reformist machine as a systematic strike-breaking force and agency of capitalism in the working class. But they show further—and this is the most important—*the new tactics of the struggle in the new conditions*, and the possibility of success; in particular (1) the realisation of the new independent strike leadership through the formation of special strike organs, the directly elected *strike committees*; (2) the increasing importance

of the *unorganised workers* as a powerful fighting force in unity with the organised workers, under the common leadership of the strike committees, in open opposition to the reformist machine.

THE directly elected strike committees—these are the all-important line for the future worked out in the experience of these strikes. In Lodz, where the strike committee was leading 200,000 workers, in the Ruhr, in Hamburg, these strike committees were directly leading and organising far larger bodies of workers than the organised workers in the trade unions. The strike committees were directly and democratically elected by all the workers, organised and unorganised, participating in the dispute, and uniting all the workers who were otherwise divided, not only by the line between organised and unorganised (and in the present stage of large-scale expulsions, as well as of the passing out of masses of workers from the unions through disgust at the reformist leadership, and also through new strata developing in the working class with new processes, the line of division between organised and unorganised is no longer the simple old line of division between class-conscious advance-guard and not-class-conscious backward workers), but who were also divided even in the organisations by differing sectional unions or by unions of differing political colour. These strike committees held the confidence of the workers and led them in the struggle.

FURTHER, it was shown that where the reformist trade union machine endeavoured to get its hold on the strike committees, this hold, if secured, was fatal to the leadership and success of the strike. In Lodz, when the strike committee, led by the revolutionary opposition, had succeeded, in the face of the antagonism of the reformist trade union machine, in bringing out the workers, first all the textile workers, and then the complete and successful general strike, the reformist trade union leadership came forward to "support" the strike in order to kill it, and demanded representation on the strike committee. The strike committee, by a grave error and through a wrong conception of "unity," accorded them this representation and allowed them eighteen places on the committee. Thus to the democratically

elected strike committee were added eighteen packed voices, not democratically elected but nominated from above by the reformist trade union machine, and in fact representing agents of the enemy let into the headquarters of the workers. The result was inevitable. A worthless "settlement," secretly negotiated by the Polish Socialist Party, was pushed through the strike committee, at a meeting to which the factory delegates had not been summoned, by a vote of 22 to 12; and on this basis the strike was broken, although the struggle still continued in many factories. The lesson of this experience constitutes a serious warning. The democratically elected strike committee can only receive consultative representatives from the trade unions, but cannot allow non-elected elements to change its composition. If the leadership passes from the strike committee to the reformist trade union machine, the strike is doomed. This lesson needs to be strongly present to the minds of all workers in Britain.

IN Britain, as has already been noted, the development is slower, corresponding to the slower process of rationalisation. But already the first signal and intimation towards the new type of struggle has been given in the Rego strike. The Rego strike showed (1) the possibility of the successful conduct of a strike under direct revolutionary leadership in spite of the hostility and sabotage of the National Executive of the reformist union concerned; (2) the fighting power, solidarity and class spirit of the supposed "unorganisable" and "backward" badly paid women workers as soon as a strong fighting leadership close to them was shown; (3) the support of the workers through the rest of the industry and throughout the country to make possible the continuance of the struggle, despite the campaign of hostility and misrepresentation by the reformist leadership; (4) the combined attempt of the employers and reformist Executive in unity to effect a "settlement" of surrender behind the backs of the strikers, and its rejection by the strikers; (5) the activity of the police and magistrates against the strikers, fining of strikers, injunction against picketing, &c.; (6) the direct rôle of the revolutionary organisations of the workers, and direct official message of thanks of the strikers at the

conclusion to the Communist Party and to the Minority Movement.

IT is notable that the Independent Labour Party, with characteristic shamelessness, *after the strike was over* and the long twelve weeks' struggle concluded in the face of the sabotage of the entire reformist leadership, came out with a little tribute to the strikers, announcement of the end of apathy and beginning of a new spirit, accompanied by an expression of regret that the strike had got mixed up with revolutionary leadership.

The paralysis and apathy that the Trade Union Movement has suffered since 1926 seems to have passed with the old year, and there is a keener and more lively spirit awakening.

One of the pointers to this has been the strike of the girls at the Rego works in London. In Labour clubs in all parts of the country I have seen subscription sheets for the strikers being generously supported, and the pluck of the girls has been a general topic for praise among rank and filers.

It has been rather a pity that some of the leaders of the strike attempted at times to use the dispute to exploit their own particular politics. (Trade Union Notes in the New Leader, January 4, 1929.)

Yes, the "paralysis and apathy" is passing; so far this I.L.P. trade union commentator is correct, and successful in discovering facts after they have come to the surface, and following at the tail of the workers with his brake (the warning against "some of the leaders"). *But who has been most responsible for the "paralysis and apathy" of the movement since 1926? Who but the reformist leadership of the Labour Party, I.L.P. and General Council, who betrayed the General Strike, disrupted the workers' ranks, smashed the miners' fight, enforced acceptance of the slave Trade Union Act, broke in pieces democratic functioning in the unions and crowned their work with Industrial Peace and Mondism? Who have fought against the "paralysis and apathy," fought a long and hard struggle against the stream, in the face of persecution, victimisation and repression by the reformists, fought for the renewal of the struggle, for the new independent line of fight? The revolutionary leadership. And now when the new wave of struggle is developing, indissolubly linked with the revolutionary leadership, the reformists think to come forward to break the*

bonds; and their commentator complacently observes the "revival," without seeing the very core of the revival—the revolutionary leadership. Now when the revolutionary leadership are beginning to reap the fruits of their hard fight, and winning the gathering confidence of the workers, the reformists dare to come forward to the workers whom they have betrayed with a Judas kiss of congratulation on their revival, and with a warning against the revolutionary leaders who have fought the way forward to that revival.

THE issue of revolutionary and reformist leadership will reach a far higher pitch of intensity than ever before in the coming economic struggles. The question of reformist leadership in an economic struggle is no longer a question of a weak and limited leadership, on which the workers will need to endeavour to exercise pressure; it is now a question of a direct strikebreaking leadership which will endeavour to strangle any real struggle in the interests of its higher policy of Industrial Peace, Mondism, a Labour Government and capitalist continuity. The temporary break in the Mond negotiations through the rejection of the proposed basis and demand for fresh negotiations by the employers' organisations does not represent any change in the situation or in the policy of the General Council. On the contrary, the General Council has from the start been the beggars in this process, and the employers the contemptuous granters of favours to their upper footmen. The break simply means, as was long ago forecast in these columns, that the abject servility and docility of the General Council has only led the employers to decide to raise the terms and exact a more humiliating surrender, and that further the employers wish to keep their hands free for any new attacks they may be making. The sapient *Daily Herald* editor finds the break "astonishing," "reaction and obscurantism," "short-sighted," "it speaks ill for the brainpower of those who have assented to it" (the cap is on the other head). But the General Council leaders are busily adapting themselves to their new humiliation. Clynes discovers that the break makes continued discussion "almost impossible" and will "very nearly" banish hope of an understanding. And Ben Turner

announces that, though the break is " *to some extent* heartbreaking," there is a " ray of light " in the proposal of a new conference. Whatever the particular manœuvring, the basic line of the reformist leadership, the line of capitalist co-operation and strike-breaking, will continue and develop to yet further heights or, rather, depths. With this certainty the workers will have to calculate. Hence the decisive importance of independent revolutionary leadership in the coming economic struggles.

THIS issue will reach its extreme point with a Labour Government. The main purpose of a Labour Government for the capitalists is to keep the workers quiet, to head off a gathering advance. The first duty of a Labour Government is industrial peace. Not the least important aspect of the whole Mondist policy of the General Council is a direct and conscious preparation for a Labour Government, to prevent the recurrence of the difficulties of 1924. The Labour Government will use every means in its power to enforce industrial peace, to enforce conciliation and arbitration and committees of inquiry and commissions (with plentiful " trade union " representation, *i.e.*, of their own agents) in place of the workers' struggle. Where the struggle develops, it will be their aim to make it " outlaw " in character, both in relation to the capitalist law and to the reformist machine in combination. The Labour Government will use every means of suppression against the workers' struggle (always covering their betrayal in the name of the " trade union " sanction of the General Council, *i.e.*, of their own agents), will use the E.P.A., the police, the secret police, the injunctions and the armed forces. In this way the Labour Government will show its true character most clearly to the mass of the workers in relation to the immediate economic struggle. The direct economic struggle of the workers, which the very existence of the Labour Government and the hopes to which it gives rise helps to stimulate, is the sharpest weapon for its exposure. The advance of the economic struggle in the coming period, and the fight against a Labour Government, are integral parts of a single fight. The independent leadership in the coming economic struggles is the key to the success of the fight against a Labour Government.

R. P. D.

COAL, CHARITY AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

By ALLEN HUTT

FOR a decade the mining industry has been the central problem confronting British capitalist society; it has been the "post-war" problem *par excellence*. Coal was the basis of British capitalism's prosperity in its hey day. It is equally the basic factor in British capitalism's decline. Fundamentally the crisis in the mining industry has been unbroken for the past ten years; and more than any other industry has coal shown with complete clearness that the economic problems of capitalism to-day are essentially political problems, that is to say problems which involve the whole question of class power.

In 1929 no one will gainsay that the mining situation, with all its implications, stands at the very centre of British politics. The bourgeoisie themselves have made this obvious by their alarmed concentration of attention on the terrible distress in the coalfields, and by the consequent charity stunt.

The Worst Year on Record

From the production standpoint the mining industry has just experienced the worst year in the whole of its history. It affords, indeed, striking illustration of the notorious fact that decadent capitalism is the barrier to the full development of the existing productive forces: for with an estimated productivity of 330,000,000 tons a year the industry in 1928 produced only 240,000,000 tons. This was 16,000,000 tons less than the output in 1927 (inflated by the brief "replacement boom" following the lockout), 3,000,000 tons less than 1925 (when the industry "seemed to be heading for irretrievable disaster") and 47,000,000 tons less than 1913. Proceeds per ton dropped from 16s. 5d. in the third quarter of 1925 to 14s. 1d. and 13s. in the third quarters of 1927 and 1928. Exports are in similar case: the 1928 figure, at a little more than 50,000,000 tons, was over

1,000,000 tons below 1927, over 750,000 tons below 1925 and over 23,000,000 tons below 1913. This declining level of exports is especially significant in view of the owners' frenzied competitive price-cutting; average export value per ton in 1928 was 15s. 7d., compared with 17s. 9d. in 1927 and 19s. 6d. in 1925. For 1928 the net trading loss over the whole industry was £12,000,000, nearly two and a-half times 1927's trading loss of £5,400,000.

During the whole period from the end of February to the beginning of December, 1928, the weekly output of coal only three times passed the 5,000,000 ton level. The position during the first two months of 1929 is that the abnormally rigorous winter has increased the demand for house coal; while the export coal trade has received an artificial stimulus from the reduction of railway freights on coal traffic for export—the first fruits of the Baldwin Government's de-rating scheme, which when it operates fully in October next will, it is estimated, make a present of some £3,112,000 to the coalowners. Under this stimulus a few closed-down collieries, mostly in South Wales, are re-opening.

But this temporary spurt in output is not reflected in any substantial increase in the numbers of men employed. Indeed, it serves to illustrate the whole post-lockout process—the extraction of the maximum intensity of labour for the minimum labour force. For the present average weekly output of $5\frac{1}{2}$ million tons is being produced by round about 900,000 mineworkers, some 220,000 less than the numbers employed, for the same output, in 1925.

The Coalowners' Offensive and Rationalisation

The coalowners' defeat of the miners in 1926, and the unremitting guerilla warfare that they have carried on since then, has enabled the cost of production to be reduced to an "economic level in relation to the world price," in the words of Evan Williams, the President of the Mining Association. The reduction is in effect entirely at the expense of wages; a comparison of the third quarters of 1925 and 1928 is instructive in this connection. It shows that while total costs of production per ton have been reduced by some 3s. 7d., of this no less than

3s. 3d. is represented by reduction in wages cost. Miners' wages are now nearly £17,000,000 a year less than before the lockout; it is worth adding in parenthesis that the royalty-owning parasites have suffered no reduction in the £6,000,000 that they suck annually from the industry, even though a prominent coalowner, E. J. Fox, managing director of the Stanton Ironworks Company, has said that the "heavy burden of royalties" is the "outstanding bad point in the coal industry to-day." F. A. Szarvasy, the financier, and associate of Lord Melchett in the anthracite combine, has supported the proposal, advocated by the Labour Party, of the State purchase of royalties. The plain fact, of course, is that nothing short of expropriation can lighten the royalty burden, as Frank Hodges (no less!) explained ten years ago.

The artificial averages of mining statistics convey a very inadequate picture of the actual conditions of the miners in any given coalfield. But the general tendencies revealed are sufficiently striking. The aggregate figure of wage reduction has already been quoted; in terms of wages per shift it means that on an average the miner now earns 1s. 1d. less for a shift an hour longer, making the average weekly wage received in 1928 something over £2, or roughly 30 per cent. over 1914 rates (themselves no paradise!) at a time when the official cost of living index is 67 per cent. over 1914. The number of miners employed dropped by a further 70,000 during 1928, and the increase in short-time working was reflected in the large numbers recorded as "temporarily stopped," especially in the Midland coalfields, where a three-day working week has been common; taking the whole country the collieries only worked 4.71 days a week in 1928, as against 4.81 days in 1927—the 1927 figure already being the lowest on record. And the output per man-shift, which in 1927 averaged 2½ cwts. more than the pre-lockout figure of 18 cwts., rose in 1928 to 3 cwts. more.

On every side the coalowners develop their offensive. Last December, in South Wales, they applied for a reduction in the minimum wage percentage from 28 to 20 on basis rates, with a reduction of the subsistence wage (to be payable to married men only) from 8s. 0½d. to 7s. a shift. They succeeded in getting an award reducing the subsistence wage to 7s. 10½d. a shift. In

Scotland the owners have terminated the overtime agreement and have enforced a reduction of sixpence a shift in the wages of colliery enginemen and boilermen. The present year is pregnant with new attacks. Durham's agreement terminates this month (March) and the Yorkshire, South Wales, Lancashire and Forest of Dean agreements in December. The owners have their pretext for demanding wage cuts ready to hand in the accumulated "deficiency" on the operation of the agreements—that is to say, the amount of profit under the terms of the agreement that the owners have had to forego in order to pay the agreed minimum wage. This deficiency already exceeds £50,000,000.

Thus the driving down of the miners to lower and yet lower levels is the basis on which any attempts at "rationalising" the mining industry are taking place. So far these attempts have not amounted to much, in comparison with the far-reaching Continental models. Amalgamation is slow (the Lancashire combine, the virtual completion of the anthracite monopoly and the Powell-Duffryn extensions—backed by the banking house of J. Henry Schroeder—are the most notable during the last period). The district marketing and output control schemes have had a chequered career, with exporters grumbling and the quota system increasing production costs. The prospects of a scheme of national co-ordination remain as remote as ever. For many months representatives of the coalowners have been meeting intermittently in London to discuss this question. Nothing emerges from these obscure corroborrees except an occasional bland communiqué that while there has been "progress,"

it is emphasised that *even when the idea of inter-district co-operation is accepted in principle*, there will remain an enormous amount of ground to be covered in formulating concrete proposals. (My italics.)

I do not believe that there is any likelihood of the coalowners carrying through any thorough-going schemes of rationalisation. Yet the problem, for British capitalism as a whole, is an urgent one. What, then, is the prospect? Governmental intervention to achieve rationalisation? There are already significant indications that bourgeois opinion is beginning to move along these lines. Thus, Mr. Meakin, the Liberal journalist who is the principal intellectual protagonist of rationalisation in the mining industry, writes:—

The conviction was expressed to me to-day by one whose technical knowledge of the industry is unrivalled that unless the attitude of the owners and their associated interests is radically changed within the next year there will be created an economic and social situation *with which only a resolute Government will be capable of dealing.* (*Daily News*, November 30, 1928.)

A Conservative newspaper is even more suggestive:—

If during the next year the coal industry does not effectively reform itself, the Government, *of whatever party*, will be compelled to step in and formulate schemes of its own devising. (*Yorkshire Post Annual Trade Review*, 1928, p. 20. My Italics.)

But the Baldwin Government “has no intention of departing from its policy of non-interference and leaving the industry to work out its own salvation.”—(*Financial News*, December 11, 1928.) The conclusion is obvious: the bourgeoisie are looking, as R. P. D. suggested in his Notes last month, to a Labour or Liberal-Labour Government, as the instrument of rationalisation.

“*Not only Benevolence, but Self-Interest*”

I referred at the beginning of this article to the charity stunt as a revelation of the political importance of the mining situation. The gross hypocrisy of the whole business is typical and need not detain us. It is worth recalling that the Lord Mayor's Fund for relief of coalfields distress was first set up in April of last year, following the publication by *The Times* of a sensational series of articles pointing to the growing “bitterness and despair” in the Welsh mining valleys. The fund collected less than £100,000 and was languishing when, with the onset of winter, the bourgeoisie took a more serious fright. It is not necessary to go into all the details of the Press campaign that followed, with the *Daily Mail* in the van, sobbing bucketsful of crocodile tears. Nor is it necessary to do more than refer to the attitude of the Government, which, after at first limiting itself to verbal “sympathy,” produced its characteristic piece of almsgiving meanness—the “pound for pound” offer. Even that offer was only made after responsible bourgeois journals, like the *Observer*, had featured reports from the coalfields that “the limit of endurance has been reached.”

The *Morning Post*, with its accustomed cynical candour, spoke what was in the inner mind of the governing class:—

The first business of everybody is . . . to play the good Samaritan rather than the censor. It is to be remembered that such an attitude is dictated *not only by benevolence but by self-interest.* (My italics.)

The object of the charity stunt is frankly to damp down the despair and revolt arising directly from the policy of the Baldwin Government in cutting down relief, disallowing unemployment benefit to tens of thousands of the 300,000 unemployed miners, and so on. By the provision of boots and food for children it also functions as a means for enabling Boards of Guardians and Education Authorities to escape their statutory responsibilities in this connection. It should be added that the Ministry of Health's tightening up of the ordinary relief machinery, and obdurate refusal to grant loans for relief works such as road construction, is continuing unchecked, notably in South Wales—(*The Times*, January 18, 1929.)

The official fund is, of course, grotesquely inadequate to meet the existing needs. At the beginning of February only £625,000 in all had been subscribed, and only £216,000 had been paid out, of which £17,000 was to subsidise industrial transference, &c. The Exchequer had only paid over the first instalment of the "pound for pound" grant, £150,000. And the distribution that does take place is through a centralised bureaucratic machine, with an apparatus of district and local committees on which the overwhelming representation is capitalist and bureaucratic—Guardians and Local Councils and their officials, Labour Exchange managers, charity and religious organisations and the like. The methods adopted are inquisitorial, in the worst traditions of the Charity Organisation Society. In Scotland, for instance, an applicant for relief has to answer thirty-four questions, giving every conceivable detail as to his possible income—including income from "relatives and friends" and from children not resident with him. The scale of relief in Scotland, incidentally, is carefully calculated to be *below* the level of unemployment benefit, and in many cases means that 1s. a week is granted for a child, and that is all; relief vouchers for as little as 6d. are being issued.

With minor criticisms, the reformist leadership is participating

in this charity swindle. The M.F.G.B. has paid over £10,000 from its own distress fund to the official fund. The vulgar Tory electioneering stunt of the Prince of Wales' tour through Northumberland and Durham was hailed with servile adulation.

Every moment of this trip has been very painful to the Prince and everyone also concerned (smugly wrote the special correspondent of the *Daily Herald*), but the way in which he has gone into everything is a tribute to his humanity and an explanation of his popularity.

But the destitute miners themselves are learning by experience what capitalist "charity" means. I think on this point it is worth quoting some recent remarks by David Proudfoot, one of the Fife miners' agents:—

The scheme has misfired. More dissatisfaction exists because of the methods of distribution and the small allocations than existed before the relief commenced. In addition this dissatisfaction is slowly organising and expressing itself . . . [Unemployed miners] attend N.U.W.C.M. meetings in greater numbers . . . They are now realising that the relief scheme is one huge hoax so far as they are concerned.

Growing Militancy and the Unemployed March

Where the crumbs of charity do not suffice to restrain the recrudescence of militancy in the miners' ranks, the bourgeoisie turn at once to their other weapon—the policeman's baton. Nine Mile Point is the current case. At this Monmouthshire colliery, closed down since last November, the men were standing absolutely solid against the owners' terms for re-opening, which involved wage reductions of 4s. 6d. a shift for colliers, an illegal ten-hour shift for 20 per cent. of the hauliers and enginemen, and negotiations only through the "non-political" Union. Only four blacklegs were working out of the 2,000 miners required. On Wednesday, February 6, a crowd of some 800 miners, their wives and children, who had gathered to demonstrate against the blacklegs, was repeatedly charged by police; "so dense was the crowd that the police truncheons came down in an almost solid mass of humanity" (*Daily Chronicle*), and the casualties, including women and children, were extensive. The charge was subsequently described at the Monmouthshire Standing Joint Authority as "the most callous, brutal and vicious that could be made," and it was alleged to have been "pre-arranged" (*Daily Herald*, February 14, 1929).

Growing militancy, that finds expression in determined pit struggles of which Nine Mile Point is the latest instance, is to be seen also in the rally of miners to the National Unemployed March to London under the leadership of the N.U.W.C.M. Miners form a large percentage of the marchers and it is in their passage through mining areas that the marchers have met some of their most enthusiastic receptions. It has been left to the reformist leadership of the Miners' Federation, too, to sink to the lowest depths in their sabotage of the march. Before the march began the General Council had made their position clear and had communicated to Trades Councils their infamous "advice" not to help the marchers. But Herbert Smith waited until the first contingents of marchers were actually on the road—and then signed his name to a leading article in *The Miner* (January 26, 1929) advising Federation members not "to have anything to do with the March." Leaving aside Mr. Smith's humbug about the "terrible hardship" of the march, we may observe his concluding reason for opposing it, namely that:—

The main object of the organisers is to make propaganda for a political party which is hostile to the Labour Party, to which the Miners' Federation is affiliated.

Here, clearly expressed, is that subordination of the Miners' Federation to the political line of the Labour Party which has been a feature of the Federation's attitude in relation to the position in the Scottish Miners' Union, and against which the rising tide of militancy needs to be more and more definitely directed.

One final word on the Scottish position. The M.F.G.B. Commission of Inquiry has come and gone, excluding from its hearings any representative of the Fife Union, though Fife, where Adamson has split the Union, is the crux of the whole position. The Scottish Miners' Executive have now accepted the affiliation of Adamson's Union. The Federation Executive have passed a formal resolution condemning the Communists while proposing a further farcical "inquiry" into the "alleged" (1) split in Fife. Meantime, the Scottish Executive have successfully rushed through, at a special conference summoned on a week's notice, a change of rule which disaffiliates all districts four quarters in arrears, which will, therefore, automatically exclude Fife, and will enable the Old Gang to hold with impunity an annual conference at which their re-election is assured beforehand.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA

Thesis of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of India

[We print below the political resolution adopted by the First All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party Conference, held in Calcutta, December 21-24, 1928. In view of the present rapid development and growing political consciousness of the Indian working-class movement, and of the prominent part played therein by the Workers' and Peasants' Party, this resolution will be found of great interest, not only for its estimate of the situation in India but also for its authoritative statement of the political tasks and policy of the Party. It would be easy to criticise some of the features of their view, which has clearly not taken into account the important discussions of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International on the Indian question, notably with regard to the industrialisation of India and the dangers inherent in a political party, like the Workers' and Peasants' Party, based on a union of different classes. This fact only makes it the more important for us in Great Britain to pay adequate attention to the important movement now developing in India.]

THE political situation in the past year, while it conforms generally to the lines described a year ago, has undergone important developments. The following are its main features:—

- (1) Continuance of the firm policy of imperialism towards the bourgeois nationalist movement, and increasingly reactionary attitude towards the masses.
- (2) Consequent retreat of almost all parties of the bourgeoisie, including the Congress, in support of a timid Liberal programme of constitutional demands and communal reconciliation.
- (3) Considerable increase in the strength and militancy of the mass movement, workers, peasants and petty-bourgeoisie.
- (4) An effort on the part of a wing of the bourgeoisie to threaten imperialism with the mass movement, and at the same time to regain the control over the petty-bourgeoisie and the masses which they are losing.

The Policy of British Imperialism

(1) The provocative and apparently stupid policy of British imperialism is dictated by the increasing difficulty of its position in the world. The approach of war, and the continued economic decline of Great Britain, render it imperative for imperialism to keep its political control and economic predominance in India undisturbed. But this is becoming increasingly difficult, as the shortage of an exportable surplus of British capital tends to deprive the British interests of an important weapon used in maintaining their economic leadership. Increasing recourse must, therefore, be had to the political weapon, and the British political dictatorship has been used to force through the Rupee ratio, the All-British Commission on Constitutional Reforms, &c., and is expected to enforce the Reserve Bank Bill in spite of the strenuous opposition of practically the whole forces of the bourgeoisie.

At the same time the appointment of the Butler Committee and the statements of the leading loyalist Princes show that serious steps are being taken by imperialism to safeguard its position by strengthening its hold on the Indian States and increasing their military efficiency.

But the difficulties of British imperialism also determine that its fundamental economic and political line of policy in India shall be maintained. It is British imperialist policy to industrialise India, in co-operation with Indian capital, though in such a way that British predominance is maintained. The policy of concessions is still pursued, as is shown by the continued grant of tariffs to predominantly Indian firms and industries. Similarly the basic policy of compromise with the Indian bourgeoisie on the political field is to be maintained, and even concessions are to be granted, provided that effective British control is absolutely secure. Thus the Memorandum to the Simon Commission of the European Association suggests an increase in the nominated and Government seats in the Assembly, addition to the powers of the Provincial Legislatures, but no widening of the franchise, some concessions to the bourgeoisie—none to the masses—but increase in the power of British control at the centre. Further, the respectful attitude of officials and of all responsible sections of the

Anglo-Indian and British imperialist Press towards the Nehru Report, testifies to an anxiety to compromise. The unexpected aggressiveness of imperialism does not, therefore, imply a fundamental change in its policy towards the Indian bourgeoisie, but only a partial and probably temporary modification. The essential line of policy remains the same.

The Retreat of the Indian Bourgeoisie

(2) Before the firmness of the Government the bourgeoisie have again retreated. Their natural indignation and the pressure of the masses after the appointment of the Simon Commission drove them towards an uncompromising attitude, in the case of the Congress leaders to support of the Independence Resolution and the approval of hartals on the arrival of the Commission. But later, when the All-Parties Conference was convened, and the bourgeois Left Wing had to choose between the masses and their class, they chose the latter. The attitude of the Government impressed many with the fact that nothing was to be gained by declamation or threat. There was left no alternative but a united front of the bourgeoisie, on the basis of practical constitutional possibilities. All the bourgeois parties, under the same compulsion, dropped their political and communal differences, and put forward a reasonable proposal for compromise with imperialism in the Nehru Report.

The Nehru Report, as accepted by the All-Parties Conference, makes the following principal demands: (1) complete responsibility for an Indian Parliament elected by universal suffrage, in regard to internal affairs, including finance, customs, taxation, &c.; (2) rights of the individual of a bourgeois democratic type, including a special safeguard of private property rights, but including also some freedom for trade union organisation, &c.

In return it concedes:—

- (1) Foreign affairs to be conducted on the same basis as those of the Dominions,
- (2) Executive powers nominally vested in the King, acting through nominated Governor-General and Governors.
- (3) No discrimination against British financial, commercial and industrial interests.

- (4) The armed forces to be under the control of a committee consisting partly of Ministers and partly of British officers.
- (5) Existing pay, &c., of present civil and other officers to be guaranteed, their resignation voluntary.
- (6) Indian States remain under their present regime, but in relations with the Indian Government.
- (7) All foreign State debts to be paid.

The masses thus enter into the programme hardly at all. In the States they are left at the mercy of the Princes. In British India they are given the vote, personal rights, a certain protection for trade unions, primary education, some vaguely-worded promises in regard to economic improvement and security of tenure of land, the landlord system being otherwise retained.

The Report is entirely a bourgeois-democratic scheme, of a not very advanced type, and in relation to imperialism constitutes almost the minimum which the Indian bourgeoisie could demand. Its acceptance means a decisive retreat on the part of the Congress leaders from the position taken by them a year before, and represents a consolidation of the whole bourgeois class, on the basis of reconciliation of minor differences, the complete acceptance of imperialism, and a minimum programme of demands, into a single reactionary *bloc*, completely divorced from the masses.

The retreat of the bourgeoisie from its position of would-be leader of the masses, is shown also by:—

- (1) Its betrayal of the Bardoli peasants' resistance to increase of assessment.
- (2) Its practical neglect of, and even opposition to, the numerous mass workers' strikes which have occurred this year.
- (3) The half-hearted and formal opposition expressed to the extremely dangerous and reactionary Trade Disputes Bill.
- (4) The conduct of the Bengal Congress Council Party in connection with the Bengal Tenancy Law Amendment Bill, in which on practically every issue they supported the zemindars against the cultivators, frequently voting with the Government.

The Advance of the Mass Movement

(3) While the bourgeoisie as a whole have been retreating, the masses, including a large section of the petty bourgeoisie, have been making noteworthy advance. The workers' move-

ment, which has been rising slowly for some time, has reached a level of activity and militancy which has not been attained for six or seven years past. Most disputes have been characterised by (1) extreme obstinacy and prolongation; the resort by the capitalist to all devices of intimidation and deceit to break the workers' strength, which, however, has in most cases been maintained with remarkable courage and endurance; (2) the active participation of the State forces on the capitalist side; wholesale arrests, prohibition of meetings, forcible entry into workers' houses, beatings, &c.; (3) a consequent tendency in some cases for the workers to emancipate themselves from the ideology of the old-style bourgeois leaders, and to acquire class-consciousness and an attitude of struggle against both the employer and the State. The political consciousness of the leading sections of the workers has substantially increased. And at the same time the base of the movement is broadening; several disputes have occurred in previously unorganised industries.

The basic conditions which bring about this movement, viz., trade depression and an employers' offensive, rising prices and a gradual spread of knowledge of the workers' movement and of revolutionary ideas, continue to operate. In spite, therefore, of some setbacks and local demoralisation, the progress of the movement is likely to go on without serious intermission for some time.

There has also been a less marked, but important, advance in the peasants' movement. Actual campaigns against landlords or Government have occurred or are threatened from Bombay, Madras, United Provinces and Bengal; mostly defensive, but one or two actually taking the offensive; while several Workers' and Peasants' Conferences have been held in different Provinces.

Some sections of the petty bourgeoisie have also manifested increased activity, as is shown by the continued growth and activity of the Youth Movement, the enthusiastic acceptance almost everywhere in the Youth organisations and in Congress meetings, &c., of the slogan of Independence and the tendency, given expression to, though not yet much realised in practice, to take up mass organisation.

In response to the growth of the mass movement, especially of its leading section, the workers, the Government, in addition

to its practical repressive measures, has taken serious steps. It has brought forward a Trade Disputes Bill, of which the most important proposals are to penalise heavily all strikes with a political complexion and to prevent all strikes in railways and other services, thus cutting off from the movement its largest and hitherto most active and best organised section. Further, by means of the Public Safety Bill, further steps are taken to cut the feeble connection between the international revolutionary labour movement and the Indian workers. In addition, increased efforts are being made through the I.F.T.U. and the British Trades Union Congress to support and strengthen the reactionary leaders of the unions.

The Independence for India League

(4) The publication of the Nehru Report, which by its frankness and moderation revealed the true nature and aims of bourgeois nationalism, brought about a crisis within the Congress ranks. The hypocrisy of the bourgeois nationalist propaganda for some time past, especially of its support of complete independence, was very clearly shown. It was feared that the petty-bourgeoisie, whose enthusiasm has been greatly roused by the slogan of Independence, would withdraw support in disgust. At the same time the rapid rise of the workers' movement impressed many with its power, and with its danger for the bourgeoisie. It was clearly seen to be emancipating itself from the control of the old type of moderate bourgeois labour leader.

Accordingly, the Independence for India League was launched, and rapidly found support among the bourgeois politicians, although its policy, not yet formulated in detail, must mean nothing short of mass revolution if taken seriously. There was even some talk of revolution and of socialism. The possibility arose of a serious breach in the ranks of the bourgeoisie if such wild talk were allowed to continue, even if only for purposes of demonstration, before the masses and the petty-bourgeoisie, whose psychology it fitted so well. A halt was, therefore, called by the Bengal group, who published independently and in advance of the general body, a suggested programme, clearly with the object of forcing the hand of the All-India League, and confining Independence propaganda to harmless bourgeois lines.

The programme and manifesto published by the Bengal Independence for India League, while using phrases such as "economic emancipation," "removal of economic inequalities," and "rousing the masses," contains nothing totally unacceptable to the more moderate wing of the bourgeoisie. The section on political democracy contains nothing but the demand for complete independence, and that on social democracy familiar items of social reform propaganda. The economic demands include, for workers, the eight-hour day for factory workers, unemployment pay, sickness insurance, pensions, &c., and control of the rate of interest on loans and supply of cheap credit by co-operative institutions. In connection with industry it is proposed to nationalise the key industries, railways, shipping and air services, to introduce compulsory arbitration, profit sharing and labour participation in management. Taxation on private capital, including inheritance duties, is also proposed.

This is a programme not intended to rouse the revolutionary energy of the masses in pursuit of their economic demands, but is calculated to bring Indian industrialism into line with modern bourgeois practice, including its methods of keeping the workers under control. It is essentially a programme for the bourgeoisie, in which items are included not as demands by the workers, but as promises of what will be done for them by the bourgeoisie when bourgeois independence is established, so that the independent workers' movement may be held in check. In particular, it has no revolutionary significance at all.

Even more reactionary is the programme in connection with the land, in which the chief items are annulment of agricultural indebtedness and abolition of landlordism by indemnification. This item provides a very clear indication that the Independence League intends no break with the Congress, which in Bengal is notoriously influenced by landowning interests, but is on the contrary more in fundamental agreement with the general line of Congress policy.

The unreal and hypocritical character of the programme is perhaps most definitely revealed by the fact that throughout there is not a word mentioned of the method by which the aims are to be achieved.

The programme is quite in line in its counter-revolutionary character with the usual propaganda of its leaders (cf. the presidential speech of Mr. S. C. Bose at the Maharashtra Provincial Conference, 1928, in which the class struggle is definitely opposed), and with their conduct in connection with labour disputes. In more than one strike the efforts of the Independence League leaders have been directed towards stopping the strikes in the interests of a national industry. Some leaders of this school do not hesitate to avow themselves Fascists.

Although the Bengal League represents a moderate wing in relation to some other sections, the nature of the League as a whole is fundamentally the same. This is shown by:—

- (1) The personnel of the leading groups, the members of the All-Parties Conference who signed the initial manifesto, and the decision to make the League a wing of the National Congress only. No section or group which is loyal to Congress principles can really lead the masses. Congress aims are nationalist, and opposed to class struggle. The mass movement can only grow by waging the class struggle. To confine the League membership to Congress members means in effect to exclude the masses.
- (2) The action of most of the members in supporting simultaneously the Independence League and the Nehru Report "except for Dominion Status." The whole Report depends upon Dominion Status, that is, compromise with imperialism, as its basis, and its provisions are quite incompatible with any attainable independence.
- (3) The repeated hint that if Independence is advocated, Dominion Status may be granted as a compromise.
- (4) The failure of almost all the propagandists of the League to treat the matter seriously. They appear to think that a mere sentiment in favour of independence is sufficient qualification for membership of the League, and that the propaganda of this sentiment is its whole work. The practical revolutionary implications of independence are neglected almost entirely.

The Independence for India League is thus to be looked upon as the resultant of different tendencies:—

- (1) A hesitating and as yet confused move on the part of a section of the petty-bourgeoisie towards a revolutionary policy, with perhaps on the part of some the idea of exploiting the revolutionary mass movement for the attainment of independence for the middle classes.
- (2) An attempt by a section of the bourgeoisie to extort concessions from imperialism by threatening it with a movement for independence among the middle classes and the masses.
- (3) An attempt by a section of the bourgeoisie to regain that contro-

over the mass movement and the petty-bourgeoisie which the increasingly reactionary attitude of the bourgeois class as a whole, and of the bourgeois labour leaders, is causing it to lose.

Tasks of the Workers' and Peasants' Parties

In conditions of rising mass movement, the Workers' and Peasants' Party has (1) to assist the growth of the movement to the utmost, (2) to clarify its very confused ideas, and (3) to improve its organisation, especially that of the working-class vanguard of the movement, and to widen and strengthen the Party.

For the first purpose it is necessary to establish a united front with all organisations which tend to increase the momentum of the movement, whether of the workers, of the peasants, or of the petty-bourgeoisie. But for the remaining purposes it is essential to insist more strongly than has been done previously upon the independent role of the Workers' and Peasants' Party, as the only organisation which has a correct policy and can unite and lead all the mass revolutionary forces of the country. The Party can be content no longer to act primarily as a section or wing of another organisation. It is the only genuine representative of the rising mass movement.

The developments of the past year bring the relations between the Workers' and Peasants' Party on the one hand, and the National Congress with its Independence wing on the other, to a new stage. The gradual divergence between the masses and the bourgeoisie, which has been making itself manifest for some years past, has sharpened decisively. The bourgeoisie as a whole has retreated, and that section which has not done so, maintains its advanced position more and more obviously for tactical reasons only. On the other hand the masses have advanced considerably. The appropriate expression of the old relations between the movements, was that the Workers' and Peasants' Party constituted itself a Left Wing of the National Movement, and worked as a section of the Congress.

This can no longer be the situation. The Workers' and Peasants' Party is the representative of the advancing mass movement. The dominating leadership of the Congress associates itself with the retreating bourgeois *bloc*, whose representative organisation is the All-Parties Conference. The two move-

ments separate, and their leading organisations must do so also. The Workers' and Peasants' Party must henceforth play a definitely independent part.

For some time, however, the Congress will maintain its composite character, as a loose organisation, with indefinite creed, under bourgeois leadership, but with a petty-bourgeois following including different social strata and different political tendencies, some of a potentially revolutionary nature. While this is the case, and while the Workers' and Peasants' Party remains relatively weak and unorganised in the country, it will be necessary to follow the traditional policy of forming fractions within Congress organisations for the purpose of agitation, of exposing its reactionary leadership and of drawing the revolutionary sections towards the Workers' and Peasants' Party. This policy, however, is only temporary. The Workers' and Peasants' Party can have no intention of dominating or capturing the Congress: the function of its members within the Congress is a purely critical one. Party members cannot, therefore, be allowed to take office in Congress organisation (except with the special permission of the N.E.C.) The object of the Workers' and Peasants' Party can only be to build up its own independent organisation so that it can as soon as possible dispense with the necessity of agitation within the Congress.

The relation with the Independence League is of a different nature. Although not homogeneous in membership, the Independence League has a definite policy and programme. It is in essence a bourgeois organisation whose policy is an insincere travesty of that of the Workers' and Peasants' Party, and whose object is in large part to prevent the independent growth of the mass movement. Workers' and Peasants' Party members cannot enter the Independence League as members, as to do so would be to attribute to it before the masses a seriousness and importance which it does not possess. The Workers' and Peasants' Party can only work with the Independence League in a united front, on the basis of its propaganda for independence, which in spite of its frivolous character has objectively some value. But it is necessary continually to expose the League's faults of programme and policy, and its fundamentally bourgeois, even Fascist character, and ultimately counter-revolutionary rôle.

As opposed to the policy of the Independence League, the Workers' and Peasants' Party must emphasise the following principal points:—

- (1) It must expose the Nehru Report as a whole, and especially the pretence that it is possible to support simultaneously the Report and independence. The allied conception that Dominion Status is a "step to independence" must also be exploded.
- (2) There must be left no doubt as to the meaning of independence; it involves the destruction of imperialist, political and military control, and economic penetration, and hence necessitates revolution.
- (3) The independence of the Labour Movement from bourgeois control must be insisted upon, and the necessity of its pursuing its class struggle against all exploiters.
- (4) The abolition of landlordism, in principle without compensation, must also be put forward, and the consequent necessity of the agrarian revolution.
- (5) In regard to the States, the policy of the Nehru Report, which is supported by the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia of the States, represented in the States' Peoples' Conference, must be opposed. It is in effect to leave the States under their present feudal regime, only advocating some formal change in the relations between the princes and the Government. The policy of the party must be to draw the populations of the States into the struggle side by side with the masses of British India, for the total abolition of the States and the establishment of democratic government on the same basis as is advocated for the rest of the country. Only the creation of a mass movement in the States can neutralise or destroy them as a base for imperialism.

It is essential for the Party also to develop its own activity in other ways. It must not depend upon the Congress and the bourgeois movement even to the extent that it has in the past for its campaigns and slogans, and must take its own completely independent initiative in all political matters. It is necessary for the Party (1) to wage a far more intense campaign against the Trade Disputes Bill, in spite of the indifference of the bourgeois politicians. (2) Similarly a campaign of propaganda must be conducted against the war danger, and particularly against the war preparations against Soviet Russia. (3) The international nature of the revolutionary nationalist and working-class movement must be emphasised in concrete manner, and examples from current politics brought before the masses, particularly the

workers. Of especial importance is the support of the Chinese workers and peasants against the white terror of the bourgeois nationalists in alliance with imperialism, and exposure of the part played by the Chinese bourgeoisie in the movement. In this matter the whole nationalist Press and propaganda is definitely counter-revolutionary, and the class sympathy between the Indian and Chinese bourgeoisie must be exposed.

THE INDIAN BOURGEOISIE AND THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION

By M. N. ROY

THE speech of the British Viceroy in the Indian Legislative Assembly on January 28 indicated how imperialism plans to meet the situation in India. Evidently imperialism has not failed to notice the radicalisation of the Nationalist Movement, and to focus its attention on the force causing this radicalisation. Imperialism recognises its most dangerous and determined enemy in the working class. Its tactics in the present situation, as hinted by the Viceroy, are to point out to the Nationalist bourgeoisie the dangerousness of the situation, and ask their co-operation in meeting the common danger. The Viceroy was encouraged to put forth this policy of counter-revolutionary united front by the attitude of the Nationalist bourgeoisie who are positively alarmed by the situation, and frankly express their disapproval of any revolutionary movement. The following quotations illustrate the situation.

Commenting upon the "critical situation in the country" as indicated by the events of the last twelve months, and by the Congress and Conferences during the closing week of the year, Bepin Chandra Pal writes:—

It is no longer possible to describe the Congress as a demonstration of mere middle class discontent. . . . It can no longer be said that the educated classes in India have no backing in their political struggle from the masses of the people. . . . Indeed, *it is at least doubtful whether the lead comes at all from the educated leaders* or whether these leaders are not more or less helpless instruments in the hand of the awakened multitudes. Every one of the Congress leaders feels that his position in the movement entirely depends upon the favour of the crowd. No leader to-day dares to follow the lead of his reason or conscience, not even the Mahatma (Gandhi). Yet in 1920 Gandhi's word was law to the multitudes. . . . The Leviathan has commenced to move. . . .

This was demonstrated by the invasion of the Congress by twenty thousand labourers. This was verification of the adage, "coming events cast their shadows before." . . . On one of the banners of this procession of working men was inscribed "Long Live Independent Socialist Republic of India." . . . The time cannot be very far when the working classes, once aroused to the sense of their power to coerce the government of the country, will refuse to be exploited by the middle-class politicians; "Red" leaders will rise from among them who will have no respect for any law or order either economic, political or moral.

Pal presents this remarkably true and well-drawn picture of the situation not as something to be welcomed. He draws it as a warning not only to the Nationalist bourgeoisie, but also to the petty bourgeois radicals who unconsciously are riding on the crest of the rising tide of revolution. An ex-Jacobin himself, Pal warns the Indian Jacobins not to play with fire. He reminds them what they are, and explains to them the dangerousness of the game they are playing. He writes:—

Neither the Congress leaders nor the Moslem leaders in their Khilafat Conference or their League, much less the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha, will bring about a revolution. Some of them may talk of Civil-disobedience and non-payment of taxes; but none of them is made of the stuff that creates revolutions. . . . Yet all these people have been working for revolution, which, if and when it bursts, will make them its first victims. Once popular passion is roused by them for their purpose, neither God nor man will be able to keep the angry multitudes non-violent.

Having pointed out the dangerous potentiality of the situation, Pal, who is the foremost ideologist of bourgeois Nationalism, appeals for a counter-revolutionary united front of all who would save India from the horrors of class struggle. He continues:—

And let the Government know that should there be a revolutionary outburst under present conditions, they will not find it possible to grapple with it as easily as they grappled with a peaceful upheaval ten years ago. It behoves, therefore, both Indian and imperial statesmanship to take counsel together without delay, and find a way out of the crisis . . . The proceedings of the Congress and other gatherings of the last Christmas week in Calcutta offer a serious warning to both Indian and British statesmanship to settle their conflicts before it is too late, and the future completely passes out of their hands.

This is not a solitary voice. Pal, a clever and courageous political thinker as he is, only expresses the sentiments of the entire class he represents, frankly and logically. The objective

importance of these views as indicating the rôle of the bourgeoisie in the national revolution is fully appreciated when the history of the man expressing them is known. A quarter of a century ago Pal was the leader of the Radical Left Wing of the Nationalist Movement. At that time he occupied in the country a place analogous to that recently occupied by Gandhi. It was partially under his leadership that the National Congress, a quarter of a century ago, broke away from the monopoly of the Indian disciples of imperialist Liberalism. Pal can be called the father of Indian Jacobinism, though it is long since he has betrayed his child. Indeed, he was a revolutionary when the Indian Nationalist bourgeoisie was still a revolutionary class. In view of these facts, Pal's views are particularly indicative.

But Pal is not alone. Similar views are expressed by an ever-growing number of spokesmen of the Nationalist bourgeoisie. These views increase in volume and clearness in proportion as the revolutionary forces assert themselves on the situation—in proportion as the working class appears on the political scene as an independent and dominant factor of the situation.

The Indian Liberal Federation represents that section of the Nationalist bourgeoisie which broke away from the Congress when this, in 1920, adopted the tactics of non-co-operation with the British Government. It represents heavy industrial, trading and landowning interests. Last year, a considerable section of the Liberal Federation modified its attitude of co-operation with the Government, and joined the movement for boycotting the Simon Commission. In the Annual Conference of the Liberal Federation, which met at the same time as the National Congress, the President, Chimanlal Setalvad, devoted a large part of his speech to indicating the "right way to meet the impatient idealists and to prevent the spread of Communist and Socialist ideas in India." Among other things he said:—

We are now passing through very momentous and anxious times, and it must be remembered by *all those who are interested in the welfare of this country*—and I include in that description not only ourselves, but also the British Government who in the wisdom of Providence have been brought into partnership with us—that the time through which India is now passing is really very anxious. A mentality is growing which is absolutely impatient with the present state of things and which, if not guided in the proper channel, will

swallow everything. The Communistic ideas and Socialism are the coming menace. If that mentality grows it will swallow Dominion Status, it will swallow independence, it will swallow the present structure of society . . . The only way of preventing the spread of Socialism and Communism is for the authorities (British) to take a bold step and to concede at once what we have been asking for, namely, Dominion Status.

We of the Liberal faith have served the country all these years, and value and cherish British connection, and have stood by the government believing that British connection is good for both the countries. If our moderate counsels are not heeded, there are very troublesome times ahead with the growing discontent against the Government and the present order of society.

The implication of this speech cannot be missed. The Indian bourgeoisie offer imperialism their willing co-operation to combat the common enemy. The counter-revolutionary sentiment of the Nationalist bourgeoisie is evident. Only they have no power to give practical expression to this sentiment. Therefore, they appeal to the imperialist overlords for some political power which they would wield for suppressing not only the working class but also the national revolution. There is a favourable response to this appeal. While it is out of the question that full Dominion Status will be granted in the immediate future, it is practically certain that the native bourgeoisie will be given considerable power in the provincial government. This will very likely include the administration of police by Indian ministers. Even a large section of the British residents in India have recommended this measure. The object is to commandeer the services of the Nationalist bourgeoisie in the counter-revolutionary combat against the working class and any other revolutionary movement.

The *Leader*, an organ of the Liberal Federation, commented on the speech quoted above as follows:—

Communism and other undesirable forms of extremism are the result of the policy of economic exploitation and racial domination. Steps should be taken to stop the exploitation and misleading of the masses for revolutionary purpose . . . The Liberals are opposed to revolutionary political methods. They have made it absolutely clear that they are not supporters of Communism. They are convinced that violence cannot solve any problem . . . Repressive policy will only aggravate political distemper, promote the purpose of the revolutionaries and destroy whatever influence the friends of British connection and lovers of peace have in the country, and let loose anarchy.

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The journal further writes in the same article:—

Among the friends of the British we count Mahatma Gandhi and Pundit Motilal Nehru. We pray most fervently that British statesmen may in time realise the gravity of the situation, and by large-hearted and courageous statesmanship retrieve it before it is too late.

It should be noticed that the spokesmen of the bourgeoisie use Communism and other forms of extremism, by which they mean revolutionary Nationalism, interchangeably. If it were only for Communism, this fright and hatred of the Nationalist bourgeoisie would not be so remarkable; for, as bourgeoisie they must naturally hate and fear Communism. But, as it is, the object of their fear, hatred and attack is any kind or form of revolution. The Spectre of Communism drives the Indian bourgeoisie into the arms of British imperialism, thus revealing them as enemies of national revolution.

The reference to Gandhi and Nehru as "friends of the British" is neither accidental nor an exaggeration. Had it been so, it should have been repudiated by the persons concerned. On the contrary, before and since the last meeting of the National Congress, both of them made statements which add a touch of authority to the reference made by the Liberal journal.

A few days after the National Congress had very reluctantly endorsed his compromise resolution on the question of British connection, Gandhi categorically stated to the Press: "My position is very clear. To me Dominion Status means independence. Others have been led, through suspicion of Britain's good faith, to make a distinction between the two." (*The Englishman*, Calcutta.) Here Gandhi makes a declaration of his belief in Britain's good faith. In other words, he is "a friend of the British" as the Liberal journal calls him. One cannot be a friend of the British without automatically being an enemy of the forces antagonistic to British domination. So, Gandhi also is opposed to national revolution, and will denounce any revolutionary struggle as a Communist menace in a critical moment. As regards Motilal Nehru, there is less doubt on this score. The pseudo-Danton of India will not need a guillotine for political elimination, as soon as some real Jacobins appear on the scene. A

full-blooded Girondin, he will quickly pass over to his native camp and, true to his class, will fight the revolution.

But let us still see what the out-spoken representatives of the Nationalist bourgeoisie have to say. The Moslem League, which adhered to the common Nationalist platform embodied in the so-called Nehru Report, held its annual meeting simultaneously with the Congress, in opposition to the officially inspired All-India Moslem Conference. A Maharaja with considerable capital invested in industry was in the chair, and said the following:—

Severance of British connection is a hopelessly unworkable proposition. India's place in the British Commonwealth is a place of undeniable security. Her association with the British Commonwealth is a valuable asset, and it will be folly to destroy this precious connection. There is plenty of room for growth, development and expression of Indian nationalism within the orbit of connection with England.

Abdul Karim, who opened the meeting and proposed the capitalist Maharaja for the chair, said:—

For economic and cultural autonomy Dominion Status will give India all scope we need for the present. It will, therefore, be unwise to fritter away our limited national energy for the chimera of independence.

On the morrow of the annual meeting of the National Congress the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce met, for the first time in its history, in the presence of the Viceroy. The Chairman of the Federation, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, an industrial magnate of Bombay, discoursed on the atmosphere of a threat to law and order, and appealed for legislation checking the revolutionary development of the labour movement. He was one of those who had voted against the anti-Communist Public Safety Bill in the Legislative Assembly. He made a veiled apology for his action, and hinted that when the Government brought up the Bill in the next parliamentary session, the representatives of the big bourgeoisie would vote for it. Obviously, the intervening events testifying to a radicalisation of the Nationalist Movement essentially under the pressure of the independent revolutionary action of the working class, had forced a change in the attitude of the Nationalist bourgeoisie. They are now ready to give up the constitutional opposition to imperialist domination.

The feelings of the Nationalist bourgeoisie are expressed from

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another side—a very extraordinary one. Reviewing the situation in the light of the latest developments the semi-official organ, *Pioneer*, writes:—

Gandhi hopes to guide the revolutionaries into more sober and profitable paths—to keep in check more serious developments. Or it may be that he is endeavouring to enable the British Government to make some gestures, to inaugurate some policy, which will stave off an era of political chaos. Neither Gandhi, nor Motilal Nehru, nor any other leader of the older generation wishes a revival of non-co-operation. Neither Calcutta, nor Bombay can afford to face another period of non-co-operation, and if the threat becomes real, they will be the first to demand of the government of India a more peaceful solution. If the governors of India are wise, they will appreciate the position of the moderate politicians . . . The moderate men in this country know that if there is no alteration in the policy, their fate will be an unpleasant one. . . . Let the Viceroy send for Gandhi, Motilal Nehru and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (leader of the Liberal Federation) for consultation. If the Viceroy were able to announce to the Legislative Assembly his Majesty the King-Emperor's personal pledge that Dominion Status will be granted to India, there can be little doubt but that the widespread conservative elements will once more rally round the government. The benefit would be mutual and immediate. The revolutionary movement in the country will be isolated, and there will be a chance of keeping India in the British Commonwealth.

Calcutta and Bombay, that is, the commercial and industrial princes of those cities, speaking through the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce have clearly demonstrated their disapproval of any revolutionary movement, and have indicated to the Viceroy their willingness to co-operate in the suppression of it. And the Viceroy in his speech opening the new session of the Legislative Assembly has reiterated his Britannic Majesty's pledge to grant India self-government. How soon, he did not say. But certainly not within a year. This he made quite clear. But on the strength of this pledge he trusted that the Assembly would pass the anti-Communist law and possibly other repressive measures directed against the radical elements of the Nationalist Movement. The nervousness of the Nationalist bourgeoisie and their condemnation of any revolutionary movement have encouraged imperialism to plan repression of the revolutionary movement. And judged by their utterances, the Nationalist bourgeoisie will support the Government in this plan to prove their fitness to wield greater administrative responsibility.

While the big bourgeoisie are voluntarily offering their services to counter-revolution, the petty bourgeois radicals are afraid of the potentiality of the dynamics of the situation which drive them further than they want to go. A tendency to back-sliding is to be noticed in their ranks. For example, the *Forward*, organ of the Left Wing, indignantly repudiates the charge made by a die-hard Anglo-Indian journal, that the Congress has abandoned its policy of non-violence and favours revolution. Commenting on the resolution of the Congress the *Englishman*, of Calcutta, correctly observed: "In India, sanctions to enforce a national demand can mean one thing and only one thing—revolution."

The organ of petty bourgeois radicalism, the *Forward*, of Calcutta, replies as follows:—

On a careful analysis of the apparently innocent word "sanction" our contemporary has discovered that it is dangerous verbal dynamite capable of blowing up all law and order to pieces. . . . The news will, of course, come to every Congressman as a surprise, for they are not aware that there has been any change in the Congress creed, or that the Congress had departed from its policy of non-violence. (January 8.)

The next day *Forward* reverts to the subject, and writes:—

Violence has been rightly ruled out by the Congress. The country has to devise an efficacious remedy on lines which may not bring it into conflict with the so-called laws of the country. That is the economic boycott. (January 9.)

Again the day after:—

When Congressmen talked of "sanction," they could not mean anything more serious than pressure of public opinion, economic boycott or non-payment of taxes. Our contemporary had to admit that none of these suggested methods of enforcing submission from the British Government should carry the implication of violence. (January 10.)

This cowardly attitude of the petty bourgeois radicals is not altogether subjective. It is a reflex of the crystallisation of counter-revolutionary sentiment among the big bourgeoisie. There cannot be any real Jacobinism except under the pressure of the masses. This condition for the bourgeois democratic revolution is maturing in India; but owing to the fact that it happens in an entirely different historical epoch, this condition does not make Jacobins out of the Indian bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it drives them into the camp of counter-revolution.

ON ENGELS' "ANTI-DÜHRING"

By D. RIAZANOV

[Below we give the concluding portion, specially translated for the LABOUR MONTHLY, of Professor Riazanov's preface to the new edition of "Anti-Dühring," published by the Marx-Engels' Institute in Moscow last year on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the book's first appearance. For reasons of space we have had to omit a section dealing with the influence of "Anti-Dühring" on the development of Marxist thought in Russia.]

IT remains to say something on the significance of *Anti-Dühring*. I have already pointed out the chief causes of Dühring's popularity. This must always be kept in mind. Dühring gave the revolutionary youth a philosophy of the world. He gave them a system of ideas; he gave them a system of answers to troublesome questions. What had a Marxist at that time? There was the Communist Manifesto. But the Communist Manifesto without all that had preceded it, without all the preparatory data, of which it was the conclusion, without the appropriate historical knowledge, was less intelligible than Lassalle's *Programme of the Workers*. It must be added also that it was only when a new edition was published in 1872, after it had been unobtainable for a long time, that it attained a really large circulation. *Capital* was rather widely read. But, even for Liebknecht, *Capital* was principally a book which gave him material for a Reichstag speech on working-class legislation, which provided him with material for an anniversary speech, if he wished to show to what degree the workers had been exploited by capitalism. Liebknecht was frankly convinced in 1874 that Buckle was the greatest of all historians and the creator of a new conception of world history, whilst Marx was only the creator of a new economic system. Just as in Russia, *Capital* in its philosophical and historical-materialist parts remained for the readers of Marx "an unread chapter of a favourite book"—as Plekhanov expressed it.

Engels' literary connection with the *Volksstaat* (the *People's State*), which appeared under Liebknecht's editorship, began as

early as 1873. He had to answer various practical questions. A certain Mühlberger wrote an article on the housing problem which showed that the *People's State* had forgotten the difference between Proudhonism and Marxism, and Engels used this opportunity to give a magnificent exposition of the difference between Proudhonism and Marxism in this concrete example. This was the German, more scholarly and more fundamental way—to write for a concrete occasion. A description of the whole system of the world philosophy was still lacking. This was given for the first time in *Anti-Dühring*. Engels himself tells us wherein lies the significance of *Anti-Dühring*:—

It (the polemic against Dühring) gave one, on the one hand, the opportunity to develop from the positive side, in the very varied subjects treated in the book, my views on questions of more general scientific or practical interest to-day . . . It was necessary for me to go into all his conceptions and state mine in opposition to his. Negative criticism became, thanks to this, positive ; the polemic was turned into a more or less connected exposition of the dialectical method and communist world-philosophy upheld by Marx and myself, and this, moreover, over a fairly comprehensive range of subjects.

Engels thus himself recognises that the polemic against Dühring had induced him to put forward a system in opposition to a system, a world philosophy in opposition to a world philosophy. And in this lies the chief significance of *Anti-Dühring*. Marx and Engels naturally knew—what we only now know—that in their letter files lay the manuscript of “German Ideology.” They knew that they had the possibility in the forties of putting forward in opposition to the current bourgeois philosophy of “true Socialism” their system of Communist world philosophy. But only Marx and Engels knew that. Liebknecht who had worked and lived in the closest co-operation with Marx and Engels for twelve years did not know it; the innumerable readers did not know it, and, of course, no single reader of the Gotha Programme could have had any idea of it. For the first time, in 1878, in *Anti-Dühring* was given a system of Communist philosophy which could refute petty-bourgeois philosophy in all its different varieties—and in this Marx and Engels naturally based themselves on the earlier work already done by them.

Now (and this is a very interesting point), when we read the chapters in the “German Ideology” devoted to Feuerbach—

they have been printed in the *Archives* issued by the Marx-Engels' Institute—it is possible to establish how far Marx and Engels had changed their point of view. Not since the time of the *Holy Family*—then, Comrade Stepanov would be correct—for the point of view adopted by Marx and Engels in this work had already been "withdrawn" in the "German Ideology." That was a still earlier stage. That was a close approach to Marxism, but it was not yet Marxism.

In one of his articles against Heinzen, Marx said—

Where he succeeds in observing the diversity, he does not see the unity, and where he sees the unity, he does not see the diversity. When he manages to establish various definitions they immediately become petrified in his hands, and he regards it as the most harmful sophistry to set these conceptions against each other in such a way that they catch fire and come to life.

Between the standpoint of the "German Ideology" and that developed in the first volume of *Capital* there is not any kind of "jump." The basic conceptions which Engels developed in *Anti-Dühring* in the section "Philosophy," even in those parts relating to natural science, were already completely formulated in *Capital* in a series of remarks, which were so distorted by Dühring. In *Anti-Dühring* Engels develops the dialectical method which Marx and he had created and which they had employed since 1846, since the time of the "German Ideology."

When I published Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*, which I had discovered, I emphasised, in my foreword, that in comparison with what Engels had said in *Anti-Dühring* this contained no single new idea. I wrote "no single new idea" intentionally. The quite untenable attempt of some comrades to find certain differences between *Anti-Dühring* and the Engels of the eighties, who had reached "completely opposite conceptions," arises from the unclear understanding of a number of remarks in *Anti-Dühring* and from an inattentive reading of Engels' foreword to the second edition of *Anti-Dühring*.

What does Engels say in this foreword? He is dealing with Dühring at a time when he was undergoing a "moulting process" with regard to the natural sciences. He uses a terminology that is not quite exact; all that he needed was not at his disposal, and he hoped that he would later be able to give his

conception in a more carefully thought-out form. He wrote this in 1885. Whoever reads carefully the foreword to the second edition knows that Engels quite consciously, out of a feeling of peculiar literary tact, looked out for any change. One must read the letters of Engels to Marx to understand how difficult it was for Engels, for purely human reasons, to write polemics against Dühring. He said that it was very difficult for him to write against a blind person. He had to struggle with himself for a long time in order to overcome this clearly sentimental feeling. And, therefore, he said again in his foreword, that he could not have written otherwise than as he did in 1878.

I have already pointed out in my introduction to the *Dialectics of Nature* that Engels did not know Mendeleev's periodic law when he wrote *Anti-Dühring*. One must not forget that the articles of the section "Philosophy" were all printed previous to May, 1877, and had been sent for publication by the autumn of 1876. Engels had no opportunity of studying the technical literature of chemistry which was scattered through the various scientific journals. It may be mentioned in justification of him that only in 1877 did there appear in such a "compendium" as the comprehensive text book of chemistry as that of by Roscoe and Schorlemmer any exposition of Mendeleev's law. Engels could have used it for the second edition in 1885, when he had at his disposal a mass of material which confirmed his basic conceptions, but he deliberately did not do so. In the foreword to the second edition he gives a hint of a future work, but he does not change his views. It is the same basic conception which he had formulated in *Anti-Dühring*, which appears in the notes and drafts of articles written after 1878, only more fully explained. In this relation, any attempt to prove a contradiction between Engels in 1878 and in 1882, based on the desire to stick a new label on an old idea, is doomed to utter failure.

After *Anti-Dühring*, Engels had the opportunity to develop more fully some of the conceptions which he had briefly formulated in the philosophical section of his poem against Dühring. In his special work on Feuerbach, he gave a detailed exposition of his own and Marx's relations to the philosophy of Hegel and Feuerbach. In connection with this, Engels also gave a positive

answer to a large number of questions relating to philosophy, ethics and social science. In this way, Engels' book on Feuerbach becomes not only an important supplement, but also an excellent commentary on the corresponding chapters of *Anti-Dühring*. Not less important now in this connection are those parts which I have published from Engels' *German Ideology* and *Dialectics of Nature*.

One must specially draw attention to Engels' brilliant description, in the first section, of the origin and development of the idea of equality. Marx had already shown in *Capital* that the determination of the value of commodities by labour and the free exchange of these products of labour on the basis of this value, is the real foundation of the whole political, judicial and philosophical ideology of the modern bourgeoisie.

The sketch of Engels served as the stimulus for a series of Marxist works—in particular by Laforgue, Kautsky and Plekhanov—in which the origin of various kinds of "eternal" ideas is investigated.

The second section of *Anti-Dühring* is devoted to the basic problems of Marxist economic theory and to this day forms the most authoritative introduction to a study of *Capital*. Engels gives definitions of the subject matter, the method and the tasks of political economy. On this point I do not agree with those who regard political economy as a science which investigates only the economy of commodities and the capitalist commodity relations, and who conceive right only as the right of the producers of commodities. All such attempts constitute a desire to give a "beginning" and an "end" to everything, to define exactly, to point out precisely where development is still in progress, where a succeeding form abolishes the preceding, explains it and is itself fully explained by its antecedent conditions.

The second section contains noteworthy articles devoted to the theory of force, in which the mutual relations between the economic and political factors in the history of human society are explained in a masterly fashion. In addition, Engels gives a concise history of the art of war, showing what great significance the study of the history of the art of war has for the materialist interpretation of history. The full importance of these chapters

will only be fully apparent when all Engels' writings on military questions have appeared, but, together with the foreword to Borkheim's book (1887) and the articles "Can Europe Disarm?" (1893), the sketch which Engels gave in *Anti-Dühring* represents the clearest formulation of the views which he had evolved in long years of study of the history and theory of warfare.

He was able to foretell the future imperialist war and to sketch its probable consequences with almost prophetic accuracy. It is true that the sketch of the history of the art of war which we have in *Anti-Dühring* finishes with 1877. The Franco-German War of 1870 was the last great war which Engels examined. In this respect Engels' sketch stands in need of considerable supplementation.

It can be said that some of Engels' assertions are not altogether incontestable. Especially when he wrote that armaments as used at the time of the Franco-German War "had reached such perfection that further improvements in this direction could not have any decisive influence." Even firearms have undergone considerable development since 1878. New branches of military technique have appeared, based on the development of aircraft and the chemical industry. The submarine has brought about changes in the sphere of naval warfare. It is true that the experiences of the war of 1914-1918 have fully justified the conclusions at which Engels arrived on the basis of his examination of the question of the competition between armour-plating and artillery. Even in the form of dreadnoughts, the armoured-cruiser "has been brought to such a height of perfection that it has become so invulnerable as to be unsuitable for use."

But Engels has excellently revealed the inner dialectic of militarism. Militarism, in its modern imperialist form, bears within itself all the seeds of its own destruction.

What the bourgeois democracy of 1848 could not bring about, just because it was bourgeois and not proletarian, viz., to give the working masses a conscious will, corresponding to their class position, will inevitably be achieved by Socialism (Communism). And that means the destruction from within of militarism and with it of all standing armies.

The third section of *Anti-Dühring* deals with Socialism. We have already seen how Bebel appraised the predecessors of Marx

and Engels, the Utopian Socialists. Dühring in his works distorted not only the history of political economy but also with the history of Socialism. Engels' book gave a new and powerful impetus to the study of Socialism. All the works of Kautsky, Bernstein, Plekhanov and Mehring on these subjects have their starting point, both as regards theme and as regards their general construction, in the fundamental thesis which Engels formulated in his excursus on the subject of the history of Socialism.

But this was not all that Engels achieved in the third section of *Anti-Dühring*. For the first time since the *Communist Manifesto*, on the basis of the experiences of the revolution of 1848, of the First International and of the Paris Commune, the fundamental questions of programme, strategy and tactics for the proletariat were put forward in a comprehensive manner. For the first time it was shown what inexhaustible treasure Marx's *Capital* contained for the answers to these questions. Engels for the first time fully expounded how capitalism gives rise to and prepares all the material and intellectual elements of the future order of society. In the same section of *Anti-Dühring*, for the first time, the Marxist conception of the rôle and origin of the State, already hinted at in *German Ideology*, was developed in detail in opposition not only to Dühring but also to the Anarchists, the Lassalleans and even the Eisenachers, who had not been able to free themselves from the influence of the Lassallean cult of the State.

It is by no means an accident that careful working out of the questions of the programme only begins after the appearance of *Anti-Dühring*. The Erfurt Programme of German Social Democracy, which in its essence is partly the work of Engels, would have been inconceivable had it not been for the tremendous preparatory work which Engels had put into *Anti-Dühring*. The same can be said of the programme of the group for "Liberation of Labour" and the first programme of our party. The most important part of Engels' book entitled "The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science," which equally with the "Communist Manifesto" is to this day the best manual for mastering the foundations of Marxism, is taken from the third section of *Anti-Dühring*.

In the book of Antonio Labriola, *Socialism and Philosophy*, we find the following interesting thought:—

Every country, unfortunately, has its Dühring. Who knows what other "Antis" might have been written by the Engels's of other countries. In my opinion, the real significance of *Anti-Dühring* is that it gives the Socialists of other countries and other tongues the possibility of arming themselves with those critical methods without which no "Anti-" can be written, and which are essential for the fight against all those who distort or corrupt Socialism in the name of various sociological systems.

Labriola was right. In every country where Marxism begins to develop it must cease to be in the position of a product of a "foreign creation." Marxism can only triumph in a country if it succeeds in explaining, on the basis of fundamental Marxist principles, the concrete realities of the country concerned; if it succeeds in showing that the dialectical method, dialectical materialism, represents an all-embracing method in the sense that the concrete reality in question, with whatever particular "qualities" it may be endowed finds its explanation through it itself, by the struggle of its internal contradictions; that all these "specific characters" result from the inner class conflict, from the development of the struggle of contradictions in that particular section—be it historical, economic or geographical.

In his pamphlet *Who are the Friends of the People?* Lenin again emphasises the same idea, namely, that Marxism can only lead the proletariat against the bourgeoisie of the country in question when it becomes for the proletariat and for the revolutionary intelligentsia a new Communist world philosophy in opposition to all varieties of bourgeois philosophy. The immortal service of Engels in this respect—and those are correct who say that *Anti-Dühring* is, after and alongside of *Capital*, the most important Marxist work, is that, in opposition to bourgeois world philosophy, he for the first time put forward this Communist world philosophy. He left it to later Marxists to develop this Communist world philosophy on the basis of new and ever-developing national and international experiences, and to make it ever more complete, more comprehensive, without ever forgetting that the result can only be reached thanks to the aid of such an incomparable weapon as the method of dialectical materialism.

THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

By F. RASKOLNIKOV

(formerly Soviet Representative in Afghanistan)

AFGHANISTAN is a country with a considerable historical past. Its small connection with the economy of the world, its centuries of artificial isolation, have preserved in Afghanistan quite a number of antiquated forms of feudal rule. The remnants of feudalism which may be found in abundance in China, India, Persia and a number of other Eastern countries have been preserved in Afghanistan in their original undisturbed form. The entire economy of the country is based on agriculture, in which again feudal property is predominant. Enormous masses of the population have not yet settled down to a regular tilling of the soil, but carry on a nomadic pasturage. Every year at the beginning of spring tens and hundreds of thousands of herdsmen wander with their flocks and herds, their families, and their entire scanty possessions to the blooming mountain pastures (encountering on the way all sorts of obstacles and not infrequently warring against the settled peasant population), to return in the autumn to the lower-lying winter encampments. In the system of Afghan economy, the few and thinly populated towns play no important rôle. Despite the wealth of natural treasure concealed in the mountains of the Hindukush, mining is insufficiently developed. The industrial output, concentrated at Kabul, is yet in its infancy.

This backwardness in the development of productive forces determines the class structure of the country. The overwhelming majority of the population consists of peasants (engaged in agriculture, pasturage and cattle-breeding). The peasantry lives in the utmost poverty, is subjected to spoliation and coercion on the part of the landowners, suffers under the incompetency of the officials, and has to wrest from nature every hand's breadth of tillable soil.

The political power lies in the hands of the landowners, the so-called "sirdars." The ruling class is connected with the mass

of peasant population only by means of the individual links in the long feudal-bureaucratic chain.

Under the conditions of this patriarchal manner of living, the heads of the clans and the elders represent the organised authorities.

In contradistinction to China, India and Persia, where there is a pronounced national bourgeoisie, there is practically no middle-class at all in Afghanistan. Not only can there naturally be no question of an industrial bourgeoisie, seeing that the few existing factories are in the hands of the State, but even the commercial bourgeoisie is still at an embryo stage. The entire foreign trade, which is mainly carried on via India, is (with negligible exceptions) in the hands of Indian merchants. At the same time it is possible in Afghanistan to observe the interesting process of a dovetailing of landed property and commercial capital. Many landowners invest their land-revenues in commercial enterprises and employ the profits gained thereby in extending their landed property. While in Persia the voice of the bazaar exercises a considerable influence upon the policy of the Government, the small element of the Afghan commercial bourgeoisie possesses absolutely no political significance. The small number of industrial workers have not yet begun to feel themselves a special class and are thus altogether unorganised. They figure just as little in the political arena as do the artisans who are dispersed all over the country. The Islamic clergy, on the other hand, have long since grown used to exercising an important political influence, amounting in the main to a pronounced support of reaction.

In the past, when the cruel and despotic Abdur Achman or the sensual Habibullah still sat upon the Afghan throne, all proceeded on the lines of a well-ordered feudal State. The great sirdars guided the destinies of the country, the peasants sowed and reaped beneath the sweat of their brows and paid the onerous taxes. From time to time the Government sent punitive expeditions to conquer the independent tribes of Kafirstan or of the more distant Badachshan.

Under cover of a control of its foreign relations, British imperialism turned Afghanistan practically into a subject colony.

In 1919 there was a palace revolt in Afghanistan. One February morning Habibullah, who had been hunting in the surroundings of Jalalabad, was found to have been murdered.

What were the reasons for the overthrow of Habibullah? He had failed to take into consideration the changes and developments which the world war and the October revolution had brought about in the international position of Afghanistan. He continued to bow to the Viceroy of India. In the meantime, however, the war had weakened the authority of Great Britain, and the October revolution changed fundamentally the proportion of power in the countries immediately adjoining Afghanistan. Up to the October revolution Afghanistan was in the toils of the two imperialist allies, Great Britain and Russia, which could at any moment suppress any Afghan attempt at national emancipation. After the October revolution the Soviet Union was practically at war with Great Britain. Habibullah did not understand how to exploit these international differences in favour of the national interests of his country, and for this incompetency he paid with his life. The rise of the revolutionary movement in India which set in in 1919 stimulated the activity of the Young Afghan Nationalists, who brought about a palace revolt. The Young Afghan party then placed upon the throne the third son of the late monarch, Amanullah Khan, who was proclaimed Emir in defiance of the prior claims of his two elder brothers. At the same time, the brother of the murdered Habibullah, Nasrullah Khan, laid claim to the throne. A civil war ensued, but did not last very long, since the troops of Amanullah, supported by the peasant population, soon gained the upper hand; Nasrullah was taken prisoner and shortly afterwards executed.

This civil war created a marked line of demarcation between the adherents of the old feudal conditions and the champions of a reconstruction of Afghanistan. The pious and reactionary pan-Islamic leaders rallied round them all the conservative elements, from the feudal landowners to the Islamic priests. The progressively-minded Amanullah relied on the peasant masses, on the army and on the organised Young Afghans, who were for the greater part descended from the more progressive of the small landowners.

The programme of the Young Afghans contained the claim to the independence of Afghanistan as regards foreign politics, besides radical reforms in the country itself.

The first step of the new government was the declaration of the independence of Afghanistan. But Amanullah was quite aware of the fact that such a declaration alone would not suffice. The country's independence had to be fought for. He, therefore, turned all his arms against the usurper of Afghan independence, against British imperialism. A small but fanatical Afghan army invaded the frontiers of British India in the spring of 1919. Naturally the fight was unequal, since Great Britain was furnished with all up-to-date implements of war. The Afghan troops had to retire across the frontier and for a time even to leave the town of Hosta in British hands. But the internal position of India was very critical, for seventy million Indian Moslems openly sympathised with the Afghans and were inspired with such revolutionary zeal that the British could not profit by their victory. They saw themselves forced speedily to make peace and with heavy hearts formally to recognise the independence of Afghanistan.

Simultaneously with his declaration of war on Great Britain, Amanullah sent Lenin a telegram with the suggestion of an initiation of diplomatic relations. Soviet Russia most readily acceded to this proposal and was thus the first Power to recognise the newly-gained independence of the young State.

The entire activity of Amanullah in regard to foreign politics was neither more nor less than an epoch of "enlightened absolutism under the specific conditions of a backward Oriental country."

In the course of the past ten years, the Young Afghans under Amanullah's leadership effected some great reforms, which covered various fields of activity: (1) Creation of a native State industry (arsenals for the supply of the army, cement works, &c.); (2) Enhancement of the cultural level of the country (development of the school system, delegation of teachers to study abroad, institution of female schools, &c.); (3) Reorganisation of the army; and (4) Emancipation of women (abolition of yashmaks, creation of women's organisations, &c.).

These reforms were of progressive significance for Afghan-

istan, guiding the country in the direction of bourgeois development. The tragedy of Amanullah's case lay in the fact that he undertook bourgeois reforms without the existence of any national bourgeoisie in the country.

By his crusade against the feudal system and his exclusion of the clergy from political power, Amanullah naturally incited these classes against his reforms. The difficulty lay in the fact that he needed a firm class basis for his fight against feudalism and the Islamic clergy.

The organic fault of all the reforms of Amanullah lay in the fact that they were devoid of an economic basis. These reforms, in themselves highly progressive, were extremely superficial and entailed no real advantages to the Afghan peasants.

But at the same time the reforms occasioned a tremendous outlay. The peasants, who had already plenty of taxes to pay, had to part with their last rupees to pay for these expensive reforms. Taxation increased. Thus the tax due on asses rose by 400 per cent. in the course of ten years. Amanullah's chief mistake lay in the circumstance that he opposed feudalism without effecting any comprehensive land reform.

Amanullah could easily have had the entire peasant population behind him if he had taken the land from the feudal lords and given it to the peasants or if he had decreased the tax pressure on the peasantry by increasing that on the landowners.

Under the given circumstances the increased tax pressure caused the greatest dissatisfaction among the peasants, a fact the reactionary elements immediately turned to account.

The oppositional tendencies developing by reason of this pauperisation were exploited by the Afghan reactionaries for their own ends. Naturally it was not the entire peasantry that opposed Amanullah. The bulk of the peasant population observed an expectant neutrality, a section thereof rallied round the King. The fact remains, however, that the peasants of Kugistan and the Shinvari tribe rose in arms against Amanullah.

As an Oriental reformer, Amanullah has not infrequently been compared with Kemal Pasha. The latter, however, was in a very much better position, since he effected his reforms in a less backward country. Therefore, based on the Turkish national

bourgeoisie, he succeeded in destroying the Caliphate, separating the church from the State, and breaking the back of the clergy.

For lack of a firm social basis, Amanullah was not in a position to attack the clergy and religion with such determination. He went more cautiously to work, restricted himself to half-measures, left the "shariat" untouched, and merely renovated and cleaned it a bit. Such an ambiguous position could not be without serious dangers.

The complicated national conditions in Afghanistan added to the complexity of the class struggle. There are in the country numerous tribes which are constantly at variance, thus the tribes of Shinvari and Mangal which have had a feud between them for centuries. Such differences have often been exploited by the Government.

The feeling of State citizenship is not very pronounced in Afghanistan. Each citizen is in the first place a member of a tribe and only in the second place an Afghan. Amanullah's policy of centralisation aroused resistance not only on the part of the feudal landowners but also of entire tribes. His propaganda for national independence was highly comprehensible to the young Afghan officers and students of the Kabul Academy, but failed to awaken an echo in the minds of the nomad tribes.

Finally, the policy of the British imperialists played a great role. The British Government could never get over its failure to subdue Afghanistan, which remained the sore point in British world hegemony. All the intrigues of British diplomats, from Lord Curzon to Sir Francis Humphrys, the Minister at Kabul, were directed towards bringing about a rupture of diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. Threats and promises, secret notes and open ultimatums, terrorist attempts and reactionary risings—in a word, the entire arsenal of an experienced bourgeois diplomacy was employed to this end.

The British need a dummy in Afghanistan after the pattern of King Fuad of Egypt or of King Feisul of Mesopotamia. Amanullah is naturally not to be used in such a way. Once the British diplomats had recognised this fact, they had already decided to get rid of him.

During Amanullah's visit to Europe last year, the rising was

prepared and there can be no doubt but that Bacha-i-Saquo, "famous" as a chief of banditti in the vicinity of Charikar, was in close touch with the British Legation at Kabul.

From the standpoint of war-preparations against the Soviet Union, Afghanistan is a highly important base for the British. An independent Afghanistan represents a danger to the British possession of India, while on the other hand an Afghanistan under British suzerainty would mean a real menace to the Central Asiatic regions of the Soviet Union.

Amanullah has not yet abandoned the fight. If he regains his authority he will be obliged to broaden his social basis, to rely on the peasants, to effect a land reform, to lessen the taxation of the peasants and to carry on the fight against the feudal lords and the priests with greater determination than hitherto.

The World of Labour

U.S.S.R.

Eighth Trade Union Congress

THE Eighth Congress of the Russian Trade Unions met in Moscow from December 10 to 24, 1928. It was attended by over 1,500 delegates, representing more than 11,000,000 trade unionists. These delegates were elected either at provincial territorial trade union congresses, on a basis of one delegate to every 5,000 to 12,000 members, or, in the case of undertakings employing not less than 5,000 workers, direct elections were held under a new regulation and seventy-five delegates were elected in this way. Of the total number, 71 per cent. attended for the first time, and 18 per cent. were women as compared with 7.5 per cent. at the previous congress; 1,131 delegates had a full vote, and 374 a consultative vote. Twenty-seven different nationalities were represented.

The agenda dealt with the following questions :—

- Report of the Central Council of Trade Unions.
- Report of the Commissariat of Labour on conditions of Labour.
- Report of the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.
- Condition of Industry.
- Wages and Collective Agreements.
- Consumers' Co-operation.
- Educational Work of the Unions.

In his chairman's report, Tomskey declared that present conditions made it necessary to tighten the bonds which united the working class, and to link up the leaders with the masses. Technical experts and specialists, foremen and clerks must all keep in contact with the workers. The period of sabotage among clerical workers had passed away—"they are now good Soviet workers." Women, too, were beginning to take their rightful places, but they must be made still more active.

Speaking of trade union organisation, Tomskey stressed the fact that, "All trade union tickets are one ticket; change your work and you can change your union."

Finally, he declared that while they had many achievements to record, they had also a number of mistakes, and he appealed for helpful and business-like criticism.

The last section of his speech dealt with international policy. He described the dissolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee, which he attributed to the action of the General Council of the British T.U.C., announced that the Council had joined the League against Imperialism, and expressed his opinion that the period of overtures to Amsterdam was at an end. The present tactics

of the Council were to make contacts with the mass of trade unionists, if necessary, over the heads of the union executives, with a view to the world unity of trade unions based on the principle of vigorous class war. This unity could only be achieved in opposition to the I.F.T.U. and the reformist trade union leaders.

The Council had shown its solidarity with the working class of the world by coming to the help of workers on strike.

There has not been a single dispute in recent years in which the Russian worker has not stretched out his hand to help his brethren . . . whenever the class war is in progress, the trade unions of the Soviet Union are the first to bring help.

He announced the establishment of a special solidarity fund amounting to 6,000,000 roubles for this purpose.

Losovsky, general secretary of the R.I.L.U., reported on the world situation in the working-class movement, and Harry Pollitt on behalf of the British Minority Movement.

Dogadov, the secretary of the Central Council, reported on the position of the unions. Membership had increased between July, 1926, and July 1929, by 19 per cent., and now stood at 11,060,000. Approximately 91 per cent. of all wage earners were organised. The greatest progress had been made among clothing, hotel and domestic, building and agricultural workers. Trade union finance was generally satisfactory, the expenditure of the unions being covered by receipts. Monthly real wages had risen by 12.5 per cent. in 1926-27 and by 10.8 per cent. in 1927-28, while the gap between the best paid and lowest paid workers had been slightly reduced. The reform in wage scales had in its main outlines been achieved, though much remained to be done in the readjustment of individual standards of output. Success was due to the improvement of machinery and the rationalisation of labour.

On the subject of unemployment it was reported that the number of workers unemployed had risen from 1,040,000 on October 1, 1927, to 1,374,000 on October 1, 1928. Against that was to be set the fact that the total number of workers in industry was 11,801,000, or nearly 1,131,000 more than in 1925.

It was reported that 93.6 per cent of all unionists were covered by collective agreements. Owing to decentralisation, the number of general agreements had fallen, while the number of local agreements had increased. The system of concluding agreements had been improved, and delays were reduced in consequence. Breaches of agreements were still too frequent.

There has been a reduction in the number of disputes, only ninety strikes took place in the first half of 1928, and conciliation machinery was more widely used.

A Congress resolution stressed the fact that :—

Only by successfully combining in their work the general class interests on the basis of the main policy of the working class and its party, with the care for the smallest needs of the workers, will the trade unions, as a universal school of Communism be strengthened.

The improvement of the material condition of the working class is thus inseparably bound up with the successful socialist reconstruction of the

national economy, and such success is only possible when the unions can mobilise the millions of workers for the task. The two watchwords of the Congress were consistent application of the principles of trade union democracy and searching proletarian self-criticism in all trade union activities.

The Congress confirmed the necessity of following the steady course of industrialisation of the country and endorsed the five-year plan of industrial development. At the same time it emphasised the necessity of raising the material level of the working class, and pressed for an increase of wages by not less than 50 per cent. within the next five years. This increase should begin in the coal and metal industries, and in general with the unskilled and lower-paid workers.

The Congress appealed to all workers to maintain strict labour discipline, and to increase the productivity of labour, and devoted particular attention to production conferences, which should reveal and combine the industrial experience of the workers by developing the initiative and securing the active participation of even larger numbers of workers in the management of the national economy.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Tolpuddle or "Who's Appeared?"* An Historical Play. By Richard Sorenson. (T. C. Foley, Fleet Street, London, 83 pp., cloth 2s. 6d., paper covers 1s. 6d.)
- Cement.* By F. Gladkov. (Martin Lawrence, 511 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- Voice of the Chinese People.* Regarding Sino-Japanese Questions. (Shanghai, 78 pp.)
- The Proletarian Revolution.* By N. Lenin. (Modern Books, Ltd., 160 pp., 3s.)
- British Imperialism in Egypt.* By Elinor Burns. (L.R.D. Colonial Series No. 5, 72 pp., 6d.)
- A Short History of the British Empire.* By J. F. Horrabin. (N.C.L.C. Series, 93 pp., 1s. 6d.)
- The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies.* (Modern Books, Ltd., 46 pp., 6d.)
- Living India.* By Savel Zimand, with an introduction by "A. E." (Longmans, Green & Co. 280 pp., 10s. 6d.)
- The Story of Trade Unionism.* By R. M. Rayner. (Longmans, 278 pp., 6s.)
- How to Abolish the Slums.* By K. Romney Towndrow. (Longmans, 146 pp., cloth, 4s. 6d., paper 2s. 6d.)
- Selections from Lenin.* Volume I, 1893-1904. (Martin Lawrence, 241 pp., 2s. 6d.)
- Memoirs of a Revolutionist.* By Vera Figner. (Martin Lawrence, 318 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- Trade Union Documents.* Compiled and edited by W. Milne Bailey. (Bell, 8s. 6d., 552 pp.)
- The Silent Revolution.* (Published by the National Association of Schoolmasters, 24 pp., 6d.)
- The Unemployed.* Old Policies and New. By Ronald C. Davidson. (Longmans, 292 pp., 10s. 6d.)

BOOK REVIEW

PHYSICS AND METAPHYSICS

The Nature of the Physical World. By A. S. Eddington, Plumian Professor of Astronomy in the University of Cambridge. (Cambridge University Press, 12s. 6d. net.)

THE scientific revolution of the past twenty years or so necessitates a re-examination, in the light of new physical knowledge, of the very bases of all our philosophic thinking. The old formulae and the old jargon no longer hold good; they must be—according to the result of re-examination—either scrapped or modified until they again correspond with newly-ascertained realities. The process of revision cannot stop with Euclid and Newton. To flinch from the necessity is cowardice: or, even worse, is mere orthodoxy.

Fifty, even twenty years ago, "materialism" seemed an apt enough label for belief in the existence of an objective universe. For it seemed pretty clear that if such an objective universe did exist, its basic stuff was matter. "The real basis of things" as Democritus had suggested a couple of thousand years ago "is atoms and the void." That was a reasonable, coherent creed.

To-day it has ceased to be so. The atom has turned out to be not the simple constituent of the universe but a complicated system which behaves in what are, at present, inexplicable and even apparently self-contradictory ways. Matter shows some—though not yet conclusive—signs of being, as Clifford daringly guessed half a century ago, a geometrical deformation of space, or, rather, one of a group of associated consequences of such a deformation. And the "void" itself is losing its characteristics of infinity and emptiness: presents itself as finite though boundless: with its size so related to the quantity of matter in it that—one suggestion has it—an "empty" space would be infinitely small, could not, in fact, exist.

Time fuses itself with space as a dimension of a four-dimensional continuum, but curiously distinguished by the insistent incursion into all formulae which try to treat it on all fours with the space-like dimensions of that intriguing *i* whose significance is still completely beyond us. Is there some importance in the fact that a symbol which is so inextricably connected with the relation of the space-dimensions to the time-dimension is also habitually associated with what we know as wave-phenomena.

To stand pat in the midst of all this jibbering old formulae about space and time and matter is merely stupid. Revision is essential. And revision will demand clearness of thinking, vigour of imagination, and a perfect intellectual courage. Probably it is a task that none of our generation, used to thinking in the old terms, will be able effectively to achieve: the new weapons will have to be wielded by hands trained to their use alone: the old habits are too strong with us: we are clumsy beginners at this newer game. Trying it we shall make our blunders and have our tyro's ration of smashes. But we have got all the same to try it.

The more so, because there is in full swing at the moment a desperate attempt to enlist the new physics in the service of the old theology, to cry that science has knocked the bottom out of itself and has brought us back to the

foundations of religion, that "materialism" collapsed when Rutherford blew an atom to pieces, that the contradictions of the quantum theory are so hopeless that we must turn again to the sublime simplicity of the Athanasian Creed.

For scientists who have been irked by the tension between science and religion or who have been yearning for the respectable comfort of the college chapel, who have felt chilly in a universe from which the God of their infancy had vanished or who have shrunk from the social odium which in polite England attaches to the irreligious, there has come a golden opportunity. They have not delayed to take it. The stampede to idealism, to Theism, towards Christianity and the Established Church has begun.

And the hunt is headed by no less distinguished a figure than the Plumian Professor of Astronomy. Dr. Eddington has for years found himself not over happily mated to a science which "seemed to pursue its course independently of, and indifferent to, that which a voice within us asserts to be a higher reality." He has been "uneasy that there should be an apparently self-contained world in which God becomes an unnecessary hypothesis." And to that there seemed an even worse alternative. Suppose that God could by some ingenuity be turned into a *necessary* hypothesis. That would be "to reduce God to a system of differential equations like the other agents which at various times have been introduced to restore order in the physical scheme." To the truly religious mind this world of mathematical physics, with which a Plumian professor must pass his days, is equally intolerable if it contains or excludes God. It is no temple fit for the Eddingtonian Deity. And, therefore, it must be, not, indeed, destroyed, but cut entirely away from the universe. The world of physics must be treated as an abstraction, unconnected with God's Universe, a metrical cyclic scheme shut away in a sphere of its own, where its laws do not affect that other world "filled with a reality of spiritual import," "a spiritual world—a world partly of illusion no doubt, but in which he lives no less than in the world, also of illusion, revealed by the senses."

This is Eddington's objective in those Gifford lectures which are now reprinted as a book—to tread this path himself, and to persuade his audience to follow him. He is a dangerous propagandist. If a bishop talks this stuff even the wooden-headedest is on guard. But this is no bishop, but a Plumian professor, deservedly recognised as one of the ablest of living English mathematicians. Saul among the prophets is in itself a persuasive sight.

But now consider his methods of persuasion. The technique is clear from the opening paragraphs. He contemplates his table. And he promptly announces that there are *two tables*. "There are duplicates of every object about me." The one is the familiar, substantial, table; the other, the "scientific" table—"mostly emptiness. Sparsely scattered in that emptiness are numerous electric charges rushing about with great speed . . ." Then we turn aside to a page or two of talk on scientific method. And then, coolly and suddenly, "We have seen that substance is one of the greatest of our illusions." Just a page or two of patter, and the conjuror has removed your substantial table; leaving you with an "illusion."

But what a trick for a Plumian professor to play. He begins to beg the question shamelessly from the start, from the moment that he talks of *two* tables. He lets his word "substantial" slide deftly from its philosophical meaning into a paraphrase for solidity. He distracts the attention for a few minutes. And then he makes his jump with an amazing effrontery: "'It is obvious' means 'I cannot prove'"; the juvenile mathematician is rightly warned. If he sits under the Plumian professor he will have to be advised that "We have seen" means "I am now in the act of begging the question."

That same technique pervades the whole book. You can open it almost at random and find the game afoot. Consider this for example:—

On the Newtonian theory no explanation of gravitation would be considered complete unless it described the mechanism by which A PIECE OF MATTER gets a grip on the surrounding medium and makes it the carrier of the gravitational influence radiating from the matter. Nothing corresponding to this is required in the present theory. We do not ask how MASS gets a grip on space-time and causes the curvature which our theory postulates. . . . The mass *is* the curvature . . .

See how "a piece of matter" in the first part is converted into "mass" in the second part—a conversion which makes nonsense of the whole contrast, but makes easy the begging of the whole question in the next sentence: "there is no causal effect to be attributed to mass; still less is there any to be attributed to matter."

Or consider his use of Heisenberg's theory of indeterminacy. That theory newly enunciated, and not yet clearly understood, which asserts that:—

if q is a co-ordinate and p the corresponding momentum, the necessary uncertainty of our knowledge of q multiplied by the uncertainty of p is of the order of magnitude of the quantum constant h .

Just what that signifies is uncertain. There seems some reason for supposing that it is connected with the fact that our knowledge is derived from impulses emitted in discontinuous quanta. But notice that it is quite definitely a proposition about *our knowledge* of what is happening.

Now let Eddington get to work on it. First, he elevates it to the peerage. Relativity may be satisfied to be a "theory." Indeterminacy becomes a "principle" and he restates it thus:—

A particle may have position or it may have velocity, but it cannot in any sense have both.

A perfectly sensible proposition about possibilities of knowledge becomes a completely paradoxical "principle" about the behaviour of particles.

And what a paradox. Accept this "principle"—not as stated by Heisenberg, but as adapted to his own purpose by Eddington—and determinism is blown sky high. The future of the particle has become not merely unpredictable but undetermined. If a particle at a given moment in a given field has a definite position and a definite velocity, then its future path is determined. But if it cannot have definite position *and* definite velocity then it has not a definite future. Add to this the failure at present to establish causality in those baffling quantum phenomena: assume—begging the

question as usual—that this failure is permanent and necessary : and you can triumphantly claim that “physics is no longer pledged to a scheme of deterministic law.”

You may, of course, hold instead with Einstein that—

it is only in the quantum theory that Newton's differential method becomes inadequate and indeed strict causality fails us. But the last word has not yet been said. May the spirit of Newton's method give us the power to restore unison between physical reality and the profoundest characteristic of Newton's teaching—strict causality.

But then Einstein is to all seeming an impenitent determinist, who is not, with the Plumian professor, seeking “regions of the human spirit untrammelled by the world of physics.” So he will go forward patiently trying to piece the jigsaw together, to resolve the contradictions, to explain the paradoxes.

And the Plumian professor, revelling in paradox like Athanasius or Chesterton, finding in it the triumphant refutation of reason, moves forward along the path of faith, “trusting optimistically that our values are some pale reflection of those of the Absolute Valuer.”

Einstein's place among the scientists is already determined. Eddington chooses his among the philosophers. It is side by side with Mr. Sutton Vane.

W. N. E.

CHEST DISEASES

“Umekaloabo acts as regards Tuberculosis as a real specific.”

(Dr. Sech-haye in the
“Swiss Medical Review.”)

“It appears to me to have a specific destructive influence on the Tubercle Bacilli in the same way that quinine has upon Malaria.”

(Dr. Gran in the
King's Bench Division.)

If you are suffering from any disease of the chest or lungs—spasmodic or cardiac asthma excluded—ask your doctor about Umekaloabo, or send a postcard for particulars of it to CHAS. H. STEVENS, 204-206 Worple Road, Wimbledon, London, S.W.20, who will post same to you free of charge.

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*john a. mahon,
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to mention only a few, have been pointing the moral lately in the pages of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

"Local struggles are arising naturally and inevitably", says Purkis, and the drive of the notes of the month of March was that these "rationalisation" struggles were part of the whole struggle of the militants.

A steady local sale of a Sunday paper devoted to militancy is one of the most valuable opinion-bulwarks the leaders up and down the country can have.

Then, too, the election issues of the *Sunday Worker* (which have already begun) are likely to be one of the sensations of a drab campaign.

this advertisement is issued for and on behalf of the Sunday Worker, 91 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1

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A Magazine of International Labour

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*On the Eve of the Election—Mond, Balfour, Lloyd George—
State-Aided Rationalisation — Bourgeois Tendencies—
Labour Official Support—Big Business Programme—
A "Tribute"—Beyond Birmingham—Industrialist
Labour Alliance—Lloyd George—Disruption
Report—Scottish Miners' Decision—
The End of Maxton-Cook—"Let
Bygones Be Bygones"—Cook's
Collapse—Labour Govern-
ment Excuse—General
Election Issue.*

ON the eve of the General Election the leading issues are becoming more clearly defined. The simultaneous appearance of the new Melchett-Turner Report on Unemployment, the Balfour Committee Report with the minority or Labour memorandum, and the Lloyd George Report, all represent varying aspects of a single trend. It is clear that *the central issue of the election is Capitalist Rationalisation*. The Baldwin Government by its inactivity appears to be riding for a fall, and it is unlikely that any last-minute "stunt" can save it; its chief hope lies in the mutual cancellation of Labour and Liberal candidates owing to their essential similarity of programme. An increasing and influential section of the bourgeoisie is wanting a more active policy of State-aided rationalisation, and is beginning to look to some form of Labour-Liberal Government to carry this out. Lloyd George and MacDonald are simultaneously rivals and allies in endeavouring to voice this. The Labour Party chiefs are beginning to show their hand clearly and without reserve for a Labour Government of industrial peace and rationalisation, and, if necessary, of coalition. At the same time they are using the opportunity of the election campaign to carry through their policy of splitting the unions and enforcing industrial peace in preparation for a Labour Government. Behind this policy the entire reformist leadership is now ranged; the sham "left" group of Maxton-Cook have finally shown their true colours and revealed themselves as complete servants of

MacDonald and enemies of the working class. In the face of these manœuvres, the advance of the militant workers, shown in the unemployed march, goes forward, and is reaching new forms and organs, as in the establishment of the new Scottish Mineworkers' Union and United Clothing Workers' Union, and preparation for the independent election fight. Thus the issue of this election is clearer than at any previous election. For the first time the issue between the policy of liberal class-co-operation and State capitalism and the policy of class struggle and socialism is definitely raised before the workers. *The aim of the bourgeoisie in the election is to head off the gathering working class advance and direct it into the capitalist channels of rationalisation and industrial peace through a Labour or Labour-Liberal Government.* The aim of the working class in the election must be to counter this, and through the independent revolutionary candidatures to raise the banner of the class struggle for the coming period.

WHAT is the common policy which is equally expressed in the Balfour Report, especially the minority memorandum, the Melchett-Turner Report, and the Lloyd George Report? The essence of the policy in all three is the direct State leadership and assistance, possibly also State credits and mobilisation of capital, to carry through the reorganisation of capitalist industry on to a successful competitive plane of higher profits. The Balfour Report majority declare that "the general economic policy of the State may contribute to ease the difficulties of the transition." The Labour signatories of the Balfour Report go further and add :—

We find it impossible to agree with our colleagues that reorganisation, whose economic necessity they admit, can or will in fact take place except through the initiating activity and with the support of the State. This opinion—the clearest we have derived from the course of our investigations—has been forced in upon us by the facts.

Thus these Labour signatories, after five years' investigation of the British economic situation, reach as their "clearest" conclusion, not the necessity of the dispossession of the capitalist class, not the necessity of socialism, not even the necessity of the nominal national ownership of nationalisation, but the necessity

of "the initiating activity and support of the State" to help capitalist industry on to its feet again.

IN the same way the Melchett-Turner Report calls for full-scale rationalisation with State assistance, State credits to industry, a National Development Fund, &c. The whole scheme is headed by the *Daily Herald* in its report: "*Demand for State Aid to Help Industry to Recover.*" Equally, the Lloyd George Report, bolder than either of the other two, envisages a National Development Loan of £200,000,000. In all these the same line is ever more clearly expressed, the line already indicated in the Notes on "The British Economic Perspective" at the beginning of this year—the line of Rationalisation with State assistance (with the political corollary of a Labour or Labour-Liberal Government).

THAT an important section of the bourgeoisie is moving in this direction is evident. The signatories of the Melchett-Turner Report already represent a considerable proportion of the big industrialists. The discussion and reception of the reports in the bourgeois press shows a noticeable movement; and there are plenty of signs of parallel expressions and proposals of policy. Thus the influential imperialist group of the *Round Table*, in an article on the British economic position, reaches similar conclusions:—

There is the influence which the State can exert on industry itself. Here it is not control that is needed, but stimulation. . . . On the financial side the State can also lend a helping hand.

It is worth examining, for instance, whether much greater facilities could not be afforded for providing the capital necessary for re-equipping plants in cases where the fundamental conditions were satisfactory. State credit for such purposes at low rates of interest might well prove a good investment by increasing the taxable capacity of industry and reducing the dead-weight of unemployment. ("Towards Industrial Renaissance," *Round Table*, March, 1929.)

The *Economist*, in examining the Lloyd George Report, expresses the hope that the valuable parts in it may be taken up by whatever Government comes into power, and reaches the general conclusion that opinion in the country is beginning definitely to demand a more active policy from the Government in relation to unemploy-

ment and the economic situation. Even *The Times*, which as the organ of conservative City interests is strongly hostile to any dangerous financial schemes, expresses its appreciation of the main point of the Melchett-Turner Report :—

It is a real service to know that in their industrial capacity the Trade Union leaders on the conference are willing to take so hopeful a view of capitalism. (*The Times*, March 13, 1929.)

BUT of course the Labour support is not merely a support “in their industrial capacity.” The policy of the Melchett-Turner Report is the policy of the Labour Party. If there were any doubt on this point, it is sufficiently set at rest, not only by the glowing treatment in the Labour organ, but by the definite statements of the leaders of the Labour Party :—

Mr. MacDonald said he welcomes the proposals as being of very great assistance in the propaganda of the point of view and the demands that had been reiterated with so much insistence by the Labour Party.

Mr. J. R. Clynes also observed that the more tangible recommendations of the Report were in complete harmony with Labour teaching over many years. (*Daily Herald*, March 14, 1929.)

Thus this Report, which *The Times* finds to take “so hopeful a view of capitalism,” is officially accepted by the Labour Party as the expression of its policy.

WHAT is the character of this report of capitalist reconstruction, which is so cordially accepted by the Labour Party as the expression of its own policy? It is not only a document of capitalist policy without a vestige of socialism or remote relation to socialism; it is a document of the most brutal and ruthless capitalist and imperialist policy. Wholesale emigration, Crown Colonies “development,” the fight to expand markets, rationalisation “in the widest sense” admittedly involving large-scale “displacement of labour” and “surplus labour,” for whom “where possible” labour reserve funds should be established—all this policy of the big employers is hereby officially accepted as the policy of the Labour Party. The tone and level of this document of big business, signed by their Labour servants, is sufficiently indicated by one sentence (justly termed by *The Times* “a striking sentence”), consisting of a

“tribute” to the employers from their grateful wage-slaves for their magnificent conduct of affairs during the past ten years !
The sentence runs :—

Taking into account the difficult times through which Britain has had to pass during the last ten years, a tribute should be paid to the courage and tenacity which in many cases has been shown by those responsible for the conduct of British industry.

THIS profoundly typical and illuminating expression of modern “Labour” policy is worth pausing on a moment. During the “difficult times” of the slump since the end of 1921, the employers have raised their average dividend on industrial capital from 8·4 per cent. in 1922 to 10·6 per cent. in 1928 (*Economist* figure). They have raised the average market value of their securities from 100 in 1921 to 129·6 in 1928 (*Bankers' Magazine* figure of 365 representative securities ; the rise in variable dividend securities in the same period actually reaches from 100 to 163·4). This represents an average rise of nearly 30 per cent., leaving out of account the increase in the value of money through the return to the gold standard. During the same period they have cut the workers' wages by a total of several thousands of millions of pounds. They have thrown close on two million workers continuously on the scrap-heap of unemployment. When the workers have ventured to resist, they have bludgeoned them with every weapon in their armoury from lock-outs to the Trade Union Act and the use of all the forces of the State against the General Strike. And at the end of all this, these trade union leaders, fresh from their hiding in the General Strike, come to pay their humble “tribute” to the employers for the “courage and tenacity” they have shown. Certainly, there was no need of their “tribute” ; the “tribute” is being paid by the workers already. Certainly, the employers have shown “courage,” if it is courage from the security of their offices and mansions to crack the whip of starvation against the propertyless millions, against women and children. Certainly, the employers have shown “tenacity,” if it is tenacity of their gain and profits against the misery of millions of their countrymen. And certainly no one would dream of paying a tribute to the “courage and tenacity” of these trade union leaders, who may

be accused of many things for their record in the General Strike, but whom none would venture to accuse of "courage and tenacity." Cur-like licking of the whip could not go further.

IN the Birmingham Programme of the Labour Party, in the programme of "Labour and the Nation," there was still a certain studied vagueness and ambiguity, a lingering remnant of concealment of the aims of capitalist reconstruction behind an occasional semi-socialistic phraseology. The "nation" and "national services" were mentioned where in fact capitalist profit-making industry was intended. It was necessary to analyse the programme to show that behind the vagueness capitalist reconstruction was meant. Here there is no longer any concealment. It is capitalist industry that is to be set upon its feet, that is to be helped "recover," in the Labour organ's phrase. It is the big industrialists' own programme that is counter-signed by their Labour Party lackeys. The alliance of capitalism and the Labour Party is open and confessed, and even boasted of and made a vaunt. The *Daily Herald* proudly declares:—

Three documents from widely different sources dealing with unemployment are now in the public eye, and the pronouncements agree on two fundamental points. These are that industry is sick, and that the State must come to the rescue. Thus far, at least, the doctrine preached by Socialists has reached the stage of common acceptance.

Except Mr. Baldwin and his colleagues, no individuals who have given serious thought to the problem think that all will be well if industry is left to itself until natural recuperative powers assert themselves. Big employers, Trade Union leaders, the Labour Party and the Liberal Party are unanimous in decrying this *laissez faire* attitude. (*Daily Herald*, March 13, 1929.)

"Big employers, Trade Union leaders, the Labour Party and the Liberal Party are unanimous." This is the united front of the Labour Party. And it is with this united front that they are going into the election—in which many of their candidates will still speak to the workers of the great "ideal" of Socialism.

BUT the closeness draws further. Mr. J. A. Hobson (joint author of the I.L.P. Living Wage Report, the gospel of the "socialist" "left" in the Labour Party), arguing in the *Manchester Guardian* that the Liberal Programme "presents

a sufficient body of agreement with the adopted policy of the Labour Party to warrant thoughtful members of that party in looking favourably on co-operation," proceeds to demolish the last "obstacle" of "nationalisation" as constituting anything different from the policy of liberal capitalism :—

The declaration of Labour in favour of "public ownership" of foundation industries, such as land, railroads, power and banking, may seem at first sight a fatal obstacle to co-operation. But is there much substance in it? Labour does not propose to confiscate these undertakings. Its nationalisation would have to be financed by public bond issues, which for the most part would be taken in exchange for the existing share and debenture capital of the concern so "nationalised."

Fixed interest would still be paid to the persons who had invested their capital in these undertakings. *Would this differ appreciably from the Liberal proposal to leave the ownership of the undertakings intact, but to put them on a fixed interest or debenture basis?* (J. A. Hobson, "Liberalism and Labour," in the *Manchester Guardian*, February 8, 1929.)

For many years Marxists have argued against the Fabians that the policy of "nationalisation" through the capitalist State was a policy of State Capitalism, not of Socialism. It has taken the occasion of a tactical need of a Liberal-Labour alliance for the protagonists of the Labour Party no longer to deny this, but even to make it a point in their favour as demonstrating the acceptable character of their programme to capitalism.

LLOYD GEORGE is perfectly open in his approach to the Labour Party on the basis of his programme. Questioned "if he would give his support to any party which advocated these proposals," he replied "without any hesitation whatever," adding "that after the election he would support whatever Government was in power under those conditions" (*The Times*, March 13, 1929). What is the reply of the Labour Party? Faced with this, the Labour Party has no criticism for the programme of Lloyd George as contrary to its programme. On the contrary, it criticises it as a repetition of its own programme, "a hasty and rather crude plagiarism from Labour resolutions and publications" (*Daily Herald*, March 13, 1929). Its only basis

of criticism is personal against Lloyd George, not against the programme. "Mr. Lloyd George commands no confidence" because he did not solve unemployment in 1922 (are memories so short of 1924?). In a striking editorial the *Daily Herald* declares :—

To-day we have the unwonted experience of *agreeing wholeheartedly with Mr. Lloyd George*. Speaking yesterday in the Eddisbury bye-election, he said : "You must have a Government which will come to grips with the unemployment problem, and which will, as in the war, organise the resources of the country."

Never was truer word spoken. But *Mr. Lloyd George and the Liberals must realise that a Labour Government is the only possible administration which can and will grip the situation*. (*Daily Herald*, March 14, 1929.)

The basic alliance of Labour and Liberalism, only delayed and complicated by the necessities of rival electoral tactics, could not be more clearly expressed.

BUT with this open alliance with capitalism goes necessarily the splitting of the working class. Unity with capitalism means necessarily the division of the workers. The reformist bureaucracy is utilising the occasion of the election campaign to push through its policy of breaking up the existing basic working-class organisations, the trade unions, in the interests of the policy of the Labour Party and the General Council, that is, of the policy of capitalism and the alliance with capitalism. It is expected that the Disruption Report of the General Council will appear on the eve of the General Election. This Disruption Report will not deal with the disruptive activities of the General Council. It will not deal with the refusal of officials to vacate office when voted out by their members ; it will not deal with the arbitrary rulings-out of candidates and the suspension of elected delegates, elected by majorities over all the reformists ; it will not deal with the disfranchisement and expulsions of whole sections of the working class organisations for remaining faithful to the principles of the class struggle. But it will give the line for the continuance and systematisation of the disruptive activities of the reformist bureaucracy.

THE Miners' Federation Executive decision on Scotland, issued last month, and signed by the four officials including Cook, is the final test issue, the milestone which marks out the future path of the reformists in British Trade Unionism as elsewhere :—

This Federation Executive, after reviewing the general position in the Scottish coalfields, places on record its strong condemnation of the Communists and Minority Movement and the tactics which have been adopted in the various coalfields, particularly Scotland. It pledges itself to render all possible help to the *bona fide* Scottish Miners' Federation and all other districts which are carrying out the principles of the Miners' Federation, the T.U.C., and the *British Labour Party*.

This is the answer of the reformist officials to the overwhelming vote of the men against them. As Herbert Smith declared at Swansea, they are prepared to "dissect the movement to the very ground" to maintain their positions and the policy of alliance with capitalism. And the "principles" in the name of which this disruption is to be carried out are to be the "principles of . . . the British Labour Party." Here is the crux of the new policy. Henceforth *membership of the reformist trade unions is to be made dependent on acceptance of the principles of the Labour Party*. But what are the principles of the Labour Party? They are, as we have just seen, the principles of capitalism, and of open alliance with capitalism. Thus it is in the name of capitalism that the trade unions are to be disrupted.

PARTICULARLY significant in this whole process is the final self-exposure of Cook and Maxton. With them, the last remnant of the old left reformist groupings of leadership, which passed through the stages of Lansbury, of Hicks and Purcell, and finally of Cook and Maxton, has ranged itself behind the banners of MacDonald and Capitalism; and the process which has developed with such rapidity since the General Strike, by way of Edinburgh and Swansea, of Blackpool and Birmingham, reaches its completion. When a year ago Cook and Maxton raised their banner of "revolt" and issued a programme of "militant socialism" completely at variance with the programme of the Labour Party, we raised the question on

which programme they were going to fight at the election, their own programme or the programme of the Labour Party. For a time they endeavoured to hedge on this issue, though their very hedging made the ultimate answer plain to all. Even at Birmingham, after the programme of rationalisation was adopted, Maxton still declared that it was "possible" that socialist elements might be picked out of this programme and constitute the election programme. Now when the whole character of the Labour Party's election campaign is clearly proclaimed as a campaign of capitalist rationalisation and alliance with capitalism, now when the whole trend is more reactionary than ever before, they have ranged themselves and come out finally and without reserve as supporters of MacDonald and a MacDonald Labour Government, supporters consequently of capitalist rationalisation and the alliance with capitalism, and supporters of the splitting of the trade unions.

THE swan-song of Maxton was sung at the Scottish I.L.P. Conference in January. On this Conference P. J. Dollan, the leader of the "right" in the Scottish I.L.P., wrote with justified satisfaction in *Forward* (January 19, 1929) :—

The Conference, I hope, buried some differences which have worried the party in the past seven months.

and he proceeds to quote Kirkwood as having said :—

It would be a crime against Socialism to cause or foment any dissensions in the ranks at this critical period in our difficulties. The Clyde Brigade, he added, would leave no stone unturned to return Labour to power at the General Election. *On this basis we can all unite, forgetting that we were ever classified as Rights or Lefts.*

The I.L.P. organ, the *New Leader*, comments shortly :—

The Cook-Maxton Manifesto was not mentioned once directly. "Let bygones be bygones" was the keynote. (New Leader, January 18, 1929.)

The funeral of the Clyde Brigade was solemnised at the Glasgow united meeting of Henderson, Wheatley and Kirkwood, at which the police kept order by the arrest of seventeen workers.

COOK'S final collapse is even more ignominious. From the withdrawal of his signature to the manifesto of protest against the Llandudno splitting resolution (nominally in order to be able to secure the Scottish inquiry and help the workers), it was but a little step to the giving of his signature to the Scottish Inquiry Report in favour of a split and against the workers, and finally to the Executive splitting resolution. In doing all this, it is significant that he has endeavoured to shelter himself behind the excuse of the paramount necessity of securing the return of a Labour Government :—

I am working for a Labour Government. I am opposed to all those who stand in the way of this achievement, which I believe is possible this year if we can unite together. I believe our salvation is in 100 per cent. organisation industrially and politically. *The only hope for the mineworkers and their dependents is a Labour Government.* (A. J. Cook in *Forward*, March 9, 1929.)

IT will be observed that once again, as ever, the question of the Labour Government is the shelter behind which the betrayal of the workers takes place. There could be no surer indication of the true rôle of a Labour Government as the enemy of the workers. It was on the question of the Labour Government five years ago that the Price-Newbold-Wilkinson group passed from the revolutionary ranks. But once the cause of the capitalist "Labour" Government has been taken to heart, the rest soon follows. Soon after, we find Newbold deploring the "squalid" class struggle and appealing to "the men on the other side" for a common understanding. Soon after, Ellen Wilkinson is speaking at an Industrial Peace lunch, alongside Lord Melchett and the Chairman of the General Council, and replies to the toast of "Industrial Co-operation" in a speech which is "cheered enthusiastically" by the assembled employers (*Daily Herald*, January 26, 1929). And soon after, A. J. Cook, speaking in the peaceful surroundings of Welwyn Garden City, away from the coalfields, is appealing fearlessly to the reckless and desperate inhabitants of that garden city not to indulge in "bloody revolution," but to "settle down to order and sensible progress." "Mr. Cook's Mission," "Plea for Order and

Sensible Progress in the Country," are the *Daily Herald's* headings.

Mr. A. J. Cook, speaking at Welwyn Garden City last night on the general depression of industry, particularly in the coalfields, said that it was because he wanted to prevent a bloody revolution in this country that he was on his campaign.

"*I want this country,*" he continued, "*to settle down to order and sensible progress.*" (*Daily Herald*, March 9, 1929.)

The abjectness of this deflation passes comment. There is a personal aspect in all these inevitable workings-out of the logic of the class struggle in Britain, as elsewhere, which is a tragic aspect. For those who have done service to the workers and fought in their battles, for the Burnses and the Tilletts and the Smillies and the rest, it is pity that the latter part of their lives should shame the first. But politically, the only moral for the workers is to draw the ranks closer and go forward in the fight.

A GAINST the allied ranks of capitalism and the reformist leadership, the workers' struggle goes forward clearer than ever before. The whole situation of the General Election reflects with unexampled clearness the New Period of Capitalism. On the one side, Capitalism is advancing to greater activity, to new and more active efforts of reconstruction, the effects of which will only intensify the contradictions. Alongside, the reformist leadership is now ranged in closer and more complete alliance with capitalism than ever before, no longer merely as the misleader and betrayer of the workers, but as the active helper and co-builder of capitalism. On the other side, the ranks of the militant workers gather for the first time under the open banner of class struggle and the revolutionary fight for Socialism. To any who look below the surface, there can be no question that the future lies with this camp. The issues will not be decided by the present election, which is no more than an opening phase. The fight that now opens looks to the election only as one means of preparation and mobilisation in a wider struggle; it looks beyond the election to the wider struggle that will develop through the whole period in front, and that will develop against whatever Government of capitalism and capitalist rationalisation the results of the election may throw up.

R. P. D.

THE NEW TRADE UNION SITUATION

By J. R. CAMPBELL

THE new policy of the Trade Union bureaucracy has now been in operation for a period of eighteen months, and it is now opportune to review its results. So far as the General Council of the Trades Union Congress is concerned, the major part of its time and attention has been devoted to the two-fold purpose of negotiating with Mond and of preparing to disrupt the Trade Union Movement. The research experts connected with the Labour movement have, in the midst of a declining Trade Union membership, been spending most of their time on special investigations and the preparation of Memoranda in connection with the Mond Conference. In a variety of single industries and trades the Mond policy has been followed up by the employers drawing the unions into closer co-operation with them in the work of capitalist rationalisation.

The results of this policy are now obvious. However much the Trades Union Congress General Council would like to concentrate working-class attention on the agreements which it is arriving at with Mond, it cannot conceal the complete failure of the policy which it advertised as being a policy likely to open the way to improved conditions and a share in the control of industry for the working class. Since this policy has been adopted, the miners and the railwaymen have suffered cuts in wages. The cotton and woollen workers have been threatened, while the unemployed throughout the country have been more cruelly neglected than at any time in the post-war period. In industries where profits are good, the employers are being allowed to go scot free without having to face a demand for improved working-class conditions. This period has been marked not only by a decline of Trade Union membership in those industries where struggles have taken place and victimisation has been rife, but also in industries which are notable as being havens of social peace. According to the *Board of Trade Journal* for December, 1928 :—

The largest numerical decreases were :—

- 107,000 in mining and quarrying.
- 79,000 in the railway service.
- 20,000 in road transport, dock labour, &c.
- 38,000 in the metal groups.
- 25,000 in general labour.
- 15,000 in cotton.

The largest percentage decreases were in the railway service, 16 per cent. ; iron, steel, tinplate, &c., 15 per cent. ; mining and quarrying, 14 per cent. ; building labourers, 13 per cent. ; pottery and glass, 11 per cent.

Thus the Mondist policy is leading to lower wages and is driving thousands of workers away from the Trade Unions.

It is clear that this Mondist policy has not prevented the continuance of the employers' offensive, but on the contrary has facilitated it. It would be entirely wrong to estimate the weight of this offensive by the extent to which it openly challenges National Trade Union Agreements. The employers' offensive is now being conducted through a series of local fights rather than through direct national attacks. It is primarily a rationalisation offensive, that is to say, an attack on wages, hours and working conditions, accompanying the introduction of measures of technical rationalisation. As technical rationalisation is not being introduced uniformly over the whole industry, but pit by pit, factory by factory, the attacks on the workers are also taking on a local or even a factory character. Those attacks, while aiming at the abolition of local customs, conventional piece-rates, &c., while severely reducing the earnings of the working class, may not actually attack the letter of any National Agreement. In those industries and sections of industry where Trade Unionism has been weakened by the bureaucrats, the Agreements are also being challenged on a local scale, as in the woollen textile industry. The workers facing those local attacks are receiving practically no assistance from the Trade Union bureaucracy. Unless the workers take up the struggle themselves, the Trade Union bureaucracy will not move, and then, when struggle is engaged in, will only move in order to betray the struggle.

The above results would be bad enough, but there is worse to follow. The Mondist policy of the T.U.C., the complete passivity of the bureaucracy as a whole in the face of the employers' attacks,

have stimulated protest by the active men in the Unions under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement. This resistance has driven the Trade Union bureaucracy to deny Communists and Minority Movement members their rights within the Unions, to expel militant officials and to deliberately and cold-bloodedly organise, over a period of months, the splitting of the entire Trade Union movement. This splitting policy is without a parallel in the history of British Trade Unionism. Even in the days when the old Liberal bureaucracy were fighting the "New Unionists," splitting tactics on this scale were never resorted to. Even during the war, the bought and corrupted Trade Union bureaucracy in the service of the Government did not attempt to split the Trade Union movement as it is doing to-day. The reason cannot be because of the lack of support to militants to-day. In the Scottish Miners and in the London Garment Workers, the bureaucracy have deliberately adopted a splitting policy which they knew would drive thousands of men away from the Union under their control and reduce these unions to a mere skeleton. The bureaucracy does not fear to face splits and expulsions because it is no longer concerned with 100 per cent. Trade Unionism for bargaining with the employers, but is busily concerned in transforming the Trade Unions into company unions promoting capitalist rationalisation. Such company unions, protected by P.C. 5 s, such as the bureaucracy expects to get in a number of industries for its services to Mondism, do not require 100 per cent. voluntary membership. Hence the complete indifference of the bureaucracy to the fact that their policy is leading to splits and loss of membership.

The bureaucracy are trying to conceal the completely capitalist character of their policy by emphasising the fact that the employers organised in the Federation of British Industries have rejected the Mond policy agreed to by the last Trades Union Congress, and are trying to pretend that this is due to the fact that the General Council has won definite concessions from Mond. This is not so. The aim of the Mondist policy is to take preventative measures against a recurrence of working-class struggle by transforming the Trade Unions into bodies co-operating with the employers in the promotion of capitalist rationalisation. It proposed to bind the

Trade Unions to the employers through the machinery of a National Industrial Council and the Arbitration Committees associated with this Council. The employers organised in the Federation of British Industries and in the Confederation of Employers' Organisations have rejected this policy because they consider it to be unnecessary. They believe that they are able, on the basis of single industries, to pull the unions into co-operation in the promotion of rationalisation without setting up the complicated machinery proposed by Mond. They are further of the opinion that the workers are for the moment down and out, and in the mass unable to overcome the sabotaging policy of the bureaucracy. If, however, the workers get active, the Federation of British Industries and the Confederation of Employers' Associations are quite prepared to go over to the standpoint of Mond.

The memorandum which has come out of the Mond Conference on the question of unemployment is a completely capitalist document. Mond, who scouts the miserable, if well-advertised palliatives of Lloyd George, has not found any difficulty in signing this joint document with the Trade Union leaders on the question of Rationalisation and Unemployment, because it is a document in which the Trade Unions concede everything and Mond concedes nothing. It is true that the document suggests that the Government should inquire into the possibility of raising the school-age, that they should consider whether it is possible to increase Old Age Pensions without increasing present contributions, whether it is possible to organise emigration schemes, and that the employers should consider the possibility "when things have become normal" of establishing a reserve fund in their industries for men displaced by rationalisation. All these things are in the future, and for these promises of the future the Trade Union movement are agreeing to co-operate with Mond here and now in the promotion of capitalist rationalisation, leaving the Trade Union membership entirely undefended.

The period of rationalisation demands from the workers the formulation of a new policy which, by demanding higher wages, shorter hours, control of dismissals, full unemployed maintenance, is calculated to offset the worsening effects of capitalist rationalisation. The workers in all industries must, under the leadership of

the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, formulate such an immediate programme for their industries.

The closer the leaders are bound up with the capitalists in furthering rationalisation, the more difficult it will be to get the new policy that the workers formulate accepted as the official policy; the more certain it will be that even if the new policy is adopted in spite of the officials' resistance, the bureaucracy will completely sabotage any attempt to struggle for this policy. The revolutionary trade unionists, led by the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, in fighting for the acceptance of this new policy must not confine their activities to Trade Union branch work, but must, by direct factory agitation and action (the formation of factory committees, the holding of work-gate meetings, the issue of factory papers, &c.) win the masses of workers in the workshop, organised and unorganised, for the new policy. Outside of the factories, vigilance committees, &c., must be set up for work within the union branches, and, as the movement grows, the vigilance committees and the factory committees must draw closer together so that where the bureaucracy refuses to move in spite of the desire of the overwhelming majority of the workers, unofficial strike machinery embracing the factory committees and the branches of the Union can be brought together for action. Care should be taken that under such circumstances of unofficial action the control of negotiations is in the hands of a rank-and-file committee directly elected by the men so that the Trade Union officials cannot interfere and sabotage the struggle.

This policy of fighting economic struggles independent of the bureaucracy necessitates an approach to the unorganised workers. It is a great mistake to regard the unorganised worker of to-day in the same light as one regarded the unorganised worker five or six years ago when the Trade Unions embraced twice as many members as they do to-day. The unorganised worker of to-day is not necessarily a scab or a boss's man. He may be a militant but confused worker, driven in disgust from the Trade Union movement by the policy of the bureaucracy. While the revolutionary trade unionist must always fight against workers leaving the Unions in this fashion, nevertheless they must recognise that a considerable number of workers have left the Unions, while

not giving up their desire to fight the class struggle. Therefore, in unofficial movements either on a local or a national scale in defence of the workers' standard of life or for better conditions of employment, the unorganised workers must always be drawn into the struggle, and, having been drawn into the struggle, be recruited for the Trade Union movement and brought back to the branches to assist the militants in their task of defeating the old bureaucracy.

The more the policy of the organisation of independent economic struggles takes hold, the more the bureaucracy will attack the militants in the Trade Unions. Here, revolutionary Trade Unionists are faced with two dangers. The first is that the bureaucratic attack intimidates them, makes them refuse to lead economic fights against the will of the bureaucracy even when the workers are anxious to do so, makes them timidly accept Trade Union regulations and ultimatums from the bureaucracy, in other words, makes them regard the will of the bureaucracy as being the will of the Trade Union movement to which they must, in loyalty and solidarity, submit. The second danger is that the militants will allow themselves to be provoked into leaving the reformist unions or into action which will get them expelled on issues on which the bureaucracy have the sympathy of the membership, and that, because of difficulties in the unions, there will emerge amongst the militant trade unionists a new union policy aiming at the construction of brand new unions outside of the official reformist unions. Those dangers must be fought and a militant Trade Union policy pursued which combines Trade Union work in the branches with mass activity in the factories, and neither allows itself to be intimidated or provoked by the bureaucracy nor depressed by the difficulties of carrying on Trade Union work in the face of bureaucratic attack. Only by binding ourselves closer to the mass of the workers in the factory and leading those workers into the fight inside the Trade Union branches can we hope to defeat the splitting policy of the bureaucracy.

Where, however, militants are expelled, it is necessary for those who remain inside the Union to carry on the fight for their reinstatement. Committees of members should be organised in the branches and in the workshop which will show the expulsion

policy of the bureaucrats as a part of the complete betrayal of the working class to capitalism and will fight for the reinstatement of the expelled comrades and the winning over of the majority of the members in the union to a militant policy of struggle against capitalism. One of the dangers to be guarded against is that of giving up the fight against splits and expulsion because the bureaucracy have won in the first round. The more bureaucratised a union is the more we must continue to fight against expulsions by not only mass campaigns within the union but by the direct approach to the workers in the factories and workshops.

While it is criminal for militants to give up the fight in the reformist unions, they must never stand for a policy of unity at any price. The bureaucracy in the Scottish Miners' Union would doubtless have prepared to make peace with the militants provided the militants had not pressed the right of those militants who were elected to office, to assume control as the elected representatives of the men. When the militants refused to abandon their claim to hold office, in face of the splitting policy of the bureaucracy, the right wing have gone ahead and deliberately split the union. Here we have an entirely different situation from that of leaving a reformist union and forming a new ideal union outside that union. We have here a situation in which the reformist union has been split in two. In the struggle leading up to the split, the bureaucracy have driven thousands of workers out of the union. It is, therefore, up to the militants to organise their section of the union in such a way that it can organise the unorganised workers and become the representative union in the area. The same applies to the Garment Workers' Union. Here, the bureaucracy hoped to be able to expel comrade Elsbury while the membership which was behind comrade Elsbury confined itself merely to a campaign within the union which the bureaucracy, by interpretation of rule, by bureaucratic ultimatum and by the use of capitalist law, might reasonably hope to defeat. The membership in London were placed in the position that they either had to give up the fight for comrade Elsbury and for a militant Trade Union policy in London, or they had to accept the challenge and secede from the Tailors and Garment Workers' Union. The fact that when the bureaucracy split a union the revolutionary trade unionists are prepared to

organise the militants and build up an independent union does not mean that from now on we should advocate the building of new unions, but, on the contrary, that we should intensify our work within the reformist unions, getting control of the lower apparatus of the unions, building up our influence in the factories so that if the bureaucracy split, the responsibility is on them and we can carry on in independent class unions which have been developed not as a result of new union propoganda but as a result of the fight inside the reformist unions, the winning of the workers to our policy and away from the splitting policy of the bureaucracy.

In their fight for the new policy of independent economic struggle against capitalism and against the splitting policy of the bureaucracy, revolutionary trade unionists will be hampered by "left" leaders of the type of Cook who, consciously or unconsciously, are helping the bureaucracy in the present period of working-class history. The type of leadership represented by Cook will do many things for the working class on small questions and on secondary issues. It will even, from time to time, protest against Mondism when the protest does not involve any action, but on decisive issues in connection with Mondism, issues like whether the right wing bureaucracy shall be allowed to split the Miners' Federation, Cook and his type immediately go over to the side of the bureaucracy. They dare not face the bureaucracy and, therefore, blame the apathy of the rank-and-file for the splitting policy of the bureaucracy. They do not face the implications of the struggle of the workers in defence of their interests in the period in which the union leaders, in co-operation with the employers, are splitting the Trade Union movement and, therefore, continue to talk about 100 per cent. Trade Unionism. While at the same time helping the splitters, they fight Mondism in words but support it in deeds. This policy, whatever the personal intentions of those who pursue it, can only divide and confuse the militant workers and make the victory of the capitalists and their bureaucratic allies over the working class easier. This policy must be exposed and defeated if the working class is to break through the challenge of Mondism and set itself free for the independent fight in defence of these standards, the independent fight which, in the course of its development, will lead to the conquest of power by the working class.

THE EASTER RISING IN IRELAND, 1916

By N. LENIN

OUR theses (on the Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-determination¹) were written before the Easter rising in Ireland, which provides material for verifying our theoretical views. The views of the opponents of self-determination lead to the conclusion that the vitality of small nations oppressed by imperialism is already exhausted, that they cannot play any rôle against imperialism and that support for their purely national endeavours leads to no result, &c. The experience of the imperialist war, 1914-1917, provides a *practical* refutation of such views.

The war was an epoch of crisis for western European nations, for imperialism as a whole. Every crisis casts off limitations, breaks through exterior coverings, sweeps away what is outlived and discovers the deeper hidden springs and forces. What did it reveal from the point of view of the movement of oppressed nations? In the colonies we saw a series of attempts at rebellion, which, of course, the oppressing nations attempted to conceal in every possible way with the aid of military censorship. Nevertheless, it is well known that the British in Singapore brutally suppressed a mutiny among their Indian troops, that there were attempts at rebellion in French Annam (see *Nashe Slovo*) and in the German Cameroons (see the pamphlet of Junius), that in Europe there occurred, on the one hand, the Irish rising, which the "freedom loving" British pacified by executions, not having succeeded in drawing the Irish into universal military service, and, on the other hand, the Austrian Government executed deputies of the Czech parliament for "treachery" and for the same "crime" shot whole Czech regiments.

This list, of course, is very far from being complete. All the same, it proves that fires of national risings in connection with the

¹The present article, specially translated for the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, was written by Lenin shortly after the Irish rising in 1916, and represents a summing up of the conclusions of his theses on the Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-determination, written in April, 1916, and which appeared in English in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, July, 1928, pp. 421-431.

crisis of imperialism burst out both in the colonies and in Europe, that national sympathies and antipathies manifested themselves in spite of draconian threats and measures of repression. Yet the crisis of imperialism was still far from the climax of its development, the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie was still unshattered (the war "to exhaustion" can lead to this, but has still not led to it), the proletarian movement inside the imperialist powers is still quite weak. What will happen, then, when the war leads to complete exhaustion, or when, even in a single country, the power of the bourgeoisie totters under the blows of the proletarian struggle, as the power of Tsarism did in 1905?

In the newspaper *Berliner Tagwacht*, the organ of the Zimmerwaldians up to and including certain "lefts," there appeared on May 9, 1916, an article on the subject of the Irish insurrection under the initials K. P. and with the title "The Song is Sung Out." The Irish rising is represented as neither more nor less than a "putsch," for, they say, "the Irish question was an agrarian question," the peasants were pacified by reforms and the nationalist movement was now a "purely urban, petty-bourgeois movement behind which, in spite of all the great noise that it was evoking, there was not much of social importance."

It is not surprising that this valuation, so monstrous in its doctrinairism and pedantry, coincides with that of the Russian national-liberal, the constitutional democrat A. Kulischer (see *Rech*, 15. 4. 1916) who also termed the rising the "Dublinputsch."

It is permissible to express a hope that in accordance with the proverb "there is no evil without good" many comrades, who have not understood into what a quagmire they have drifted in denying self-determination in their contemptuous attitude towards the national movement of small nationalities, will now open their eyes under the influence of this "accidental" coincidence of the estimate of the representative of the imperialist bourgeoisie with that of a social democrat!

It is only possible to speak of a "putsch," in the scientific sense of the word, when an attempted rising does not reveal anything more than a handful of conspirators or stupid maniacs and does not evoke any sympathy in the masses. The Irish national movement, with decades of history behind it, passing through

various stages of development and alliances of class interests, expressed itself among other things in the mass Irish National Congress in America (see *Vorwärts*, March 20, 1926) which declared for Irish independence and has also expressed itself in street fighting, both on the part of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and on the part of the workers, after a long period of mass agitation, of demonstrations, of suppression of newspapers, &c. Whoever calls such a rising a "putsch" is either a confirmed reactionary or else a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of imagining a social revolution as a living phenomenon.

For to think that a social revolution is *conceivable* without risings on the part of the small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts on the part of the petty-bourgeoisie, with all its prejudices, without movements of the unconscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against landlord, clerical, monarchical, national and other oppression—means to deny the social revolution. It means to think that in one place one army will range itself and cry "we are for socialism," and in another place another which will cry "we are for imperialism." Only from such a pedantic, ridiculous point of view is it conceivable to revile the Irish rebellion as a "putsch."

Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will *never* realise his expectations. Such a person is a revolutionary in words who, indeed, does not understand a real revolution.

The Russian revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It consisted of a series of fights of all the dissatisfied classes, groups and elements of the population. Among them were masses with the wildest prejudices, with the most unclear and fantastic objects of struggle, groups which had accepted Japanese money, groups of speculators, adventurers, &c. *Objectively*, the mass movement broke Tsarism and cleared the path for democracy, and consequently it was led by the conscious workers.

The socialist revolution in Europe cannot be anything else than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all the oppressed and dissatisfied. Sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and backward workers will inevitably take part in it—without such participation a mass struggle is impossible, any kind of revolution is impossible—and equally inevitably they will introduce into the movement their

prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and mistakes. But *objectively* they will attack *capitalism*, and the conscious vanguard of the revolution, the proletarian vanguard, expressing this objective truth of the many-sided, many-voiced, heterogeneous and, to external appearance, disunited mass struggle, will be able to unify and direct it, to seize power, to take possession of the banks, to expropriate the trusts (so hateful to all, though for different reasons) and to apply other dictatorial measures, amounting in their sum to expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will be far from "cleansing" itself at once of the petty-bourgeois scum.

Social Democracy—we read in the Polish theses—"must utilise the struggle of the young colonial bourgeoisie directed against European imperialism for the *sharpening of the revolutionary crisis in Europe.*"

Is it not clear that in this connection to put Europe in opposition to the colonies is least of all permissible? The struggle of the oppressed nations *in Europe*, capable of reaching the extent of insurrections and street battles, and the destruction of the iron discipline of the troops and state of siege, is immeasurably more powerful in "sharpening the revolutionary crisis in Europe" than a much more developed rebellion in the far-off colonies. A blow of the same strength struck at the power of the British imperialist bourgeoisie by a rising in Ireland has a hundred times greater political significance than if struck in Asia or Africa.

The French Chauvinist press recently reported the issue in Belgium of the eightieth number of the illegal paper *Free Belgium*. It is true that the Chauvinist press in France very frequently lies, but this report has the semblance of truth. While the Chauvinist and Kautskian German social democracy after two years of war has not created for itself a free Press, but has servilely endured the yoke of military censorship (only the left-radical elements have, to their honour, published pamphlets and proclamations without submitting to the censor), an oppressed cultured nation, under an unheard-of ferocity of foreign military oppression, answers by establishing an organ of revolutionary protest. The dialectics of history are such that the small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play the

part of one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, helping towards the emergence on the scene of the *real* force against imperialism, viz., the socialist proletariat.

The general staffs in the present war assiduously endeavour to make use of every kind of nationalist and revolutionary movement in the camp of their opponents, the Germans—the Irish insurrection, the French—the Czech movement, and so on. And from their own point of view they are acting quite correctly. One cannot engage in serious warfare without taking advantage of even the slightest weakness in the enemy, without making the most of every opportunity, the more so when it is impossible to know beforehand at exactly what moment or by exactly what force there will “blow up” here or there this or that powder-magazine. We should be very bad revolutionaries if in the great war of the proletariat for emancipation and freedom we were not able to utilise *every* popular movement against *separate* disasters to imperialism in the interests of sharpening and extending the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to declare and repeat in a thousand strains that we were “against” any national oppression, and, on the other hand, to designate as a “putsch” the heroic insurrection against the oppressors of the most active and intelligent sections of several classes of the oppressed nation—then we should have lowered ourselves to a level as degraded as that of the Kautskians.

The misfortune of the Irish was that they rose inopportunistly when the European insurrection of the proletariat was *still* not ripe. Capitalism is not built up so harmoniously that different sources of insurrection at once of themselves blend themselves together without failures and defeats. On the contrary, it is precisely the variety of the insurrections as regards time, place and character that testifies to the breadth and depth of the general movement. Only through the experience of untimely, partial, disunited and consequently unsuccessful revolutionary movements will the masses acquire experience, school themselves, accumulate forces, recognise their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and thereby prepare the general offensive, just as isolated strikes, demonstrations in the towns and on a national scale, mutinies in the army, disorders among the peasantry, &c., prepared the general offensive of 1905.

EINSTEIN AND DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

By J. LENZ

ON March 14, Albert Einstein, the greatest scientist of our times, celebrated his fiftieth birthday. There is no doubt that on this occasion official bourgeois science will claim the great thinker as one of their own. The proletariat, however, knows that Einstein has never belonged to those reactionary prophets of German science who, whatever they may be able to achieve in their specialised sphere, in the great questions confronting humanity are only able to enunciate the narrowest Chauvinism and class ignorance. With that galaxy of professors who were rightly dubbed "the spiritual bodyguard of the Hohenzollerns," Professor Einstein has nothing whatever to do.

The workers know that always, when it has been necessary to make a stand against the white terror, against imperialist oppression, or against cultural reaction, Einstein has numbered among those few intellectuals who have given their support to the cause of the oppressed. Although he has not adopted a positive attitude towards revolutionary Marxism, towards the Communist movement, nevertheless he has followed with the greatest sympathy the work of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, and he entered the ranks of the International League against Imperialism (of which he was one of the Presidents) along with the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat for the liberation of the colonial peoples.

Einstein has contributed important achievements in the most varied fields of physical science, but he owes his world-wide fame to the so-called theory of relativity. An accurate comprehension of this theory demands thorough knowledge of physical and mathematical science, but we will attempt to set forth the basic ideas of this revolutionary theory in a way so as to be generally understood.

In Engels' posthumous sketches on "Dialectics and Natural Science" is to be found the remark, "Movement of a single body does not exist, only relatively."

As a matter of fact, it is easy to see that a change of position is nothing but a change of the mutual ("relative") positions of different bodies. The question whether a body "in itself" is

“absolutely” at rest or in motion has no meaning; observation can only determine whether it retains or changes its position in relation to other bodies. The earth, for example, moves with a definite velocity round the sun; if you imagine an express train going with the same speed in the opposite direction on the earth’s surface, then in relation to the sun it does not alter its position at all but is at rest. The difference between uniform movement (with unchanging velocity) and non-uniform motion (with changing velocity) has as little absolute significance as the difference between motion and rest.

These ideas, so obvious when abstractly considered, nevertheless stand in *apparent* contradiction to facts. The theory of motion and of moving forces (mechanics) which was developed by Newton in the seventeenth century, and which maintained its validity until the Einstein theory, makes an *absolute* distinction between uniform and non-uniform motion. According to this theory, uniform motion is that of bodies on which no forces are acting, whereas non-uniform motion demands for its explanation the acceptance of forces at work, and in turn producing definite forces.

If, for example, a pendulum is allowed to swing freely, it is observed that the plane in which the pendulum carries out its oscillations will, in the course of twenty-four hours, turn itself round in the opposite direction to that of the rotation of the earth, but the swings will remain unchanged in relation to the sun and the fixed stars. From this the Newtonian physics concluded that there exists an *absolute* space in which the pendulum does not alter the direction of its swings. This absolute space is only approximately characterised by the fixed stars, for it is well known that these also move relatively to one another. Thus, “real” absolute rest cannot be determined for any body, but is postulated for an empty invisible space which cannot be observed by any means.

Another fact which led to the acceptance of absolute movement, is the phenomenon of centrifugal force in rotating motion. Such considerations lead to the conclusion that the above-quoted idea of Engels, about the general relativity of all movement, has no validity in physics.

It is Einstein’s merit that he has developed these ideas of relativity in a far-reaching logical manner, and on this basis built up

a system of natural laws which explain not only all the previously mentioned phenomena but in addition other phenomena which the Newtonian theory is not able to explain.

In the Newtonian system there were two entirely distinct kinds of forces, viz., the force of gravitation, which was explained as due solely to the mutual interaction of bodies, and the force of inertia (e.g., centrifugal force), which was supposed to be derived from the relation of motion of the body to the invisible, imperceptible "absolute" space. Einstein showed that both these forces are of the same nature. The effect of the masses on one another is shown, not only in the mutual attraction, which explains the falling of heavy bodies to the earth's surface and the movement of the planets, but also, for example, in the above-mentioned pendulum experiment, which only demonstrates how the great masses of the fixed stars carry the pendulum with it.

In order to be able to put forward such a theory, Einstein had to free himself from the *metaphysical* conception of space and time as unalterable immanent ghosts floating above or behind all things. In his theory, space and time are nothing but definite properties of the material bodies which move, properties of a *relative* character, which only express themselves in the mutual relations between the bodies.

This theory signifies a tremendous advance towards a unitary materialistic conception of nature. Quite recently, Einstein has published a dissertation which attempts to embrace also the phenomena of electricity in this single field of law. This theory has not yet been tested by experience. If it justifies itself, natural science will have been advanced by yet another significant step.

In Russian Marxist literature, there has been a vigorous discussion as to whether it is possible to reconcile Einstein's theory with dialectical materialism. Such a discussion could only arise because criticisms were being made of the philosophical speculations of idealists and empirio-criticists, and not about the *physical* theory of Einstein. It is precisely the standpoint of dialectical materialism that such a theory can only be confirmed or refuted by *facts*.

Einstein himself is not responsible for his philosophical interpreters. While he maintains a sceptical attitude towards all

philosophical systems, at the beginning of his investigations he was most inclined towards the positivist empirio-critical views of Ernst Mach. However, in an article which first appeared early this year in the British Press, he quotes approvingly a statement in which the intellectual position of the theoretician of relativity is compared with that of Descartes, "or even that of Hegel, without thereby implying the adverse judgment that a physicist would naturally read into such a statement."

In truth, it is hardly possible to conceive of a greater contrast than that between the Machist, empirio-criticist theory of natural knowledge, according to which the latter is nothing more than a mere registration of the facts of experience, and the far-reaching speculative genius of the Einstein method which, as Einstein himself expresses it, rests on the "basic confidence in the unity of the secrets of natural law and in their recognition by the thinking mind."

This confidence in the "knowability" of nature itself shows with the greatest clearness that the Einstein relativity theory has not the slightest in common with that philosophical relativism which from the relativity of isolated portions of knowledge draws the false conclusion of the relativity of *all* truth, and thereby despairs of any knowledge of the world. This philosophical relativism was subjected by both Engels and Lenin to the most annihilating criticism.

The dialectical method of thought, which knows no absolute rigid conceptions, dialectical materialism which proceeds from the *unity of nature*, and the *unity of nature and mind*, from the conviction that "nature cannot be unreasonable," from the conviction of the "knowability" of the world—this basic philosophical conception of Marxism has received brilliant confirmation from the theoretical achievements of Einstein.

In the bourgeois world, Einstein's theory has been in part misinterpreted in support of all sorts of idealistic and mystical metaphysical systems, and in part attacked with reactionary narrowness. The revolutionary proletariat, which is led by its world philosophical outlook to adopt an unprejudiced critical attitude towards all new theories, which is capable of receiving new revolutionary ideas, greets in this great revolutionary in the sphere of natural science a fellow-fighter against the dark powers of ignorance, barbarism and reaction.

KING FUAD AND KING FEISAL

By W. N. EWER.

DOWNING STREET is, I imagine, congratulating itself these days that it did not as the immediate sequel of the war annex either Egypt or Iraq : that it did, on the contrary, make the splendid liberal gesture of conceding to both countries self-government of a sort.

There were many at the time who thought this a sign of weakness. And so indeed it was. Those were the years of war-exhaustion and war-weariness. Very reluctantly the British troops had to be withdrawn from Persia and the Caucasus : the rich prizes of Baku and Abadan had to be relinquished ; the dream of an all-Red route from Cairo to Calcutta had to be abandoned ; only by concessions—to nationalism on the spot and to weariness at home—could the Imperial grip be maintained in Egypt and in Mesopotamia itself. The cry for evacuation of “ Mespot ” was very strong. Even a Tory Prime Minister was driven to public regret that “ we had ever gone there.”

So the concessions were made. Iraq got a King and a constitution and a promise of evacuation at no distant date. Egypt got a King and a constitution and a declaration of independence. In both cases, of course, the concession was largely nominal. The realities of power were kept in British hands. British forces, though in reduced numbers, remained in the countries. Still, there had been concession : and the more simple-minded believed that concession was indeed the first step to withdrawal, that the British Government intended—as on occasion it professed—to make both countries, in due and fairly rapid course, independent.

That was, of course, illusion. No British Government will withdraw either from Egypt or from Iraq unless and until it is compelled to do so. For their possession—with Palestine and Transjordan—gives us the strategical keys of the Middle East. The land, sea and air routes are in our hands. That France is in

Syria is a nuisance, but only a minor nuisance. England at Cairo, at Port Said, at Aden, at Haifa, at Basra, at Muscat, dominates the situation.

Southern Persia is caught between Iraq and Baluchistan, at hand for absorption whenever "the Lion is ready for another spring." The Anglo-Persian oilfields are only just across the border whenever it may be necessary or desirable to safeguard them.

And Iraq is also the obvious base for military action against Russia. Forty odd years ago—at the time of the Penjdeh affair—British General Staff's plans for a Russian war were based on the idea of a blow at the Caucasus. There is no reason to doubt that—with the requisite modifications—the same plan holds good to-day. There are even stronger reasons for it in 1929 than in 1885. The Baku oil fields are to-day a vital spot of the Soviet Union: "hit him in the vitals" is the first canon of strategy: they are a desirable prey: and, apart from its oil, Baku is a strategic point of the highest importance. Its occupation by a hostile force cuts the main line to Merv and Bokhara, and leaves them dependent on the one long railway line from Orenburg to Tashkent. Bokhara was an objective of British Imperial ambition long before the Russians invaded Central Asia.

From Mosul to Baku is only a four-hour aeroplane flight.

Iraq, then, is of enormous importance, in itself, as a base for operations in Persia, as a base for operations against Russia, and as the end of the new land-and-air-route from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. It is as essential to "Imperial lines of communication" and to Imperial strategical plans as are Egypt and the Canal.

At all costs, then, these two countries have to be held. But the holding of them becomes a more and more ticklish political problem.

The trouble is that a foreign occupation and representative institutions (given the existence of a national sentiment) are extraordinarily difficult to reconcile. It is getting increasingly difficult to handle India. It would be already pretty well impossible if it were not constantly possible to play off Moslem

against Hindu. And in Egypt there is no significant sectarian strife. There have been no parties of importance that would be played off against each other. Every complicated manoeuvre to break the Parliamentary majority of the Wafd failed rather comically. Since the Wafd obstinately refused to accept the essential military occupation, and since the Wafd was Parliament, the issue became pretty clear. The conflict was between the Residency and the Parliament. One or the other must go under.

Now had Egypt been annexed at the end of the war it would have been extraordinarily difficult for an English Government, pledged to constitutionalism, to have suppressed the Egyptian constitution. It would have been done, of course. It would have been done if necessary. But it would have been devilish awkward. And so Downing Street last summer thanked its Imperial Gods for King Fuad.

Downing Street wanted a *coup d'etat*. But Downing Street did not want to *make a coup d'etat*. It would have looked so badly at home. It would have been so hard to justify or even to excuse. In such a situation, what a godsend to have a King Fuad who can take the responsibility.

And so Lord Lloyd's plan of governing without a Parliament, of producing a series of showy though unimportant reforms that should wean the loyalty of the Fellahin from the Wafd, which had given them only patriotic slogans, became practicable. For the High Commissioner could remain in the background and the hand of the British Government be not too evident. The destruction of Parliament, the overthrow of the constitution, the establishment of a Fascist regime which would effectively crush all nationalist activity, would be the work of the King, carried through on his own initiative and of his own motion. And Sir Austen could blandly explain the undesirability, the impossibility indeed, of interfering in the least with Egyptian domestic affairs.

So the great farce has been played. King Fuad and Mahomed Mahmud Pasha have set up the dictatorship which British policy required. And Great Britain ostentatiously washes its hands. It is not Sir Austen, it is not Lord Lloyd, who has done this thing.

The thought of the portly, indolent, Mahomed Mahmud, or of the somnolent King Fuad *doing* this, or anything else, is a grotesque one to anyone who knows them.

Here then is the use of King Fuad, not foreseen when he was made a King, but cleverly seen when the moment came. His existence has made it possible for a British "constitutional" Government, without trouble, to establish in Egypt a Fascist regime which can be used for the suppression of nationalism and the stabilisation of the British occupation.

King Feisal is cast for a similar rôle in Iraq. There the situation is only now becoming awkward. For six years it has been possible to keep the Iraqis quiet by a series of delusive promises and by a skilful playing off of Sunni against Shiah—a technique which has come naturally to Anglo-Indian administrators.

But that period is passing. The last negotiations in London stripped all disguise from the reality. The Iraqis know that the British Government has not the slightest intention of evacuating their country, and that all promises have been as fraudulent as those once made of an early evacuation of Egypt.

The effect has been to create a complete deadlock—as complete as that which existed in Egypt. Last spring, by the usual methods, a new Chamber was elected in which there was a big majority—70 to 18—for a Government which favoured ratification of the new Treaty with Great Britain. But ratification was dependent on the conclusion of the formally subsidiary, but in fact vital, military and financial agreements. The pro-Treaty Government, faced by the British demands, realised that they had been fooled. Abdul Muhsin Beg es Sa'dun resigned in January. Every opposition leader has announced that he will not take office if office involves ratification of the Treaty and of the subsidiary agreements. The Chamber would not vote for ratification or support any Government which favoured ratification.

In Iraq, as in Egypt, nationalism demands British evacuation. Nationalism controls the Parliament and would control any other which is likely to be elected. The foreign occupation and Parliamentary Government are incompatible. They cannot exist together. One or other must go.

The time, then, is ripe at Bagdad as at Cairo for a Fascist *coup d'etat* in the interests of the British occupation. At Bagdad as at Cairo it must not be carried out directly. A mandatory Power does not do these things. But if King Feisal will oblige, Sir Austen can explain at Geneva as well as in London that Great Britain, loyal to the great principle of self-determination, does not propose to intervene in any way in the domestic affairs of a State which she has set on the high road to nationhood.

Of course if Feisal will not agree, it will be awkward—but especially so for Feisal.

A SIDELIGHT ON MONDISM

By STEWART PURKIS

RAILWAY capitalists strive to stabilise railway capitalism ; so they work to rationalise railway organisation, technique and administration. But, since none of these efforts affect the fundamental problem of the decline of British heavy industry, the railway companies' financial prospects remain as gloomy as ever.

Railway rationalisation demands heavy expenditure ; but railways stand badly on the Stock Exchange ; railway reserves are far from being what they were, and railway dividends the owners are determined to maintain. The railway financier faces these facts and decides to pay for his new developments by cutting down labour costs. So railway workers are asked to accept wage-cuts, de-grading, and reductions of railway staff. The railway magnates view an attack on the railway workers as choosing the line of least resistance. But even railway magnates have uncomfortable memories of May, 1926. They realise that they must not indiscreetly provoke the resistance of railway workers. So, to avoid this, they seek to get the co-operation of the Trade Union leaders in carrying through their policy of wage-cuts and increased unemployment.

Leaders of industry are very candid as to the necessity of securing the co-operation of Trade Union leaders to ease the work of rationalisation. Sir Mark Jenkinson, financial controller of the Board of Vickers, and director of Vickers-Armstrongs, is reported in *The Times* of March 9, 1929, as saying :—

. . . Any general rationalisation could only be carried on with the co-operation of the Trade Unions and the Government, *otherwise the number of unemployed would be a source of trouble which would prejudice public opinion and increase the burden of taxation which industry had to bear.*

Trade Union leaders are generally more reticent about their labours in connection with rationalisation and Mondism ; it may even be urged that they should be forgiven for nailing the workers to the cross of rationalisation since " they know not what they do " : Mr. A. G. Walkden is an example of this. He protests that it is

wholly untrue to say that he is "helping to carry through the process of making the Unions a part of the machinery of the owning class" or that he "in the future will do for the railway owners what Havelock Wilson and Spencer are doing for the shipping magnates and coal owners."

But the vigour of his denials does not fit in with his answers in cross-examination before the Royal Commission on Transport. Walkden had suggested that the administration of the railways should be entrusted to "a small board of full-time commissioners, chosen for their suitability, and representative of the State and railway workers respectively." The following questions and answers on this proposal are most illuminating:—

Major SALMON: You say that the Board should consist of six, of whom three should be people representing the Railway Workers. Is it proposed that Railway *Workers* should nominate these gentlemen?

Mr. WALKDEN: It is proposed that the Railway *Trade Unions* should send in their nominations.

Major SALMON: They would be there as representing the Trade Unions?

Mr. WALKDEN: No! After appointment they would be *detached from the Trade Unions*. They would be responsible commissioners with a knowledge of the work of trade unions.

Major SALMON: *Would they give up their tickets as trade unionists?*

Mr. WALKDEN: Certainly. They would have to make their choice. Mr. Frank Hodges is now an Electricity Commissioner.

—(*Daily Herald*, January 19, 1929.)

These answers show how deep in Mondism and "Peace in Industry" the Trade Union leaders have sunk. Walkden, at one time an open champion of Workers' Control of Industry, now definitely agrees that workers representatives are to be *detached from the Trade Unions* to follow the precedent of Mr. Hodges, "now an Electricity Commissioner."

This leadership, which stands for "Peace in Industry," is creating "Strife in the Unions." This can be seen very clearly from an incident affecting particularly Railway Clearing House, No. 1 Branch of the Railways Clerks' Association. This local case is worthy of study because it helps to an understanding of the general position.

The Railway Clearing House has for many years massed together some 2,000 men and women engaged on the complex

work of the division of the receipts of the railway companies. Many factors helped the building up of an R.C.H. Railway Clerks' Association Branch of over 1,000 members.

The principal factor in intensifying among R.C.H. clerks a belief in trade union organisation has been the threat of unemployment resulting from the many railway amalgamations and particularly from the grouping of the many rail companies in four railway groups under the Railways Act of 1921.

This undermining of the function of the R.C.H. has made the employment of R.C.H. men and women an uncertain thing. This "vulnerability" was a great factor in forcing them into the Union and also, by intensifying the risks of answering the General Strike call, induced a large number of the branch members to give up their trade union membership in May, 1926.

The branch, which now numbers about 800 members, had the humiliation after the General Strike of finding that there was no provision in the strike settlement for the re-instatement of twenty-five fellow-strikers ("temporary" clerks of many years' duration). Not only Victimisation but also "Stagnation" has created a critical spirit among the membership of the branch.

Since November, 1927, this criticism has found expression in a paper called *The Jogger*, a Communist Party paper for Clearing House Clerks produced by the Euston Rail Group of the Communist Party. The criticism has been direct and vigorous. The local issues and the general issues for railway workers have been dealt with, including victimisation, the Mond-Turner negotiations, 100 per cent. black-leg proof trade unionism, stagnation, Communist rights in the Labour Party, fusion of the railway unions, failures of negotiating machinery, salaries of trade union officialdom (particularly Walkden's), the 2½ per cent. cut, the Road Powers Bill, and the need for a new leadership. The E.C. of the Railway Clerks' Association—compelled either to meet the attack or to employ suppression—called on the writer of this article to give assurances that he would cease to support the work and policy of *The Jogger* and other papers or to accept expulsion. He has now been dismissed from membership of the R.C.A.

The expulsion of an individual must not be exaggerated and

described as "Strife in the Union," but the sequel to the expulsion can be so described without exaggeration.

The R.C.A. Executive decided to ask the R.C.H. No. 1 Branch to endorse its policy of expulsion. The situation seemed a simple one. Clerks are not generally deemed "sympathetic with Communism." It appeared that a Branch made up of men and women employed in the "Head Office" would be certain to endorse the expulsion of a supporter of Communist policy.

So, setting aside the local officials of the branch, the Executive summoned a special meeting. Every leading national official was brought to the platform. T. H. Gill, the President; A. G. Walkden, the General Secretary; Lathan, the Assistant Secretary; A. E. Townend, M.P., the Treasurer, and London E.C. members.

They submitted the E.C. case to a meeting of three hundred members. The E.C. representatives stated their case and it was then dealt with by the rank and file. The result was a rejection of their request that their action should be endorsed: it was rejected by 92 votes to 78.

It seldom happens that the E.C. of a Trade Union faces the unofficially-minded rank and file. The meeting dealt first with the "expulsion" issue and then began to express in a direct and forceful way its demand that its bread-and-butter issues should be considered. The contrast between the outlook of the platform and the outlook of the questioning, critical, demanding rank and file was complete. The visit of the Executive of the Railway Clerks' Association to the R.C.H. Branch has settled one thing—the branch now completely lacks respect for the capacity and usefulness of the present leadership. The rank and file attitude is summed up in the comment: "Whatever we think about Communism, we will make the railway companies a present of Walkden for all the use he is to us."

The National Minority Movement Conference of Railworkers indicated the growth of militant feeling in the ranks of railwaymen, but this feeling has manifested itself even more vividly in this special meeting of a Trade Union branch. The stabilisation of capitalism is creating ever-increasing contradictions: it becomes plain to all to see that those who stand for "Peace in Industry" are creating "War in the Unions."

ESSAYS IN CENSORSHIP

By T. A. JACKSON

THE deputation of strictly moral nobodies which waited upon Sir William Joynson-Hicks the other week may not have been aware of it but they were a sign and a portent. They urged him, fresh from suppressing a not-quite published novel, to persevere in his self-appointed task of purging both the literature of the land and the night life of London from anything that "might offend these my little ones"—as the Home Secretary himself somewhat blasphemously quoted recently.

The portent did not consist in the newness of the appeal, since the prudesse "have always with us." It consisted in the readiness with which it was seized to excuse the whole of the policy of repression and suppression with which Joynson-Hicks' regime has been marked, and the almost gloating enthusiasm with which he made it clear that if he has his way there is more—much more—to follow!

Where this "more" is likely to lead us is worth an effort to imagine.

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Before the war your patriotic Briton prided himself upon nothing so much as that Britain was the "land of liberty"—the land where (according to Tennyson) "a man may say the thing he will!" The Continent, cluttered-up with its passport offices and its secret police, pointed the contrast; while Russia under the Tsars, with its censorship, its espionage, its raids, and its arrests for political offences, seemed, in good British eyes, the epitome of tyrannical abominations.

It was this that ensured for the Russian Terrorist-Liberals an almost universal sympathy in Britain as "people rightly struggling to be free"; and ensured general British approval for all Liberalising efforts aimed at securing for "foreign" lands a measure of the "liberty" "guaranteed" by the Union Jack.

We have, of course, changed all that. Not only have "we" revised our bad opinion of the Tsar and Tsardom; but "we" have ceased to boast of the Liberty of Old England. In the years

since the war we have heard so many clamours for so many "tightenings up" and "strengthenings" of the law that we have grown to expect them as a matter of course. Legislation against sedition; legislation against blasphemy; legislation against the Trades Unions; against "propaganda"; against "agitators"; against the "growing licentiousness of the age"—all these have been demanded by true-blue patriots and all have been conceded in new acts or administrative measures.

The process began during the war with a sudden and extensive revival of prosecutions for "sedition" (and, later, "blasphemy") and in the various Orders under the Defence of the Realm Act which swept aside "Habeas Corpus," trial by jury, and other "milestones" on the path of Liberal progress. To these were soon added a censorship such as Tsardom could envy and a Department of Propaganda which Ignatius Loyola could scarcely have bettered. These "restraints" had, perforce, to be relaxed when the war came, lingeringly, to an "official" end; but they left behind them the "Emergency Powers Act"—which, by reversing the time-honoured British legal maxim (that a man's innocence must be presumed till the contrary is proved in court) and throwing the onus of proof upon the defendant, let the world know that as the repressive practices of Pitt during the Anti-Jacobin wars had been outdone by D.O.R.A., so the post-war deeds of Sidmouth and Castlereagh were to be exceeded by their post-war successors of a century later.

These things, it is true, did not come to be without revealing a measure of "Liberal" misgiving; nor could they fail to beget logical and psychological consequences far transcending the occasions which provided their excuse.

In the main they were frankly aimed at coping with a crisis of class-conflict. It was *against* particular class-movements with specific class objectives that the "State" had to be "preserved" and the realm "maintained"; and this formulation of the problem revealed clearly enough that it was to *protect* another particular class, its institutions, and its conditions of life and rule, that these barriers of repression were erected. Hence even when neither the E.P.A. nor the Trades Disputes Act was actively functioning the ruling class sense of danger and insecurity remained in full and

fructifying force. This, and this alone, is the background from which springs Sir William Joynson-Hicks.

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The concerted and sustained repression of a lower class (conceived officially as the "public enemy"—since officially in a "democracy" such as "ours" *class* is a thing unknown) implies necessarily the completest attainable unanimity, discipline, and good order, in the ranks of the class repressing. In the measure, therefore, that the potentially rebel proletariat must be held in check, the ruling class itself must impose within its own ranks and among its own functionaries a tighter and ever tighter discipline and contról.

It might seem at first glance a far cry from the release of the "Zinoviev" letter to the imprisonment of Mrs. Meyrick and of ex-Sergeant Goddard, or from the crushing of the General Strike and the miners to the banning (and burning) of the "Well of Loneliness" and the "Sleeveless Errand." Yet the connection is there and easily to be traced.

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We would err profoundly, and concede Joynson-Hicks' basic claim, did we take the view of those who imagine that in literature, the arts, and in personal morals there have been "great advances" since the war came; all which "progress" the Home Secretary is seeking to cancel on stupidly Puritanical grounds.

The new feature of the modern period is not so much the return to Elizabethan frankness as the genuine endeavour, among a section of the intelligentsia at any rate, to treat sex-relations seriously in their relation to social relations. It is this very seriousness and not its incidental bawdiness which has caused the Home Secretary to repudiate both in precept and in practice all the basic assumptions of nineteenth-century Liberalism, and adopt frankly the maxims and methods of Tsarism. He feels, and his Cabinet colleagues, presumably, share his feeling, that any fundamental critique of social-relations, any truly scientific scrutiny of conventional moral standards cannot fail, in an age of literacy and libraries, to shatter all those optimisms upon which a dis-integrating social system always relies.

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The Home Secretary in vindicating his department against criticism for detaining postal packets (containing scientific works in one case and manuscript poems in another) talked at large of the "mass" of "indecent" books and photographs imported into this country in this way.

That there exists a demand for and a supply of these things is not in question, any more than is the fact that the demand centres chiefly upon the adolescents in the "great" public schools. Whether any good purpose is served by driving this traffic "underground" (as it has been for the past half-century) is more than doubtful; but what is certain and highly significant is that the law of "obscene libel" (like its legal kinsmen the laws of "seditious" and "blasphemous" libel) has all through its history been a pretext for repressive action against the proletariat and its actual or political allies.

The first important case of "obscene libel" on record was that of John Wilkes, whose agitations infuriated the government of George III at the time when the revolt of the American colonies was growing serious.

Driven desperate by the refusal of juries to convict him of "sedition" the Government (in a truly Jix-like manner) raided John Wilkes' home, looted his private papers and prosecuted him for his privately printed and circulated *Essay on Woman*—a parody of Pope's *Essay on Man*. It was hardly pretended even that this bawdy jest, produced for the private entertainment of a club of thorough-going and notorious rakes, was likely to "corrupt the morals" of the nation. It was not even "published" in any honest sense of the word. The object of the prosecution was to silence an inconvenient agitator; and it, temporarily, succeeded.

That has been the barely concealed motive of all the chief prosecutions for "obscene" libel from then till now.

To repress "obscenity" was one of the chief objectives announced by the "Society for the Suppression of Vice, Indecency and Profaneness" which played the part of common informer against the English sympathisers with the French Revolution. In fact their chief efforts were directed at the suppression of Paine's *Age of Reason* and kindred works.

Actual prosecutions for "obscene" libel were rare in those days—as now—notwithstanding much talk of its "prevalence." Shelley's *Queen Mab* was prosecuted (for blasphemy) but not his *Cenci*. Byron's *Cain* and his *Vision of Judgment* were prosecuted (as "seditious") but not his *Don Juan*. The only case of "obscenity" to reach public notice in the Sidmouth-Castlereagh period was that of Wm. Benbow (afterwards famous as the first advocate of the social general strike) who was prosecuted for a Malthusian pamphlet.

The political motives inspiring the prosecution of Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant in 1869 for another "obscene" Malthusian pamphlet were obvious. Only less so were the motives of the prosecution in 1890 of Havelock Ellis's *Psychology of Sex*—since Ellis was known as a sympathiser with the then rising Socialist movement. (A similar motive intensified, by the way, the ferocity with which Oscar Wilde was pursued—a ferocity which more than defeated its own object by throwing over Wilde and his practices the halo of martyrdom.)

In our own day the cry of "obscenity" has similarly been begotten by a sub-conscious political terror. The plays banned as "obscene" in pre-war days—those of Ibsen, Shaw, Barker and Brieux, all challenged the validity of conventional morality; and all demonstrated that that "morality" had no effect upon the actual practices of the ruling and respectable classes. The novels banned in our own day do no more.

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This continuity was underlined by the fact that the deputation (referred to at the outset) was specially insistent that there should be further restrictions and restraints upon the sale of "birth-control" literature. This is not only in the direct line of tradition but presages the mobilisation at the back of the Home Secretary in any future essays into Tsarism of the whole body of truculent clericalism which in every political crisis has always been the "Hindenburg Line" of the British Torquemada from Thomas Cromwell to William Pitt, from Henry, Lord Sidmouth, to William "Lord" (?) Hicks.

That "Jix" knows this and banks upon it is patent; his legal agent in the latest suppression case pleaded (quite irrelevantly)

that in addition to being "obscene" the work was "blasphemous"—citing, as an example, the quotation.

In 1842, the Chartist agitation then being at its height, George Jacob Holyoake, a Chartist-Socialist "missionary," was convicted of blasphemy for suggesting that "we are too poor to afford a God!" In 1794, the lawyer Gale Jones was convicted of "sedition" for saying in a casual conversation: "I'm for equality and no king!"

If doubt still remains there is the clinching fact of the espionage upon the Post. The Home Secretary vindicating himself for seizing D. H. Lawrence's MS. poems in the post, claimed that they contain in half-a-dozen places as any "obscene" words. It seems to have escaped every newspaper critic and Parliamentary questioner that the discovery of these words by the Home Office implies an elaborate organisation for opening, reading, and commenting upon not merely printed, or photographic, but MSS. matters committed to the post.

When far back in Judge Jeffries' days a conviction was secured against Algernon Sydney by using as evidence a private paper found in his study, Sydney became a classic martyr to the cause of English liberty. When in early Victorian days the British people learned that the Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, had opened Mazzini's letters in the Post, and revealed the contents to the Austrian rulers of Italy (thereby causing the death of his correspondents), an all-but universal howl of execration drove Sir James Graham from office. To-day, it seems, such things pass without comment; not merely when the victims are Communists (whose correspondence is invariably "grahamised"), but even when they are distinguished men of letters.

If this can be done without uproar, what is there that is not possible?

Before the war Britons prided themselves on nothing so much as their "liberty"—their freedom from "Tsarist" censorship and espionage. Since the war——!

Scheme and contrive as they will the rulers of Britain can win back neither their pre-war industrial pre-eminence nor the pre-war docility of the working-mass which was a pre-requisite for that pre-eminence. As a matter of life and death for their social system they must, in a world where everything has changed and is changing

re-create, by some means or another, the once common belief in the Gibraltar-like stability of the British State and Empire. They can "tune the pulpits" as Elizabeth did, but the pulpits matter little nowadays. They can "manage" politicians as Walpole managed them and the Press, so far as it is not theirs to manipulate already, they can "gag" as Castlereagh did and all printed matter along with it.

Already there are laws enough to deal with "agitators" industrial and political; it needs but a little more and the whole system of British Tsarism—censorship, espionage, and repression—will be complete.

But even that "little more" needs (such is the persistence of the "liberty" illusion) dexterous political preparation. The self-exposure by their intellectuals of the weariness, disillusionment, decadence, and disgust growing in the ranks of the bourgeoisie is of little moment in itself either historically or as a practical problem for the Home Office. But it is just the thing to provide a hard-pressed ruling-class with an excuse for Essays in the Censorship that their needs will force them to establish sooner or later.

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"In the fear of the proletariat is the beginning of wisdom." Thus and thus alone can one interpret the policy of Sir William Joynson-Hicks.

THE CLASS LEADERSHIP OF CHARTISM

By REG. P. GROVES

IN the article, "Chartism and the Present Day," which appeared in the January issue of the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, an explanation was given of the causes of Chartism's decline. "The main reason," it was stated, "is to be found in the actual conditions that created Chartism." In particular, the expansion of production and trade which followed on the depression of the 'thirties and 'forties diminished the antagonisms between the proletariat and the capitalists. This conclusion does not obviate the need for further analysis of the conditions determining the decline of Chartism. To isolate one single part of a developing situation, to explain the closely connected causes and effects by this single part of the whole, is to fail to understand the interaction of the various closely connected *factors* which operate to produce a given result.

The importance of the class divisions within the Chartist ranks ; the consequent difference in aims and outlook of the divided forces ; this point is of considerable importance. The purpose of this short article is to examine the various groups contending within the movement for its leadership in the light of these class divisions, always bearing in mind that this must be regarded as supplementary to the article mentioned above. An examination of this character is not complete without reference to the part played by Marx and Engels in the Chartist struggles and their attitude towards the different groups

Generally, the Chartist leadership is divided into a "moral force" group (Lovett, Hetherington, Collins, &c.) and a "physical force" group, in which is loosely included O'Connor, Cooper, Harney, Taylor and a host of others. Such a division obscures the real issue, which lies between a "centrist" group and a "left wing" group. The "moral force" group, who formed and dominated the London Workingmen's Association, were, as the movement gathered itself for the struggle, speedily outstripped, and became a negligible factor in the big

struggles of Chartism. Of the "Centrist" group, O'Connor is the most representative and outstanding figure ; of the "left wing" group, Harney is the most advanced ; an examination of the policies and significance of these two men will afford a basis for an understanding of the division between these two groups.

Fergus O'Connor led the movement into its greatest struggles and into its greatest defeats. O'Connor's failures and treachery are usually explained as being due to his personal character ; thus Postgate argues that "vanity and love of popularity misled him" (L.R.D. Syllabus, No. 7). The roots of O'Connor's failures lie deeper than mere personal faults. O'Connor came to the British working class from Ireland, a purely agrarian country. His rapid accession to the leadership of the movement was due to the fact that he personified and voiced the demands of the non-proletarian elements in the movement—the handloom weavers and similar sections, who, powerful in numbers, looked to the Chartist movement to lead them, not toward the conquest of capitalism but backwards to the pre-capitalist days ; their slogan was "back to the land and life of our forebears." They hated capitalism but could not understand it, and consequently fought hopelessly and blindly. They were, in a word, reactionary in outlook and uncertain in struggle. In this lies the explanation of O'Connor's vacillations ; of his land settlement schemes ; of his betrayal of the Welsh insurrection. In this lies the cause of the spasmodic and uneven nature of the Chartist struggles. As we shall see later, the failure to recognise the nature and roots of O'Connorism led to final disaster for Chartism.

George Julian Harney was born amid the squalor and misery of the town. He knew no other system but capitalism, and so was far in advance of the O'Connorites in outlook. Imprisoned for selling unstamped newspapers at the age of seventeen, in his early twenties he broke definitely with the London Workingmen's Association, and formed the London Democratic Association, which, recruiting from the East End proletariat, secured within a short time a membership of 3,000 (compared to the L.W.A.'s 400). In a letter to the *Northern Star* (March 24, 1839) he stated his reasons for this step. He scoffed at the idea that "moral force" and "education" were weapons of any value in the immediate

struggle, and asserted that the emancipation of the workers could only be achieved by their own efforts. His journal, *The London Democrat*, displays both the fire and vigour of the rising proletariat and the theoretical understanding of the nature of capitalism, and the rôle of the working class that later was clarified and developed by Marx and Engels. Any suggestion of an alliance with the middle classes he attacked vigorously. Harney showed his appreciation of the rôle of the middle class in the following passage :—

You see now through the delusions of your enemies. Nearly nine years of "liberal" government have taught you the blessings of middle class sway, blessings exemplified in "bastilles" and "water gruel," in "separation" and "starvation" [Harney is referring to the effects of the New Poor Law Act on the conditions in the work-houses]; in the cells of silent horror and the chains of transportation, in the universal misery of yourselves and the universal profligacy of your oppressors. (*London Democrat*, April 20, 1839.)

Seeing clearly the economic roots of the workers' support for the Charter, on that his journal was equally emphatic :—

Unless the "People's Charter" is followed by a measure to equalise the condition of all, the producing classes will still be oppressed. (*Ibid.*, April 13, 1839.)

In the issue of May 4, 1839, Harney pointed out clearly that the General Strike, then being advocated as a peaceful method of carrying the Charter, would, if carried through, only end in civil war, and for this preparation was necessary.

But Harney and his group, in the early years of the movement, were, like many others, under the powerful influence of O'Connor. O'Connor is an example of a certain type of "centrist" in action. "Centrism" promises force (always with the proviso "if necessary"); "centrism" appears to advocate mass action, leads the workers almost to the point of struggle, and then falls back into confusion and defeat.

This rôle O'Connor played very successfully, as the history of Chartism tragically shows, right up to the April demonstration of 1848, when at last to the whole working class his true political rôle was revealed in the ignominious surrender on Kennington Common. But by 1848 the real driving force of Chartism was spent. The industrial proletariat was growing less and less inclined to follow a revolutionary leadership (for the reasons for this see the

previous article already referred to); the failure of Harney, Ernest Jones and the other left wing members to come forward as an independent force, based on the proletarian elements in the movement, whilst the whole working class was united in its determination to secure their political and economic rights, paved the way to the disaster of April 10, 1848, and the subsequent disappearance of Chartism. The task of effecting the union of Communism with Chartism (which would have decisively undermined O'Connor's position) was not seen in its right perspective. As a result, Chartism merely paved the way to the ensuing period of blossoming reformism, when—inside the framework of an expanding capitalism, with the working class “educated,” *i.e.*, educated in capitalist ideas and policy, with religion holding its sway over the industrial areas—the owning class could safely grant gradually the principal points of the Charter which they dared not do in the days of Chartism.

In discussing the Chartist movement, nothing helps more to clarify and illustrate the points dealt with than to examine the relations of Marx and Engels to the Chartists. G. J. Harney became acquainted with Engels whilst the latter was in England preparing the materials for his book, “The Condition of the Working Classes in 1844.” How far Harney and the experiences of Chartism influenced Marx and Engels it is difficult to judge. That both owed much to Chartism cannot be denied. But much more clear is the combined influence of struggle and the theories of Marx and Engels on the Chartists. Professor Riazanov's discovery and publication of the articles of the World League of Revolutionary Communists (first published in English by the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, August, 1928) shows Harney as one of the leading members of this league. Even more strikingly is the effect shown in the speeches and writings of Ernest Jones and G. J. Harney. For example, at a meeting of German Social Democrats, Harney, in the course of his speech, declared :—

The cause of the people in all countries is the same—the cause of labour, enslaved and plundered labour. . . . The men who create every necessary, every comfort and luxury are themselves steeped in misery. Working men of all countries, are not your grievances, your wrongs, the same? Is not your good cause one and the same also . . . the veritable emancipation of the human race. (*Northern Star*,

February 14, 1846—a year before the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*.)

Another example, more striking still, is this extract from Harney's journal, *The Red Republican*, of July, 1850. (Note that by this time the hey-day of Chartism had passed.)

As regards the working men swamping all other classes the answer is simple—other classes have no right to exist. To prepare the way for the *absolute supremacy of the working class* preparatory to the abolition of the system of classes, is the mission of *The Red Republican*.

And yet there are still people who maintain that the dictatorship of the proletariat is an alien doctrine !

Ernest Jones in 1851 put forward a Socialist programme which included “Nationalisation of the land, disestablishment of the church, founding of national co-operatives, creation of people's militia, abolition of army, abolition of capital punishment, right of poor to work or maintenance. Compare this with O'Connor's advocacy of small-holdings and his declaration :—

I ever have been, and think ever shall be, opposed to the principle of Communism. . . . I am even opposed to public kitchens, public baking houses and public washhouses. (*The Labourer*, 1847-48, pp. 149 and 157.)

A further example from the writings of Ernest Jones :—

An amalgamation of classes is impossible . . . these two portions of the community must be separated distinctly, dividedly and openly from each other, CLASS AGAINST CLASS. All other mode of procedure is mere moonshine. (*Notes to the People*, 1850, p. 342.)

Thus are the theoreticians of capitalism answered when they cry, “alien to British tradition are the theories of Bolshevism.” In the struggles of the Chartists is to be found the answer also to those who maintain that the British working class was, is, and always will be, passive, God-fearing and constitutional. Chartism substituted class for community, mass struggle for constitutional agitation, the General Strike and armed revolt for parliamentary petition, and on the basis of the developing struggle, *Embryonic Marxism for Owenism*.

The work of the proletarian group, who were precisely the group that had some scientific theory to guide them, deserves special study to-day ; the failure of this group ruthlessly to expose and uproot “centrism ” and take an independent line should be burnt into the consciousness of the contemporary revolutionary movement.

LABOUR GOVERNMENT IN QUEENSLAND

By J. RYAN

A LITTLE more than a dozen years ago the workers of Queensland were delighted by the fact that the old capitalist political parties were defeated at the General Election for the State Parliament, and the Labour Party had won sufficient seats to form a Government. Since that victory Labour has not been ousted from office, but has, on the contrary, increased its representation in the Legislative Assembly.

Of course, Labour-in-Office could do very little for the workers in those early days; its Ministers were inexperienced, the Civil Service was honeycombed with hostile elements, and there was the "Upper House"—the Legislative Council—a nominee chamber which could veto or mutilate legislative measures put forward by the Labour Government. "Wait," said the Labour politicians, "wait until we get rid of the Civil Service bureaucrats, the class-biased judiciary and the fossilised Upper House."

So the patient workers waited. True, they were surprised when the State police were used to baton strikers during the 1919 metalworkers' dispute in the north, and again, not long afterwards, when the demonstration held in Brisbane to commemorate the anniversary of the Russian Revolution was brutally broken up and several demonstrators jailed; nevertheless it was thought, by many, that until Labour could place its own nominees in all strategical positions such unfortunate incidents were bound to occur.

Several State enterprises were established, such as State butchers' shops, State saw-mills, State sheep stations, &c., but these did not materially benefit the workers; what profits were cleared were ear-marked to pay interest on capital cost and State public debts. Railways had always been built and administered by the State, for no capitalist was sufficiently philanthropic to invest

capital in railways in a sparsely populated country like Queensland when it was possible to invest in government loans which were used to build railways and returned a guaranteed rate of interest.

It is true also that the Government passed an Act which had for its object the raising of rents of large landholders who had acquired tracts of land as vast as European nations for insignificant annual payments; but a sharp reprimand from London financiers caused the Act to be speedily amended. A young country must have loans, and he who pays the piper calls the tune; the workers cannot loan much money to a government for reasons that are obvious.

As the years rolled by, more and more Labour Government appointees were placed in the Civil Service; eventually the time arrived when not only the Legislative Assembly, but the administrative offices were distinctly Labour Party in character. In addition even the sacred judiciary was flooded with Labour politicians and their supporters. A successful attack was launched on that bulwark of reaction—the Legislative Council or Upper House. It was disposed of by the simple process of flooding it with nominees who were pledged to vote for its abolition. There was great joy when it died a welcome death in 1922. Thus all constitutional and administrative barriers were annihilated and the Government was free to legislate in the interests of the working class.

Unfortunately the Government has been more concerned with maintaining Queensland's credit on the London money market than with the needs of the working class; all that the Government can boast of is that it can offer security for loans that is second to none. The tragedy of it is that the leaders of the Labour Party *do* boast of it. How is it possible for finance-capital to retain such unbounded faith in a Government composed of a party whose objective is "the socialisation of industry."

Actually the Australian Labour Party is no more sincere about Socialism than the British Labour Party or the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. The socialistic objective is merely a sop for the militants; there appears to be a tacit agreement among Labour politicians never to mention it; certainly it is not taken seriously by any of them. When appealing for votes

during election campaigns, Labour Party leaders modestly offer to give the workers higher wages, decreased working hours, better houses, schools, and so on—under capitalism. They say that those reforms will make the workers more efficient, will increase productivity. They leave all talk about Socialism to dreamers and visionaries, whom they vilify for jeopardising their chance of electoral success.

Modest even as the promises are, Labour Governments find themselves fighting the workers to prevent them gaining those very reforms. In Queensland the Labour Government has fought the workers more viciously than any other State Government, Labour or openly capitalist. It has used its control of the police, judiciary, Civil Service, and Parliament to defend the interests of the employers and to smash the organisations and fighting spirit of the workers. No wonder its credit is good!

Admittedly, certain Acts of Parliament have been passed which appear to be advanced, but they have been passed only after a severe struggle has been put up by the trade union movement of Queensland. Happily the trade unions of Queensland have a comparatively militant membership—particularly the Australian Railway's Union—and have not hesitated to fight for their demands in recent years. After all, what is this advanced legislation? An Unemployment Insurance Act which is practically a replica of the British Act; a Workers' Compensation Act which is not the equal of several State Acts in U.S.A.; several minor Acts of a like character, and the Forty-Four Hours' Week Act which was only conceded after a terrific fight had been waged by the trade unions.

Without deprecating the value of these Acts it can be truthfully said that with the same amount of pressure from the organised workers any government would have been forced to concede similar reforms. In any case, all of those reforms have been conceded by capitalists or capitalist governments in various parts of the world.

The important point is that the Queensland Labour Government is unwilling to, determined not to, go any further; it is bankrupt of reforms, for if it does not curb the organised workers it will lower itself in the eyes of finance-capital; it has

reached the inevitable position of all reformist governments—a militant defender of capitalism. In this rôle it is more efficient than the older capitalist parties because of its knowledge of the working-class movement.

In 1926 the trade unions of Queensland made an application to the Board of Trade for an increase of ten shillings per week in the basic wage. The Board of Trade consists of three persons, two of whom are Labour men—one an ex-Labour Premier, the other an ex-secretary of the Australian Workers' Union. After the unions' representatives had presented their case to the Board, the Government opposed the application on the grounds that industry could not bear the burden. The arguments of the Government's representative were so elaborate that the employers said there was no need for them to present a case as the Government had said all that could be said in opposition to the increase. Of course the application was refused.

Could anything be more ludicrous? A government rides into office on the pennies and shillings of the working class, appoints a Board to judge the workers' case, then opposes the demands of the unions so cleverly that the employers are left speechless with joy. The Board, which is controlled by ex-Labour politicians, then throws out the application. "Wait until we get rid of the class-biased judges. . . .!"

Towards the end of 1926 the same Board refused the application of the Queensland building workers for a forty-hour working week. When other workers were working forty-eight hours a week, building workers were working forty-four hours, therefore, they considered that as other workers had gained a forty-four-hours' week they should have a forty-hours' week. Also, it was explained to the Board, that as a result of new methods introduced into the building industry the productivity of labour had been considerably increased in recent years.

Such arguments were wasted on the Board. It was then decided, at mass meetings, that from January, 1927, building workers would work only forty hours a week and would sacrifice four hours' pay. A general lock-out of building workers resulted. The Labour Government displayed its solidarity with the master builders by locking out all of the building workers in the employ

of the Government departments ! This had not been anticipated; within two months the workers were smashed.

A series of stop-work meetings held by railwaymen to enforce concessions, inspired the Government to pass a special Act of Parliament which prevents railwaymen, under a penalty of £1 each, from participating in a stop-work meeting. Quite an excellent sample of "advanced" legislation !

All of the foregoing was as nothing to the Government's colossal scabbing during the South Johnstone Mill strike in 1927. At a small sugar mill in North Queensland several workers had been frequently victimised. Their fellow-workers ceased work and scabs were employed in their places. Sugar produced by scabs is, of course, unfit to be handled by union railwaymen, consequently when the time arrived to rail the sugar the railwaymen refused to touch it. The Labour Premier (McCormack, a one time militant union official), instead of congratulating the railwaymen on their solidarity, issued a proclamation to the effect that if the railwaymen refused to handle the scab sugar from South Johnstone Mill he would lock them out. An avowed capitalist politician could not say more than that.

Needless to say the railwaymen would not scab even though threatened with the sack by a tin-pot Mussolini. The railways being State-owned, it was possible for McCormack to put his threat into effect—which he did; about 15,000 railwaymen being locked out because a dozen of their number had refused to handle scab-produced sugar. For a whole week not a wheel moved on the Queensland railways. Unfortunately, only half of the railway workers are in the Australian Railways' Union; the other half are divided among a number of craft unions. A couple of craft union officials were detected engaging in private conferences with McCormack. This weakened the morale of the rest of the leaders of the unions, and a compromise was agreed to whereby the railwaymen would be reinstated without the obligation of handling the scab sugar at South Johnstone, but they had to sign a paper promising to be obedient in the future.

Quite obviously the whole affair was a deliberate attempt by the Labour Government to smash the A.R.U. which has been a thorn in its side for many years. During the fight the Queensland

Chamber of Commerce adopted a resolution congratulating the Government on its "firm stand," and offering to assist in every way possible. The members were so enthusiastic that, when the resolution was carried, they jumped to their feet and sang "Rule Britannia."

Recently, when the waterside workers (dockers) were straining every nerve to prevent the shipowners and the Bruce Federal Government from smashing their union to pieces, the Queensland Labour Government supplied an army of police to prevent the unionists going near the wharves where the scabs were working. In addition, the Government victimised a score of railwaymen who refused to touch goods handled by scab wharf labourers.

While the "Labour" Government has been proving itself a fitting defender of capitalist interests important events have occurred within the trade union movement and the Labour Party itself. Due to its large membership and bureaucratic leadership the Australian Workers' Union has achieved complete control of the political machine to the exclusion of all other unions. Both the Executive of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party are completely dominated by the A.W.U. bureaucracy, backed up by middle-class elements in the local Labour Party branches.

As with all other reactionary political parties, the Queensland Labour Party leaders attacked the Communists and excluded all members of the Communist Party from its membership. This was the first step. Then the representatives of the Australian Railways' Union were not permitted to attend the Labour Party Convention because they would only sign the anti-Communist pledge "under protest." Later, individuals were expelled merely because they criticised the leaders. Thus the Party has been purged of all but the reactionaries.

Because of this purging and treacherous policy, the Australian Railways' Union and the Australian Meat Industry Employees' Union, two of the largest unions in Queensland, have cancelled their affiliations with the Labour Party. Also all the other unions, excepting the Australian Workers' Union and a few small unions, find themselves at variance with the Labour Party and the Government. This dissatisfaction was crystallised at a

special Trade Union Congress held after the 1927 railway lock-out, where resolutions were adopted condemning the executive of the Labour Party and the Labour Government for their reformist policy.

For several years the Communist Party of Australia advised the workers of Queensland to vote for Labour Party candidates, knowing that the best way to expose the reformists was to put them into office. This exposure has, in fact, taken place to a striking degree, especially during the Government's latest term of office. Therefore, the Communist Party in Queensland has decided that it will no longer advise Queensland workers to vote for Labour Party candidates, unless those candidates repudiate the scab actions of the Government and adopt a programme of militant immediate demands. The Communist Party has decided to enter the arena with its own candidates in a few electorates, and encourage the formation of Left Wing committees for the purpose of supporting Left-Wing candidates in as many electorates as possible at the forthcoming State elections.

It is too soon as yet to offer a forecast as to the probable results of this change of tactics by the Communist Party. While a large number of workers are disgusted with the Labour Government it is also true that a considerable percentage of them are disgusted with the *personnel* of the Government; it is not yet widely grasped that a reformist policy makes such actions inevitable. A drastic change at the selection ballots may alter the situation considerably.

At present the Communist Party has not a large membership in Queensland. However, a start has to be made somewhere as the time is over-ripe for the Communist Party to challenge the reformists electorally. The Brisbane Plebs' League, a small but energetic group, has endorsed the Communist Party policy; several prominent trade union officials have done the same.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL League Against Imperialism

THE Conference of the League against Imperialism held in Cologne, January 15-17, 1929, was one of the most important since the inaugural Congress of the League. The holding of the Executive session was attended by a characteristic incident when Mr. Maxton, M.P., Chairman of the League Executive, Mr. Saklatvala, M.P., and Mr. Bridgeman were arrested in Ostend on their way to Cologne. Only energetic intervention succeeded in securing their release in time to attend the session.

In his opening speech, W. Münzenberg, secretary of the League expressed the indignation felt by all at the murder of Antonio Mella, the leader of the anti-imperialist movement in the Latin-American countries, a member of the General Council of the League and at the same time the leader of the Mexican Peasants' Union. A resolution of protest was passed unanimously.

Professor Alfons Goldschmidt reported on the situation in Latin-America. The section of the League there was growing and embracing larger and larger sections of the population. In Mexico, for instance, the League already had thirty-eight sections.

The most important point on the agenda of the conference was the question of the relations between trade unions and the League. The Conference at Cologne itself showed that the League had strengthened its relations with the organised workers very considerably. No less than nine prominent trades-unionists were present from England, including A. J. Cook, S. O. Davies, Harry Pollitt and Alex. Gossip. Two representatives of the committee for Trade Union Unity were present from Sweden. Others present were Baumgartner, the president of the Basle Trade Union Cartel, Merclet from the C.G.T.U. in France, Hui Fei, representing the Chinese Trades Union Federation, Ford from the American Negro Workers' Congress, Mamdi-el-Husseini the leader of the left wing of the Arabian national-revolutionary movement and Fritz Meckert from the R.I.L.U. The Central Council of the Soviet Labour Unions was represented by Melnichansky, Figatner and Josefovitch.

Many trade union and labour organisations sent letters of greeting to the conference, and during the session a message arrived from the All-India Trade Union Congress announcing its decision to affiliate to the League.

The conference recorded its appreciation of the first attendance of representatives from the Soviet trade unions by adopting a declaration appealing to all to take steps to counter the charge of war against the Soviet Union.

In the resolution adopted on the trade union question, the League recommends close co-operation between the national-revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements. It calls upon the masses organised in the trade unions to co-operate in the anti-imperialist movement.

The following is the text of the chief resolutions :—

The League against Imperialism and the Trade Union Question

- (1) Imperialism in the colonial countries expresses itself in the loss of all political and economic rights, destruction of freedom of the Press, free speech and public meeting, loss of land, terrible housing conditions, long hours, starvation wages, unheard of exploitation, appallingly high death rates, and complete absence of all protective and social legislation.

All this is achieved by the most naked and brutal violence by the imperialist forces of suppression, their armies, navies and police, which are employed in order to keep the colonial peoples in subjection for the profit of the imperialist exploiters.

- (2) In the "home countries" of imperialism, the conditions fostered in the colonial countries are made the basis for attacks on what have hitherto been conceived to be the higher standards of the working class and a continued offensive which results in lower wages, longer hours, increased exploitation, increased unemployment, reduced expenditure on social services and the destruction of legal trade union practices and customs—all showing the necessity for the unification of the two anti-imperialist movements, the class struggle in the capitalist countries and the national revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies.

The struggle for new markets and spheres of influence arising out of the intensified international competitions results ultimately in new wars.

- (3) The fight against imperialism and against the ever-growing danger of war can only be carried out successfully on condition that the broad masses of the workers of Europe, England and America and all other countries actively take part in this struggle.
- (4) This is particularly true for the anti-imperialist fight for freedom in the colonial and semi-colonial countries which can never end in victory if the broad masses of the workers and toilers are not brought into the anti-imperialist struggle. The trade unions can and must fulfil a special rôle in this fight.
- (5) The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism therefore draws the attention of all its organisations and groups to the necessity of strengthening the work of winning the trade unions for the work of the League either by means of the affiliation of these unions to the League or through special agreement with the trade unions for particular campaigns and activities against imperialism and the war danger.
- (6) The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism recognising to the full the necessity of drawing the trade unions into the common fight against imperialism considers it necessary to emphasise that neither the League itself nor single sections of the League should intervene in the internal work and the inner life of the trade unions.

At the same time the Executive is of the opinion that the development and the strengthening of the trade unions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries can only be successful if its leadership is in the hands of the workers and representatives elected directly by the workers. The trade unions, particularly in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, can fulfil their revolutionary tasks in the day to day struggle if they keep their

class character and do not become dependent on nationalist and bourgeois revolutionary parties.

- (7) The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism considers it necessary to draw the attention of all class-conscious and revolutionary trade unions of Europe, England and America to the trade union movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and to point out to them that it is absolutely necessary to render assistance to the latter in organising work and in economic and political struggles.

Resolution on India and the League Against Imperialism

Recognising the importance of India as the central problem in the struggle of the Asiatic peoples for their national freedom, the Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism welcomes warmly the decision of the conference of the All-Indian Trades Union Congress to affiliate its organisation to the League Against Imperialism. This decision brings the workers of India into line with the world movement for the overthrow of imperialism.

The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism has observed with the greatest satisfaction that both the All-Indian Trades Union Congress and the Workers' and Peasants' Party have refused to countenance or support the Report of the Nehru Committee which demands no more than "dominion status" for India within the British Empire.

However, the Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism expresses its regret that the organised workers and peasants of India did not adopt any decision to carry on a determined fight for the complete independence of India. The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism expresses the hope that the All-Indian Trades Union Congress and the Workers' and Peasants' Party will make up for this omission, and commence a campaign to organise the masses for the economic and political struggle against capitalism and imperialism, for only through such a struggle based upon the masses of the workers and peasants will it be possible for India to throw off the yoke of imperialist oppression.

The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism congratulates the Indian National Congress upon its decision to extend its active connection with the League Against Imperialism, but regrets that in a sentimental attempt to maintain a futile and unreal unity, it should have abandoned its former demand for complete independence, and by a majority decision declared its willingness to acquiesce in a continuation of British rule in India.

The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism feels itself compelled to record the fact that by their declaration of willingness to accept a form of self-administration for India within the British Empire, the Indian leaders have contributed to the maintenance of an institution which is built upon fraud and violence, and upon both national and social oppression.

The League Against Imperialism deplores the fact that the politicians of India have not learnt a lesson from the recent experience of the Irish people and that they advocate the camouflage of Dominion Status in a so-called Commonwealth of British nations in which a nation of 300 million Indians and millions of other Asiatics and Africans are bound to subordinate their interests to seventy millions of Europeans.

With its decision in favour of Dominion Status, the Indian National Congress has rendered nugatory the effects of many Asiatic and European organisations in favour of Complete Independence for India and for other oppressed colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism welcomes therefore, the formation of the League for the Independence of India, which organises all the anti-imperialist elements in the Indian National Congress, and its affiliation to the League Against Imperialism.

The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism trusts that the League for the Independence of India will ally itself with the organisations of the workers and peasants of India in order to carry on an irreconcilable struggle for the emancipation of India from the yoke of British imperialism.

In conclusion the Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism wishes to record its energetic protest against the arrest and deportation of Comrade J. W. Johnstone, the representative of the League Against Imperialism at the conference of the All-Indian Trades Union Congress and the conference of the Indian National Congress. The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism is convinced that the Indian people will not permit this new insult on the part of the British Imperial Government of India to pass unchallenged.

Once again the Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism declares in the name of all its affiliated organisations that it will render all possible moral and material support to the struggle of the working and peasant masses of India in order to secure the complete independence of India from the yoke of British imperialism.

AUSTRALIA

Timber Workers' Strike

THE strike of Timber Workers in all the chief Australian mills is one more indication that the results of the recent General Election and the setting-up of an Industrial Peace Conference do not represent the real temper of the Australian workers.

Once again the compulsory arbitration system has been called in question. In the present instance it has been used to force longer hours upon the workers. On January 23 Judge Lukin, the Federal Arbitrator, gave a decision involving an increase of hours from 44 to 48 for 20,000 timber workers, which met with the prompt resistance of the Unions. First in Melbourne and then in Sydney and Adelaide the workers refused to start at the earlier hour necessitated by the new award, and the employers refused to engage them, and proceeded to apply to the Court for a declaration that a strike existed, in order that the Arbitration Amendment Act passed last year might be invoked against them.

The timber workers thereupon called out the carters and crane drivers, and the Central Strike Committee of the Australian Council of Trade Unions summoned a special conference on February 7, at which representatives of over thirty Unions agreed—

- (1) To extend the strike to a general movement in favour of a 44-hour week ;
- (2) To boycott the Federal Industrial Court ; and
- (3) To entrust the conduct of the strike to the A.C.T.U.

In pursuance of this policy the Carters and Drivers' Union attempted to withdraw an application already before the Court, but permission was refused by the Arbitrator. The Australian Workers' Union rejected the boycott policy.

The Premier and the Attorney-General appealed and protested against both strike and boycott; Mr. Bruce threatened "to maintain legislation and insist on its observance," while Mr. Lathom made contemptuous allusions to "discredited political catchwords." Their self-righteous bluff was called, however, and the Government's position was rendered supremely ridiculous by its own refusal to comply with the Public Arbitrator's award granting increased allowances to postal workers, and it was only saved from defeat in the House of Representatives on February 13 by the Speaker's vote.

While the strikers remained solid in other districts the Adelaide workers, numbering 600, decided to resume on February 18, subject to the consent of the A.C.T.U., and eventually returned to work without the necessary ratification, owing to lack of funds and the generally depressed condition of the South Australian Labour Movement, the result of acute unemployment.

A further development of the struggle was its effect on the Industrial Peace Conference, which had been set up on the recommendation of the British Economic Mission during its recent visit to Australia. Preliminary meetings had been held, and things were going fairly smoothly, until the outbreak of the timber strike, followed by the threat to dismiss over 10,000 New South Wales miners, brought the protest of the militant workers to a head. The A.C.T.U. and the Sydney Trades Council insisted on the granting of certain demands as a condition of further participation in the conference. The first of these was the immediate settlement of the timber dispute. The other terms included the withdrawal of notices to the New South Wales miners, the repeal of the Transport Workers' Amendment Act (*cf.* LABOUR MONTHLY, December, 1928). The employers refused any concessions, and on February 23 the Conference was adjourned *sine die*, a result which caused some heartburning among the Trade Union officials, but was generally welcomed by the rank and file.

From this point official coercion increased, and the Arbitrator proceeded to take his revenge on the workers who had flouted his award. On February 25 Judge Lukin ordered a secret ballot of the timber workers in Victoria and New South Wales, and a week later the Western Australian workers were forced to withdraw their strike notices, after a compulsory conference and a reference of the dispute to the State Arbitrator. On March 1 he imposed the maximum fine of £1,000 under the Arbitration Amendment Act on the Timber Workers' Union, and this was followed up by a fine of £50 against E. J. Holloway, the Secretary of the Melbourne Trades Hall, for encouraging the officials of the T.W.U. to "do something in the nature of a strike."

The open hostility of the Government provoked a more militant spirit among the strikers, and demonstrations and conflicts with the police became more frequent as time went on.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*May Day and the General Election—"Triumph of Labour" ?—
F.B.I. Labour Conference—Independent Working-Class Fight—
What the Advance Means—A New Perspective—Labour
Party and Capitalism—Holy Capitalist State—Political
Struggle or "Party Politics"—Working Class and Left
Bloc—Liberal Revival—Labour Rôle, 1924-1929—
Labour Responsibility for Liberal Revival—Silence
on Coalition—A Liberal-Labour Government ?—
"Hypothetical Contingencies"—MacDonald's
Perspective—The Issue of the Election.*

MAY Day falls this year on the eve of the General Election. The day of international working-class solidarity, the day of the class struggle, precedes the "democratic" bacchanalia of humbug and hypocrisy, in which the three great parties will deny the class struggle and appeal to the "sovereign people" in the name of the "common interests of the nation." Three years ago May Day fell on the eve of the General Strike. The millions of workers were strong in the sense of solidarity, strong in their readiness for the struggle and the hope of victory. Since that time, events have happened which leave a gulf between. The betrayal of the General Strike, the desertion and crushing of the miners, industrial peace and Mondism, and the disciplining of the Labour Party and Trade Unions in the interests of capitalism—this is the record which has split the workers' ranks, opened the way to the successes of capitalism, and marked the final ranging of the reformist leadership into the consolidated capitalist bloc. To-day this same reformist leadership calls on the workers for their votes to win a Parliamentary majority and become the custodians of the capitalist state. The May Day of class struggle, like the General Strike itself, is for them a memory to be buried in oblivion. The official Labour Movement denies and suppresses May Day, boycotts the workers' celebration, and seeks to replace it by the spirit of a Sunday School picnic on a day inoffensive to capitalism.

But, for the revolutionary workers, May Day and the election alike are occasions for the demonstration of their class solidarity and the proclamation of their revolutionary will. *The revolutionary workers will go forward to the election in the spirit of May Day, in the spirit of the class struggle.*

WHAT is the decisive issue of the present General Election for the working class? In the expression of the Labour propagandists on every side, the great issue—"the greatest political struggle in this country's history" in the words of the *Daily Herald*—is the advance of the Labour Party to power, the overthrow of the Baldwin Government and the return of a Labour Government, the first steps to the realisation of Socialism. From MacDonald to Maxton, from Thomas to Cook, the great objective is proclaimed. "Victory" is in the air; the "triumph of Labour" is felt to be at hand; the very division of offices is being busily calculated. And yet a survey of the actual situation of capitalism and the working class at the present moment reveals a strange and striking contrast. *At the moment when "Labour," in the sense of the Labour Party, is supposed to be stronger than ever before, is supposed to be on the eve of "power" and "triumph"—the workers are more crushed under the weight of capital than ever before.* The smashing of the resistance of the working-class organisations, the ruthless domination of the great trusts, wage cuts, lowered standards, longer hours, mass unemployment, shackling legislation and the humiliations of Mondism—these are the realities alongside the Labour Party's buoyant dreams of triumph. What is the meaning of this contrast? What is the political lesson to be drawn from it? In the answer to this question lies the answer to the problem of the election.

THE contrast goes further. For the Labour Party's advance to glory not only proceeds parallel with the growing subjection of the workers. In fact, the Labour Party leaders are themselves in union with the capitalists in organising this servitude. On the very eve of the election they are engaged in enforcing wage-cuts, disrupting the workers'

organisations and extending their alliance with the employers. The policy of Mondism is the policy of the Labour Party. On April 23, within five weeks of the election, the Labour leaders are due to meet officially in conference with the leaders of big capitalism, with the Federation of British Industries and the National Confederation of Employers' Organisations. *The Labour Party leaders, who are supposed to be leading the workers to the assault on capitalism, are in consultation and alliance with the leaders of capitalism.* This is no question of a tacit understanding which is officially denied, of individual expressions and acts, of incidental similarities of policy. It is here a question of an official alliance, of official meetings to draw up common policies in the very centre of the headquarters of the "enemy." What is the meaning of this seeming paradox? The correct understanding of this situation, and the practical conclusion of policy to be drawn from it, is the crux of the election for the working class.

THE fight of the working class against capitalism has reached a more advanced and intense stage than ever before. The old limited and sectional struggles, the old division of economic and political struggles, have passed away. The workers are confronted with a more concentrated and highly-organised capitalist machine than at any previous stage, in which not only the massed power of the employers, but the whole State apparatus and the reformist leadership are interlocked. For the moment, capitalism has won new ground, because the workers have still to adapt themselves to the new stage of struggle. In every sphere, the fight is urgent. The fight against wage-cuts and the offensive of capitalist rationalisation; the fight against industrial peace and Mondism; the fight against imperialism and war—all these press on every side. But this fight cannot be led by the Labour Party. The Labour Party is part of the instrument of the new stage of capitalism. In the new wave of strikes that is developing, the workers are already showing the power to break the bonds, and advance with independent action in the face of capitalism and the reformist leadership. *But the new stage of struggle that is developing in the economic field has to be realised equally in the political field.* This,

and not a "victory" of the Labour Party which would mean in reality a strengthening of the apparatus of capitalism, is the real heart of the election for the workers.

THE task of the working class in the present General Election is to advance to a new stage of independent revolutionary politics. For the past thirty years, and indeed for the past half century, the gradual advance towards independent working-class representation in Parliament, in the sense of independence from the existing capitalist Liberal and Conservative Parties, has been the main line of advance of the political working-class movement in Britain. In this sense, the evolution of the Labour Party has in the past period, despite the character of its leadership from the outset, represented an objective advance of the working class. But the battle for independence, which has in the past been fought through the forms of the Labour Party, has never been more than half fought. The independence has only been independence in organisation from the Liberal and Conservative Parties; it has never been a real independence of programme and policy, which has remained subordinate to capitalist politics. In consequence, the inevitable outcome of the Labour Party has been the opposite to that for which many of its early pioneers in the country fought; the more the Labour Party has grown, the more it has become in practice a capitalist governing party, an integral part of the capitalist state. The second half of the battle has now to be fought, the battle to realise independent working-class politics on a programme of political class struggle against capitalism and against the capitalist state.

THIS advance requires a completely new perspective. It means for many workers a wrench, and even a difficult wrench, from old traditions and routines, not only from traditional forms of action and organisation through the Labour Party, but also from the whole previous outlook of parliamentarism and concentration on a Parliamentary majority as the supreme aim and means of emancipation. Only when the Parliamentary and election struggle is seen as a subordinate auxiliary to the main line of the class struggle, and not its replacement, as useful

solely so far as it helps forward, widens and extends the real struggle outside, and harmful so far as it gets in the way of this, only on this basis can it be freely and frankly understood why a *militant working-class fight in the present election and the return of a militant working-class fighter to Parliament (or even if none is returned) is more important and a greater gain and advance for the working class as a whole than the return of a Parliamentary Labour majority committed to rationalisation, industrial peace, imperialism and the maintenance of the capitalist state.* The basic revolutionary advance of working-class outlook that this position represents has admittedly to fight in the first stages an uphill battle against deeply-ingrained traditions of parliamentarism and liberal illusions, which are all the more dangerous because they are disguised under a "Labour" dressing. But the force of facts, the ever more open real position of the Labour Party, and the vital necessity of militant working-class struggle will necessarily win increasing understanding of the new situation; and already the fight of the conscious revolutionary elements for the new understanding is itself an advance and a victory within the British working class.

THE Labour Party enters the election as the representative of a policy of capitalist reconstruction and industrial peace, in open alliance with a considerable section of the big industrialists on the basis of the Melchett-Turner Reports, and a potential element of a future Left *Bloc* Government. How completely this is the case was strikingly shown in the recent debate on the Budget. The Budget represents a concentrated expression of the whole policy of capitalism over the governing field covered by the State. In former days it represented mainly the expenditure on the administrative machine of capitalism for the regulation and protection of capitalist interests and the subjection of the workers; and at that time the principal interest of the capitalist class was to keep it as low as possible consistent with effective functioning. To-day it covers a much wider field, and has become a direct instrument for intensifying exploitation; it contains within itself a considerable cross-section of the total capitalist expenditure, since one-fifth of the aggregate national income now passes through the hands of the State. The greater

part of this expenditure goes to the service of the bondholders and of war. The opening for Socialist criticism over this whole field is obvious. What was the criticism of the "Socialist" and "Labour" spokesman, Snowden? His principal criticism of the entire capitalist Budget of Churchill was (1) that the niggardly and negligible concessions to popular demands in it constituted "bribery"; (2) that the debt settlements with foreign powers had been too lenient, that certain British capitalists had been "practically ruined" by the depreciation of their French bonds, and that he himself would take a much sterner stand than the Conservatives in extorting the maximum interest for the benefit of British capitalism.

A NO less striking example of the basic policy was afforded recently by the treatment of the Glading case. Comrade Glading, it will be remembered, was dismissed from Woolwich Arsenal some six months ago on the ground that it was "no longer the policy of the Admiralty to employ Communists"; there was admittedly no other ground of dismissal. This case of political victimisation of a leading active member of one of the strongest trade unions in the country was so open and flagrant that the trade union machinery was compelled to take it up; and the case passed into the hands of the General Council and Labour Party Executive, a combined delegation of whom interviewed the Government. The final outcome of their endeavours has only recently been announced in a communication of the Amalgamated Engineering Union Executive to their London District Council:—

The joint bodies of the T.U.C. and the Labour Party were informed that the dismissal did not arise from any matter connected with his work or any industrial action connected with his duties as a workman.

In the opinion of the T.U.C. this placed the complaint in the category of being purely political, and such being the case, considers that no good purpose would be served by pursuing the matter further.

What this means would at first sight seem a puzzle beyond solution. The victimisation was "purely political." Certainly; every one knew that; it was not necessary to interview the Prime Minister to learn that. That was precisely the reason for taking

it up. But to the combined T.U.C. and Labour Party Executive, this fact, after being the reason for taking the case up, became the reason for laying it down.

AT first sight this would seem to be pure gibberish. But a little reflection will reveal the meaning behind the artless confusion. The case appearing at the outset as a clear case of political victimisation, working-class pressure compelled the Labour leaders to make a show at any rate of taking it up. But so soon as the Prime Minister explained that the issue was really "*political*," *i.e.*, that the essential interests of the capitalist state were concerned, it became equally clear to the Labour leaders that the case must be dropped. *In other words, "political" for them means, not the field of the strongest expression of the class struggle, but the field where the class struggle stops and must not enter, the field where no workman "as a workman" can have concern, the field where there must be absolute unity of policy and "no good purpose would be served by pursuing the matter further," the field of the holy capitalist State.* (The minor areas of permitted controversy between the Labour, Liberal and Conservative Parties, always leaving untouched and within the inviolable framework of imperialism and capitalism, the Monarchy, City, Stock Exchange, police forces, &c., are termed, as those who have studied Labour Party and bourgeois terminology will remember, "*party-political*" or "*party politics*"—a very different thing, in which the utmost licence and even violence of expression is correct and even encouraged, without for a moment disturbing the harmony and good fellowship of the rival orators.)

IT would not be difficult to show that the basic political attitude here crudely and clumsily laid bare ("*purely political*," "*no good purpose would be served by pursuing the matter further*"), *i.e.*, the attitude of unquestioning and respectful servility before every fundamental institution of capitalism, is in reality no accidental expression on an isolated incident, but on the contrary at the root of the whole Labour Party position, and extends in fact to every sphere of its policy, towards the Empire, towards armaments, towards the Foreign

Office, towards financial policy, towards the rights of property and towards the whole home apparatus of coercion. (The recent storm over Snowden's utterance on war debts and hasty repudiation of any intention to disclaim the obligations of a Conservative Government or seek revision other than within the limits of continuity of foreign policy only serves to illustrate the whole position.) The defence and maintenance of the essential existing institutions of capitalism, while holding before the workers the claim of protecting working-class interests and even the propaganda of Socialism as the society of the future—this is the essential position and rôle of the Labour Party, and the basis of its value to capitalism. As the French Socialist Party recently declared, through the mouth of the Secretary of the Aude Socialist Federation under whose auspices its leader, Léon Blum, was last month returned to Parliament:—

The Socialist Party will stand forward as the sole party capable of saving capitalist society (le seul parti capable de sauver la société bourgeoise).

“**T**HERE is a good deal of unreality in the present political contest,” remarks a leading Conservative politician and representative of the most reactionary possessing interests, Lord Hugh Cecil, in a recent article, and he continues:—

Is there any difference, going beyond method or degree of change, between the plans of official and respectable Labour and those of Conservatives or Liberals? . . .

Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Baldwin wish to keep society as it is, though with improvements about the method of which they differ. There exists, he adds, a real issue—the issue of the class struggle or “advanced Socialism”; but on this issue “Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. MacDonald” are all “on the one side”; and—

*The arrangement of parties is so constructed as to prevent this issue being fought and to bring forward instead the subordinate controversies about ways and means in achieving the common objects of all three official parties.—(Lord Hugh Cecil, “From the Conservative Point of View,” *Sunday Express*, March 17, 1929.)*

If a prominent Conservative, who would be the first to raise the loudest alarm at the slightest sign of real danger to his class interests

or to the security of capitalism, can thus express himself, what reason is there for any intelligent worker to put his faith in the Labour Party as the means of fight against capitalism or advance to Socialism? But it is precisely to raise this forbidden issue, the issue of Socialism and the class struggle, and force it into the political field against all three official parties, that is the whole meaning and justification of the Communist and revolutionary working-class fight in the present election.

IT is necessary to see clearly the political situation of the election. The working class is advancing to renewed struggle against capitalism. All over Europe, and in England also, the growing new Leftward wave is visible. Both the Social-Democratic and the Communist Parties have made very great advances in strength in the past year in the elections which have taken place in France, Germany and a number of other European countries, the Communist advance being proportionately the greater. New strike movements have broken out. The factory councils elections in Germany, which have resulted in one big trust concern after another in absolute majorities for the revolutionary opposition, have revealed an amazing rapidity of revolutionisation. In England, the first intensity of the working-class opposition to the prolonged capitalist offensive and process of rationalisation of the present period finds itself in bitter hatred and hostility to the Baldwin Government which embodies the whole policy of the capitalist offensive. And here comes in the tactics of the bourgeoisie. *It is the tactics of the bourgeoisie, if they cannot stem and hold in the growing tide of working-class opposition, to canalise it, while there is yet time, into safe channels through the Labour Party and the Liberal Party as the "opposition" to the Baldwin Government's "reaction,"* which will then form the alternative government for capitalism and conduct the same essentials of capitalist policy through other forms. This is the old device of the Left Democratic *Bloc* succeeding to the Conservative *Bloc* as the alternating means of capitalism to deceive, curb and hold in the workers in the period of the rising working-class movement (1906 and 1924 represented the same process). The task of the Labour Government or Labour-Liberal Govern-

ment will be to stem the working-class advance and constitute the bulwark of capitalism against the militant struggles of the coming period.

THE artificial and loudly boomed revival of the Liberal Party constitutes an important factor in these preparations, since it is obvious that the balancing rôle of the Liberal Party can afford a valuable additional safeguard for capitalism against any dangerous experiments or accidents in the period ahead. What lies behind the re-growth of the Liberal Party? In the years of intensified class struggle since the war, prior to the General Strike, the Liberal Party was inevitably passing into collapse, since in such a situation there is obviously only room for two camps. The partial re-growth of the Liberal Party in the last few years is manifestly, in its social basis, a reflection of the partial stabilisation of capitalism and the renewed self-confidence of the petit-bourgeoisie to endeavour to play an independent rôle. But the possibility of this renewed growth has in great measure been created by the whole policy and leadership of the Labour Party, which, by refusing to lead the workers on the plane of the class struggle, and thus retarding the development of the whole class situation, has provided the conditions for the re-growth of the Liberal Party. *It is precisely in the years of the intensified " Liberalising " of the Labour Party that the rapid growth of the Liberal Party has taken place.*

HOW much this is the case is not generally realised. Yet an examination of the record of 1924-1929 in its electoral reflexion will reveal a very curious and significant result. The period 1924-1929 is the period of ever-growing intensity of working-class opposition to the Baldwin Government. But to whose benefit did this opposition go in the electoral field? In the General Election of 1924 the votes were divided as follows between the three parties: Conservatives, 7,838,225; Labour, 5,487,620; Liberals, 2,925,142. Since then, up to the present General Election, there took place sixty-one contested by-elections. These show an aggregate vote as follows: Conservatives, 630,680; Labour, 567,914; Liberals, 447,834. There is here clearly visible the slump of the Con-

servative Government. Their share of the total votes fell from 48 per cent. in 1924 to 38·2 per cent. in the aggregate by-elections of 1924-1929. But where did this turnover go? The Labour share of the total vote in the General Election of 1924 amounted to 34 per cent. The Labour share of the total aggregate votes of the by-elections of 1924-1929 amounted to 34·5 per cent. *In other words, in 1924-1929, in this period of most intense working-class opposition to the Baldwin Government, the Labour share of votes rose by 0·5 per cent. ; that is, it practically remained stationary.* It was the Liberal share of votes that rose from 18 per cent. to 27·3 per cent.

THERE could be no more powerful revelation and condemnation of the whole Labour Party leadership and the consequences of its policy than this amazing result, when contrasted with the strength and bitterness of the working-class opposition to the Baldwin Government. Here, in language which the most narrow and philistine Labour propagandist and vote-catcher can understand, is expressed the price of the leadership and policy represented by the MacDonalds, the Snowdens and the Thomases. With all the cards in their hands, appearing before the workers as the sole party of the workers and the natural instrument of their opposition to the Baldwin Government, they have been incapable of taking advantage of a position that played into their hands and have had to go through the humiliation of yielding ground to a Lloyd George. *By their weakness and failure to voice the working-class opposition, and by their continuous concession and capitulation to Liberal policy and politics, they have directly assisted to raise up again the Liberal Party from its collapse, and have enabled the Liberal Party to reap the benefits which would normally have fallen to them.* And this situation in turn has now its repercussion on the position in the present election and on the question of governmental possibilities after the election.

FOR the question now arises: What will be the position in the event of no party having an independent majority? What will be the Government formed? It is obvious that this question goes to the root of the whole political position

of the election. The answer to this question determines the real political position of every party. And yet it is precisely this question to which no party is prepared to give a clear answer. This question is still publicly enveloped in a discreet fog. There are noisy assertions of independence in the actual election campaign—which no one questions. But for the situation after the election, which is the decisive issue, there is not a single definite binding declaration of any party. *This silence on the central tactical issue of the election is itself significant, and a key to the real situation of the election*; it is profoundly indicative of the shadow-boxing character of the whole election campaign of the three official parties, of the basically coalition character of the three official parties. Every one knows that the situation of no independent majority, and the problems arising from it, is not merely a possibility, but even the major probability of the election outcome. It is evident that the leaders of all three parties are very actively exercised with the question. Nevertheless, the electors are to go into the election with no answer upon it. The real policy is to be settled elsewhere. For the electors to go into the election in this situation, for the workers to vote for the Labour Party without an answer on this question, is to put their heads into a noose.

WHAT is the position? It is clear that, in the event of such an outcome of the election, some form of Coalition Government is inevitable, whether as a direct ministerial combination or as a minority government based on outside support upon an agreed programme. In practice, only two forms of coalition are at present in question, a Liberal-Conservative Coalition or a Liberal-Labour Coalition. Both these phases may develop under given conditions in the future period. But for the immediate future, the whole trend of the situation points to some form of Liberal-Labour combination as the most probable. The ever closer similarity of programme (mutual accusations of "stealing") points in this direction. This would constitute the Left *Bloc* Government to replace the Baldwin Government as the next phase of capitalism. In reality, even a Labour Government on a basis of an absolute Labour majority

would in fact bear this character; the Labour Government would tend to look to Liberal support against its own "left" opposition (MacDonald's remarks at the end of 1924 about preferring to be in office with a minority rather than a majority may be remembered). But, indeed, the declarations of the Labour Party, despite all the professions of independence, already, by the very reservations and loopholes that they increasingly leave, begin to point ever more unmistakably to the future direction.

AT the Easter Conference of one of the larger trade unions, with a considerable section of left sympathies in its membership, the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, a resolution was moved against any alliance or understanding with a capitalist party either before or after the election. After a notable debate, what happened? The platform succeeded in securing that the resolution was not voted on; the "previous question" was carried. Why should a vote be prevented, unless the official leadership were consciously wishing to keep their hands free for a future alliance? If the professions of independence, such as Lansbury's famous pledge last year at Birmingham, were genuine, why hesitate to face a vote? On this issue and the whole discussion, the official organ of the Labour Party commented in an editorial:—

To waste time discussing possible alignments of parties after the election serves only to encourage opponents. . . . Harping on hypothetical contingencies which may not, and, given the right will, need not arise, is ill-preparation for the greatest political struggle in this country's history.—(Daily Herald, April 2, 1929.)

It will be seen that there is here no longer any denial, but only an insistence on the *untimeliness* of discussing the question at the present stage.

NO less unmistakable is the language of MacDonald himself. Writing on possibilities at the beginning of the present year, he declared:—

"What shall we build in 1929? . . . If the commission which we get is not absolute but we are in a minority, shall we accept it? If our majority is small, shall we accept it? If amongst the majority there are some who have never disciplined themselves in the loyalty of

comradeship, shall we begin building ? The questions upon hypothetical possibilities which have been put, and the opinions offered upon them, by no means exhaust the problems which 1929 will present to us, and which we must face in forming or declining to form a government.

“To them all there is but one answer, and I throw it across the threshold of the New Year. *We shall courageously and firmly make use of whatever opportunity is given to us,* and in that spirit we shall ask the country to place Labour in power.”

Wait, he continues, until after the election:—

“Then, with full knowledge in its possession, with all the roads that are open in front of it, *the Party must consider what is best to be done in the interests of the people it represents.*”—(J. R. MacDonald in *Forward*, January 5, 1929.)

It is not difficult to read between the lines of these and similar declarations the preparations of the future Left *Bloc* Government.

IT is in the face of this situation that the fight of the Communist and revolutionary working-class candidates becomes of a hundredfold intensified importance. The Communist Party stands forward in the present election as the only party of the working-class struggle against capitalism and clearly and expressly committed against any form of alliance or understanding with capitalism or the capitalist parties. Every worker who has in the past fought for working-class independence through the form of the Labour Party can have no doubt where the line of battle lies to-day. The smallness of the first pioneering phase of the fight should not for a moment blind any to the significance of the issue (the Labour Party in its first General Election secured 62,698 votes). To those with eyes to see, the inevitable force of the future is here, because it is built on the working-class struggle. Against both the Conservative Government and the alternative Left *Bloc* Government (whether Labour, Liberal or Labour-Liberal), the line of the class struggle is the line of the working class in this election and beyond the election.

R. P. D.

THE GENERAL ELECTION AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

By HARRY POLLITT

THE election campaign opens in a period of sharpening class struggles. At the very moment when all three capitalist parties, Tory, Liberal and Labour, are speaking of Industrial Peace and Reconstruction, the workers in every industry are beginning to revolt. Slowly the effects of rationalisation, carried through as a result of the open collaboration of the reformist labour leadership with the capitalists, are making themselves felt upon the economic standards of the workers. They are reflecting themselves in ways that thousands of workers refused twelve months ago to believe would ever happen, and they are so terrible in their effects that the workers are resisting and fighting in face of their trade union leaders and in spite of the traditional belief in constitutional trade unionism that has been so assiduously cultivated in Britain.

These strikes and lock-outs just beginning are only the first signs of a great mass strike movement that will develop in this country over the heads of the reformists and under the leadership of the Communist Party and Minority Movement. Day by day the reformist leaders are giving exposures and betrayals that in their blatancy and grossness outdo all their previous betrayals.

There is now no attempt to camouflage their tactics. The mask is off. The new revolutionary period, born out of the inner contradictions of the new period of capitalism, forces them to take their stand unreservedly with the capitalists against the workers. So that official trade unionism has become a means whereby the capitalist can lower wages, intensify exploitation, abolish long-standing customs and practices in the workshops that have been won after fierce class struggles, adopt a merciless rate-cutting policy to all those who work systems of piece work,

force speeding-up to the utter disregard of human life and safety. These are the practical manifestations of Mondism, Rationalisation and modern Trade Union leadership.

This is the aftermath of the General Strike betrayal and Miners' Lock-Out, and it is an eloquent testimony to the demands that the reformist bureaucracy make upon all those who now seek to make an alliance with them, that A. J. Cook should now repudiate his pamphlet, "Nine Days," and in his speech at Tyldesley on April 14, 1929, declare :—

Let us not waste our time now in quarelling about what happened in 1926.—*Manchester Guardian*, 15.4.29.

and as the struggles of the workers develop both before and after the election, men like A. J. Cook will be compelled even in their own industries to assume exactly the same rôle as the MacDonalDs, Bevins and Thomas's did in 1926.

What is happening at this moment? After the General Strike and Miners' Lock-Out, after two years of Industrial Peace treachery, the conditions in the workshops are getting past all human endurance. And the means of breaking this resistance is not the old style capitalist methods ; the breakers of the workers' resistance are the Trade Union and Labour Party leaders, the open agents of the capitalists now in control of the machinery and organisation of the movement.

The Cricklewood Busmen had a fight against speeding-up that is not merely a danger to their own lives but a danger to the public ; it is Mr. Bevin, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, who tries to smash that resistance by threats and suspensions from officials, etc.

The workers in the Austin Motor Works strike against wage reductions, unorganised workers lead the strike, the trade union leaders are called in to split the solidarity of the men and to use the strike as a means of recruiting to a trade unionism that is, in effect, in Austin's bound to be company unionism.

The Boilermakers again and again refuse to endorse a Ship-yard Agreement that shackles the men to an elaborate conciliation machinery which would destroy any chance of the men's grievances being speedily tackled, their E.C. refuses to recognise the vote of the men.

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The Woollen Textile workers take a ballot vote as to whether they are prepared to accept a wages reduction, there is a small majority in favour of strike action, but the Executives of the Unions refuse to call a strike and recommend the acceptance of the wage reduction "under protest." A decision upon which the *Manchester Guardian*, April 4, 1929, makes the following comment :—

The result of this appeal to the operatives is important, because it may well be taken by other employers in the West Riding as a signal for them to secure similar reductions to those gained so easily by the heavy woollen employers.

As I write this article, April 15, 1929, a lock-out has been in progress seven weeks at the Dawdon Colliery. Three thousand eight hundred men and boys are involved, resisting a wage reduction that is estimated to average 3s. per shift. The Durham Miners' Association have tried to get the men to accept, under protest. The Miners' Federation of Great Britain so far has not made a single pronouncement of support (perhaps Mr. Cook is too busy repudiating his past), and the local official leaders are defeatists who do not dare to organise national support for these men.

All the above are the living facts of the class struggle, and they are taking, or have taken, place in industries where the capitalists signed the Mond Letter of December, 1927, asking for collaboration with the T.U.C. General Council, and having got it, the workers are now experiencing the results and fighting against them.

It is pertinent in this connection to again note the type of speeches that were made last year by Trade Union Leaders and Capitalists alike :—

The members of the T.U.C. were now engaged in discussions with a representative group of employers on a wide range of problems. They were asked "How can you go into conference with people who tried to beat you in 1926, people who have fought you?"

His answer was that he regarded the change of attitude of these people as an indication that Labour had won the first round."—*Daily Herald*, April 30, 1928.

Let me point out what I think is the great change I have noticed throughout the whole of these conferences which we have been having for so many months, and it is that the leaders of Labour in this country have realised one basic fact. It is that unless industry

is prosperous there is nothing to be got for the workers.—LORD MELCHETT, *Morning Post*, December 12, 1928.

As a member of the employers' side of that body (Mond—T.U.C.) he would tell them that he was amazed at the change which had come about since the General Strike over those teaching Labour opinion.—WILLIAM HARRISON, Chairman, *Daily Chronicle* group of newspapers, January 31, 1929.

It is "the great change" that is responsible for driving the workers' conditions down, and it is one of the basic facts facing the workers in the General Election, for it is these same leaders, who betrayed the General Strike and who are carrying through rationalisation for the capitalists, who are now asking to be elected as a Labour Government. The thing is one that it is impossible for any class-conscious worker to do. Just as the Labour Leaders are the instruments to force through wage reductions to-day, to-morrow, as a Government, they will be the means of carrying through rationalisation on a tremendous scale and, as a result, hastening the coming of war, which the imperialists are making inevitable and which will come the sooner, the quicker rationalisation takes place.

Therefore the election period is for the revolutionary workers, though not a vote-catching period, yet a mobilising for heavy struggles. Advantage must be taken of an awakened interest in politics to bring out the whole implications of the present period and the present leadership. The new line of the Communist Party and Minority Movement will be accepted by all the best elements in the working class because it is the only policy that the workers can adopt.

The fight now in every sphere of political activity, whether in elections, strikes, lock-outs, unemployed demonstrations, etc., is against the enemies, the capitalist class and the Labour Party and the T.U.C. The apparent "stabilisation" of capitalism has been achieved at the sole expense of our class, the success won by technical development and all-round attacks on the workers have not solved the problems of capitalism, they have only led to a development of the contradictions of capitalism as they increasingly manifest themselves at home and abroad.

The problems confronting the workers can only be solved by smashing the capitalists, and their allies, and by the formation of

a revolutionary workers' government. This is the basic fact to place before the workers in the election period. Every fight, however small in character, carried out under the leadership of the Communist Party, is preparatory work for the final objective, the Revolutionary Workers' Government, and the more struggles that develop between now and polling day the more will be exposed all the treachery of the Labour Leaders, whose only rôle to-day is that of defending and reconstructing capitalism in the interest of the present ruling class.

And this policy was never made clearer than by Mr. J. R. MacDonald himself when, in a recent tour of his Seaham constituency, he spoke in every part of it—except Dawdon, where 3,800 men and boys had then been fighting a life-and-death struggle for bread for three weeks—and when at Murton, a twenty minutes 'bus ride from Dawdon, he was asked "Why was not Mr. MacDonald giving a fighting lead to the miners at Dawdon Pit," he answered :—

He knew his job better than to interfere in what was Trade Union business. The Labour Party, unlike the Communists, was not out to exploit the industrial difficulties of the Unions.

Fighting for bread and helping to win that fight is the main task in the present period. The Communists will never desert that fight or the workers who are engaged in it. Let Mr. MacDonald go on looking after "his job." This election is a stage in this fight in which for the first time the workers will be able to support their own working-class Party—The Communist Party.

THE POSITION OF THE SCOTTISH MINERS

By W. ALLAN

Provisional General Secretary, United Mine Workers of Scotland.

FOR over ten years there has gone up from the Scottish coalfield an insistent cry for the dissolving of the small county miners' unions and the establishment of one Union to cover the whole coalfield. As far back as 1919, a ballot vote was taken on this issue and resulted in a very big majority in favour of this step being taken at once. Since that time there has been a regular series of resolutions passed at every conference held, all agreeing to the one Union being set up.

Nothing, however, has been done by the Scottish Union leadership (consisting of the County Union officials, agents, and M.P.'s) to carry out this task entrusted to them, except the setting-up of committees composed of self-interested agents. Two such committees embarked on this task and have, after long delay, reported that the thicket of vested interests was too big an obstacle. Mr. Smillie has often stated that if there were no county unions in Scotland, the task of building up a single union would be simply and speedily accomplished. Sundry agents have stated that one Union for Scotland is impossible until some guarantees are given that this present horde of county officials will not be in any way penalised by such a development. Thus, despite the repeated instructions of the miners, despite the confusion and danger that results from such disunity, the miners' "leaders" of Scotland have not only refused to lift a finger to help forward this unifying of our forces, but have actually used their power and positions to hold back the taking of such a progressive step forward.

The pass to which miners' organisation in Scotland has been brought by these so-called leaders is incredibly bad. Out of some 96,000 persons employed in the Scottish coalfield, less than 30,000 were organised in the period following the lock-out of 1926. This pitifully small handful is scattered and broken up into small separate county unions, each with its own Rule Book, its own scale of benefits, and contributions, its own methods of conducting Union affairs and of handling disputes, and its own clique of officials and

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sets of jealousies. The following table will give an approximately correct idea of the present position of mining trade unionism in Scotland :—

<i>District</i>	<i>Number employed</i>	<i>Number organised in County Unions</i>
Lanarkshire	34,000	5,000
Fifeshire	23,000	9,000
Stirlingshire	10,000	1,600
West Lothian	5,000	600
East Lothian	11,000	7,000
Ayrshire.. .. .	10,000	6,000
	93,000	29,200

Every effort has been made to get the Scottish "leaders" to get out to the coalfields with campaigns for rousing the men against the owners' attack and for resisting the Pool scheme, but all these efforts and motions have been continually blocked. Their disgraceful actions in remaining in official positions long after they were voted out, their refusal to hold the Annual Conference from 1925 to 1929, or any kind of special Conference to deal with the issues confronting the men, and their efforts to expel the militant and progressive elements of Fifeshire and Lanarkshire, have had the effect of accelerating the drift of the miners away from the Unions.

The Pool Scheme

Since the beginning of last year the Scottish coalmasters have been driving ahead with the most intensive forms of speeding up. Their Pool Scheme of May, 1928, involved the closing down of over 70 pits, the flinging of over 10,000 miners on to the scrap heap and an incredibly brutal and ruthless attack against the already low standards and wages of those who were allowed to remain at work.

A wave of alarm spread over the whole coalfield and the feeling amongst the men was of such a nature that any kind of move on the part of the Scottish leaders would have brought large masses of the miners back into the Union and into the fight against the coalmasters. Nothing, however, was done by them although warnings of the crisis are on record by myself as early as January, 1928.

Not only was nothing done by the leaders, but they actually prevented anything from being done by others.

After much urging, a meeting of the Scottish Executive was held in June, 1928, at which a resolution was tabled by me, demanding that a Scottish Conference should be called at once to deal with the Pool Scheme of the employers. The only reply of the leaders to this was to vote against it and to arrange for the holding of a conciliation board meeting with the coalmasters.

When this meeting was held, the miners' side contented themselves, not with denouncing the whole plans of the coalmasters and organising effective resistance, but with whining about how the coalmasters had done wrong in not consulting them before the setting of the Pool into operation.

During the whole of the summer of 1928 the coalmasters were able to ride rough-shod over the men, and any form of unofficial resistance on the part of the latter found the Union agents doing all in their power to cajole or bully the men into going back to their work, into being reasonable, into giving any proposed reductions a fair trial, and so on.

Side by side with this active assistance for the bosses, there went on the most shameless efforts to dodge the adverse vote that had been cast in the branches against these leaders remaining any longer in office. In order to thwart this majority that had been cast against them, they concentrated on reducing the majority vote to a minority by expelling the Fife Union and its 12,500 votes, and also on the driving out of the militant elements from the other County Unions.

The result of all this, which was only to be expected, was that the miners continued to drift away from the Unions, and these became, more than ever, mere dead empty husks.

In July, 1928, the Llandudno Conference passed a resolution laying it down that districts like Scotland should amalgamate the small county unions into one union for the whole district. The Trade Union officials were too busy operating the anti-Communist resolution to pay attention to it, and nothing was done during the following three months. The effects of the Pool were falling heavier than ever upon the men, and the militants being entirely unable to get a conference called officially, then

convened the "Save the Union Conference" at Falkirk in October. The items on the agenda of this Conference were organisation of resistance to the Pool Scheme, preparation for the ending of the Wage Agreement and consideration of ways and means to get the One Union established through the existing channels.

This attempt at preparation for unifying the Scottish mine-workers was made the occasion for the organisation of a vicious attempt by the Scottish Executive to keep the branches from sending delegates to the Conference. This attempt, however, signally failed, for the Conference was very well attended and showed even a greater resentment against the whole of the officials and their policy than had been expected.

The Overtime Swindle

Following on this came the sorry business of the Overtime Agreement. Various complaints had been pouring in throughout the summer about the refusal of many pit managers to honour the Overtime Payment Agreement. In Lanarkshire a strike at eight pits belonging to one notoriously bad firm was arranged on the urgings of the Left elements. On the day that this decision was arrived at, Mr. Hunter, chairman, stated that he hoped when the men refused to stand for pickets that we would not be able to blame the "old duds" for the defeat. (This fight went on solidly for two days, and was then called off by the "old dud" majority on the Executive.)

As a result of this and pressure from the rest of the country, a meeting of the famous Conciliation Board was held on November 4 in Glasgow. At this meeting the coalmasters calmly put forward the ultimatum that the Overtime Agreement was to end on December 30, 1928. The acting chairman, Mr. Marnin, gave a sickening exhibition of grovelling at this meeting, which aroused the disgust of even his case-hardened colleagues.

Motions were then put by me to have a whole series of meetings and demonstrations called in every county, to be followed up with the holding of a special Scottish Conference in the middle of December. This was rejected in favour of again meeting the coalowners. By the middle of December a further report

showed that the coalowners had correctly sized up the opposite side, and were remaining adamant. Again the proposal was put that a Conference should be called to link up whatever forces still remained among the miners of Scotland. This was rejected a second time by the so-called leaders, and on January 31, 1929, the owners were able to stop paying overtime rates to all but a tiny handful of men, without the least resistance coming from the leaders, and leaving the men all hopelessly divided and confused.

It was at this time that the Scottish coal trade position was getting a bit firmer, and a decisive stand made at this time would have compelled the owners not only to postpone their reductions for a month (as they did) but to postpone them indefinitely rather than risk losing their share of this "good trade." The responsibility of the loss of extra payment for overtime can be placed entirely at the door of these so-called "leaders."

The Exclusion of the Fife Union

In February, 1929, the Scottish Executive, after refusing to call a Conference for a period of eighteen months to deal with the pool, overtime, safety in the pits, etc., suddenly called a Scottish Conference, at three days' notice, to introduce a new rule regarding the arrears of County Unions. The effect of this rule was to cut off Fife and Stirlingshire Unions from contact with the loosely federated National Union of Scottish Mineworkers. The monstrous injustice of cutting off Fife because of arrears accumulated during the six years that Adamson was General Secretary of the Fife Union, and at the same time accepting the affiliation of the scab union set up by Adamson, has been described elsewhere and denounced, and by none more trenchantly than A. J. Cook himself.

By February, then, the miners in Scotland were faced with the position, so far as organisation is concerned, that their forces were hopelessly and irretrievably split and this, as A. J. Cook well knows, long before the new Scottish Union was launched. Every orthodox trade union avenue had been explored, inside the branches, the Delegate Board and County Executives, to get the forces of the miners better organised and the policy in relation to the coalowners changed, but these efforts have never been

able to break through the solid crust of officials. The only reply from the latter has been an increasingly more active splitting policy leading to the cutting-off of unions such as Fife, and the expulsion of militants in the other county unions.

New Attacks from the Coalowners

The miners were faced, despite loose talk on the part of the officials about a boom, with two clear pronouncements from the coalowners that they intended to "lower the costs of production." Not only did the coalowners say this but the day-to-day attacks at the pits became more savage, and indeed show every sign of intensifying.

Side by side with this daily dose of "industrial peace" there is a continual wail raised by the owners about the £5,600,000 "deficiency" in the ascertainments, which sum is "owing" to the owners by the men, and is to be paid back out of any, and all, future surpluses. The possibilities are that there will be no surpluses, and that the £5½ millions of debt will rise to £7 millions by the end of the summer, and that this and the never-ceasing local attacks will pave the way for the owners to be able to force the broken-up and demoralised Scottish Unions to accept a wage about two shillings below the present level of 8s. 4½d. per day.

The United Mineworkers' Union

At the beginning of 1928, Cook described the Scottish Executive's postponement of the annual conference as "the most dastardly undemocratic act in the miners' history, which undermines the whole basis of trade unionism." When the M.F.G.B. Executive met in May, 1928, he was one of the minority against the condemnation of the Communists. After the Llandudno Conference, in July, he signed the manifesto criticising the Conference's support of the Scottish bureaucrats, but in October he withdrew his signature and began to talk about opposing "outside interference" in the miners' organisation. Since then he has gone many steps further.

Arthur J. Cook may consider it artless or cunning to trumpet in the coalfield that he is against all splitters, whether Adamson or Allan, but he cannot disguise the fact that he knows the real

position in Scotland as well as anybody. He knows that the real splitters are not the people who are trying to put into operation the resolution passed at the M.F.G.B. at Llandudno, last year, for the uniting of all the badly scattered forces of the Scottish mineworkers into One Union for the Scottish coalfield. He knows full well that the real splitters are those officials, agents and M.P.'s in control of the National Union of Scottish Mineworkers who have not only allowed year by year to slip past without ever trying to get the forces of the miners united, but have actually obstructed every move made by the union membership in this direction.

There is nothing more certain than that the fate we have described, of further accumulating debt, further local attacks and wage reductions, further demoralisation, will be in store for the miners of Scotland if Cook's advice of remaining inside the County Unions and obeying the present hopeless "leadership" is listened to. Cook himself should understand that he will be held gravely responsible by the miners for his present attitude.

The only line of salvation, of helping the unions to recover those tens of thousands of trade union members who have broken with County Trade Unionism in disgust, of carrying out the Llandudno Conference resolution and decisions of the miners for the last ten years, of getting out of the present rut of depression, of blocking the rationalisation drive of the coalowners—lies in getting away from the self-wrecked and discredited rump and establishing One Union for the whole of the coalfield.

This Union, the United Mineworkers of Scotland, has now been inaugurated, and it is securing enthusiastic response from the miners, and will provide the only means of protecting the standards of the men and enabling them to go forward in unison with the other parts of the British coalfield in the fight against their present rotten conditions.

INDIA ON THE EVE OF REVOLT

By PHILLIP SPRATT

[Comrade Phillip Spratt, well known in India for his activity on behalf of the workers' and peasants' movement, in this article written only a few days before his arrest, clearly foresees the development of the present repression.]

A NEW wave of revolt is sweeping over India. Almost at the same time we hear of the arrest or conviction of hundreds of working-class strikers in Madras, Calcutta and Bombay, a crop of arrests for sedition and murder in the Punjab, a series of prosecutions for sedition in Bengal. The Simon Commission tours round the country leaving behind it a trail of broken heads. The Assembly is presented simultaneously with three startling new essays in repression, the Trades Disputes Bill, the Public Safety Bill and the Press Bill.

In India, the magistrate's court, even better than the legislature, serves as the thermometer of public affairs. At the moment both are rising rapidly. There can be no doubt that the political cauldron is well on the way to boiling point.

The most striking feature of the present political movement, as contrasted with the last great wave of the national upheaval in 1921, is its working-class character. The workers themselves are being savagely attacked; the members of the Workers' and Peasants' Party were arrested in Calcutta during the Simon boycott demonstration on account of the radical posters they were carrying, and again it is the Workers' and Peasants' Party members who are arrested for the Saunders murder (and then, in the absence of any evidence, tried for seditious speeches); two of the Government Bills are simply for suppressing working-class propaganda and activity.

In 1921, the petty bourgeoisie, and, to some extent, the bourgeoisie led the movement, drawing the masses behind them. In 1929, already the working class is in the front rank. This is shown in the most striking manner by the propaganda of

imperialism. Fear of communism, (i.e. of the working class) it is no exaggeration to say, is the leading note of the recent imperial speeches from Col. Gidney to the Viceroy, the European candidates to the Bengal Council and the president of the Jute Millowners' Association. Langford James, at the European Association Conference, summarised all the warnings and pronouncements.

In this Association there are no two views, I think, on the subject of Bolshevism. We regard it as the most imminent and the most dangerous menace which this country has to face at this moment.

Such statements suggest two questions. Is this fear genuine? And is it justified? There is no doubt that it is difficult to see reason for the panic of these spokesmen in the actual strength and organisation of the movement. It is often suggested therefore that this propaganda is a pretence, a scare, like the Zinovieff Letter, and is used at this ticklish time, when the new reforms are on the anvil, to dissuade the Indian bourgeoisie from indulging in any unnecessary opposition.

It will suffice to reply that the Zinovieff Letter was in no way a false alarm from the imperialist point of view. The Government it helped into power smashed the General Strike, crushed the miners and passed the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Act of 1927—not to mention a host of minor outrages upon the working class. The letter was a fake, but their fear of the British workers was genuine.

Is the fear in the Indian circumstances justified then? A theory is gaining currency among a wide section of the population which certainly would deny it. Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, for example, argues from a mass of data that India is two generations behind industrial Europe. Banking finds itself "numerically, functionally as well as morphologically, somewhere near the level of world-progress attained by the pioneers of modern industry and commerce say about 1886 or even 1870." The first Indian Trade Union Act of 1926 is to be compared with the legislation of 1871-6 in England and of 1884 in France. Even the ideology of present-day India is that of Europe in the 'sixties and 'seventies.

This is the theory of the Indian bourgeoisie. For it points to the future they desire—one of rapidly growing industry and

rapidly swelling profits. And, as usual, the theory of the bourgeoisie is also of that the labour reformists. Prof. Sarkar puts it clearly for them :—

1927-28. The Peasants' and Workers' Party of India is established. The strikes, the Trade Union movements, Factories Act amendments, advances in industrialisation and the growth of joint stock concerns, together with intensive international intercourse on all fronts as well as the political events of the post-war decade, enable Socialism to become a mentionable category for the first time in the organised public life and thought of India. For comparative chronology it is necessary to remember 1875, when the German Social Democratic party was established, and 1881, when the American Federation of Labour came into being, or 1886, the year of the establishment of the National Federation of Syndicates in France. The Indian movements have hardly ARRIVED at these institutions of some fifty years ago but bid fair to be approaching these Eur-American consummations."

This is the theory—if they have a theory—of the Indian Labour Reformist school. They are looking forward to a generation or two of peaceful progress on the lines of the European labour movement from the 'seventies onwards. The Trades Disputes Bill is only a temporary difficulty like the German anti-Socialist laws. Labour leaders will be concerned, not with the seizure of power, but with election to Parliament ; they will sit, not in the workers' soviets, but in the Royal Commission on the grievances of the working classes.

The answer to these conceptions is not very far to seek. It is familiar to all concerned with the cotton industry. Listen to its expression also at the Annual Dinner of the Mining and Geological Association of India :—

Turning to the black spot of the mineral industry, Mr. Chartres said the coal trade was suffering from the same complaint as many of the industries in England to-day—a capacity for over-production and the consequent low sale price of the product. The remedy was in rigid reorganisation to cut production costs.—(*Statesman*, Calcutta.)

Not much room for peaceful expansion here !

There is no need to discuss the subject any further. Lenin did so quite adequately fourteen years ago. He emphasised that imperialism was the period of WORLD-wide crisis and decay of capitalism. Capitalism has extended its rule and system over the

whole earth, and the process of collapse of capitalism necessarily involves in one way or another all countries, including India.

Indeed, there seems to be a certain reversal in the order of progress. The most highly developed capitalist countries, although they show in some cases very clear signs of decay, are not the first to undergo political transformation. Their long accumulated strength still maintains them. Russia was backward compared with Europe as a whole ; yet Russia was the first to evolve a Workers' State. China shows the same possibilities. It was the undeveloped, numerically insignificant working class that took a leading part in China in the Chinese nationalist movement in the post-war period.

The theory of Indian Capitalism and of Indian Labour Reformism is thus unsound.

The path of progress for the workers in India and the path which they will be forced to follow is that of militant struggle, not merely for economic reforms but for political power. In the course of their struggle there will be repression, foreshadowed only dimly by what has gone up to the present. They will be attacked by enemies from all sides, the Government, the bourgeoisie, the labour reformists (the reformists are already talking, if not organising, to split the workers' ranks).

That is why the Government and its spokesmen are alarmed about Communism, and why they are bringing in, among other things, the Public Safety Bill. Their alarm is both genuine and justified. For not only the Reforms are coming within the next few years, the second great world war, and with it the second stage in the world-wide crisis of Imperialism, will be upon us.

THE I.L.P. CONFERENCE

By HUGO RATHBONE

THE Conference of the Independent Labour Party has provided opportunities for a host of humorous and witty comments on the contradictory policies of that Party. Some have pointed to the two voices of the I.L.P. : the one in the guise of a responsible member of the future Government of the British Empire, the other as the " soul " of the Labour Movement, the militant Left Winger seeking the votes and the support of the workers on the street corner, trade union branch, &c. While Maxton at the Conference proudly affirms that the Party is " a revolutionary one " the Conference at its conclusion meekly agrees to sing " Auld Lang Syne " instead of the " Red Flag " for fear of annoying the War Office or the owners of the drill hall in which the Conference was held. While the Conference passes a resolution calling upon all its M.P.'s to vote against war credits, it is at the same time jockeyed by its leaders into agreeing that those instructions need not—in fact, must not—be heeded for fear of provoking the immediate resignations of these very same M.P.'s.

On the other hand, while thus showing fear of attempting to control its hundred odd M.P.'s, it decisively rejected at an earlier stage of the proceedings the logical recognition of the consequences of this fear by its vote against Roden Buxton's suggestion to become merely a propagandist body of Socialism and to take no part in the job of, for instance, running candidates for Parliament, &c.

From these contradictory decisions or expressions of opinion, indeed, it could well be concluded that the I.L.P. must become completely paralysed, if it has not become so already, and be on the verge of disruption. But that would be to assume that conditions in England have reached the point where a revolutionary situation demands immediate action to realise the revolution. For in this situation the basis of the I.L.P. would be gone. Action would be necessary either on one or other side of the barricades, and it would not be possible to remain on the top with one leg on each side as is seemingly the present position of the I.L.P. to-day.

But what *is* this basis of the I.L.P.? The answer can be none other than the petty bourgeoisie. This is not to say that the petty bourgeoisie is actively round the I.L.P. or inside it in large numbers, but it does mean that the I.L.P., which sets out to be one of the parties in the Labour Movement, gives expression to the petty bourgeois ideology which has been grafted on to the Labour Movement.

The very aim of the I.L.P. at its foundation, to promote independent Labour candidatures for Parliament, though objectively it was an indication of the movement of the workers towards class consciousness, nevertheless by the fact that it was treated as an end in itself was an acceptance of bourgeois democracy. It was an acceptance of the illusion that the workers could achieve their emancipation through the ballot box of the bourgeoisie. It was petty-bourgeois because it merely appropriated an idea of one class, the bourgeois class, and tried to utilise it for the aims of another class, the working class. The petty bourgeoisie is in the position of a class which exists and yet has no future. It is bound either to ally itself to the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. According to the changing conditions of the struggle between these two classes it treacherously shifts its alliance, always hoping to be on the side of the victor in the minor issues of the struggle. Its eyes are always on the future, but it has no policy for the present. Its action, therefore, is always in the future, while on the day-to-day issues it can only interpret them in the light of that future, but cannot see action that it can initiate to lead to them.

Maxton unconsciously expressed this petty-bourgeois outlook with the utmost clearness at the 1928 Annual Conference of the I.L.P. when a question was put as to what the I.L.P. would do if its M.P.'s consistently opposed I.L.P. policy. He said:—

In every bit of work done, the I.L.P. Group [in Parliament.—H.R.] tried to bring to bear the I.L.P. view point. There was no clear guidance as to how the I.L.P. philosophy had to be applied to day-to-day work, but in big things the I.L.P. point of view was put very clearly.—(Official report, p. 61.)

In "big things," such as Socialism in Our Time, when there is a Labour Government with a clear majority and completely imbued with the I.L.P. spirit, then everything was clear (yes,

Maxton, so clear it has been that for the last three years your Party has been wrangling over exactly how you will really set up this far-off Utopia of "Our Time," but more of that later), but on the day-to-day struggle I.L.P. philosophy is silent, for, as Mr. Maxton admitted, its philosophy provides it with no policy.

But why is it possible for the I.L.P. to occupy this position of providing expression for the petty-bourgeois ideology within the Labour Movement? The answer to this is to be found in the historical conditions surrounding the formation and original aims of the party. For, as has already been stated, the aim of the I.L.P. was originally to propagate the idea in the Labour Movement of support for Labour candidates for Parliament, independent of both the Conservative and Liberal Parties. It sought to achieve this by working through the existing organisations, trade unions, &c., and therefore, though it itself did put up one or two candidates, it also actively supported the formation of the Labour Representation Committee, the origin of the present Labour Party. With the growth of the Labour Party it became merely one of its affiliated societies, but counted its influence in that party not only through its own representatives as an affiliated society, but through individual members of the I.L.P. acting as representatives of the other bodies affiliated to the Labour Party.

Thus, while it still continued to support directly the promotion of its own candidates to Parliament many of its members were directly supported as parliamentary candidates by other bodies affiliated to the Labour Party. But the aims of the I.L.P. remained the same—the achievement of Socialism through the ballot box. But this was the aim of the Labour Party. With the growth of that party it became, with its own body of policies, the controlling body of the Labour M.P.'s, while the I.L.P. members were merely a group inside what developed into the official parliamentary party. The I.L.P. thus was relieved of responsibility for the day-to-day work of its candidates and was, therefore, free to develop and work out that Socialism in Utopias which it was its aim to achieve. This indeed gave free rein to the petty-bourgeois ideology of its members. Relieved of all necessity of deciding on action with regard to the day-to-day struggle it could build up its Utopia out of a pot-pourri of ideas borrowed

both from the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—Socialism, but through bourgeois democracy; a living wage, but with family allowances (the latest dodge of capitalism to reduce the basis of wage payment to what is necessary for the existence of one individual), and so forth.

This is well reflected in its constitution. For here while we find as the object of the party the Socialist Commonwealth, and a scheme of "political and industrial democracy" to run this Commonwealth, yet it is tacitly assumed in another paragraph that the bourgeois democracy of to-day is not essentially different from the democracy which is to run the Socialist Government. For in the paragraph headed "Method" it says:—

Circumstances *may* arise when a Government or reactionary class *might* attempt to suppress liberty or thwart the national will, and it holds that to defeat such attempt Democracy must use to the utmost extent its political and industrial power. (Our italics.)

Here we have the crux of the matter. There is "liberty" now says the I.L.P. The "national will" does get a free chance of expression now. Only there might possibly arise some occasion in the future when this "national will" would be threatened. If that were to happen then democracy, bourgeois democracy, would step in—but wait, not so fast, for that would seem to imply a justification of counter-revolution. But is not this in fact the case? By its claim that there is liberty now, that the national will is not thwarted now, it assumes that every member of society is politically equal. Any attempt then by a section of this society, for instance the working class, to suppress this liberty, to thwart this national will, would be met by democracy, &c. But this is denying the class struggle—this is counter-revolution. No brave words such as are also in the constitution can wipe this out.

Under this same paragraph headed "Method," we find:—

The Independent Labour Party takes its part in the struggle of the workers to win freedom from the economic tyranny imposed by the capitalist class and capitalist State.

Here we have nothing but the height of confusionism. According to the I.L.P. there is then no economic "freedom" for the workers, but there is political "liberty," yet this political "liberty" exists in a capitalist state which might some time in the future attempt to thwart the "national will," but, oh no, it doesn't

do it now. What is "democracy" in a capitalist state but capitalist democracy ; yet this same democracy is called upon to wield its power against any infringement of liberty in this capitalist state—a liberty which can only be for capitalists. Where was supposed to be shown the method of achieving Socialism we find an advocacy of counter revolution.

But it will be said that this is only due to certain small unclearnesses in the constitution—the heart, at any rate, of the I.L.P. is sound. It believes in the class struggle. Here we beg to differ. The heart of the I.L.P. is a petty bourgeois heart. It is, therefore, essentially unsound, essentially confused. Essentially unsound because it has no future for which to beat. Essentially confused because its theories are borrowed from several other classes. Agreed that in certain circumstances of the class struggle it might be forced to come down on the side of the workers, but in a weak, half-hearted and essentially petty-bourgeois way, but equally is it certain that in other circumstances it treacherously betrays the workers. We can see the signs of these two alternatives in all its policies. But the class struggle demands a clear and unwavering policy. Is then the I.L.P. a Party that the class-conscious workers can support? We will answer this question by briefly reviewing the decisions of the recent Annual Conference.

There were three main discussions at the conference : one was on the living wage policy, one or rather more than one on colonial policy, and one on war credits. The living wage discussion was noticeable for its complete barrenness ; no interjections were made except for Dollan's objection to the civil service intellectual E. F. Wise "coddling" the workers. The resolution adopted rejected the previous conference's resolution requiring of the Labour Government the immediate enforcement of a living wage, as impracticable, and, instead, laid down a complicated plan as to how, according as the industry was reorganised, a living wage would be paid.

The debates on the colonial policy revealed once again the persistence of a definite imperialist outlook. For in the first place a resolution condemning the colonial resolution of the Labour and Socialist International was rejected. Secondly, amendments to the imperialism resolution designed to get the Labour Government to declare for immediate independence for Egypt and India were

rejected. The argument against independence that was used once by the platform and copied afterwards by the imperialists in the hall, that Socialists were not prepared to leave the natives of Kenya to be exploited by the white settlers, reveals an absolute lack of understanding of the class struggle. For as we showed above it reminds us that if the I.L.P. doesn't believe in the political violence exercised to-day by the capitalist state it cannot believe that it exercises it also in the colonies. There is as in Great Britain only economic exploitation by the capitalists, in this case the white settlers. Therefore the I.L.P. cannot realise that by withdrawing from Kenya all the representatives of the British Government and British capitalism, soldiers, sailors, civil servants and commercial agents, and declaring Kenya to be independent, it at once withdraws also the basis of the domination exercised by the white settlers over the black population. Without the fear of guns, bombs and bombardments by imperialism it would be impossible for the white settlers to continue their enslavement and economic exploitation of the black population. With this gone, there would be no question of leaving the natives to the mercy of the white settlers, but rather Lord Delamere and his gang of white settler ruffians would soon be dealt with by the people over whom they previously tyrannised. Perhaps what the I.L.P. fears is violence—but a limited violence in the interest of the oppressed, while it condones the continuous and ever-increasing violence of the capitalist exploiter.

The third subject of big debate at the conference was the war credits resolution ; by its disgraceful, but inevitable, exposure of lack of any desire or intention of seeing that these instructions to vote against war credits were obeyed, it showed again the petty bourgeois vacillations of the I.L.P. when confronted with an immediate problem which demands action. Indeed, as we have shown, Maxton has admitted that the I.L.P. is clear enough about "the big things," but about "day-to-day work" there was "no clear guidance."

When compelled, therefore, to take action on an immediate issue, even if it starts on the right way of supporting the workers and continues its action, it will, as in the Chinese revolution period, finally betray the workers. If it takes no action this betrayal of the workers is just as complete ; for no action means support for capitalism. The workers clearly cannot support such a party.

LASSALLE AND BISMARCK

By D. RIAZANOV

[*This valuable contribution to the history of Socialism by the head of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow has been specially translated from the Russian for the LABOUR MONTHLY. It first appeared in the Moscow "Pravda," July 14, 1928.*]

"**B**ACK to Lassalle." Such was the slogan uttered by Struve¹ in 1900 when he put forward the "undying idealism" and "realpolitik" of Lassalle as against the dialectical materialism and "idealistic" tactics of Marx.

"Marx was unjust to Lassalle, Marx under-estimated Lassalle," so the Russian followers of Struve repeated in various tones.

During Lassalle's life, Marx did not once express himself either against his agitation or his literary activity. In *Capital* he devoted to Lassalle a single remark in which he emphasised that the economic views of the author of *Capital and Labour* were not identical with his own. Only in 1891 did Engels publish Marx' famous letter on the Gotha programme in which the theoretical views and political tactics of Lassalle were subjected to sharp criticism.

The views of Marx and Engels on the political activity of Lassalle were appropriated by Bernstein who, however, in places gave them almost the form of a caricature in the biography written for the collection which he edited of selected works of Lassalle. When, freed from Engels' supervision, in 1896 he began to move away from Marx, he "revised" also his views on Lassalle. Just at this time Mehring came to meet him. Considering the rehabilitation of Schweitzer² as one of his most

¹ Struve was the leader of so-called "legal Marxism" in Russia in the 'nineties. He drafted the first manifesto of the Russian Social Democratic Party. After 1900 he quickly broke with Marxism, went over to the Liberals and later became an extreme reactionary.

² Schweitzer was a follower of Lassalle and became the leader of the organisation built up by Lassalle shortly after the death of the latter until the fusion with Liebknecht's party in 1875.

important tasks, the most talented follower and pupil of Lassalle, the author of the *History of German Social Democracy*, was compelled also to undertake the rehabilitation of Lassalle.

It was a very difficult task. It was necessary to prove that the opportunist policy against which Mehring was declaring himself *at that time* was the sole correct policy *in the past*. To defend and justify the tactics of Lassalle and Schweitzer meant to attack those of Marx and Engels. Mehring came out in defence of Lassalle against Marx especially definitely in the fourth volume of the *Literary Remains of Marx, Engels and Lassalle*.

The comments which Mehring furnished for the letters of Lassalle to Marx which he published represented an apologia for the tactics of Lassalle in the 'fifties, and prepared the way also for an apologia for his actions in the early 'sixties. Whoever says A must say B also. When Mehring took part in the publication of the correspondence of Marx and Engels, he perceived to his astonishment that they occupied a completely independent position in the disputes of Liebknecht and Bebel (the Eisenachers) with Schweitzer (Lassallist), that they criticised the views and tactics of Liebknecht much more sharply than any one else dared to do, defending Schweitzer against the attacks of Liebknecht and Bebel, as Mehring himself does in his *History of German Social Democracy*.

But is it true that the tactics of Schweitzer were only a continuation of Lassalle's tactics? How to explain the stubborn hostility of Marx to Lassalle? Mehring, quite unperceived by himself, slid down to the point of view of "personalities" in history. The attitude of Marx and Engels was explained only by their personal antipathy to Lassalle. Mehring took on himself the thankless task of "defending" Lassalle—as he did also in relation to Bakunin—against the "unjust" attacks of Marx.

Mehring began to repair the "injustice." In a well-known article entitled "On the Antagonism between Lassalle and Marx" (*Neue Zeit*, Vol. III, June 27, 1913) Mehring came out sharply against the "fanatical" worshippers of Marx, among whom Kautsky was at that time still included. Mehring's point of view, which he continued to maintain even in his biography

of Marx, published in 1918, was given clear expression to in the following tirade:—

As long as Marx' sun shone in the heavens in solitary splendour, it was still possible, in strict agreement with the "greatest scientific seriousness and the most fervent interest in our common cause," to make the most gross accusations against the presumably eclipsed Lassalle. But from the time when only an insignificant portion of the party continues to believe in the mythical stories about various deals of Lassalle and Schweitzer with Bismarck, from the time when the mists began to remove themselves from the image of Lassalle and to threaten to concentrate themselves in the form of clouds about the sun of Marx, from that time the threatening song of the high priests [Mehring intends those who bowed down to Marx] is converted into a soft, conciliatory melody.

In Mehring's opinion, after the publication of Marx' letter on the Gotha programme, it was no longer possible to deny the "unpleasant" fact that Marx "had an unfair judgment of the personality of Lassalle and completely failed to understand the significance of his activity." The correspondence between Marx and Engels only strengthened Mehring in this conviction.

Unfortunately, Mehring's viewpoint found adherents in the Left group of German Social Democracy and afterwards also among the Communists. Not wishing to be "unjust" to Lassalle, Mehring and his disciples became "unjust" to Marx. Accusing the latter of failing to understand the significance of Lassalle's activity, they thereby only proved that they had a poor conception of the opposition existing between the views of Lassalle and Marx.

On what grounds did Marx and Engels reprove Lassalle, and why did they condemn his political tactics? In the first place, Lassalle completely denied any succession from the old party, the Communist League, and the whole previous German Revolutionary Labour Movement. Of course, this was done partly because Lassalle did not want to "compromise" the new Labour Movement. But in whose eyes? In the eyes of the enemies of the working class Lassalle appeared as a "liquidator" of the old party.

In the second place, Lassalle in his struggle against the Progressists,³ against the Liberal bourgeoisie, sought a union

³ The Progressist Party was formed in Germany in 1861 advocating Liberal ideas. In 1862 it had a firm hold in most of the large cities in Germany.

with the feudal and absolutist elements. This was not merely a temporary enthusiasm, an exigency arising from the heat of political struggle, it was a definite system, for Lassalle succeeded in obtaining immediate practical success. This also explains his relations to Bismarck, the apostle of Prussian junkerdom.

A series of public declarations made by Lassalle in 1863-64 caused Marx, and more especially Engels, to regard with increasing suspicion the agitation of Lassalle. The well-known Ronsdorf⁴ speech showed that Lassalle, in the interests of his "realpolitik," did not hesitate to adopt any kind of flattery towards the King of Prussia, the proverbial "cardboard prince." Even Bernstein, who has radically changed his old views on Lassalle, was compelled in 1922 to write with regard to this speech that "it is impossible to serve two masters," that the endeavour to modulate one's language so as to produce the desired effect on the "heads" led, in fact, to the adoption of a completely Cæsarist tone. "This speech," continues Bernstein, "was a two-fold proclamation of Cæsarism: Cæsarism in the ranks of the party and Cæsarism in the policy of the party."

In a letter to Kugelmann, on February 23, 1865, Marx wrote that it was only after the death of Lassalle that it was revealed to him that Lassalle in fact *betrayed* the party. Lassalle concluded a formal treaty with Bismarck (of course, without there being any kind of guarantee that the agreement would be adhered to by Bismarck). At the end of September, 1864, he was to travel to Hamburg in order to "force" Bismarck to annex Schleswig-Holstein, *i.e.* to proclaim it to be a re-union in the name of the "workers." Bismarck, for his part, promised universal suffrage and certain charlatan measures of a quasi-socialist character.

Lassalle [writes Marx further] could go astray in this way because he was a believer in "real politik" after the manner of Mr. Miquel, only of greater calibre and with wider aims. Just as Miquel and his latest friends took up the "new era" proclaimed by the Prussian Prince-regent in order to begin his national-union tinsel and to make use of the idea of "Prussian supremacy"; just as they all in general began to develop their "civil pride" *under Prussian protection*, so exactly did Lassalle wish to play the role of a proletarian Marquis Posa in relation to the Ukkermarck Philip II. Bismarck had to take on himself the role of a pimp between him

⁴ Lassalle's speech on May 22, 1864, in Ronsdorf, where he received an enormous ovation, was the climax of his campaign for the building up of his "Workingmen's Association,"

and the Prussian King. He only imitated the gentlemen of the National Union. But while they invoked Prussian "reaction" in the interests of the middle class, he exchanged hand-clasps with Bismarck in the interests of the proletariat. They had so much greater justification than Lassalle, inasmuch as the bourgeoisie is accustomed to regard as "reality" what lies immediately in front of its nose, and inasmuch as this class everywhere made compromises even with feudalism. The working class, however, in the very nature of things has to be honestly "revolutionary." For a theatrically ostentatious nature like Lassalle's (which, however, could not be bought by such trifles as lucrative posts, &c.) what was seductive was the perspective of important achievements, immediately in the interests of the working class, for which the latter would be indebted to Ferdinand Lassalle.

A happy chance—it is true, a chance which could not have "happened" if it had not been for the German revolution of 1918—gives us now the possibility of verifying the judgment made by Marx and Engels. Some months ago, in the cabinet of the Prussian prime minister, Otto Braun, the same cabinet wherein was once seated the Iron Chancellor, an old chest which had been there from unremembered times fell to pieces simply from excessive decrepitude. It appeared that it contained various official papers. Among them was discovered a correspondence between Lassalle and Bismarck. Otto Braun gave them for publication to Gustave Mayer, the well-known biographer of Schweitzer and Engels, and also to the publishers of Lassalle's literary remains.

It is difficult to establish in what way letters of Bismarck to Lassalle also got into this chest. It is true that they are very few, and their contents also are of no kind of interest. It is clear that Bismarck did not wish to compromise himself in any way. He preferred to "listen," and if he uttered his opinion, it was only orally, face to face, without witnesses. Lassalle, on the contrary, both spoke a lot and wrote a lot. Until this time only two letters of Lassalle to Bismarck were known. In any case, Bismarck for some reason considered it important for himself to get back even his shortest notes.

First of all, the new-found letters of Lassalle enable a fact of the utmost importance to be established, a fact so far completely unknown. Even Oncken, who investigated this question with especial care, makes the supposition, in the last edition of his

biography of Lassalle, that the first meeting of Lassalle and Bismarck took place in May following the foundation of the *Universal German Workingmen's Association*,⁵ that is after May 23, 1863. There could not have been many such meetings, for Lassalle left Berlin at the end of June and only returned in October. Bebel, who always pointed out that the initiative in these meetings proceeded from Bismarck, considered that they took place in the autumn and winter of 1863-64.

Now we know that Bismarck met Lassalle for the first time already before the foundation of the Universal German Workingmen's Association. Of course, Bismarck was already acquainted with Lassalle's utterances against the Progressists and with his "Open letter to the Leipzig Committee."

What exactly was the subject of the conversations of May 12-13, 1863, we do not exactly know. The tone adopted by Lassalle is best of all shown by his first letter, together with which he sends to Bismarck "the constitution of *my* State, with regard to which you may, perhaps, be a little envious of me."

The member of the Communist League, the revolutionary, republican and democrat, writes as follows to the most evil representative of Prussian junkerdom who, in the beginning of June, 1863, had only just published his savage regulations against the Press:—

This miniature will serve you as a convincing proof that the *workers* do in fact instinctively feel themselves drawn towards a dictatorship, if it were only possible to convince them in a suitable manner that this dictatorship will be realised in their interests, and show you the extent to which therefore they would be inclined, in spite of republican convictions, or rather owing to the latter, to see in the crown the natural bearer of a social dictatorship, in opposition to the egoism of bourgeois society, if the crown for its part could at some time decide to take the naturally rather improbable step, viz., of genuinely proceeding along the revolutionary and national path, and of converting itself from a monarchy of the privileged strata into a social and revolutionary monarchy.

Already, in the first conversation, Bismarck declared to Lassalle that he "intended to persuade the king to change his

⁵ The Universal German Workingmen's Association was the political party founded by Lassalle. Its Statutes, adopted on May 23, 1863, declare "the real removal of class antagonism in society can only be secured by universal, equal and direct suffrage."

policy, to introduce universal suffrage and to conclude an alliance with the people " !

Lassalle endeavoured to convince Bismarck that such measures as the savage persecution of the Press could " make it impossible for you to achieve your own aims and make absolutely impossible any union between the king and the people."

As " an enemy, but an open and honest enemy of the existing system," Lassalle desired that the ideas defended by him should triumph " along the peaceful lines, beneficial to all society, which your Excellency recently pointed out to me."

A careful study of this letter shows that Lassalle already, in the middle of May, had built up his whole tactics on the basis of an alliance with Bismarck, that the so-called " tactical change," described by Mehring and other, began even before the foundation of the Universal German Workingmen's Association, and that every step undertaken by him from this time, every speech, every declaration, was weighed by him from the point of view of the impression which it would produce on his chief allies, Bismarck and the crown.

(To be concluded.)

"DEMOCRACY" IN NEW ZEALAND

By R. F. GRIFFIN

NEW ZEALAND has a reputation as a "land of freedom and democracy," of "no strikes," of "socialist experiments," and "prosperity"; in other words, a land without class struggle.

Looked at through working-class eyes, the history of New Zealand since colonisation shows that the New Zealand bourgeoisie have nothing to learn in ruthlessness or contempt for constitutional procedure from their older brothers.

New Zealand has been primarily an agricultural country, depending for its livelihood on the export of its produce. The ruling class have always been of a narrow agrarian-capitalist outlook, and have become bitter because of struggles in the maritime industry which interfered with the dispatch of their produce. The Transport Workers and Seamen were for many years the only real proletariat, except of course the miners, who came chiefly from Scotland and brought with them the militant traditions of their calling in these older countries.

It was following the early maritime strikes that the New Zealand bourgeoisie attempted to establish state machinery to eliminate strikes—and succeeded to a certain extent. It became illegal for Unions, registered under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, to strike. Compulsory arbitration was introduced and a form of Arbitration Court set up, the first of its kind in the world. This did not entirely eliminate strikes, but served to bluff the workers. However, that is not the story in this article. Whenever industrial disputes took place, what is known as "the strong hand," in other words the mailed fist, was used.

An extraordinary strike of miners took place at the gold mining centre of Waihi in 1911. All the methods—importation of scabs, thugs and gunmen, and bribery—so well-known in the U.S.A. coalfields were used against the strikers. One strike leader, Evans, was battered to death by these hired thugs of the mine owners, backed by the Employers' Federation. It was a real taste of class struggle, and produced, I believe, New Zealand's first working-class martyr—Evans, of Waihi.

The whole story has been told in a booklet, "The Tragic Story of Waihi," by three collaborators, one of whom is H. E. Holland, M.P.—now leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party—then a well-known and dangerous "Red."

About the same period, a Military Conscription Act was introduced into New Zealand by a Liberal Government under Sir Joseph Ward's leadership (now leader of the new United Party in New Zealand, which has caused a Government defeat at the elections). This Act made Military Training compulsory for all males from 14 to 25, and also at that time provided for military training in schools. This resulted in a strong agitation

against such a measure and the gaoling of hundreds of boys and young men, but the Act remained on the Statute Book and operates to-day.

From 1913 Onwards

That New Zealand workers will respond as well as any other workers when a class fight takes place was proved in 1913. The wave of strikes which swept around the world also hit the Dominion and a general strike took place. In this strike, scabs were organised by the State, military forces were turned out, special volunteer forces of farmers' sons were drafted into the cities, and numerous street struggles took place. The situation held revolutionary potentialities if it had been properly led and handled. But the workers were heavily defeated and a reactionary Government, representative of large *farming* interests, firmly fixed in the saddle.

With the outbreak of War, all kinds of Acts restricting the "liberty of the subject" were introduced, such as Anti-Sedition laws, Banned Literature laws, Immigration Restriction measures, &c., &c. New Zealand was also one of the first countries to submit to the imposition of Military Conscription for the War in Europe. Many objectors—religious, socialist, Irish and Maori—were gaoled, others fled to Australia, while others again went "on the run" and became outlaws in the hills, rather than become "soldiers of freedom" in Europe.

The treatment of conscientious objectors in New Zealand is equal to any of the stories of white terror in Europe. They were tortured, maimed, some driven mad, others turned grey, and some flung into the front-line trenches in France, and cases were also reported of death as a result of prison treatment. Mr. H. E. Holland has collected the facts and reports in "Armageddon or Calvary." They are a sample of what New Zealand workers can expect with the development of the class struggle in "God's Own Country."

Practically all the War Regulations with regard to literature and free speech have been retained, and in the years following the war (1921-2-3) many prosecutions and gaolings took place. These arrests are still proceeding to-day. In the early days of the process of formation of a Communist Party in New Zealand many party members were gaoled and persecuted—Wilkinson, Johansen, Bourbeau, Thomas Galbraith, and others—for sedition, for importing and selling literature (even that printed in Australia). Police spies were put into the party for the purpose of securing convictions. The case of Miss Weitzel (now H. Ross, of Australia) caused a stir. She was a school teacher and student at Victoria University College in Wellington. She was convicted for selling the Australian Communist Party paper and deprived of employment, expelled from the College, and at one time could neither get a job in New Zealand nor a passport for Australia. Other comrades served terms of imprisonment, varying from three months to eleven.

It was in this after-war period that enforcement of oaths of loyalty became common. Children in schools had to parade and salute the flag; teachers were sacked for refusing to take the oath. New arrivals in New Zealand and even returning New Zealanders and seamen paying off were forced to take the oath of allegiance. One of the Communist Party members in

Wellington, a seaman paying off his ship, was detained for two hours until he agreed to take the oath. During that time he was examined by detectives who were able to tell him his detailed movements and movements of members of the Communist Party and persons whom he visited.

Opposition to these measures was confined entirely to the more militant workers—and the repressive laws, though perhaps slightly relaxed, still remain.

Persons of *disaffected tendencies* can be deported, and have been, without trial. Similar persons can be prevented from landing. Fines for strikes are frequently enforced. Police raids and persecution of militant workers continue. In Wellington (the capital city), members of the Communist Party are prevented from holding open-air meetings, while the Labour Party and the religious orators have no bar against them. Since the Hands-off-China campaign, conducted by the Communist Party, the party is now also prevented from using public halls for meetings, and confined to the Trades Hall, where detectives are always present. The Trade Union officials have joined with the police in the attempt to suppress the party. They tried, without success, to prevent the party using the Trades Hall, and on one occasion called in the police to remove Communist Party paper sellers.

After the Arcos raid lists of names (mostly out-of-date) were published, supposedly "discovered." Intimidatory articles were written in the Press and members of the Communist Party questioned by the police.

Less than a year ago, J. Basham, one of those mentioned in the "Arcos Raid" list, was convicted and fined £10 for importing the **LABOUR MONTHLY**.

Within the last few months Communist Party offices in Auckland have again been raided on two occasions. The chief purpose of the police seems to have been to secure information on the party and its activities through minute books, &c., which they seized.

One prosecution has so far been the result, and a fine of £10 again imposed.

The banning of literature in New Zealand is particularly strict. A board, consisting of the Parliamentary Librarian, the Wellington City Librarian, and the Chairman of the Booksellers' Association (also Manager of the Bible and Book Society), act as a consultative body in the matter. The purpose of the ban can be seen from the fact that a list of banned books (private and confidential) which came into the possession of the Communist Party some time ago was five-sixths political and one-sixth sex literature. It is not customary to issue lists, and anything which savours of "disaffected" or "disruptive" *tendencies* may be prohibited. Confiscation of imported literature without compensation and often without advising those concerned is usual. Everything published as "Communist" or "I.W.W." literature is prohibited, and of course farcical acts occur, such as confiscation of an Irish novel published first about one hundred years ago.

The Labour Party, having become extremely "constitutional" of recent years, has managed to dodge persecution, and some of its leading members, who themselves in years gone by did their terms in gaol, are now leading the attacks against the Communist Party.

The official organ of the Alliance of Labour and Labour Party, the *New Zealand Worker*, actually attempted to justify the prosecution against Basham, and attacked the *LABOUR MONTHLY* as an organ which was, in its opinion, "Communist," and deserved suppression.

The treatment of Samoa by the New Zealand capitalist class is another example which shows that they are equally as Imperialist in their outlook as the larger Imperialist Powers of which they are mere vassals.

Samoa is mandated territory to the New Zealand Government from the League of Nations. As a result of native agitation against New Zealand administration over one hundred native chiefs were deported on 1927, and this year two gunboats were sent up there, marines landed, and a special force of military police organised in New Zealand to teach the natives "law and order," and in the words of the League Covenant to "carry out the sacred trust of civilisation."

These reflections on the history of the New Zealand bourgeoisie and their actions against the working class do not include the treatment of the Maoris (New Zealand natives) in the early days, their ruthless slaughter, and the confiscation of their lands. Yet in these facts there is sufficient to remove any illusions anyone may have as to the form of democracy in this "Britain of the South."

"Liberty," "Freedom," "Democracy," &c., are here, as elsewhere, cloaks for capitalist dictatorship. Strikes are illegal, free speech is forbidden, working-class literature prohibited, military conscription enforced, police persecution condoned, and organisations created to prevent "peaceful transition to Socialism." The only constitution allowable is one that conforms to the needs of capitalism.

Already there exists a potential Fascist organisation led by the Chief Justice and Deputy-Governor, Sir Chas. Skerrett, who was also chairman of the Royal Commission on Samoa. This body, known as the Welfare League, is openly and secretly preparing, with the aid of some renegade "labour" men, for the future against such "disruptive bodies" as the Communist Party, or in fact any militant elements of the working class.

Tsarist autocracy and New Zealand democracy have many points in common. The forms only are different,

The World of Labour

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CEYLON

The Heroic Struggle of the Workers

SINCE 1921, Labour has begun to organise in Ceylon. The harbour strike of 1927 made the power of organised Labour felt. In October of last year the All-Ceylon Trade Union Congress was formed and a Labour Party has been organised to carry on the political side of the struggle. On January 4, 1929, the conductors, drivers and other employees of the Colombo Electric Tramway and Lighting Co., Ltd., formed themselves into the Tramwaymen's Union and affiliated it to the Trade Union Congress.

On January 10 they submitted a memorandum of their demands. At present they start work with 1s. 9d. per day; from the seventh year, 3s., and at the end of eighteen years, 4s. per day. They asked for an all-round increase of 50 per cent. in wages and a general improvement in conditions of work. Mr. Goenensingha, the President of the Trade Union Congress, made a compromise and persuaded the men to ask for only a 20-25 per cent. increase in wages and general improvement in conditions. Messrs. Boustead Bros., the local agents of the company, granted a few minor concessions as regards leave and overtime, but refused to consider the vital question of wages. On the 21st Mr. Goenensingha asked for the reinstatement of a dismissed conductor, and on the refusal of Mr. Boustead to consider the matter he threatened a strike. Mr. Boustead asked him to go ahead. On January 23, 150 men struck work, principally on the question of wages, but expressed their willingness to submit the dispute to arbitration. The Bousteads, confident of victory, called for "volunteers" and started recruiting a new staff. They issued reports that, as far as the company was concerned, the strike was over, and threatened to cancel the privilege of superannuation gratuities. A few English planters and assistants in firms "volunteered" to scab, but at no time was the company able to run anything near a normal service.

Both sides prepared for a bitter struggle. At a mass meeting of the strikers and their sympathisers it was decided to launch a vigorous campaign to boycott the trams. Colombo and approaches to it were placarded with posters asking the public to boycott the trams and "show sympathy for the sufferers." The Labour Union ran its own fleet of motor-cars as an alternative service. Public sympathy began to mobilise for the strikers.

"The public" began to serve the boycotters with "soft drinks." Funds began to pour in to aid the strikers. The law students in red sashes demonstrated their support in front of the Labour Union Offices. The mercantile clerks went in procession in the streets and expressed their sympathy. The railway workers displayed their sympathy in even more vigorous ways.

From the beginning, two armed policemen guarded every car, and this number was increased as the strike progressed. The tramway routes were lined with police. At important junctions there were stationed detachments of police in charge of senior officers. Colombo began to take on the appearance of an armed camp. Labour Union volunteers and their sympathisers were assaulted and arrested. The hostility of the police and the agitation among the people were daily showing themselves in strong colours. A clash seemed inevitable.

Labour looked for fresh weapons, and found the sympathetic strike ready at hand. Messrs. Bousteads are agents for a number of companies, so a boycott of their goods in the harbour was declared. The piling up of goods in the harbour and the prospect of declining dividends at once brought the Bousteads to their knees. Through the "good offices" of Mr. Hayley, President of the Chamber of Commerce, negotiations were started on February 1. An understanding was arrived at, but the shrewd lawyers of the company drew up an agreement which even a local capitalist paper called "an inhuman document," and which drew from Goenesingha the remark: "I am not a lunatic to sign it."

The boycott was stiffened, and the men prepared for a "fight to a finish." Public feeling was running high. Again, on February 4, protracted negotiations were started by Mr. Hayley, the high priest of "industrial peace," in order to bring about "a peaceful settlement." An agreement was arrived at, but the Bousteads wanted time till twelve noon of the 5th even to cable London for permission to arbitrate. On the morning of the 5th Mr. Goenesingha and other labour leaders were assaulted by the police. When the news of these incidents spread to the workshops and the harbour, nearly 20,000 men "downed tools," and there occurred a "spontaneous general strike." The men marched to the Labour Union offices and the police headquarters. However, the agreement was signed at 11.20 a.m., and the men were calmed and persuaded to go back to work. Mr. Goenesingha undertook to call off the strike till the 10th, pending a reply from London. But it was too late. Crowds began to gather in the streets. The attempt of an armed police guard to arrest two men in the railway workshops brought strong resistance. By 5.30 the crowds were so thick and threatening that the police, in panic, withdrew to the security of their headquarters. The crowds demanded the release of the men arrested. A baton charge proved futile. A stray shot killed an onlooker. The sight of the dead body made them furious and thirsting for vengeance. They cut off the telephone and electric light wires and a gas-main, burned the record office and a fire engine, and barricaded the entrances to the P.H.Q. with municipal refuse carts. The Fort police and the Royal Garrison Artillery were called and firing ordered. The Fort Police and

"the Boys of the Bulldog Breed" came firing from a distance. Firing lasted twenty minutes, five were left dead and about 250 wounded, mostly onlookers and men at the railway station.

For two days the police could not appear in the streets. Their sight was anathema to the public; whenever they appeared they were greeted with a shower of bottles, brick-bats, etc. The Labour Union volunteers stepped into the breach and kept order. They were not authorised to do so, but they displayed initiative and commonsense and left parliamentary imbeciles to talk about fine constitutional points. On February 15 the Company cabled from London its willingness to submit wages for arbitration, but superannuation gratuities were to be granted only on "good behaviour." Goenesingha persuaded the men to accept the terms, and the strike came to an end. The same day the "European" Volunteer Force held a route march in Colombo—demonstrating the sanctions of imperialism.

The tramwaymen's strike demonstrates the militancy, organising ability and the solidarity of the workers of Ceylon, but the leaders displayed lamentable confusion and muddle-headedness. Not understanding the class nature of the state, they considered the police to be impartial in an industrial dispute.

Messrs. Goenesingha, C. H. Z. Fernando and Mahadeva negotiated with high government officials for the substitution of Ceylonese police by English police, thereby losing public sympathy. They wanted "educated English police who understand the proper functions of Labour Unions," in place of the ignorant Ceylonese police who only carry out Government orders. This tendency on the part of the Labour Leaders is a direct result of the machinations of MacDonald, Purcell & Co. Until Goenesingha attended the Commonwealth Labour Conference last summer, he was a splendid fighter for the working class, but since his return, confused by Fabian mysticism, he has become an advocate of "industrial peace." The renegade MacDonald is moving heaven and earth to keep the Colonial labour movements as appendages to his own bankrupt Party and to prevent the Colonial workers from giving any support to the nationalist movements against imperialism. The opportunist labour leaders of Ceylon are helping these renegades who are trying to camouflage imperialism. But the workers of Ceylon, driven by objective conditions and the infiltration of new ideas, are beginning to open their eyes. They, by their heroic efforts for two weeks and by a final demonstration on February 5, showed what mettle they are made of.

D. P. R. GUNAWARDENA.

GERMANY

Elections to Works Councils

ELECTIONS to the Works Councils in most German industries took place in March and April. The German trade union movement is divided into reformist unions, free trade unions and Christian unions. Last year the Communists and revolutionary workers did not put forward their own list of candidates but confined themselves to a fight around

the free trade union lists. This year they used the election struggle to get a united front between the organised and unorganised workers. In the free trade union meetings they advocated the putting forward of a composite list consisting only of those who pledged themselves to a militant working class policy and whose record proved them to be prepared to carry out that policy. Where they failed to get this united list they put up a list of opposition candidates.

The change in procedure makes it difficult to gauge the growth of revolutionary influence by a mere comparison of votes, but the tremendous success of the opposition candidates all over Germany shows that it has increased.

In the Ruhr mining industry the attack of the reformists on the Communists in the Unions had been so virulent that by bringing the whole trade union machine to bear to prevent them to stand for the committees, etc., they had reduced the number of pit councils with Communist majorities from fourteen in 1925 to six in 1928. This year the Communists have gained a better position even than they had in 1925, since they now have overwhelming majorities on seventeen pit committees. At thirty-four mines where there were opposition lists, the opposition obtained 21,788 votes, the reformists 20,143, and the Christian Socialists 13,704.

The revolutionary opposition was very successful in the town transport industry, gaining an absolute majority in Berlin and in Dresden, and a very strong position in Essen and Munich. In a great many important smelting works the opposition succeeded in gaining a majority or a very strong minority, as, for instance, in "Bochumer Verein," where they had practically no seats before. In the other metal industries they were also very successful, even at "Zeiss," Jena, which is a firm which goes in for welfare work and other palliatives, they received 1,411 votes to the reformists' 1,739, and gained three fresh seats. In the "Siemens-Werner-Werk" the Communists gained eight new seats, making thirteen in all.

These are only a few examples, but the results of all the elections show the same increase of Communist influence. The Social Democrats are replying by splitting the unions, as in the Berlin metal union, where they are depriving Communist officials of their offices, and by using their Government positions against the Communists. Some months ago the Social Democrat, Zöriebel, chief of the Berlin police, prohibited demonstrations in Berlin. On March 23 this was extended to the whole of Prussia by the Social Democrat, Grzesinski, Police Minister of Prussia. The following extracts show the nature of this prohibition :—

Public assemblies in the open air and processions which represent an immediate danger to public security must be forbidden and prevented.

I shall proceed unscrupulously against the radical organisations with all the means at my disposal. Nor shall I refrain from dissolving such unions and associations as have the character of political parties.

Thus the answer of the German social democrats to the growing influence of the Communist Party is the threat to use their position in the Government to make the Communist Party illegal.

RHODESIA**Railway Strike**

ON February 16 a strike was declared on the Rhodesian railways, following the complete refusal of the men's demands by the Rhodesian railway company. The strikers put forward about twenty demands, including an increase of wages of £1 8s. a month, an eight-hour day, a guaranteed month of twenty-six days, increased rate for overtime, abolition of recent rent increases, and employment of trade unionists only. The question of wages was the most important. Wages had been decreased by £3 a month in 1922 owing to the bad financial position of the railways. After a Government enquiry in 1927, £1 12s. of this had been restored but they were still receiving 28s. less than before the reduction.

The members of the two unions concerned, the Rhodesian Railwaymen's Union and the A.E.U., came out solidly in spite of the fact that it was not until eleven days later that the Council of the A.E.U. at Johannesburg endorsed the strike. For eleven days not a single train was run. A party of tourists were completely stranded at Victoria Falls, and some railwaymen had the greatest difficulty in getting home owing to the fact that railway officials prevented them from taking the trains to the home centres when the strike was declared, which had been the intention of the Union.

On February 19 the Premier of Rhodesia, Mr. H. R. Moffat, asked the Union to agree to a return to work on condition that an assessor from South Africa or overseas be appointed to inquire into the position and decide whether an increase of wages was justified. The Union replied that they would be willing to drop fourteen of their demands, but the increase in wages, the guaranteed month, and one or two other demands must be conceded before they would return to work. Colonel Birney, the Manager of the Railway Company, still refused to consider these demands.

Meanwhile the farmers were showing a certain amount of impatience at the delay of traffic. The Enterprise Farmers' Association called upon the Government to enroll volunteers and run the trains. By March 25 the special constables enrolled by the Government were on duty and being paid £1 a day. Most of these were used to guard the stations, although there was no sign of any disturbances. At Salisbury a high barbed wire fence, two miles long, was put up round the station.

On February 27 one small goods train left Bulawayo, and one train manned by railway officials left Livingstone. Meanwhile, the Railway Company had signed on about 100 volunteers who had had some experience on the railways. Policemen, armed with rifles, accompanied the drivers on the engines. In spite of this, by March 5 the Railway Company still only claimed six trains to be running during the whole day, and not more than twenty men over the whole system had returned to work. On this day the American tourists were fetched from Victoria Falls after a fourteen days' wait.

On March 7, after a series of conferences between the Government, the Trade Union leaders and the Railway Company, a settlement was reached. The terms were that all railwaymen were to be taken back without victimisation, and that a commission of inquiry, with Mr. J. Martin, of Johannesburg,

and four Rhodesians, was to be appointed to settle the question of wages. These terms were accepted by large majorities in all the branches. These terms were accepted largely because the men felt they could not hold out longer, but also because Mr. Martin was thought likely to declare in their favour and had been recommended by the South African Typographical Union. The other members of the Commission included an engineer, a large wholesale merchant, the Auditor-General of Mashonaland, and a lawyer.

The report of the Court of Inquiry was published on April 11. The unanimous finding of the Court was that the claims of the railwaymen are entirely unjustified and that the present scale of wages is adequate and reasonable.

U.S.A.

Clothing Workers' Strike

THE new Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union of America has just fought its first strike. The strike, which was in the clothing factories of New York, started on February 7 and lasted for exactly one month. By February 11 the numbers of workers on strike was 15,000. The object of the strike was to abolish the sweating conditions in these factories and to gain Union conditions, hours and wages. An unusual feature of the strike was the large number of negro workers who joined in. The strike was violently opposed, not only by the clothing employers, but also by the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, who did their best to provide scabs for the employers. The employers bewailed the impotency of the right wing union in failing to do this. The strikers were persecuted by the police, who tried to prevent picketing. During the course of the strike 1,500 workers were arrested for picketing, most of them being fined sums varying from \$1 to \$50. But in spite of this, extraordinarily successful mass picketing was carried out. At a mass picket on February 7, at 7 o'clock in the morning, 10,000 workers crowded the area of New York where the clothing factories are situated.

The police had the assistance of the Ladies Garment Workers' Union in arresting the strikers. Schlesinger, of the Garment Workers' Union, on many occasions, without any foundation, accused strikers of violent actions and had them arrested. On one occasion he accused eight Greek workers of breaking into a shop, but when they appeared in court the case was dismissed, as the employers themselves had to admit that they had done no damage. The lawyer of the Ladies Garment Workers' Union appeared in court to prosecute the strikers on behalf of the employers.

After a fortnight many shops opened on the Union terms. In these shops the members worked one eight-hour day for the Union funds. On March 7 the strike ended, the Union's terms having been accepted by nearly 400 shops, thousands of new members having been made for the Union. The terms which the employers accepted were payment of the Union minimum wage scale, establishment of a 40-hour, 5-day week, recognition of the Union, and of the right to the job after one week's trial, with no dismissal except for misbehaviour.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE NEW TRANSLATION OF MARX

A Letter from Professor Riazanov

DEAR COMRADE,—In your last letter you mentioned the new translation of *Capital* by E. and C. Paul¹. The book, peculiar as it may seem, has not been a pleasure to me. Of course, it is agreeable to find the demand for the works of Marx having become so great as to require a new edition of the *Capital*, and as a sign of this increased interest in Marx and his works I certainly welcome this edition. Only my pleasure has been marred by the circumstance that one has found it necessary to make an entirely new translation instead of revising the edition of Moore and Aveling, which had been thoroughly revised and completed by Engels.

Both translators of the first English edition were born Englishmen, both were quite conversant with economical matters and even if to them has to be denied an all-round competence in questions of economy, nothing of the kind can be said against Engels, who, as is to be seen from letters of that period, also from his introduction to the English edition, has spent an enormous deal of time and labour on this edition. This old edition contains a tremendous deal of Engels' own work, and I do not consider it right to neglect this work; and what is more, to me it is not a neglect only but equals almost to a contempt, to an abjudication of Engels, and with such a tendency I, of course, cannot at all sympathise.

I do not consider myself so competent as to declare decisively that the edition revised by Engels complies to all stylistical requirements, or that it contains no mistakes, no errors. Its containing mistakes is quite possible. But to justify the discarding of the text authorised by Engels, the least one ought to have done would have been to prove on hand of numerous instances the absolute uselessness of the old English edition, the impossibility of adapting it to the requirements of to-day and hence its inevitable fate of being thrown away in order to make room to a completely new translation. To such an authority as Engels this justification, to my idea, ought to have been made!

I have not gone through the Pauls' translation very thoroughly, but the fact of this translation suffering from serious errors was brought home to me by the introduction of the Pauls, from which I learned that they have not used for their text the *Volksausgabe*, published by Kautsky (and to which I also contributed by adding a very complete register).

This Kautsky edition, though not a critical definite one, possesses great advantages over all other editions as far as the text is concerned, as Kautsky has used for this edition *all* the variations of the four different versions by Marx, resp. Engels, further numerous corrections of Marx and Engels found in their own copies, and also the French edition, which to a great extent had been revised by Marx. From all this is to be seen that the Pauls have not made use of the best text hitherto known, therefore their translation is a step backwards.

¹*Capital*. A new translation by Eden and Cedar Paul, based on the Fourth and Definitive Edition. (Allen & Unwin, 927 pp., 12s. 6d.)

A hasty perusal of their book resulted in my discovering the following errors:—

- On page 866 instead of "hoffnungsvoll" (hopeful) they translated unhappy.
- „ 282 instead of "Arbeitsvolk" (working people) they translated the French people.
- „ 318 instead of "Arbeitszeit" (labour time) they translated labour power.
- „ 552 instead of "Lehrfabrik" (factory for learning) they translated tannery.
- „ 593 instead of "politische Oekonomie" (political economy) they translated English economics.

In conclusion, let me say that as long as E. and C. Paul do not convince me by a thorough criticism of the old translation that a revision (the necessity of which I do not deny) has been absolutely impossible, I maintain and shall continue to maintain the standpoint of considering their new translation from a scientific point of view superfluous. The interest of the English-speaking world in Marx's *Capital* will grow to such an extent that I hope the day will not be far off when the opportunity arises of re-editing the old translation.

Fraternally yours,

D. RIAZANOV.

Moscow, April 18, 1929.

THE OUTSIDER'S INDIA

Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India, 1927-28. (H.M. Stationery Office, 4s. 6d.)

An Indian Commentary. By C. T. Garratt (I.C.S. Retd.). (Jonathan Cape, 1928, 7s. 6d.)

Living India. By Savel Zimand. (Longmans, Green & Co., 1928., 10s. 6d.)

Shiva or the Future of India. By R. J. Minney. (Kegan Paul, 1929, 2s. 6d.)

THESE four recent books on India all attempting to treat of India as a whole, and all of them from different view-points, are at once an indication of the increased interest that is being taken in the subject of India and a measure of the sort of judgments that are being arrived at by non-Indian observers.

The Government publication is the easiest to dispose of. It is a bulky volume of four hundred pages of Government propaganda, compiled by Mr. J. Coatman, who enjoys the office of Director of Public Information in India, and who recently earned some notoriety in the Legislative Assembly, where he is a nominated member, by an anti-bolshevik tirade in the debate on the Public Safety Bill, and by handing round a large scrap-book of cuttings from the Indian Press to show its pernicious bolshevik character. It is sufficient to note the opinion passed on his volume by a non-official British journal, the *Pioneer Mail*, of Allahabad. This British paper describes it in its editorial notes as a—

collection of platitudes, misrepresentations and one-sided generalisations. Except for occasional pages of statistics and passages of plain straightforward history of events, the volume is valueless. The chapter on politics during the year—46 pages—would be amusing if it were not such a tragic revelation of

the incapacity of Mr. Coatman to understand the real political situation in the country.—*Pioneer Mail*, Feb. 15, 1929.

The *Pioneer Mail* indulges in this frank speaking, not because Mr. Coatman has departed in any way from the correct imperialist opinions of the British rulers of India, or because the *Mail* has itself "gone native," but because Mr. Coatman is such a careless spokesman for his caste, and because his official optimism and self-satisfaction makes more difficult the reconciliation with the upper class Indian nationalists that the *Mail* would like to see brought about.

As an instance of Mr. Coatman's treatment of events it is just worth noting that he goes so far in his efforts to show the utter insignificance of the opposition to the Simon Commission as to declare "with the exception of Mr. Jinnah, no Mohammedan politician of any standing denounced the Commission." He has, of course, also a section on the "Communist plotters." In the course of this, he is not above writing such ridiculous nonsense as that the Labour Research Department, London, is an "organisation under the control of the Central Council of Trade Unions in Moscow." This is the sort of stuff printed at the public expense in India.

Mr. Garratt would perhaps claim his to be the most serious study of the four. It is written by a man with a wide knowledge, a liberal outlook and a capacity for writing clear readable English. He is a retired official of the Indian Civil Service, but although he has discarded the blinkers of the official view-point he still retains more than a few relics of the British administrator about him. In spite of his endeavours to have regard to the whole structure of Indian society, he remains nothing more than an old-fashioned liberal, blind to the basic character of British imperialism in India and to the class forces at work there.

He starts off by telling us that the whole tragedy of modern India is that "the educated classes of England and India remained hopelessly estranged." His first section, on the structure of Indian society, is not inadequate as far as it goes, though, of course, there is no hint of exploitation, and the account of the working class is reactionary and out of date. He notes that the new influences to which the industrial workers are exposed "may in time produce a class-consciousness" among them. He makes ignorant assertions as to strikes and working-class organisation, declaring, for example, "only in the railway workshops and at Ahmedabad have unions been organised on anything approaching European lines (p. 61). Ahmedabad, it will be remembered, is the scene of Mr. Gandhi's experiments in yellow unionism.

In the next section, on the relations of Indians and English, we have the old story of the unfortunate development of unfriendly relations because of British aloofness and arrogance, not a word about British domination as such or the nature of British imperialist exploitation.

Mr. Garratt's description of the National Congress is almost a travesty. Speaking of the Congress after the Lucknow session of 1916, he says:—

From this time forward no politician however extreme his views has found the Congress too moderate for him to attend, and no Moderate has cared to place his demands from the British Government lower than complete political independence. (Pp. 143-4.)

The problem of self-government and democracy he approaches purely from the standpoint of a Civil Service official. He notes that :—

the war did much to solve the question whether Indians could be entrusted to administer the bureaucratic machine from within. (P. 157.)

He reports that the Reforms Scheme was a failure because :—

when Mr. Montagu brought in his scheme the tide was running strongly against the Europeans and he introduced into a country afflicted almost with xenophobia a complicated and delicate piece of constitutional machinery. (P. 145.)

And finally he comes to his root criticism that—

the British are not steering for some definite objective, but drifting vaguely along and thankful when the weather is calm. (P. 205.)

This cheap "Dilly-Dally" accusation is actually the final word of Mr. Garratt's wisdom. In his last conclusions on Indian nationalism, he declares :—

Probably most people who can claim any knowledge of Indian nationalism would agree that the exasperation of the educated classes is due more to the lack of any settled policy than to the dilatory manner in which the reforms are introduced. (P. 315.)

And he ends by saying :—

any reforms which are introduced should be of such a nature that an Indian can visualise the type of Government which will be in existence five, ten or fifteen years ahead.

It is hardly necessary to quote any more of Mr. Garratt. We will note only that, in his study of "The Future," he refers politically only to the likely outcome of the Simon Commission and similar possible reforms, his own opinion being that "it will be difficult to avoid something approaching dyarchy in the central administration"; he repeats the common view that "the real problems of modern India are social and economic," as opposed to political, in speaking of industrial development; and he ignores the agrarian question altogether, talking only of the usual trifling reforms. Mr. Garratt may be worth reading for what information he has, but his understanding is that of the typical British petty-bourgeois Labourite.

Mr. Zimand's book is of a different kind. It is at once more superficial and yet closer to reality and less affected by British national prejudices. This is not surprising, for Mr. Zimand is an American. The book is frankly the work of a journalist based on a single visit to the country, plus a catholic study of books about India, but his very eagerness to give all the facts, his vivid pictures of personal impressions, his evident sympathy with Indian nationalism and his sensitiveness to the warning portents of coming "trouble" takes it out of the usual run of European books on India and makes it worth studying.

Perhaps because he is an American, Mr. Zimand cannot fail to see, and is not concerned to conceal, the economic basis of British imperialism in India. In a sketch of the history of British rule and of the chain of "Caesars" who have represented British power there, he is by no means complimentary to the methods by which they made "economic penetration" secure and "safeguarded" British investments. Yet he ends this section with the lame conclusion that "the spirit of political unrest has reached a stage when real reforms can no longer be denied."

The greater part of the book is occupied by his studies of the "social fabric," devoted rather at undue length to such aspects as the all-powerful grip of the Hindu religion, the walls of caste, child marriage, sacred cows and holy mosques and the Indian princes. All this is devoted to pictures rather than problems and the same applies to the small chapter on the "masses."

The last part of the book is called "seething India" and contains sketches of the nationalist movement and ends with the usual examination of the question of "reforms." His view of nationalism is too much obsessed with the personality of Gandhi, and this, together with his pre-occupation with religious aspects of social life, no doubt gives the basis for the remark of "Æ," in a short and empty foreword to the book, that "almost all the evils spoken of by this latest writer on India have a religious root." Incidentally, it probably goes with this sort of vague twaddle about "Mendelian dominants" of "culture" to include such inaccuracies as to refer to Sir Flinders Petrie as Sir Hendon Petrie.

The final observations of Mr. Zimand are disappointing. After all his keen observation of "seething" forces, he sees no further than that:—

Great Britain has to her credit real achievements in India. But her greatest opportunity still lies ahead . . . On the type of constitution which the Parliament of 1930 decides to grant greatly depends whether India will, within the next generation, be incorporated as a loyal member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. (P. 272.)

One is irresistibly reminded of the kind of prophecies that were made of the future of "reforms" in Russia, in Turkestan and in China before the war. Close observers always come to the bold conclusion that gradual "progress" was inevitable. In the same way Mr. Zimand considers:—

Universal suffrage may not be conceivable in India for perhaps another half-a-century. (P. 268.)

Mr. Minney's pamphlet on the *Future of India* is dear at half a crown, from every point of view. The series of books to which it belongs started well, with some thought-provoking essays by eminent writers, but it has evidently degenerated to printing sheer trash. The wrapper of Mr. Minney's work advertises that it has been banned in India. One would imagine that the reason is, not because it is an indictment of British rule, but because it contains all the stupidities and grossnesses of Miss Mayo without her facts, and its circulation in India could only have the effect of bringing the Britisher into contempt.

Mr. Minney's main title to fame is, apparently, that as a journalist on the *Englishman* in Calcutta he once wrote a series of highly-coloured articles on "night-life" in that city. They attracted no attention and he has now made them the basis of his picture of all India. His remarks, whether for or against British rule, are not to be taken seriously.

C. P. D.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE I.L.P. IN SOUTH AFRICA

[We have received the following letter from Mr. Ballinger, the I.L.P. adviser to the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of South Africa, on the subject of the article by Mr. E. R. Roux in the LABOUR MONTHLY, February, 1929. We gladly accede to his request to publish the letter, giving also Mr. Roux's reply. Our readers will be able to judge for themselves whether the original article in the LABOUR MONTHLY was as "ill-informed and irrelevant" as Mr. Ballinger contends. Mr. Ballinger asks for sympathy in "forging a solution" to the problems of the Native in South Africa. The question is in whose interests will be a solution achieved "on ticket of leave."]

I.—MR. BALLINGER'S LETTER

DEAR COMRADE,—I have to-day received a copy of the February issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

Above the caption of the article "What is the I.L.P. Doing in South Africa?" is pencilled—"With the Author's Compliments."

Eddie Roux, the author, is at Cambridge. His article is a typical University arm-chair diatribe. A sort of—I visualise the road that all Labour Trade Unionists and Socialists must travel, otherwise they are "Reformist I.L.P. Rightwingers."

Your contributor has foisted on LABOUR MONTHLY readers a singularly ill-informed and irrelevant résumé of I.C.U. affairs.

Last October, a stamp receipt collecting system and administration by departmental "heads" was introduced. Since then the I.C.U. has had no interest for Kadalie, neither has he consulted his colleagues or the writer. Clean administration is in being, as every month since last October clear certificates have been given by the Auditors, Messrs. Howard Pim and Hardy.

I am still on ticket-of-leave and not even to ingratiate myself with the C.P.'ers will I "burst out." It is good tactics to choose, so far as is possible, time and place of attack.

South Africans who are *au fait* with I.C.U. affairs are amused at Roux's statement that Ballinger and Kadalie "are well suited for their task." Three months ago Kadalie claimed that "Ballinger is a dictator," and at a public meeting allowed a resolution asking for my deportation.

Hertzog welcomes me: Kadalie allies himself to the farmers. Topsy-turvy, but it shows how misleading is the article, "What is the I.L.P. Doing in South Africa?"

The undernoted is a further example of a deliberate effort to mislead:—

For the I.C.U. to set up rival unions . . . under Ballinger's leadership . . . is as mean a thing as could possibly be perpetrated by the worst reactionary.

If it were true, I would agree, but what are the facts? The I.C.U. has as many members in the trades covered by the Native Federation as the Federation. Why does Roux draw a veil over the disastrous Clothing Strike, conducted by his confrères?

All the Native members were arrested and fined 10s. Gain, nil; loss of employment and fine.

Kadalie has held a chieftainship in the I.C.U. His own officials have by persistent pressure and insistence upon clean administration broken his power. At the beginning of January he was given a "year's leave of absence." Further misdemeanours, which included an attempt to forcibly take possession of the Head Office and install a self-appointed staff, were met by the I.C.U. National Council Sub-Committee diplomatically forcing his resignation.

Mr. Roux writes disparagingly of certain Johannesburg people who welcomed me, and who, through their business or profession, are not Trade Unionists.

Well, I have yet to learn that University students are affiliated, as an organised body, to either the T.U.C. Amsterdam or R.I.L.U.

Time and again, C.P.'ers have claimed that the universities are citadels of reaction. Beware, Mr. Roux—the Comintern may suspect you—Social Democrat!

But Moscow, like many others, does not know the great difficulties attendant on unionising the African Native. There is white antipathy to the "Nigger." Who is going to do the dirty work? "House Boys" (grown men) do most of the domestic menial tasks—even in the homes of the White Trade Unionists.

Although there is an ever-growing number of urban or detribalised natives, the majority are kraal natives, who come into the towns to eke out the failure of crops, insufficient tribal lands, or to get money to purchase lobolo cattle, which in turn means wives, and an easy time, while the women cultivate the land. Women know more about agriculture in South Africa than their menfolk.

Another great problem to be faced is the Gold Mines indentured Labour. And last, but by no means least, the quiet insistent demand for "forced labour" to establish aerial stations.

Overwhelming all, the Pass Laws and Master and Servants Act. Problems to which there are no parallels. Surely I, endeavouring with the Native to forge a solution to his problems, can rightly expect the sympathy and goodwill of all the best elements in the Labour and Socialist Movements.

W. G. BALLINGER,
Adviser to the I.C.U.

II.—MR. ROUX REPLIES

Cambridge,

April 11, 1929.

DEAR COMRADE,—Since my article was written, an open quarrel has broken out between Ballinger and Kadalie, and the latter has resigned the secretaryship of the I.C.U. To the extent that I did not foresee such a development and even suggested that a working partnership between the two might, continue for some time—to that extent I have been proved a false prophet. I have never denied that Ballinger has made a serious effort to prevent pilfering of the I.C.U.'s funds by dishonest officials. Even the most reactionary organisa-

tion could not carry on indefinitely as the I.C.U. has tried to do during the past few years. I had expected Kadalie to submit to the new financial discipline. That he has not done so proves him to be less astute than I thought he was. My general criticism of I.C.U. policy, as interpreted formerly by Kadalie and at present by Ballinger, is hardly seriously challenged by Mr. Ballinger's letter.

The I.C.U. leadership definitely adopted a reformist and opportunist policy at the end of 1926, with the expulsion of the Communists and Kadalie's enunciation of the "no strike" policy. Our Party demanded at that time: democracy in the I.C.U. and control of officials by the membership; re-organisation on a real trade union basis, involving the use of the strike weapon when necessary. After our expulsion we demanded in addition the lifting of the ban on the militants and the right of all workers to belong to the I.C.U., irrespective of party.

I have attributed the decline of the I.C.U. primarily to the political opportunism of its leaders as shown in their failure to get down to the real work of trade union organisation. I have correlated this general lack of sincerity in the native workers' struggle with the speculation of funds and other activities of the leadership, which caused the I.C.U. to become known as a "hot-bed of corruption." Ballinger now claims to have inaugurated a clean administration. But does the desire for cleanliness only extend to funds? What about policy? Is Ballinger prepared to withdraw the ban on the Communists as part of his general "cleaning up"?

With regard to the attempt of the I.C.U. to set up rival unions to those organised by the Native Trade Union Federation, there seems little doubt that such an attempt was made in at least one case. The South African *Worker*, organ of the C.P., referred to this in a leading article last August:—

Although Mr. Ballinger has only been in South Africa a few weeks, he has lost no time in attempting to split the movement, as witness his action in calling meetings of native bakers under the auspices of the I.C.U., whilst being in full possession of the fact that a Native Bakers' Union has existed for many months.

As to the number of I.C.U. members in trades covered by the Native Federation, it would be interesting to have some figures if Mr. Ballinger can supply them.

The Native Federation recently claimed 10,000 members on the Witwatersrand, and there seems little doubt that in this area it has the support of the majority of organised native workers in the trades covered by it.

However, priority of formation and a larger membership in any area does not by itself justify the claim of any trade union to continue to represent the workers. In the case of the unions covered by the Native Federation, they were not only first in the field as *trade unions*, but they already have a record of militant and, on the whole, successful action, and *they do not exclude Communists, as the I.C.U. does.*

In the case of the Clothing Workers' Strike, it is true that the natives were arrested, imprisoned and fined. Such has been and will be the fate of many native strikers under our present unequal laws. It is what happened to the native strikers at the Government Farm at Onderstepoort, and that was an I.C.U. affair! The remedy is not to reject strike action (in many

native strikes the authorities have not felt strong enough to enforce the Master and Servant and similar laws and the strikers have *not* been arrested), but rather to build up strong, militant, native workers' organisations which will over-ride unequal racial laws and compel their abolition. That is why the I.C.U. ban on Communists must be raised and the way opened for the federation of all native unions in one united body.

Further points raised in Mr. Ballinger's letter are relatively less important. Hertzog's opinion I merely quoted from a speech made by him at the Orange Free State conference of the National Party, reported in the *Johannesburg Star*, October 19, 1928.

I cannot find any reference in my article to Kadalie allying himself with the farmers.

The significance of the aid now being given to the I.C.U. by certain white supporters lies not in the fact that they do not happen to be trade unionists (the point I made about the absence of white trade unionists was a separate one) but in their known imperialist sympathies and particularly their connection (Howard Pim) with the largest employers of native labour—the Chamber of Mines. I am sure readers of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* will agree that a certain amount of significance might reasonably be attached to the association of such people with a native labour organisation. It is also significant that Mr. Ballinger is candid enough to describe himself as "on ticket of leave."

In associating him with Kadalie as full and responsible joint leader of the I.C.U. during the latter half of 1928, I may have done Ballinger an injustice. At any rate, now that Kadalie is out of the picture, the way is free for Ballinger to reverse the anti-Communist decision of 1926 (if Howard Pim will let him)! If he succeeds in doing that, I (when I return to Africa this year), and the other members of the C.P., will be pleased to work with him to build a united native labour federation in South Africa.

E. R. ROUX.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Trade and Credit.* By R. G. Hawtrey. (Longmans, 189 pp.)
The War Loan. Facts, Reflections and Suggested Remedies. By Dr. M. B. Shipsey. (Shipsey, 32 pp., 1s.)
My Apprenticeship. By Beatrice Webb. Re-issue. (Longman, Green and Co., 459 pp., 7s. 6d.)
White Labour and Coloured Labour. By Lord Olivier. New Edition, re-written and revised. (Hogarth Press, 348 pp., 12s. 6d.)
When We Were Very Green. By K. S. Bhat. (E. Archer, 48 pp., 2s.)
The Last Step. By Durham Stokes. (Simpkin, Marshall, Ltd., 29 pp., 1s.)
A Guide to Agricultural Policy. By John P. Maxton. Foreword by A. W. Ashby. (Ruskin College, Oxford, 47 pp., 6d.)
Clash. A Novel by Ellen Wilkinson. (Harrap, 310 pp., 7s. 6d.)
The Meaning of May Day. (Labour Research Department, 15 pp., 1d.; 50 copies 2s. 9d.; 100 copies, 5s. 6d., post free.)
Voici ce qu'on a fait de la Georgie. By Henri Barbusse. (F. Flammarion, Paris, 314 pp., 12 francs.)

JUN 10 1929

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 11

June, 1929

Number 6

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*The New Government — International Situation — Real Issues
— World Crisis — Geneva Fiasco — A War Preparations
Conference—Paris Reparations Conference—New Align-
ments—Britain versus America—American Expan-
sion—Hoover Regime—Britain and Hoover—
Germany To-day—Intense Contradictions—
Revolutionisation—The Meaning of
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Counter-Revolution — The
British Perspective.*

WITH the completion of the General Election, the question of the consequent Government to be formed and its policy occupies the centre of attention. If, as is likely, the results of the election prove inconclusive, a period of parliamentary instability and manœuvrings for governmental combinations is to be expected. The distinctions, however, between the various forms of government that may be constituted are greater in appearance than in reality. The whole election campaign has shown with greater clearness than ever before the essential unity of the three dominant parties. The particular type of government formed will have important tactical consequences on the political situation ; but the main line of policy of British capitalism will remain the same. The real issues lie outside these combinations, and will break in with ever greater force, whatever government is constituted. To judge the situation that is now developing in Britain, it is necessary to look beyond the narrow parliamentary horizon and to see more clearly the total new international situation that is developing and of which the political crisis in Britain is only one factor.

THE British General Election, even before it was completed, has already been dwarfed by the magnitude of events which are taking place on a world scale and which point to rapidly sharpening issues both between the rival imperialisms and within each country. *The unconcealed breakdown of the Disarmament Commission, the conflicts revealed in the crisis of the*

Reparations Conference, the open fighting and storm of repression in Germany, the mass strikes, shootings, and suppression of the workers' organisations in India—all these are the deepening thunder of the new period of world capitalism, in relation to which the half-hearted and sham issues of the three governing parties at the election fade into insignificance as no more than a smoke-screen. In the noise of constitutional questions and problems of governmental combinations which may be expected to follow the election, the workers will do well to look further to see the real issues that are gathering storms ahead.

WHY has the election campaign, so far as the three governing parties are concerned, been marked by so much unreality, indefiniteness, and identity of programmes as to excite universal comment? The endless mutual accusations of "stealing our programme" have been repeated to weariness by each one of the three parties against the other two. And in the event of the election result proving as inconclusive as the contest, the subsequent manœuvrings for governmental position will only further emphasise the unreality of the issues. From this the conventional political commentators have drawn the conclusion that the present stage of politics is "dull." But the very hesitancy and indefiniteness of the fight between the governing parties is itself an important indication of the real position. There could be no greater mistake than to imagine that, because the surface of politics appears so seemingly trivial and characterless, there are no real issues behind. On the contrary, it is just because the real issues are so serious that they have to be withdrawn from view and replaced by a shadow-show. The governing parties hesitate even to go through the appearance of fighting each other because they are so much more concerned with the serious common problem of saving capitalism, and the gravity of the period requires a united national front of all the capitalist forces in face of the gathering international situation and the rising class issues at home. The F.B.I.—General Council alliance for "consultation and co-operation," which is the reality of Labour policy at the present stage, is inevitably reflected in the political situation. The parliamentary instability which is likely to be a feature of the

period immediately in front is itself only the prelude to the future National Coalition in one form or another.

THE essential character of the present international situation is that, while British capitalism is still in the process of passing through the rationalisation drive and even, in some respects, in its early stages, *the general level of world capitalism has already advanced far beyond this into the new stage of crisis following on the consequences of rationalisation.* It was from the first the point of difference between the capitalist-reformist and the revolutionary view of rationalisation that the former saw in the technical advance involved a process of stabilisation and a new lease of life for capitalism, while the latter saw in it a hastened advance to a new and intensified stage of world crisis through the increased international competition and antagonism and the sharpened social divisions. It is the latter view that is now being proved correct by events. Increased international antagonism and sharpened social division is the clear character of the present situation on every side ; and the Geneva fiasco, the Paris deadlocks, the Berlin May Day battles, or the Indian ferment, are common high points in this process. The development in Britain internally moves more slowly ; British capitalism is torn between the problem of its own reconstruction and the new issues of the world situation ; the new wave of wage struggles directly connected with rationalisation is still only beginning ; but the movement in Britain follows step by step the same general line, and is at every point governed by the total international situation. Just as world economic conditions, and not the internal British economic situation, compelled the rise in the British bank rate, so the new forces of the world situation govern the position in Britain, despite the relatively more backward development.

IT is now manifest on every side that the increase in productive power consequent on rationalisation, which has left pre-war levels behind in all the leading countries except Britain, has led to a sharp increase in international competition and imperialist antagonism. The Geneva Disarmament proceedings have served as a register of this. It was, of course, never the purpose

of the Geneva Disarmament Commission to reduce armaments, but only to prevent disarmament in the normal official Royal Commission fashion, and to produce cogent reasons why armaments could not be reduced. This rôle, which was proceeding peaceably and happily enough over a chain of years and a hundred or so sittings without even reaching the completion of the preparations for a conference, had already been awkwardly and inconveniently interrupted by the unexpected intervention of the Soviet delegates, who had the graceless lack of tact to lay before the Disarmament Commission a proposal to disarm. After this proposal had been suitably scoffed out of existence by all sober statesmen from Chamberlain and Poincaré to Paul-Boncour and MacDonald, it became clear that something would have to appear to be done if the Commission were not to fail completely to perform its rôle as a mask and become instead an exposure. Even the veriest League of Nations boobies in every country were becoming visibly restive and sceptical. "Unless a good deal was effected at the present session" declared Lord Cushendun himself at the opening of the April meeting, "the Commission would make itself the laughing stock of the world. He had no doubt that would be very gratifying to the Soviet delegation, but he hoped they would not give them that satisfaction." (*The Times*, April 20, 1929.)

A GOOD deal was effected at the session in question, but not in the sense intended. The stage was set for a considerable show. Very much more Press attention than previously was fixed on the Commission. The Gibson naval gesture was hailed as the opening of a new era. But then the performance broke down. Every proposal, however limited, broke, almost before it was made, on the rock of the real antagonisms and strategic calculations. All further naval discussion was abandoned as inopportune. Military limitation was discussed only to prove that it was impossible: "the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament placed beyond all doubt this morning its inability to recommend any form of limitation of military armaments." (*The Times*, May 6, 1929.) The British and American delegates vied with one another in their concessions to French military demands, with reference to trained reserves and kindred questions, in the

obvious endeavour to win alliance against each other for their naval aims. Even the German proposal to prohibit air bombing did not receive so much as the hypocrisy of national acceptance, but was directly rejected. In the last stage, the Soviet suggestion that at least the purpose of the Commission should be defined as to "reduce armaments" was actually rejected. *The Conference became not even in appearance a conference for disarmament but openly and visibly a conference to prepare the next war.* Humbug broke down before the urgency of immediate realities. Strategic considerations were so paramount as to prevent even the pious formula of a pacific show. There could be no clearer indication of the sharpening of the war atmosphere.

THE Paris Reparations Conference has brought out the same intensification of antagonisms in another form. It was clear from the outset that the significance of the Conference lay only indirectly in the question of reparations, and primarily in the new groupings and strategic manœuvres of the Powers, including Germany. There was no actual crisis of the Dawes Plan to compel the Conference. So far as the actual exaction of the Dawes tribute from the German workers was concerned, it was proceeding successfully for the time being ; so far as the problem of transfer arises, it still belongs to the future when the transfer ceases to be masked by foreign loans and becomes instead intensified by the addition of interest and repayment charges on these ; but this question was not handled by the Conference. In the same way, the actual sum of the fifty millions, on which the British-American conflict took place and the deadlock of the Conference threatened, was obviously in itself, relatively to the much larger figures given and dropped in the course of the bargaining, no more than the immediate occasion, rather than the cause, of the crisis in the Conference. Behind the actuarial maze of figures lay inescapably visible the wider diplomatic and strategic aims of the rival imperialist Powers. *The Owen Young Conference of 1929 has not been able to proceed with the same easy smoothness as the Dawes Conference of 1924 because the position is no longer the same.* The Germany of 1929 is no longer the helpless Germany of 1924. The

British-American temporary alliance of 1924 is replaced by British-American open rivalry to-day.

IN the Paris Conference the new conflicts of the imperialist Powers, replacing the old alignments of Versailles and after, have come more openly into the front than at any previous conference. The new German Imperialism, rebuilt in its internal economy with the aid of American capital, but still at a disadvantage in the world position and unable to secure an adequate share of the world market for its increased productive apparatus, reaches out to strengthen its world position, to regain its economic independence, to secure territorial revision and, above all—the indispensable adjunct of imperialism—to secure colonies, as the political section of the Schacht memorandum now openly declared. America at the same time seeks to extend to a further stage its financial control in Europe through the yet only partially disclosed plans of the International Bank. British Imperialism concentrated, as throughout since Locarno, on the primary aim of the anti-Soviet front, and, to win Germany to the Western orientation and its own plans, has sought to win German support with alternative promises of concessions and threats. French Imperialism plays on its equal indispensability to either Britain or America in order to secure the support of both for the maintenance of its Versailles hegemony.

IN the first stages of the Conference, Britain played up to German demands, to the unconcealed dissatisfaction of the French, and sought to secure a reduction of the tribute as well as other concessions. But the Dawes method of combined coercion of France and Germany with American aid was not to work so easily this time. *America was this time no longer a partner, but had an independent rôle to play, in relation to which Britain represented its principal rival to be overcome; and here arose the crux of the Conference.* America was not prepared so lightly to yield its dominant control of German policy and assist the British arbitral rôle in Europe. Faced with this situation of Britain bidding for German support and seeking to establish a European united front under its leadership, with the edge

turned against the American creditor, America at a stroke turned the tables and out-trumped Britain by the Owen-Schacht memorandum. By this memorandum considerable reduction was to be secured for Germany, but almost solely at the expense of Britain, and practically without loss for France or Italy. In this way the tables were for the moment turned, and the support of France, Germany and Italy secured for a united front, with America against Britain, while Britain was isolated and compelled to bear alone the onus of rejection of the plan. The final outcome, which in the face of the existing balance of forces is likely to be inconclusive at the present Conference, remains to be seen ; but there could be no clearer indication than in these manœuvrings and counter-manœuvrings of the sharpening of imperialist antagonisms and the preparations and groupings for future war around the central imperialist antagonism of Britain and America.

IT is a noticeable point that the two principal countries which have most completely carried through the process of rationalisation and entered into the new stage, America and Germany, represent the sharpest expressions, in their different fashions, of the new contradictions and advance to crisis. America, on the one hand, is driven by the very conditions of its ever accelerating expansion to enter on an ever more aggressive line of world domination. Nearly two years ago the United States Minister of Labour, Davis, published an article on the problem of large-scale unemployment consequent on rationalisation, and reached the conclusion that the solution lay in a vast expansion of American exports. It is self-evident that this solipsist solution (which is the only solution known to capitalism) involves conflict with the other monopolists in all their preserves, such as is to-day taking place. "An examination of the available data," says the *Economist* (March 30, 1929), "suggests that American manufacturing exports so far have been the merest wavelet compared to the tide that is to come." The record figure of American exports in 1928 of 5,130 million dollars or 1,020 million pounds (United States Chamber of Commerce report : *Chicago Tribune*, April 16, 1929), compared with the British total of 723 million pounds, still represents only a small

proportion of American production, in manufactures some 8 per cent. And whereas until a few years ago the bulk of American exports still consisted of food and raw materials, which constituted a complement and not a competition to the other industrial nations, this situation is now reversed; and in 1928 the proportion of manufactured exports to the total amounted to no less than 68.5 per cent. or over two-thirds. The basis of growing world conflict is here evident.

CORRESPONDING with this phase is the new Hoover regime in the United States. "Our sympathies are broadening beyond the bounds of our nation" was the keynote of Hoover's Inaugural; and further, "Peace can be contributed to by respect for our ability in defence." The appointment of Hoover's Cabinet was a sufficiently clear indication of tendencies. The placing of the Big Navy advocate, C. F. Adams, at the head of the Navy; the continuance of Mellon, whose financial interchanges with Britain have lacked nothing in sharpness, at the Treasury; the appointment of the banker Lamont as Secretary of Commerce; and above all the appointment as Secretary of State of Colonel Stimson, the former Governor-General of the Philippines, ex-Secretary of War and recent Special Envoy to Nicaragua ("In the past," declares the *New Republic*, "his sympathies have been with the militaristically inclined.")—all these are expressions of a single line. In the same way, the appointment of General Dawes to London and the activities of Gibson at Geneva and Owen Young in Paris show the same general character. The recent Industrial Mobilisation Bill and Military Conscription Bill, although not yet likely to be carried, bear the stamp of the War Department and indicate the policy of the Administration. There is no sign here of any pacific outcome of capitalist "stabilisation" and "prosperity"; on the contrary, the true meaning of rationalisation and Americanisation is plain for all to see.

NOR has the British press been lacking in expression of its apprehension and distrust at the meaning of the Hoover regime in America. *The Times* writes of the advent of Hoover :—

And so we enter upon what for a variety of reasons will be the most assertively and vigorously American of administrations. . . . He is not anti-British, anti-French, anti-German, unless the very excess and passion of his Americanism may make him seem so.

If the new President is to succeed, America must be prosperous, even (and this is the crux of the matter) *at some expense to the rest of the world.*—(*The Times*, March 4, 1929.)

Even more open was the language at the time of the Presidential election, when *The Times* pronounced Hoover to be

as completely and unmistakably an American as Coolidge, and *with a dash of the aggressive in his patriotism.* . . . For him the American way, whether it be political, social, or religious, is better than any other way, and in its essence different and superior. To call him, as some of his stupid opponents have called him, an "internationalist" is to misunderstand him completely, unless the word is distorted to mean *a belief that the universe could with advantage be re-made after the American model.*—(*The Times*, November 8, 1928.)

The old "Kaiser" propaganda is being made to do service again in almost identical language. The fault of Hoover is evidently his failure to understand that the British Empire is the real model for the salvation of the universe. With still less concealment the *New Statesman* proclaims :—

He will seek to make the American Presidency as vigorous and influential in world affairs as it was in the days of Theodore Roosevelt. Less perhaps by temperament than by training and policy he is an economic imperialist, the first American statesman of a new order. *And it is in this character that the British Empire will meet him—a none too friendly critic and a formidable vis-à-vis. His very considerable experience of Europe has not taught him to love it, and least of all to love Great Britain.*—(*New Statesman*, November 10, 1928.)

The British-American rivalry has still many phases to pass through ; and in the near future there may be further naval conferences and even temporary agreements ; but these are themselves only interludes in the wider growing antagonism.

IN Germany, the workings out of rationalisation and the new stage are more complicated, but of crucial importance for the European working class to understand. Germany represents to-day a state of extreme and startling contradictions. On the one hand, Germany is in the peculiar position of the defeated Imperialist Power, militarily at the mercy of the victors and still

shorn of a large measure of its strength and shackled in its independence, and consequently still wavering in its interests and foreign policy between the line of "fulfilment" and the line of nationalist resistance, between the Western orientation of Locarno, which together with American influence constitutes the strongest immediate pull, and the not yet abandoned Eastern orientation of Rapallo, which constitutes its alternative basis of bargaining; and consequently a dissatisfied element in the international sphere and an uncertain element in the imperialist front. At the same time, internally, Germany represents a country that has passed through a revolution which nearly reached working-class victory, and which was only with difficulty suppressed and brought back to bourgeois limits, leaving an unstable balance of class forces, in which the capitalist dictatorship is erected on a basis of latent civil war. When Baldwin last year described Germany to the Editor of the *Lokalanzeiger* as still in the Kerensky period, he was using a clumsy and inappropriate analogy, but nevertheless not without a certain basis in relation to the primary significance of Germany to-day in the progress of the international social revolution outside Russia. But on the other hand, Germany at the same time, since the reorganisation with the aid of American capital, represents the most highly organised and advanced capitalist state in Europe, second only to the United States in its technical equipment, apparatus, centralisation and industrial power.

ALL these opposing factors lead to a situation of intense contradiction. The enormously increased productive power cannot find adequate outlet; the trade balance still remains passive in the face of the necessity of high and increasing foreign payments both in reparations and in interest on loans; unemployment since rationalisation moves feverishly up and down, ranging from two to three millions. The whole economic position is unstable. The German statistician Dr. Kuczynski estimated at the end of last year (*New York Nation*, November 11, 1928) that of the total German national wealth one-quarter is now in foreign hands, mainly American. The new foreign loans since Dawes have largely exceeded the payments in

reparations. The excess of imports in the first three years since Dawes has exceeded three hundred million pounds. To correct this deficit and at the same time to meet reparations and the payments on foreign loans would require an enormous increase of exports, which would necessitate the still further cheapening of production, driving down the conditions of the workers and a flooding of the world market. The real wages of the workers have been brought down since Dawes, hours increased, and output speeded up. It is only recently that the flow of foreign loans has begun to diminish, thus bringing out the urgency of the position, and reflected in the raising of the Bank Rate to 7½ per cent. All this situation leads to growing tension, both internally and externally, reflected alike in the rôle of Germany at the Paris Conference, in the wave of counter-revolutionary suppression at home, and the battles of the Berlin proletariat.

AN advancing process of revolutionisation in the working class has accompanied this situation. In the 1924 elections the vote of the Communist Party stood at 2,679,429. In the 1928 elections the vote of the Communist Party advanced to 3,260,000—an increase of over 20 per cent. in the four years of “stabilisation” since Dawes. The Social Democracy, after its first rôle of assistance in the suppression of the working-class revolution, and its subsequent rôle of assistance in the Dawes reconstruction of capitalism, has now increasingly to take the rôle of the police officers of reconstructed capitalism against the rising working-class advance—the rôle of the Zörgiebels and Grzesinskis. The German Social-Democratic Party, which once held in the vanguard the banner of May Day, now suppresses the May Day demonstrations of the working class with guns and bloodshed—and social democratic workers were among the killed by their own leaders. In the face of the combined front of capitalism and social democracy the independent revolutionary working-class advance goes forward, shown in the great strike movements of 1928, directly led by the revolutionary opposition, in the Ruhr and Hamburg, and still more in the factory councils elections of this year. *The results of these factory councils elections are the most powerful revelation of*

the revolutionisation of the working class. In the great transport systems of Berlin, Dresden and other towns, in the A.E.G., in the Leuna Chemical Works, and a host of other large-scale enterprises, the revolutionary opposition gains absolute majorities over the bourgeois and social democratic lists combined; in the Ruhr mines and elsewhere the revolutionary opposition gains the largest single vote. The tactics of the independent revolutionary working-class fight have justified themselves a hundredfold by their success.

FACED with this situation, the bourgeoisie and their social democratic allies move to ever more open repression. The Social-Democratic Police Minister of Prussia, Grzesinski, threatens to make Communism illegal in his March declaration :—

I shall proceed unscrupulously against the radical organisations with all the means at my disposal. Nor shall I refrain from dissolving such unions and associations as have the character of political parties.

All demonstrations are prohibited. The Red Front, the fighting organisation of the working class, is proclaimed dissolved. The working-class Press is seized and proscribed. The May Day demonstrations of the workers are attempted to be drowned in a reign of terror, with wholesale and reckless police firing. ("The official inquiry into the events has been unable to establish that a single shot was fired by a civilian against the police. Only one policeman, it is stated, was hit by a bullet, and he was hit in the hand through the accidental discharge of his own revolver." —*Manchester Guardian*.) This is the rôle of German Social Democracy to-day; and to this rôle the Labour Party, which has already performed similar tasks in India, will come also in Britain.

THE moves towards some form of counter-revolutionary dictatorship in Germany become increasingly open. This applies not only to the large body of the Nationalist bourgeoisie, the transference of the leadership to Hugenberg, and the activities of the Stahlhelm and kindred organisations. The same process is visible in the "moderate" and "liberal" bourgeoisie, in the increasing movement against "parliamen-

tarism." In a declaration to the Executive of the People's Party last February, Stresemann stated :—

We are faced, if the situation develops further on its present lines, with a confrontation of the trusts on one side and the millions of employees and workers on the other. *Social antagonisms are rising. . . . We must prepare to come to the reform of parliamentarism.* If the parties fail in this situation, then the call will sound: *Res venit ad triarios*, and *responsible personalities will find the courage to govern and take over the leadership.*

In the same way, the leading Liberal *Kölnische Zeitung* finds that Germany is on the eve of political change. The fight is no longer against absolutism, but

against the unfruitfulness of our parliamentary system, against the irresponsibility of parties, against the whole indiscipline of our bankrupt economy. . . . *The Government has too little power.*

The intensification of social antagonisms, the menace of counter-revolutionary coups, the signs of approaching civil war—these are the characteristics of "stabilised" and "rationalised" Germany to-day.

WITH these gathering signs of storm of the international situation, the workers of Britain will do well to look beyond the immediate parliamentary excitements and governmental manœuvrings which are held out to them as the sum-total of the political situation. The development in Britain, though slower, is following the same line, and is governed by the total international situation. The problems of the new period, the consequences of rationalisation and intensified international competition, the advance to imperialist war, the rising colonial revolts, the intensification of social antagonism and approach of new struggles, the new rôle of social democracy and the growth and consolidation of the independent revolutionary working-class forces under their own leadership—all these processes are in full development in Britain. Whatever Government comes to power, Labour, Liberal or Conservative, or a combination of these, will be faced with the same general problems, with the developing war situation, with the rôle of repression against the colonies and especially India, and with the rôle of repression against the rising struggle of the workers at home.

The rôle of a Labour Government, if formed, will be from the outset a rôle of repression. If the relative strength of parties shows a balance, if a period of parliamentary indecisiveness follows, alongside a situation of sharpening social and international antagonism, then the call will sound ever louder, here as elsewhere, for party combinations, for national coalition, for the reform of parliamentarism, and for stronger government : class antagonisms will become more open, the police rôle of the Labour Party and trade unions in combination with capitalism will be ever more strongly brought out. The independent line of the revolutionary working-class forces, which reached its first definite stage at the present elections, will be more than ever justified and will be more than ever needed in the advance to new strength and wider issues in the growing struggles ahead.

R. P. D.

SHARPENING CLASS WAR IN GERMANY

By WILHELM PIECK

THE events of the First of May and of the following days in Berlin are of great importance in the development of the class struggle of the German—indeed, of the world working-class. It is not yet possible to estimate the exact political significance of these events in their entirety. But we can explain the economic and political background against which this clash of hostile class forces occurred, we can point out its international bearings and draw the first lessons.

The German working class is to-day in a much worse economic situation than it was before the world war. Real wages are lower than in 1913. The eight-hour day has been abolished, partly with the help of the Social-Democrats, and a process of murderous rationalisation has been carried out in all factories in order to restore the competitive capacity of German industrial products in the world market. The workers have "reaped the harvest" of this rationalisation in a tremendous increase in the degree of exploitation, which even bourgeois economists have calculated to be, on the average, an increase of 30 per cent. In these efforts to fetter the working class the Social-Democrats have worked hand-in-hand with the bourgeoisie. It was the Social-Democrats who instituted the arbitration guillotine, which in practice amounts to a prohibition of the workers' right to strike. It is the Social-Democrats who are anxious to make the trade unions the obedient tools of "economic democracy." It is they who are thrusting the representatives of the revolutionary trade union opposition out of the unions, they who are splitting the unions. It is they who sabotage and throttle all the industrial struggles of the German workers.

It is characteristic of Germany's political situation that German trust capital, bent on carrying out its programme, is renouncing the methods of parliamentary democracy, and turning to the use of fascist methods to suppress the will-to-fight of the German working class. Parallel to this, or as a result of it, German social democracy is moving rapidly to the Right, to social fascism and open

social imperialism. Since taking over the government, the Social-Democrats have carried out the policy of trust capital, not only within the government itself, but outside it, in all the spheres over which it exercises any influence. Social democracy has become an integral part of the State apparatus, and is growing more and more ripe to play the chief part should a fascist form of government be established. This development is most clearly expressed in the attitude to war. Its defence programme is a war programme, directed primarily against the Soviet Union.

Within the working-class camp, increasing radicalisation is apparent. The German workers are meeting the attacks of capital, no longer by defensive action alone, but by counter-attacks. The great fights which they have waged in recent months were more than defensive fights, they contained elements of attack. The great victories of the Communists and the trade union opposition in the recent factory council elections are another indication of this Leftward swing.

The other capitalist countries offer the same picture of a great accentuation of class contradictions, of the growing exploitation of the workers under rationalisation, of the muzzling and suppression of revolutionary workers' organisations, of the use of fascist methods to enslave the proletariat or to reinforce an existing fascist regime—while, accompanying this, the working class is taking up the struggle more vigorously, is, in its turn, attacking.

The international and the German bourgeoisie are well aware that great struggles confront them ; imperialist and colonial wars, industrial disputes and political struggles. The factor which will decide the fate of these contests will be the class relation of forces between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie cannot triumph in one of these struggles if it does not succeed in crushing the revolutionary proletariat and its advance guard, the Communist Party. This question is the central issue of all the serious economic and political problems which are ever more frequently arising in capitalist countries, and whose solution becomes a matter of increasing urgency for the bourgeoisie. But above all the bourgeoisie is less aware that a war against the Soviet Union can be conducted only as a war simultaneously against the proletariat at home. Such is the background to the

international persecution of Communists, such are the reasons which, in Germany, led to the bloody First of May.

What actually happened on that day? Through the mouth of their social-democratic acolyte, Police-President Zörgiebel, the German capitalists forbade the Berlin workers to demonstrate in the streets on May Day. The social-democratic police-president stuck to his decision, although he knew that the Berlin workers would not give up the right to demonstrate on the streets, although he knew that the workers all over Germany had voiced an emphatic protest against the decision, although he knew that great masses of workers besides the Communists felt this prohibition of May Day demonstrations to be a challenge to the proletariat.

In spite of Zörgiebel's prohibition, Berlin workers appeared on the streets of Berlin on May 1.

And what did Zörgiebel, that eminent representative of the democratic ideals of social democracy do? He allowed the demonstrating, unarmed workers to be grossly and brutally mishandled by his police, and when the demonstrators objected, they were shot, their houses fired on, and the streets, the centres of Communist influence, Wedding and Neukölln, occupied by armoured cars and artillery. The police used all the latest appliances of military technique, tanks, aeroplanes, searchlights, to restore order in the affected districts. This was the revenge of German social democracy on the Berlin workers for their losses in the factory council elections; in this way they hoped to punish the workers for their revolutionary will to give the May Day demonstration a militant proletarian character. All the attempts of social democracy to hinder the growth of Communist influence by mass exclusions of Communists from the trade unions, by agreement with the employers not to employ Communists and to condemn them and their families to starvation, could not break the fighting spirit of the German working class.

So the Social Democrats decided, with the aid of the police machinery of the capitalist class state, of which their bureaucracy is a constituent part, with the aid of open civil war, to crush the vanguard of the German proletariat, the Berlin workers; to use methods of bloody terrorism in order to banish the spectre of approaching revolution.

Twenty-four dead, several hundreds wounded, thousands mishandled—this was the sacrifice made by the heroic Berlin workers during the May days. Proletarian blood has again stained the hands of German social democracy, a stain which cannot be washed away. Like the blood of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, of the thousands and thousands of workers and sailors tortured to death and shot by Noske, the blood which was shed in Berlin during the May days deepens the abyss between social democracy and those sections of the working class still under its influence, an abyss which no bridge can span.

The blood bath in Berlin aroused profound indignation among the workers all over Germany. The sympathies of the masses are with the Communists despite all attempts to obscure the facts. These sympathies have not yet found an organisational expression. The Communist Party has not succeeded in directing the bitterness of the working class towards a general strike. But one thing is certain: the blood shed in Berlin was an unexampled object lesson for millions of workers to realise the part played by social democracy in suppressing any revolutionary movement, in preparing a new imperialist war, in carrying out capitalist rationalisation.

The Social-Democrats, who knew quite well the preparations made by the police, had, even before May 1, carried on a slanderous campaign against the C.P.G. and the C.I., in order to divert attention from their own responsibility for the enslavement of the workers, from their own blood-guiltiness of their murder. After May 1 they spoke again of a Communist *putsch*, of armed insurrection, born of scatter-brained ideas and nourished by foreign interests. The old stale slogans of all reactionary governments were resurrected: "*They are foreigners and strangers; they are sowing the seeds of rebellion . . .*"

After all that we have said, it is clear why the workers fought. Living under the most dreadful exploitation, they would not suffer any attack on their freedom to demonstrate, any further attempt of the capitalists and Social-Democrats to muzzle them and degrade them into the position of powerless slaves, on whose backs the capitalists may continue undisturbed their reparations business, finally buying them for cannon fodder in the coming war. No! a thousand times no! The Berlin workers would not stand it.

They want bread and not social-democratic adjudications; they want shorter hours and not increased exploitation, they want a clear road for their militant activity and not suppression by trade union bureaucrats and police trade unionists. Communist, social-democratic and non-party workers attested their demands on May Day, on the day when the international proletariat, suffering in similar conditions, demonstrates for similar demands. The struggles which took place in Berlin were a realisation of the united front from below and a declaration of the international solidarity of all workers. This is a truth which cannot be disputed.

The events of May brought the two class fronts sharply up against each other, and impressed the masses with the consciousness that the proletarian class front can only be established in sharp opposition to the blood-stained social democracy; can be led only by the Communist Party, the revolutionary trade union opposition and the militant bodies elected by the working class. The greatest lesson of the May fight for the German Communist Party is the realisation of the necessity for seriously and urgently tackling the problem of winning the majority of the German working class to its side. The political influence of the Party is great, but it must be anchored on a broader and firmer organisational basis. A directly revolutionary situation may arise in the near future in Germany, but an essential condition for such a situation is the winning over of the decisive sections of the German working class by the Communist Party.

The bourgeoisie's attack on the working class is going on. The social-democratic Minister of the Interior for Prussia has prohibited the Red Front Fighters' League all over Prussia. It has now been banned in Bavaria and Hamburg.

The German working class must continue and intensify the fight against police terror, the fight for their freedom to demonstrate, to meet and to organise. The protest against police suppression and impoverishment voiced at the funeral of the workers murdered in Berlin, must be the prelude to an organised and comprehensive struggle which will finally put an end to the whole regime which feeds on the blood of the workers.

COOK'S BREAK WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKING CLASS

A Statement and a Reply

I—A Statement

By A. J. COOK

DURING the past few months articles and editorials have dealt with the miners' organisation in Scotland as well as questions affecting the M.F.G.B. Many references have also been made to myself which have been false, and misrepresent my actions and opinions. In view of the fact that the M.F.G.B., of which I am secretary, is investigating the Scottish position, especially in regard to Fife, I can deal only in general with that situation. But I can assure the readers of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* that the whole position has been grossly misrepresented.

In the first place, I want to correct one of the many misrepresentations which has appeared in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*. In the April issue the following statement appears :—

I am working for a Labour Government. I am opposed to all who stand in the way of this achievement, which I believe is possible this year if we can unite together. I believe our salvation is in 100 per cent. organisation industrially and politically. The only hope for the mineworkers and their dependents is a Labour Government.
—(A. J. Cook, in *Forward*, March 9, 1929.)

This is a deliberate twisting habitual with many so-called Communist leaders in their campaign of vilification. The statement in *Forward* actually reads as follows :—

I stand to-day where I always stood—that the control of trade unions should be in the hands of the members who attend their branch meetings, and no one else. While being a life-long trade unionist, and a Socialist for over twenty years, I am working for a Labour Government. I am opposed to all those who stand in the way of this achievement, which, I believe, is possible this year if we can unite together. I believe our salvation is in 100 per cent. organisation, industrially and politically. The only hope politically for the mineworkers and their dependents is in a Labour Government,

which I am prepared to prove either at meetings or articles in *Forward*.—(A. J. Cook.)

Note the deliberate leaving out of the word "politically" in the editorial quotation. Other quotations from the Press are used, —without any inquiry whether they are correct or no—to base an attack upon myself. Apparently the policy of the LABOUR MONTHLY as outlined by the Editor, is to destroy the British Trade Union Movement by forming new unions under the control of, and taking their orders from, the Communist Party of Great Britain. There is no question of the organisation of *all* workers to protect them in their every-day struggles to live, to secure compensation, safety, unemployment pay, minimum wage, &c. ; but only of the formation of a definite organisation under the direct control of the Communist Party to create a revolution. That is the policy pursued—hence the opposition to Labour representatives on local government bodies and in parliament with a view to creating intense poverty, chaos and misery so as to provoke some kind of revolt. This is the "theory of increasing misery."

While in theory leaders of the Communist Party proclaim movements are greater than men, principles more important than personalities, they practise just the opposite. Their tactics have been continually to attack all leaders not members of the C.P. since, it is claimed, they are the only pure, the only perfectly honest brand when they possess the C.P. label.

Communists prate about "rank and file control," yet discredit the rank and file by stating that they cannot control. As one who has been an active trade unionist for many years, going straight from the pit to be a miners' agent, I repudiate the vile suggestion that the rank and file cannot control their own organisations, and I again repeat—the M.F.G.B. can be controlled by its membership. I am not very sure whether the rank and file of the Communist unions on the Continent have even the opportunity to control their unions. I have been a Socialist for many years, and look upon the Trade Union Movement, Labour Party and Co-operative Movement as workers' movements, governed and controlled by the workers.

At any rate they are the workers' movements and their membership only can change their organisation and structure. The

C.P. leaders are giving the trade union leaders in particular credit for having great power and intelligence if they really believe that the millions of rank and file are in their pockets, controlled by a few leaders for their own personal ends, &c. No greater insult could be levelled at the membership than to suggest that they are a lot of fools and weaklings, bossed and dragooned by a few leaders who are, according to the élite of the C.P., ignoramuses. Trade Unionism in Great Britain caters for all workers whatever their religious or political beliefs. The trade union card is their insurance policy for life, not death. In the struggle for life (safety), livelihood (wages), the membership learn of the class struggle and begin to understand capitalism. Employers must be met, negotiations must take place with the owners of industry to secure protection every day. At the same time, trade unionism must create, as it has done, a political party, a research department and an educational department to prepare for the next step and further steps to control industry and to move towards national ownership and control. The C.P. with their present tactics and policy are trying to destroy the only means for protection now and the only means to create and construct a new social order. Hence they become, not enemies of leaders but of the rank and file membership, who are now begging for relief when we want remedies.

Not only are the C.P. by their present tactics destructive of the workers' organisations, but they are also helping to destroy Soviet Russia. The Soviet Government want diplomatic relations with Great Britain to secure normal trading relations and credit facilities, full rights among the nations, &c., and they know this is only possible under a Labour Government and healthy cordial relations with the British T.U.C. The Russian workers are suffering because of isolation very severely. Willie Allan, who no doubt is carrying out Communist instructions, has formed another union in Scotland, a Communist organisation. He did this while secretary of the Lanarkshire Miners' Union. He called a conference for this purpose which left no option to the Lanarkshire Union but to suspend him and finally dismiss him. Since then he has made (as have the C.P. and their Press) the position clear. They are out to smash the M.F.G.B., the T.U.C. and Labour Party—quite an ambitious proposal. No greater or more insane object could ever have

been formulated outside a lunatic asylum. Granted that there is need for reorganisation, this cannot be accomplished by such suicidal methods. I am against reaction and inaction but must realise my relation to the masses—must take them with me—must save them from unnecessary suffering and misery during the march from Capitalism to Socialism. I do hope the *LABOUR MONTHLY* will aid the workers in this task instead of being the tool of the destroyers of the workers' political, industrial and co-operative organisations.

After May 30, the C.P. will know what the working class think of their mad exploits. Our enemies, Tories, Liberals and capitalists, have chuckled with great glee at the policy of the C.P. They encourage them in their destructive policy, because they know what industrial and political power means to the working class.

I am not a Mondist. I am a Socialist, fighting every day for the miners and the masses nationally and internationally, facing poisoned bullets from the C.P., the employers and reactionaries in the trade unions and political Labour movement of Great Britain. I stand for scientific organisation, nationally and internationally, for the overthrow of capitalism by the establishment of Socialism, and a Labour Government is a step towards that end.

It is very easy for those without any responsibilities at all to give others advice, and condemn those who are leaders to-day facing the most difficult period in economic development. It is cowardly to stab others in the back, and to fire shots from safety and seclusion. Comradeship means something higher and nobler than the example set by the British Communist Party in their campaign of personalities, hate, vilification and destruction. We must fight Capitalism with all the weapons at our disposal in an organised fashion. This needs power, which only trade unions can create by industrial and political action.

II—Editorial Reply

A. J. Cook's statement is of value to print for one reason only—because it exposes to readers his present position more clearly and damningly than any criticism could do.

He complains of misrepresentation; but he does not attempt to base his complaint on any of the main charges brought against him

with regard to his own line, or on the analyses of the position in the *Scottish Miners' and the Miners' Federation*, which have been published in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, and which he does not attempt to challenge. His complaint is instanced solely by a single verbal correction in a quotation, the accidental omission of the word "politically" in the quotation "The only hope politically for the mineworkers and their dependents is in a Labour Government." We are glad to publish this correction, and to assure him that the omission was accidental; the inclusion of the word would have strengthened the point made, which was precisely that he was putting forward the false political perspective of a MacDonald Labour Government as the hope for the workers, and alongside of this lining up with the reactionary leadership in trade union and other issues.

On the main charges against him, the complete turnover in his line from the signature of the *Llandudno Manifesto* to his repudiation of that signature, from his denunciation of the *Scottish reformist officials' wrecking tactics* to his signature of the *Scottish Report* condoning those tactics, from his attacks on MacDonald, the *General Council* and the *Labour Party Programme*, and praise of the *Communists*, to his present support of MacDonald and the *Labour Party Programme* and wholesale attacks on the *Communists* and revolutionaries, or on the facts of the position in the miners' organisation, which are a complete denial of working-class democracy—on all these he attempts no reply, but endeavours to cover his retreat with general random denunciations of the *Communists* and revolutionaries.

These denunciations of the *Communists* and revolutionaries as seeking to "destroy the *British Trade Union Movement*," aiming at "creating intense poverty, chaos and misery so as to provoke some kind of revolt," "this is the 'theory of increasing misery,'" &c., are so cheap and frivolous, the stock-in-trade of the *Citrines*, *Thomases* and "*Daily Mails*," that it is a degradation to have to waste the space of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* in answering them. The use of this type of argument marks Cook's complete break with *Marxism* and the revolutionary working-class movement.

What is the position? A crisis has arisen in the *Trade Union Movement*, because the reformist bureaucracy, threatened in their position by the growth of revolutionary influence, have proceeded to a series of undemocratic measures to prevent this influence securing

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its representation. "In the trade unions Communists or Minority Movement members, or even those who happen to agree with them in their general policy, are denied their right to stand for union positions" (A. J. Cook in his joint pamphlet with Maxton, "Our Case"). These measures have openly been taken to prevent the revolutionary workers, even should they become a majority, from securing expression of their wills in the unions. This process has reached its culmination in the Scottish Mineworkers' Union, where the reformist officials, after being voted out by overwhelming majorities in due constitutional form, refused to vacate their positions. The Scottish Report of the Miners' Federation Executive Committee of Investigation, signed by Cook, and the consequent Executive resolution, signed by Cook, have sanctioned and approved this gross violation of any pretence of democracy in the unions.

And in the face of this, Cook now dares to come out with "I repudiate the vile suggestion that the rank and file cannot control their own organisations," "(I) look upon the Trade Union Movement, Labour Party and Co-operative Movement as a workers' movement, governed and controlled by the workers," "Trade unionism in Britain caters for all workers whatever their religious or political beliefs." This nauseating cant and humbug will only earn the contempt of every honest worker.

Cook finds it a "vile suggestion," insulting to the "rank and file," that the reformist bureaucracy is preventing them from securing representation of their views in the trade unions and Labour Party—although this is a fact demonstrable by plain evidence. On the contrary, the real "vile suggestion" is to suggest that the rank and file are genuinely represented by the treacheries and belly-crawlings of the General Council and their company, who could not maintain office a moment in a really democratic trade union movement. "The Right Wing knows, just as well as I do, that a general balloting in the British Trade Unions would almost completely wipe out the reactionary leadership" (A. J. Cook in his interview to Earl Browder, *Australian Workers' Weekly*, June 22, 1928). Cook now endeavours to cover his retreat, in the ignoble fashion of every retreating reformist leader, like Lansbury before him, by "blaming the workers."

Finally, with regard to the Communist Party. The Communist Party is the party of the working-class struggle, both in the day-to-day

struggle, and in the fight for revolution and the conquest of power. To attempt to draw a line between these two aspects of a single struggle is a trick, which is the very stamp of reformism, and which will deceive no intelligent worker, who knows the record of the Communists in the forefront of every daily struggle of the workers. So far from seeking to "smash the British Trade Union Movement," the Communist Party has even incurred unpopularity with a section of the revolutionary and disillusioned workers by continuing to press for "keeping in the unions," despite the tactics of the reformist leaders; and their line still remains to continue the fight in the existing unions to the very last ditch, until the reformist leaders themselves compel a split. As for "continually attacking all leaders not members of the Communist Party," the Communist Party has, on the contrary, supported Cook and a host of other leaders outside the Communist Party in every action they have undertaken for the aims of the revolutionary working class; and the only ground for criticism, expressed at the Communist Party's own Congress, has been that the Communist Party has in the past gone too far in supporting and endeavouring to assist leaders outside its own ranks, despite their obvious vacillations and weakness.

In his talk of the aim to "create a revolution," "creating intense poverty, chaos and misery so as to provoke some kind of revolt. This is the 'theory of increasing misery,' " &c., Cook descends to the lowest levels. We may inform Messrs. Cook and the "Daily Mail" that revolutions are not "created" by agitators, and that capitalism is quite capable by itself to create increasing misery and the conditions that compel revolution. This parody of Marxism is a sufficient revelation of the value of Mr. Cook's "Marxism."

The LABOUR MONTHLY, as an organ of Marxism and the revolutionary working-class movement, has given support and the publicity of its columns to Mr. Cook, so long as he fought for the aims of the revolutionary working-class movement. When he now turns against all the former principles he professed, when he has made his peace with representatives of the exploiters and the toadies, and when he descends to ignorant abuse of the honest revolutionary workers, the LABOUR MONTHLY says farewell to him without regret and with the contempt that he deserves.—EDITOR, LABOUR MONTHLY.

REVOLUTIONARY WORK IN THE TRADE UNIONS

By JOHN A. MAHON

ON August 24 and 25, 1929, the National Minority Movement will hold its Sixth Annual Conference at the Shoreditch Town Hall, London. These gatherings, year by year attracting increasing numbers of militant trade unionists, have more and more tended to become the real industrial congresses of the trade union movement of this country. The agenda of each conference is in direct contrast to that of the Trades Union Congress, and reflects the actual problems in front of the workers; the delegates, being workers directly from the job, have contributed to the formulation of policy in a way impossible at the official T.U.C.

The preliminary agenda indicates that this year the conference will deal with questions arousing still greater interest throughout the working-class movement. The four main items will be :—

- (1) The development of rationalisation.
- (2) The war danger and the colonial question.
- (3) Trades unionism to-day.
- (4) Sectional conferences.

The acute problems arising from the development of Mondism to the stage of official union strike-breaking have rendered essential the working out in detail of the application of the new line of the Communist Party in Britain to trade union work.

The analysis of the British situation from which the Ninth Plenum of the Communist International worked out the new line, described the betrayal of the general strike of 1926 as the dividing line which marked the commencement of a new stage in the British working-class movement, a stage in which the reformist leadership of the official Labour movement definitely and irrevocably became part of the capitalist apparatus, consolidated itself into an organised and disciplined party, and set to work to complete the transformation of the Labour Party into a Social-Democratic Party, and to begin

to transform the trade unions into organisations indistinguishable from company unions. Those developments made it essential for a revolutionary party to openly challenge the reformist leadership and go straight to the masses, proclaiming itself the only working-class leadership and leading the masses against both capitalism and reformism.

This new line has been applied first to the fight against the Parliamentary organisation of reformism, the Labour Party. Here the lines of division are clear and the objective conditions enable the open and distinct confrontation on the Parliamentary field of two sets of candidates.

On the trade union field the process of necessity develops differently. The economic rôle of the union, the mass resistance of the membership to Mondism in practice, the presence of numerous Communists and Minority Movement members in important branch or district positions, the traditions of the unions, all make it a much less easy task for the reformists to convert the unions into organisations functioning as an active part of the capitalist apparatus than it was for them to transform the Labour Party.

Nevertheless, there is not the slightest doubt that the perspective described by the resolution of the IVth World Congress of the R.I.L.U. is absolutely correct for the majority of the unions affiliated to the T.U.C. and that the reformist bureaucracy will hasten the process of transformation into company unionism by wholesale disciplinary measures against the revolutionary elements, a process already being prepared for by the issue of a T.U.C. questionnaire on "disruption."

Therefore the new line, however different the tactics may be, involves on the trade union, as on the Parliamentary field, a similar fundamental challenge to the reformists, a similar direct appeal to the masses, by the Communist Party as the only working-class leadership, leading the struggle of the workers against both capitalism and reformism, without submission to reformist discipline. In its sharpest form, this means direct revolutionary leadership of strikes, against both employers and union officials, and acceptance of the organisational consequences of such action.

The interest in this question shown by many workers not members of revolutionary organisations is in itself an indication

of what will be the main questions in the discussion on "Trades Unionism To-day." To three questions in particular the workers will demand a concrete answer from the Sixth Conference. These are :—

- (1) What is to be done with the unorganised masses ?
- (2) How are factory and shop committees to be built ?
- (3) How is the bureaucracy to be fought in the "document" unions ?

All three questions are of course aspects of the general situation of trades unionism to-day. Any attempted answer must be based on an estimation of the objective conditions.

There are two main characteristics of the present period. The first is the consistently developing rationalisation offensive of the capitalists in the course of which wholesale reorganisation of industry is taking place, and continuous attacks are being made on the conditions of the workers in the factories, mills and pits.

These attacks are no longer conducted only on a national scale, involving a demand for reduction in wages or increase in hours and precipitating a national crisis of brief duration : they are taking place continuously and are undermining conditions of the workers which have been built up by years of struggle. They include reductions in wages, lengthening of hours, intensification of labour, transfer of time workers to piece work, replacement of skilled workers by unskilled or semi-skilled workers, replacement of adult labour by youth and female labour, the moving of thousands of workers about the country, and the establishment of completely changed conditions of production.

The second characteristic is the complete and official co-operation in these attacks of the trade union reformist leadership, which has a specialised part in the work allotted to it by the capitalists, that of maintaining industrial "peace" while the conditions are worsened. Their methods include conclusion of agreements without knowledge of membership, connivance at violation of existing agreements, surrender of existing conditions without a struggle, conference rigging and ballot faking, connivance at victimisation, strike breaking and betraying, and organised blacklegging.

By performing these services and maintaining industrial

peace during rationalisation the Labour leaders hope to become the Labour masters for the capitalist combines and the State, and to base themselves upon the organisation of the relatively privileged sections of the workers and those "regularly" employed, leaving outside the unions the mass of the lower-paid grades, and abandoning all pretence at conducting the struggle against capitalism.

These processes, of course, have developed in different stages in different unions, and have met with considerable opposition from the rank and file and from the lower organs which reflect their opinion. Nevertheless, 1929 has already demonstrated that in the main the reformists have developed methods of entrenching themselves against opposition, and that during the coming months they will intensify their operations in the big unions.

Against this background, the Conference of the Minority Movement will have to answer, among others, these three questions.

The Question of the Unorganised Workers

The Table on the opposite page shows the trade union membership in the principal industries compared with the total number of workers in industry. From this Table and Table I* it is clear that not only is the considerable majority of the proletariat unorganised at the present time, but that the process of leaving the unions is a continuous one.

It has been generally assumed that the unorganised have been the more backward section of the proletariat, and for one reason or another less ready to fight the capitalists. This contention in the past no doubt has been correct, but a number of new factors are now coming into play which makes it no longer correct.

It will be seen from the Table that the biggest loss from the

* TABLE I. Fall in Trade Union Membership¹

Membership at end of Year. (000's omitted.)

1913	4,135	1923	5,419
1918	6,533	1924	5,533
1920	8,337	1925	5,495
1921	6,622	1926	5,207
1922	5,615	1927	4,908

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TABLE II¹

Industry or Group.	No. organised in Trade Unions end of 1927	Estimated number of insured persons July, 1928. (Ages 16-64.) (000's omitted)	Total wage earners. (Census 1921.)
Agriculture	36	—	1,097
Mining	678	1,200	1,219
Metal working, machine construc- tion, Shipbuilding	620	1,800	2,094
Textile	598	1,300	1,095
Clothing, Boot and Shoe	163	560	731
Woodwork and Furniture	63	200	546
Paper, Printing and Publishing	181	370	298
Building	322	970	717
Railways	413	— ²	764
Other Transport ..	464	630	838
Commerce, Finance and Distribution..	221	221	—
National and Local Government	341	370	—
Teaching	205	—	—
Miscellaneous	155	—	—
General Labour ..	448	—	—
Grand totals ..	4,908	11,881^{2 3}	17,415³

¹ All figures have been taken from the Ministry of Labour official publications, the *Gazette*, and the *Nineteenth Abstract of Labour Statistics*. The classification into groups does not always correspond.

² The principal classes of workers not included in these tables are young workers under sixteen, and those of sixty-five and over; also all non-manual workers with a wage of £250 per annum, agricultural workers and those employed in private domestic service and as out-workers. Workers employed by local public authorities, railways, and certain public utility undertakings, the police and workers with rights under statutory superannuation schemes may also in certain cases be excluded (*e.g.* the number of railway workers insured is only 140,350 compared to a total of 764,000 employed by the railways according to the 1921 Census).

³ Including other headings not corresponding to the trade union headings.

unions has taken place after such events as Black Friday and the betrayal of the General Strike in 1926. This is a reflection of the workers' reaction to the official policy of refusing to fight. Many thousands of workers undoubtedly left the unions because these organisations would not fight to improve their conditions.

In the second place the rationalisation of industry has resulted in the introduction of many new elements, especially of women and young workers, into industry. The transference schemes and the general mobility of labour have also brought many workers into new sections of industry where they are unorganised, although they have had previous trade union membership and experience.

The Austin Strike was one indication of the readiness of unorganised workers to stand firm against wage reductions, and although it undoubtedly would be an exaggeration to say that the Austin situation is in any way typical, nevertheless it is a lesson that cannot be ignored. At the Romford Bus Strike in London it was also the unorganised men who came out first and stood out longest.

Prior to the official endorsement by the trade unions of the policy of Mondism, the revolutionary elements had paid no attention to the question of the unorganised workers beyond dealing with them by the application of the slogan 100 per cent. into the appropriate existing trade unions, and propaganda for the formation of one union for each industry by amalgamation or re-arrangement of the existing organisations.

It must be admitted that the unorganised workers have not responded to this slogan with any degree of enthusiasm.

Now the position is that the rationalisation offensive creates all the conditions for a new wave of struggle. The experiences of the Rego Strike, the various disputes in the mining areas (especially the Dawdon Strike), the Austin dispute, and, finally, the events that led to the formation of the United Clothing Workers' Trade Union and the United Mineworkers of Scotland, show that the desire of the working class for militant trade unions to organise their struggle is as strong as ever.

The question, therefore, that faces the revolutionary elements is: Is it any longer a revolutionary tactic to try and lead the masses who are looking for a militant trade unionism into the organisa-

tional channels of those unions which are already committed definitely to Mondism, led by bureaucrats entrenched against all possible attacks, exercising a dictatorship over the lower organs of the unions, in fact governing the membership by fascist methods? Is there the slightest likelihood of the unorganised joining these unions unless compelled to by some form of P.C. 5?

If these questions are answered in the negative the revolutionary trade union movement will be faced with the need for immediately formulating concrete proposals to organise the many millions outside the trade unions and of developing the necessary activity to carry them out.

Shop Committees

This question, long a propaganda slogan of the revolutionary trade union elements, has now reached a stage where its realisation in practice is an essential step to further progress. Because the fight against rationalisation can only be developed in the factory, pit and mill, the development of a fighting leadership, based on the factory, is essential to prevent the morale of the workers being sapped by a series of unsuccessful disputes.

The present chaotic condition of official trade union organisation and the division of the workers between many scores of competing unions, operates in a manner which makes extremely difficult the unification of even the stewards of an organised factory through the official trade union machinery. For example, in the Metropolitan District Railway repair sheds, or in the London General Omnibus Company's shop at Chiswick, although by no means 60 per cent. of the workers are organised, they are scattered between about two dozen unions, some of which have methods of shop organisation all differing from one another, and some of which have no officially recognised shop organisation at all.

The primary necessity at every place of work, of course, is for an organised group of revolutionary workers in touch with the revolutionary Party and politically conscious. Such a group would work for the establishment of a Works Committee, elected entirely by, and responsible only to, the workers.

Such a Committee would have to lead the struggle of all the workers at the factory, irrespective of their trade union membership,

free from control by the reformist unions, but linked up with the revolutionary trade union centre, the National Minority Movement. It would have its own funds collected from all workers in the factory, and its own apparatus inside the factory.

But in practice the development of the essential group of revolutionaries proves a long and difficult process—a process slower than the development of struggle, since the workers only became revolutionaries through the experience of the struggle.

The existing forces which offer starting points for a movement towards Works Committees are :—

- (1) The factory groups of the Communist Party and Minority Movement.
- (2) The organised trade unionists and particularly the shop stewards.
- (3) The workers' side on certain legal joint Works Council (*e.g.*, railway L.D.C.'s, federated engineers' shops, &c.).
- (4) Branch committees of unions where the branch is coincident with a particular factory or depot.
- (5) Strike committees.

The development of a new wave of disputes, a rising movement of the masses to fight the worsening of conditions through rationalisation, is undoubtedly the necessary objective situation making possible the establishment of factory committees. The necessary subjective conditions can only be developed by the propaganda and organisational activity of revolutionary groups, which have to find methods of work enabling them to establish effective connection with the workers in their factories and avoid premature exposure to the management.

The biggest difficulty to contend with in the development of the London bus struggle was the absence of a fully politically conscious leadership on the job, and the same difficulty is reported in nine cases out of ten where disputes are pending. "The workers are ready to fight, but there is no one inside to give them a lead."

The factory sheet dealing with grievances and presenting a militant policy, distributed inside by underground methods or from outside by comrades not working in the enterprise, can be made a powerful propaganda and organisational weapon. The development of agitational work (in the full sense of the word) inside by the members of the revolutionary groups is yet in its infancy.

The existence of numbers of official joint works councils and the tendency of the employers to develop further these bodies creates tactical problems which as yet have not been fully discussed by the revolutionary trade union movement. Such bodies undoubtedly afford very considerable fields for revolutionary work in winning the confidence of the workers, training new leaders and blocking the efforts of the reformists. The problem is, how and when to take adequate advantage of possibilities which exist, while preventing the degeneration of members on the committees, and how effectively to expose the real nature of the joint works council and at the same time to secure support for a real Works Committee.

The trade union branch and its machinery, wherever we have members, can be turned on to the factories. Revolutionaries in their capacity as representatives of branches on District Committees, or as shop stewards, can secure meetings of workers at factories, can issue material to them, can raise factory questions inside the union. To break away from the rut of routine activity inside the apparatus and to secure the orientation of trade union work toward the factory will be one of the big tasks of the Sixth Conference.

The Fight in the "Document" Unions

The situation created by the operation of bureaucratic decisions completely preventing the election of revolutionaries to official positions in an increasing number of unions, and the prospect of a wider extension of this situation in the near future, renders essential the working out of effective methods of drawing the masses of the members in such unions into the fight against the reformists. The basis of this struggle can only be the economic issues affecting the workers, and factory work by our members in these unions is the only way to keep the struggle going. It is noticeable that the only positions from which revolutionaries in these unions have not been removed are those of collectors and shop stewards. The bureaucracy calculates on leaving them in these positions to do the work while they reap the results. We must certainly hold on to these positions, but they can and should be used to rouse the workers to action against employers and union leaders, without concessions to union discipline.

The position of a constitutional opposition without any rights,

to which revolutionaries are now reduced in some of the unions, is absolutely unsatisfactory and shows that we are unable as yet to utilise the opportunities existing and to work effectively on the job. The delegates at the Sixth Conference who come directly from the job will have a special responsibility of contributing to the formulation of effective methods for this work.

These three questions, each of which is of immediate importance, should be discussed and clarified prior to the Sixth Conference in order that the decisions reached will lead to the active development of revolutionary work in the trade unions.

THE PROBLEM OF INDUSTRIALISATION IN RUSSIA

By MAURICE DOBB

THE situation in Russia to-day seems to present some quite important parallels to the period of 1921-23. It was then a question of starting reconstruction from the very bottom—of raising Russian industry from the abysmal depths into which it had sunk by the end of the civil war. Russia was isolated in the midst of a hostile capitalist world, her capital depreciated, her stocks exhausted, her workers half-starving, her agricultural harvest shrunk to famine proportions. To reconstruct her shattered industry needed capital in considerable quantities. How could such capital be accumulated when there was no margin between production and the minimum of necessary consumption? How squeeze a surplus from a collapsed and exhausted economic system?

The road of reconstruction in those days was, therefore, plentifully beset by criticism and discussion. There were the romantics on the left, who could not or (from timidity) would not face the facts of the situation, and, consequently, over-estimated the speed at which it was possible to advance, and under-estimated the need to adapt policies, forms and methods to experience. There were the timid pessimists, on the right, who disbelieved in the possibility of building Socialism in Russia alone. The so-called "Workers' opposition" appeared at this time which was critical of the New Economic Policy, of the methods adopted to restore the economic union between town and country and of the new forms of industrial organisation. This point of view reappeared in 1923 during the "scissors crisis" in the Trotsky opposition with its view that industry could only develop by increased pressure on the peasantry and on the basis of the exploitation of the village by the town. On the other hand, there were many, particularly among the economists in industrial and trading institutions, who regarded it as impossible to find the capital for reconstruction except by

granting generous "concessions" to the capitalists of the West. At the time of the Genoa Conference in 1922, for instance, the official policy of the Soviet Government had leaned a little in this direction, and the capitalist Powers, if they had chosen, could probably at this time have made a better bargain for themselves with Russia than at any other time.

To-day, Russia has completed the stage of reconstruction—has completed it by her own resources with only negligible aid from capital abroad. All industries, save the basic metal trades, are at a level of production well above pre-war; and not only does industrial production continue to increase at the quite extraordinary rate of about 15 per cent. per annum—a rate of growth which in other countries would be considered to constitute a "super-boom"—but the actual production of the last two years has considerably exceeded the planned estimates. It is now a question of industrialising Russia, which before the war had only made a beginning of passing through the industrial revolution: 82 per cent. of her pre-war population was rural; little more than two million persons out of a population of 140 million worked in factories. This involves the accumulation and investment of large sums of capital in building new factories, constructing new power-stations, extending the railway system, erecting new workers' houses; and accumulation of capital can only come out of the margin or surplus between current production and current consumption.

If a country is already rich and the productivity per worker is large, it is not difficult to find such a surplus with which to finance further progress. But a country less favoured is faced with a much harder task. History seems to show that countries in the past have accumulated the capital with which to finance industrialisation by one of three means. First, by the expropriation or exploitation of agricultural producers, either inside the country or in colonial areas which lie beyond its borders. In Britain for instance there were the enclosures and the exploitation of the Indies and the American colonies during the Mercantilist period. To aid such accumulation indeed, seems to have been the prime historical rôle of Protection: by allowing the internal price of manufactures to rise above the world price and above agricultural prices, it has served as a necessary

condition of the exploitation of agricultural producers through trade, and the creation of industrial super-profit. Second, by the creation of an urban or a rural proletariat, living at a low standard of life and producing surplus-value for a rural or an urban bourgeoisie. Third, by borrowing capital from abroad, and in return (if the country is weak politically) conceding large measures of political control to the foreign creditor.

The first of these methods was the one on which Preobrajensky relied in his famous "Law of Socialist Accumulation": until socialist industry had fully developed so as to provide its own surplus, it must rely on "primitive accumulation" by treating peasant agriculture as a "colony" from which to extract "super-profit." And this became the theoretical basis of the programme of the Trotsky opposition. The third method is limited in Russia's case to the amount of capital which can be borrowed *without* making any political concessions to foreign capital which would weaken the Soviet State and its power to build up socialism. The second method is inconsistent with communism if it means the revival of class differentiation—if it means that the surplus value created goes to enrich a new bourgeois class. For instance, if the rich peasant were given greater leash in the village, he might produce a larger surplus of grain for market, from his profits he might accumulate capital in savings banks and state loans for the benefit of industrialisation. But at the same time the creation of such a surplus would be at the expense of fostering an embryo capitalist class. On the other hand, if the wages in state industry rise more slowly than the output per worker, then this allows a surplus to accrue directly to State industry to aid the expansion of industry. In addition, a surplus may be created to the extent that socialist rationalisation—better planning of the economic system, the economies of co-ordinated marketing, elimination of waste, improvement of labour discipline, &c.,—reduces the cost of production and so allows more to be produced than before with the same expenditure of labour-power, materials and machinery. And here socialist industry, in the advantages gained by central planning, probably has very great advantages over a system of capitalist *laissez faire*.

The situation at the moment in Russia is of supreme significance

and interest precisely because in the acutest form it raises the question : At what rate can industrialisation proceed ? Industrialisation, like a rolling stone, gathers momentum as it proceeds. The initial period of setting the ball rolling is the hardest part of the task ; and for this reason the current year and next year in Russia are the crucial ones of the new epoch, and the ones in which the difficulties gather most thickly. As in 1921-23 it is a question of how and whence to find the capital. If new factories and power stations are to be erected, the economic resources involved in their construction cannot simultaneously be used to increase the supply of finished goods. If materials and labour-power are locked up in something which will only yield fruit five years hence, the expenditure will have no return to show to balance it in the interim five years. Similarly, it is a question *either* of importing machinery from abroad *or* importing bananas, gramophones, clothes and razor-blades (at present only 12 per cent. of Russian imports consist of manufactured goods ; the remainder consist of machinery and industrial raw materials). One inevitable result, therefore, of the process of industrial construction in its early stages is that finished industrial goods are scarcer than would otherwise be the case.

As in 1921-23 there are voices, such as those of the opposition two years ago, who were in favour of a greater forcing of the pace. There are also voices to-day from the " Right " which declare that the pace is being forced too much, and who despair of Russia, isolated amid a capitalist world, being able to find the funds for a rapid industrialisation without making considerable concessions of principle—for instance, giving leash to the development of the *kulak*, or rich peasant, in the countryside. The most important factor in the present situation is that the shortage of finished industrial goods relative to the demand for them (the " goods famine ") reduces the incentive which the peasant has to sow and harvest and market his grain : if he cannot get the manufactured goods he wants in sufficient quantities, he does not desire to sell for market and procure money in return. Moreover, before the war the *kulak* farm accounted for half the market surplus. Now, with greater equalisation in the village, the *kulak* farms are much reduced in size and fewer in number. Moreover, in the last eighteen months a new offensive has been opened against the *kulak*, to stem the

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rebirth of class differentiation in the village. The Agricultural Tax has been made more "progressive," so that 35 per cent. of the poorer peasantry are exempt. In addition, a special surtax has been levied on those who are deemed to come within the *kulak* category. As a net result, while agricultural production has reached the pre-war level, the *marketed surplus* is still only three-quarters, and in the case of grain only half of the pre-war amount ; while at the same time the increase of the area and yield of agriculture proceeds at much too slow a speed. This was the reason for the shrinkage of the export surplus of grain last year, and the reason why at present even urban consumption is having to be curtailed by rationing.

In order to repair this agricultural deficit, which is at present a handicap to the growth of industry, the Soviet Government has now adopted the policy of carrying through a rapid extension of State and collective farms. At present these produce little more than 7 or 8 per cent. of the marketable surplus of grain ; but by the end of five years it is hoped that they will play a rôle of greater importance in Russian agriculture than did the landlords' estates before the war, producing some 40 per cent. of the grain surplus, and increasing this surplus, as a result, by 60 per cent. above its present amount.

The Right-wing critics within the Russian Communist Party tend to advocate a slower rate of industrialisation in the immediate present, to relieve the difficulties of the present period. At least they advocate a curtailment of investment in long-period constructional schemes which only yield fruit some years ahead and in the basic metal trades, in favour of investment in finishing industries such as textiles where the capital would yield a more speedy return. At the same time they are inclined to be critical of the speed with which the new State farms can be successful and yield a surplus, and in the interim would favour a relaxation of the restrictive measures against the *kulak*. A group of old-regime economists, centred round a body known as the Conjunction Institute, in addition to such criticisms, issued a statement a year ago that an attempt was being made to invest more than the actual objective surplus between current production and current consumption warranted, and that this was producing symptoms of inflation,

was accentuating the "goods famine" and causing a breach, between the village and the town.

But it is certainly true that in so huge an experiment as the attempt to industrialise backward, peasant, agrarian Russia, one cannot know the limits of the experiment until one has tried. To carry through the experiment requires courage and the iron hand of a disciplined Party at the wheel. As in 1921-23, so to-day, the pessimists may be wrong equally with the romantics. At any rate, timidity will not achieve great historical tasks such as these. It could hardly be expected that industrialisation would be started without considerable difficulties and stresses and strains. Did not much richer bourgeois countries flounder in the mire of crises during their industrial revolution, even when they had all the advantages of a rich surplus culled from a weak and exploited working-class? And to turn back in face of the first frown of such difficulties is not likely to be done by the advance guard of the world working-class movement.

THE TWILIGHT OF VIENNA

By J. ADAM

THE evolution of Social Democracy in Middle Europe is extraordinarily rapid these days. In Germany, Hermann Müller, a feeble prisoner in his own Coalition cabinet, gives way on every issue to his reactionary colleagues, while his colleagues of Prussia and Berlin have added a new chapter to the history of Social Democracy by shooting down workers who dared to demonstrate in the streets on May Day.

But after all Hermann Müller is the man who signed the Treaty of Versailles—which even Scheidemann refused to do—and nothing but a nerveless surrender and a pitiful clinging to office was expected of him. Even more significant than his poltrooneries or than the brutalities of Zörgiebel is the rapid demoralisation of the Austrian Social Democrats.

For these Austrians—these Austro-Marxists—have always boasted themselves as the genuine left-wing of Social Democracy. Were they not the inventors of the old “Two-and-a-half” International which, if it feared the Third as Communist, despised the Second as Reformist? Have they not boasted to nausea of the power and the glory of “Red Vienna,” of the numbers of their members, or the strength of their *Schutzbund*? They at any rate would, in the words of English Socialist song, “Keep the Red Flag Flying Here.”

But since I last wrote in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, what a collapse, and what a hauling down of flags. And that was only seven months ago. The retreat, as I pointed out then, had already begun. In July, 1927, after the “Red Days,” the *Arbeiter Zeitung* had declared that :—

In our mourning for our fallen brothers and sisters there can be no thought of reconciliation. We swear on the grave of the dead not reconciliation but passionate struggle against the bourgeois capitalist world.

All that came of that oath and that “passionate struggle” was the comedy of Wiener Neustadt, followed by a humiliating

petition to Monsignor Seipel to disarm both the fascist Heimwehr and their own Schutzbund. Seipel of course refused. He had no intention of disarming the Heimwehr. He knew quite well that the Schutzbund has no arms worth talking of, and that in any case the Social Democratic leaders would never have the nerve to use it for anything more than a Sunday afternoon parade under police protection.

The Austro-Marxist "revolutionaries" proceeded to grovel more abjectly. In December, by returning empty ballot slips, they connived at the election as President of the Republic of Seipel's creature Miklas. After the election Seipel triumphantly declared that the new president—"one of us"—would rule Austria "on Clerical principles": while the *Arbeiter Zeitung* sycophantically called on Socialists to "pay him the respect which every good Republican owes to the President."

Seipel's next contemptuous kick was the seizure of the few arms which had been secreted since the Revolution in the Socialist Headquarters in Vienna. How unfair, said the Socialists, to take our arms while the Heimwehr are parading every Sunday in the provinces with rifles and machine-guns and steel helmets. The government naturally took no notice. The Heimwehr parades went on. The Heimwehr grew in strength. Its leaders began again to talk openly of the "march on Vienna."

At the end of February they made—though unarmed—their first march through the "Red City."

"We shall not rest," Generalissimo Steidle announced, "until we have captured the city itself. We are working for the day when we shall break into the Red Capital."

Talk of a putsch began to be general. The Socialists were warned that unless they wanted Parliament to be overthrown they must cease to behave like an opposition. They must abandon their obstruction of the Bill for the increase of rents. They must collaborate loyally with the Government. If they behaved themselves properly and made big enough concessions they might even be asked to join a Coalition Government. If they did not—then the Heimwehr would see to it that their opposition was useless.

The double incentive was irresistible. To the fear of a putsch

(and of having to keep—or eat—their vows to meet force by force) was added the temptation of office. It was hinted to them that Seipel would be willing to retire to facilitate an agreement. It was nonsense of course. Seipel was preparing to stand aside, not to make a compromise with Socialism possible, but because developments were impending which might make it embarrassing for a dignitary of the Church. The shedding of blood has always been regarded as a somewhat unseemly occupation for priests : even the fighting bishops of the Middle Ages carried maces instead of swords. Violence is the job of the secular arm.

But the Social Democrats eagerly caught at the suggestion. Karl Renner announced in the Parliament that Seipel's personality alone stood in the way of a cessation of the dangerous hostility between the Government and the Social Democrats. Next day Seipel resigned. The attacks on him, he said, were unjust. But as a patriot and a Christian he could not stand in the way of peace. He would retire and allow the country to find a new leader.

The Social Democrat leaders were triumphant. Visions of office danced before their eyes. They began to talk of elections. They eagerly opened up negotiations with the Government parties. They offered to agree to the raising of rents to two and a-half times their present level, and to the complete decontrol of all flats (Vienna is a city of flats) with more than two rooms. They talked only perfunctorily about the necessity for disarmament. Everything was forgotten in the glamour of the possibility of a coalition.

Disillusion followed rapidly. The Clerical leaders announced that there would be no deviation from the policies of Seipel. Had not the Socialists themselves said that it was his person, not his policies, that they objected to? Very well, then let them, now that his person had been removed, accept his policies. Their offers were scornfully rejected. Even the humiliating surrender on the rents question was declared to be quite inadequate. The visions of a coalition vanished, and the new Government was formed, not only without the inclusion of any Social Democrat, but without consultation with their leaders. They had been fooled once more.

And the new Government, instead of being less reactionary

than Seipel's, is if anything, more reactionary. The Chancellor, von Streeruwitz, is an old Habsburg officer, who began his career as a landowner and a militarist, and has since the war become a big industrialist. He is one of the moving spirits of the Vienna Industrial Association, which is one of the chief sources of the Heimwehr's funds. He is a friend and associate of Steidle and the other fascist leaders. He was their nominee for the Chancellorship.

In his first speech in Parliament he said no word about disarmament. He said no word about collaboration between the Opposition and the Government. Instead, he gave warning that if the machinery of Parliament were used for internal conflicts the Government would know how to act as "arbiter." To which Renner replied that though the Chancellor had said nothing about it the Social Democrats did hope that the Government would not treat them as unworthy of its confidence and that it would not attack them.

And now, with his opponents already on their knees begging to be treated kindly, the Chancellor is preparing for the *coup de grâce*. His first act has been a dramatic gesture. The Heimwehr, having already twice invaded the Vienna suburbs, announced their intention of marching through the centre of the city. The Social Democratic Mayor, Seitz, forbade the march. At once the Heimwehr leaders approached the Government, and at once the Government overruled the Mayor and ordered that the march should be allowed.

So, on May 12, while the Social Democrats called their followers off to a demonstration in an obscure outer suburb, and the police obligingly arrested as many Communist leaders as they could find, the Heimwehr marched through the centre of "Red Vienna" and their leader took the salute as they paraded past the old Imperial Palace of the Hofburg.

That contemptuous gesture is the warning of more to come. The Heimwehr to-day is vastly stronger than it was a year ago. It is reported, on good authority, to have 200,000 enrolled members. It is well supplied with arms. It is well supplied with funds. Its leaders, for all that they talk like braggarts, are men of far stronger will than any of the feeble "Austro-Marxists." And the Govern-

ment is on their side. They could take Vienna as easily as the Fascist took Rome. For there is no fight in the Social Democrats and the Communists would be hopelessly out-numbered.

The *putsch*, they are now saying, will come in the autumn, as soon as the harvest is over and the rural battalions of the Heimwehr can be mobilised. The last hope of the Social Democrats is that foreign powers may step in to prevent a disturbance. They are looking to Mussolini as the saviour of "Red Vienna." It is a fatuous hope, in keeping with all their fatuity.

"Red Vienna" is doomed by the poltroonery of its leaders. "Austro-Marxism" is dying of cowardice.

LASSALLE AND BISMARCK

By D. RIAZANOV

[The first part of this study by the Director of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, of Lassalle's relations with Bismarck, based on recently-discovered correspondence, appeared in our May issue. In a letter to Bismarck written in May, 1863, before the formation of the Universal German Workingmen's Association, Lassalle declares that the workers would regard the monarchy as "the natural bearer of a social dictatorship," if only Bismarck could persuade the King to move along "the revolutionary and national path" and introduce universal suffrage. Lassalle shows in these letters that he based his whole tactics on an alliance with Bismarck.]

IN view of this letter it is possible to understand Lassalle's well-known telegram to Bismarck of September 27, 1863, in which he begged the Minister-President to take measures immediately against the Progressist Mayor of Solingen who had dispersed a meeting organised by Lassalle.

"This telegram," wrote Mehring previously, "was a grievous mistake on the part of Lassalle : as the German proverb says, it is no use complaining of the devil to his grandmother. To turn to the standard bearer of feudal reaction, who for many years had been denying the right of association and meeting and still continued to do so, with a request that he should punish an infringement of this right, whether the person to blame was a Progressist or any other, is behaviour least of all fitting in a revolutionary."

Mehring sees in this fact the beginning of that "tactical change" after which the time quickly came when Lassalle's "spiritual fire crackled and smoked rather than flashed and blazed." He refers Lassalle's tactical change of front to the autumn of 1863. "Was it not really worth while to make Bismarck move forward, to extort from him the right of universal suffrage, which could never be obtained from the Progressist party, and thus win for the proletariat a powerful weapon for the satisfaction of their class interests?"

Unfortunately, it was not Lassalle who "shifted" Bismarck, but, on the contrary, it was the latter who from the first meeting had Lassalle in his grip. The correspondence now published proves how, having made the first false step, Lassalle became more and more entangled in contradictions. While attempting to achieve immediate successes on behalf of and in the name of the workers, he antagonised the leading sections of the working class in Berlin and in Saxony. The belated attempts of Mehring and Laufenberg to show that Lassalle's tactics were more in correspondence with the existing situation, because the German workers at that time had still not sufficiently developed to appreciate the revolutionary tactics of Marx and Engels, suffer from an excessive desire of "justifying facts." On the contrary, all the attempts of Lassalle to attract to his side the most revolutionary elements of the working class—and without their co-operation he could not convert the Universal German Workmen's Association into a political force—ended in failure. These workers were antagonised by Lassalle's intrigues with the junkers and the monarchy. It is unfortunately true that the so-called insinuations and slanders of the bourgeois Progressists, as we now learn from Lassalle's letters, were essentially an expression of what actually happened.

After the telegram from Solingen, there followed a series of letters (October 23 to November 17) addressed immediately to Bismarck and copies of letters sent in the first place formally to the police-president of Berlin but really intended also for Bismarck. All these letters depict in a very characteristic light the "revolutionary" tactics of Lassalle. Any one of these letters would be sufficient to compromise for ever any "leader" not merely of the workers but even of any democratic party, who had the slightest self-respect.

On November 22, 1863, when Lassalle organised a public meeting in Berlin, the police broke into the hall and, dispersing the meeting, arrested Lassalle on a charge of treachery to the State. After three days Lassalle was released on bail amounting to 3,000 thalers.

It appears now—and in this respect there is a curious letter of Lassalle's to Bismarck of November 19, 1863, that the intention of the police-president Schelling to bring a charge against Lassalle

of treachery to the State, and to demand his arrest, was well known to the latter. He accordingly turned to Bismarck with a request that it should be prevented, since it would strike "much too deadly a blow to *all* those interests of which he was the representative."

"Of course," Lassalle adds, "a serious and strict administration of the Ministry of Justice would put an end to these attempts of the police-president who is so passionately desirous that I should be arrested."

Finally, Lassalle concludes by remarking that there was "not an hour to lose" in intervening in the matter, and he gives, in an indirect but very clear form, his advice to Bismarck that the police-president Schelling should be transferred to another place, otherwise he, Lassalle, would not be allowed to remain in peace in Berlin. It was necessary by personal interviews to convince Bismarck thoroughly of his "loyalty" in order to be able to address such requests to him!

The conversations of Lassalle with Bismarck in January, 1864, became known thanks to the exposures by Bebel in the Reichstag in September, 1878. Bismarck only contested details, but did not think it necessary to add that Lassalle's relations with him had begun at a considerably earlier date. Now we know that in January, 1864, the initiative actually came from Lassalle, as Bismarck maintained, though at the same time, contrary to the truth, the latter asserted that in these conversations of his with Lassalle there was no thought of discussing the granting of universal direct suffrage.

Now that we have at our disposal not only Lassalle's letters of January 13 and 16, but also the others, we can see how far Lassalle's "game" had proceeded.

Bismarck this time also deceived Lassalle. In spite of all the proof of the latter that the granting, from above, of universal direct suffrage ought to take place before the war, Bismarck in alliance with Austria entered into war against Denmark on February 1, 1864. The tactics recommended to him by Lassalle, he put into operation in April, 1866, *previous* to declaration of the Austrian war.

But Lassalle's correspondence with Bismarck continued even after the declaration of war, The letters of February 5 and 7, 1864,

are of no less unexpected a character than the others which have so far remained unknown.

Who would ever have thought that even before the publication of this book against Schulze-Delitsch, Lassalle was already taking all measures, through the intervention of Bismarck, in order that the police-president should not arrest him ?

“ It would not be pleasant for me,” he writes to Bismarck, “ if your Excellency were to suspect me of literary vanity. Nevertheless, I must say to your Excellency, that this work of mine will result in the *complete* annihilation of the Progressist party and of the whole Liberal bourgeoisie, because it is with them I deal in the book and not with the personality of Herr Schulze who is of importance only as a type. It will produce a tremendous impression in the working class, and not only there : it will raise against the Progressists every intelligent element in the nation. In a word it is precisely what is required in the character of a prologue to universal suffrage.”

Lassalle does not forget to add to this servile tirade that he is—

“ in a position, independently of the sensation which this book will evoke by itself and of its general distribution, to secure by writing a recommendation that the book will be read at all workers’ meetings throughout Germany.”

Lassalle clearly had in mind what Marx wrote in an article on Proudhon, intended for the *Social Democrat*, the organ of the Lassallians :—

Only one motive will remain in force—the love of honour of the subject, and the question for him amounts only to the achievement of the paramount aim of every lover of honour—successes of the moment, the ephemeral attention of the world. Thus, there is necessarily extinguished even that elementary moral tact which, for example, did not allow Rousseau even to enter into apparent compromises with the prevailing powers.

The new letters of Lassalle, now published by Mayer, compel us to review afresh the question of the relations of Lassalle with Bismarck, and, along with that, also the question of the significance of his whole political activity. We once again have the opportunity of witnessing Marx’s uncommon perspicacity. It is true, he did not have at his disposal all these facts. If he had, his judgment would have been still more sharp and severe. The legend which has been woven around Lassalle in Germany, and also in Russia, has prevented even the most orthodox Marxists from doing full justice, not to Lassalle, but to Marx and Engels. The young

German and Russian Marxists frequently came to Marx after first going through the school of Lassalle. It was necessary to carry through a great critical work in order to free them from the spiritual influence of the author of *Ideas of the Contemporary Working Class*.

While Lassalle was, in the words of the old Bekker, "a bold, adventurous acrobat in his tactics, who with a firm conviction in his strength and agility could without any danger risk a leap to the extreme edge of the abyss"—he was only saved from political destruction by his premature death—his talented pupil Schweitzer was indeed swallowed up in the abyss. In the old dispute between Bebel and Mehring, the former proved to be right. If Lassalle could request Bismarck to adopt measures against impending arrest for his book, if he could counsel the workers to proffer to the king a request for mercy, then Schweitzer, without the least compunction could make use of the benevolent neutrality of Bismarck's policy. While it was impossible to *buy* Lassalle, Schweitzer and his associate Gofstettin took money from the secret funds of the Prussian State for their newspapers in which they supported the policy of Bismarck.

The "sun of Marx" continues "to shine in the heavens." Lassalle is not only "apparently" but in reality eclipsed. And whether Mehring is correct or not in saying that Marx and Engels frequently erred, no one will now agree with Mehring in his declaration that "the greatest mistake of their lives was that they proved themselves completely incapable of judging the historical activity of Lassalle."

The World of Labour

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INDIA

Bombay Mill Strike

THE General Strike which occurred in the Bombay Textile Mills and lasted from April to the beginning of October last year, was settled on the understanding that the conditions of work were to be referred to a Government Committee, and that, pending the result of that inquiry, *status quo* was to be observed in the mills.

Despite this agreement, the owners made piecemeal attacks on the workers, especially those connected with the Girni Kamgar Union, which led to sporadic strikes. These attacks finally resulted in a lightning strike on March 2 last when about 15,000 millworkers downed tools. The strike ranged around grievances in the Wadia Group of mills where about 6,000 workers had been dismissed and others employed in their place. The demands of the strikers included the reinstatement of seventeen victimised members of mill committees, and the recognition of these committees which have functioned since the end of the last strike.

On March 30 thirty-one of the most active trade unionists and leaders of the Workers' and Peasants' Party were arrested on a charge of "Conspiracy against the King." Practically every official of the Girni Kamgar Union was arrested. A one-day strike in protest took place. New officials, mainly workers from the mills, were elected to carry on the union work.

Then began sittings of the joint representatives of the workers and millowners to discuss the findings of the Fawcett Committee's report which had just been published. On April 16 the representatives of the Girni Kamgar Union stated that they were not prepared to continue the discussions until their grievances with regard to the treatment of the union and union members at certain mills had been redressed.

On April 24 this statement from the new Secretary of the Girni Kamgar Union appeared in the Press:—

15,000 workers belonging to the three mills of the Wadia Group, the Spring, the Textile and the Century, have been on strike for about fifty days in protest against the victimisation of those comrades who have been taking a leading part in the activities of the Girni Kamgar Union. . . . All attempts to negotiate with the individual millowners having failed, the complaints about victimisation were placed before the Millowners' Association, and it was agreed that questions about the Wadia Group of mills should be thrashed

out at the next sitting of the Joint Conference. If a satisfactory settlement of the question is not reached on Wednesday, there is a likelihood of a general strike being declared. The contention of the Union is that a systematic campaign of victimisation of its members has been begun by individual mill-owners with the connivance and encouragement of the Millowners' Association with a view to destroying the Union. The campaign is being carried on with great vigour, especially since the arrest of the Labour leaders on March 20.

It was reported on April 23 that women demonstrating against blacklegs had been attacked by the police, and about seventeen of them had been arrested.

At the Conference, on April 24, the representatives of the Girni Kamgar Union informed the Chairman that as there had been no response to their demands for the reinstatement of the workers in the Wadia Mills they would have to reconsider their position. Mr. Bakhale thereupon stated that this did not commit himself or his Union, the Bombay Textile Labour Union, and suggested the appointment of a sub-committee to deal with the allegations of victimisation.

On April 25 at a mass meeting of millworkers in Bombay, called by the Girni Kamgar Union, it was decided that, as efforts at compromise had failed, the Union should declare a general strike at all the mills for 12 noon on the following day. This decision was unanimously supported by six other mass meetings on the same evening.

Mr. R. R. Bakhale, the General Secretary of the Textile Labour Union, issued a leaflet exhorting the workers not to resort to a general strike, since a strike is "a double-edged weapon," &c., and suggesting that the strike was forced on unwilling workers. In another leaflet he asked "whether there was sufficient reason to justify a strike, since only eighteen operatives had been dismissed, and for their sake no less than 15,000 workers had already been on strike for some days." He appealed to the workers to disillusion themselves and not to become party to a general strike.

By April 27 out of the eighty-four textile mills, the workers of seventy had downed tools obedient to the call of the Girni Kamgar Union, the largest textile union in the city with a membership of over 70,000. A strike organisation was immediately set up and picketing commenced. A volunteer force of 400 picked millhands with their red badges were posted at the mills.

On May 1 a huge and spectacular May Day procession, organised by the Girni Kamgar Union, was broken up by the police. A vast concourse assembled for the first meeting and after about two hours, as the workers were forming up for the demonstration, the police forced the demonstrators into three groups, and it was only due to the extreme restraint of the strikers that a clash was averted. The following is the comment of the *Bombay Chronicle*:—

The noteworthy aspect of it was that they were perfectly peaceful and disciplined. That a mere handful of "Red Badge" volunteers could so wonderfully manage such a tumultuous gathering of people spoke volumes for the discipline and organisation of these workers.

On the same day the General Member of the Government of Bombay invited the representatives of the Girni Kamgar Union and the Millowners' Association to discuss the strike situation.

The Union representatives confined the discussion to the following demands, on which they would accept no compromise, and on the acceptance of which depended the resumption of work:—

- (1) That the policy of victimisation which is being pursued should immediately stop.
- (2) All workers who are on strike, including the old operatives in the Wadia Group of mills, should be forthwith reinstated.
- (3) The Mill Committees should be allowed to function without any impediments being put in their way.
- (4) The collection of union funds within the mill premises should not be prohibited.
- (5) That the Millowners' Association should give full recognition to the Girmi Kamgar Union.
- (6) That the owners should put a stop to their surreptitious efforts to crush the Labour Unions.

INTERNATIONAL MAY DAY

May Day in France

ELABORATE preparations were made beforehand to prevent a May Day demonstration in Paris. The Republican Guards and the regular Paris garrisons were reinforced by detachments from the provinces, and 30,000 troops were confined to barracks ready for the Prefect of Police to call upon in case of need.

On April 29 preventive arrests began, including a number of foreign suspects, and the Prefect was able to announce, in the language of class warfare, that "the defence of Paris is assured." The frankly warlike character of this pronouncement caused some comment in the Press, both at home and abroad, and was generally considered somewhat "extravagant" in tone. What has received less notice is the stretching of the legal powers by the authorities, who put the whole of Paris under martial law, and in the words of the Socialist *Populaire* "handed it over to the armed forces."

Meanwhile, the number of arrests continued to grow apace, and included Comrades Joly and Garchery, Dudillieux, the Secretary of the C.G.T.U. and Doriot, in spite of his Parliamentary immunity as a deputy. Over 500 trade unionists, who marched to their T.U. headquarters to get their cards checked as usual, were seized, and 300 workers who were distributing Communist leaflets met the same fate. In all 3,287 arrests were made, and in addition the special Communist May Day issue, *Le Premier Mai*, was confiscated and all responsible arrested.

On the day itself police and Republican Guards were massed at the stations and at all important strategic points, reinforced by mounted and cyclist patrols; all attempts at forming processions or holding demonstrations were interfered with, and all meetings strongly picketed. The march of the reformist C.G.T. to the Central Labour Exchange was the only demonstration permitted, but even that was smaller than usual.

All these terrorist precautions did largely succeed in preventing the Paris workers from holding demonstrations and expressing their demands,

but they did not prevent the workers from making themselves felt—by their absence. Practically all the taxis were off the streets, and street transport was down to 10 per cent. of the usual amount. According to the Minister of the Interior only 20 per cent. of the workers were “idle,” but this is probably an underestimate, and in some industries the figures were very much higher, *e.g.*, 60 per cent. among furniture and postal workers, 50 per cent. among printers and 100 per cent. in the building trade. In the suburbs the proportion was higher—about 80 per cent. The “Red Belt” round Paris proved effective, and in some areas not a single factory was open while nearly all the engineering and motor shops were closed.

From the provinces comes much the same story. The mining districts were idle, and at Lens there were casualties when the workers succeeded in driving off the police. General stoppages took place at Roanne, Concarneau and elsewhere and thousands of workers came out at Nancy, Bourges, Toulon and other places.

May Day in Other Countries

Concerning the keeping of May Day in other lands very little detailed information has come to hand, with the exception of Germany, which forms the subject of a special article in this number. But everywhere the news is the same. In every country large demonstrations of militants were held, and demands were put forward for a seven-hour day, the abolition of rationalisation and the release of political prisoners.

Clashes with the police and military occurred in many places. In Austria fights took place between workers and fascists at Saint-Marien in Upper Styria, in the course of which a member of the Socialist Defence League was wounded and eight fascists were beaten, and at Bruck-on-Mur detachments of the Austrian Republican Army were called out.

In Poland police raids and arrests were numerous at Lodz and Vilna, where several demonstrators were killed in a clash with the police in the Town Hall Square; at Warsaw hundreds of workers were arrested for distributing literature, a printing shop was raided and 300,000 copies of a May Day appeal were confiscated.

In Lithuania, too, there were many casualties, especially in Kovno, where all demonstrations were forbidden and a Communist procession was fired upon by the police.

A “White terror” is reported from Budapest, and in Sofia a pitched battle with the police took place in which many were injured, and sixty students were arrested for holding a protest meeting.

In Prague, 25,000 workers took part in a May Day demonstration, and all over Czecho-Slovakia large demonstrations were held protesting against the suppression of the Communists.

In Belgium there were Red parades at Brussels and Antwerp, and in Spain there was a general stoppage of work in spite of Governmental prohibition, and mass demonstrations were held.

The first officially sanctioned post-war May Day demonstration took place in New York in Union Square, and 25,000 workers took part in the procession, which was led by contingents of coloured workers and strikers

from the food, clothing and textile industries, while thousands more lined the streets and a mass meeting of 20,000 was held at the Coliseum in the evening. The Socialist Party confined its activities to a small indoor meeting of about 12,000. Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, San Francisco and all big cities report similar demonstrations. Manifestoes were issued by the T.U. Education League, and a special May Day Conference of Labour Unions was held calling for a general strike on May Day.

In South America stoppage of work was general both in Bolivia and the Argentine, while in Montevideo there was a strike of motor drivers.

In Jerusalem a one-day strike was declared, and in Telaviv the British police seized the opportunity of attacking the Communists.

In Japan, also, May Day was observed. At Tokio and Osaka large demonstrations were held, and 1,000 seamen demonstrated in Kobe Harbour.

In Soviet Russia May 1 was officially observed as a general holiday. A review of troops took place in the Red Square, and 500,000 workers and peasants filed past the Kremlin and took part in the general rejoicings.

AUSTRALIA

The Attack on Compulsory Arbitration

THE system of compulsory arbitration, which has for many years formed a vital part of Australian industrial policy, is on its trial, and seems likely to lose its case. The attack comes from two opposite quarters. From the representatives of capitalist industry and from the militant workers—from those who desire to lower the standards of the Australian workers, and those workers who are anxious to have their hands free in the fight against capitalist rationalisation. The defenders of the system are the industrial pacifists, the Labour politicians and moderate leaders of the Australian Workers' Union.

A lead was given to the opposition from the side of big business by the British Economic Commission which recently visited Australia under the leadership of Sir Arthur Duckham, the coal and power expert. Prominent among the findings of this Commission stands the proposal to abolish the Arbitration Courts, which are declared to have failed since, in the words of a leader in *The Times* on the subject on January 11:—

Under present conditions increases in tariff involve a rise in the cost of living which inevitably leads to increased wages being enforced by arbitration awards.

The British Mission proposed an Australian Mond Conference to fix wages and conditions as a substitute for the arbitration system, which "tends to divide employers and employed into two opposing camps," and an end to all Governmental interference. This Industrial Peace Conference was duly set up and received the parting blessing of Sir Arthur, but broke down almost at once, as reported in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, April, 1929.

Meanwhile, the intention of Australian capitalism to rid itself of the shackles of arbitration is being made even more apparent and more urgent

in view of the fact that, owing to a sharp rise in the cost-of-living index figure, wages have also risen from 1s. in Perth to as much as 4s. in Sydney and Adelaide. At all costs Australian wages must be brought down to the European level, and with the Commonwealth Government and all the Federal Governments, except one, starting on a new lease of life, with falling markets and a rising tide of unemployment, the time is judged ripe for a determined onslaught on the workers' standards.

The latest and frankest expression of this policy is contained in a speech by Mr. Butler, the Premier in the South Australian Parliament, in which he declared that:—

Compulsory arbitration was the primary cause of the industrial depression and unemployment throughout Australia. Arbitration left a trail of wreckage in industry which was almost too serious to contemplate, and there must be something wrong with a system which provided high wages and reduced hours for some people by forcing others out of employment. Service and results were not counted, and the worst feature of the Australian system was that the strike was no longer a matter between employer and employee, but was an offence against the law of the country. All that the penal clauses in compulsory arbitration had done was to prove how damnably wrong the whole thing was.—(*The Times*, May 16, 1929.)

Compulsory arbitration is one of the subjects to be discussed at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference, and it is not hard to forecast that an attempt will be made either to abolish or to alter the system to meet the present needs of the employers. The Australian *Workers' Weekly* (February 8, 1929) states that:—

We have pointed out time and again that whereas the Arbitration Court and compulsory arbitration system were at one time useful instruments to the employers—as a means of minimising industrial strife and stabilising conditions at a time when Australian capitalism was phenomenally expanding and when labour was rather scarce, the capitalist class are beginning to feel that the Arbitration Courts are more of a hindrance to them than a benefit . . . in the general capitalist offensive against the workers' conditions and the trade unions. More drastic and effective weapons are desired, and some of these weapons are already in use: the Anti-Trade Union Law, the Crimes Act, the Transport Scab Bill, &c., . . . The Arbitration Court is a tool in the hands of the exploiters, more so to-day than ever (Judge Beeby's Award: Lukin's Award). But the employers find these tools too slow for their purpose. Hence their opposition to the arbitration system. That is no reason why we should be blinded to the fact that the Arbitration Court is an anti-working-class weapon.

A blow was struck against the arbitration system in the course of the timber workers' strike, still in progress, when (as reported in the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, April, 1929) the Special Conference of Unions summoned on February 7 by the Australian Council of Trade Unions decided to boycott the Federal Court on account of Judge Lukin's decision against the timber workers. The feeling is increasing among the workers that the only way to ward off the attacks of the employers is to fight, without the impediment of so-called impartial machinery, whether it goes by the name of an Arbitration Court or an Industrial Peace Conference.

U.S.A.

Textile Workers' Strikes in Southern States

OUT of the 1,100,000 textile workers in the United States 300,000 are in the South, and about half of these in the Piedmont region of North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee, where the Left Wing National Textile Workers' Union is organising the millworkers. Long hours, low wages and terrific speeding-up have brought about a series of strikes among unorganised as well as organised workers.

The first strike started on March 12, when 1,200 rayon workers in the American Glanztoff Corporation at Elizabethton struck against the Bedaux efficiency system, which meant increased work for decreased wages. The strikers were joined a few days later by 3,500 workers at the American Bemberg Corporation Plant. The usual drafting in of State militia followed and injunctions were got out against the strikers. Finally, with the help of the A.F. of L. United Textile Workers' Union the strikers were persuaded to go back, by a promise of wage increases, which was not carried out. A few weeks later all the leading union men were dismissed. This was the signal for a fresh strike, and on April 15, 5,000 workers came out on strike again. By May 16, 6,500 were on strike, in spite of the use of every method of terrorism against them. State militia were rushed to the town, the water main supplying the workers' part of the town was blown up by dynamite, the strikers were drenched with tear gas and menaced with hand grenades and machine guns. The mills were made into fortresses with artillery and machine-guns.

The conditions in North Carolina are much the same as in Tennessee. The majority of the workers are women and children. There is a "legal" working week of sixty hours but workers are dismissed unless they "volunteer" to work seventy-two hours. Wages are about eight to ten dollars, but deductions are made for rent, coal, light, and most of the rest of the pay is in coupons for the company store where the workers are compelled to shop.

A week after the first strike in Tennessee, a strike of 1,200 started at Ware Shoals in North Carolina, and spread rapidly to other mills. In many places the fight for the withdrawal of the speeding-up system has been won, but about 8,000 workers are still on strike. These include 3,000 at the Loray Mills in Gastonia, owned by the Manville Jenckes Company; 1,000 of these strikers are under sixteen years of age. These are their chief demands:—

1. Union recognition:
2. Abolition of the stretch-out and loom-clock efficiency system.
3. A forty-hour, five day week.
4. Wage increase to 20-dollar minimum.
5. Better houses and lower rents.

The appeal of the strikers to the militia not to fight against their class has been so successful that all five companies of militia were withdrawn and substituted by thugs and American Legionaries. The companies are attempting to defeat the strike by evictions, and disease is rapidly spreading among the strikers and their families encamped in the streets amidst their furniture. The W.I.R. are organising relief, and collecting funds for food and medicines.

On the other hand the A.F. of L. is sabotaging the strike everywhere, and has sent instructions to its locals to refuse to give aid to the strikers.¶ On their advice a committee of investigation was set up by the Senate at Washington, but this committee refused to see a deputation from the strikers.

BOOK REVIEWS

TWO DIPLOMATS

An Ambassador of Peace. Pages from the Diary of Viscount D'Abernon. Vol. I, 1920-22. (Hodder & Stoughton, 21s. net.)

On the Edge of Diplomacy. By J. D. Gregory, C.B., C.M.G. (Hutchinson & Co., 21s. net.)

ON the surface these two autobiographical books, the one by the most distinguished of British amateur diplomats, the other by the most notorious of the professionals, differ as—I suppose one must say, though heaven knows why—chalk from cheese.

Lord D'Abernon has all the seriousness of the amateur, Mr. Gregory all the flippancy of the professional. Lord D'Abernon is famous for his dignity. Mr. Gregory has never in his most official moments been dignified.

Lord D'Abernon, I am sure, looked upon his years of embassy in Berlin as the fulfilment of an important duty. Mr. Gregory opens his account of his career by announcing that "diplomacy is sometimes a joke and not always a good one."

But there is behind the earnestness of the Ambassador as behind the flippancy of the Assistant Under-Secretary a common seriousness. Their interest in the European exchanges might be of a very different character. (It is interesting in passing to note that the professional financier made a very efficient diplomat, while the professional diplomat made a woefully incompetent financier.) But in their detestation of Soviet Russia they find common ground. And it is indeed natural that they should. For, since the German debacle of 1918, hostility to the Soviet Union has been the *leitmotif* of the policy of the Foreign Office, of which each in his own sphere was one of the chief executants.

Lord D'Abernon—to take the more important book first—discloses almost unwittingly how this hostility informed the whole of the policy which he was carrying out. Primarily he is concerned with the difficulties and intricacies of that long settlement of the financial and other legacies of the Versailles Treaty which even to-day remains obstinately an unsettlement. And it goes without saying that, for all its discretion, his book is a very valuable addition to our knowledge of that important—if often grotesque—piece of diplomatic work. But at the very beginning he makes it plain that, as the French policy was moulded by enduring anxiety for the safety of the Eastern frontier, so British policy was moulded by "the vastly more important problem of the defence of Europe against Asiatic Communism." Not any chivalry to a fallen foe, not even an appreciation of the "economic consequences of the Peace," but the dread that Germany, too hard pressed, would "be forced into close alliance with Russia" was the dominant consideration in Downing Street.

To prevent the formation of such an alliance, to convert Republican Germany into a "barrier against Bolshevism" was D'Abernon's chief task. And it is significant that when the Russian armies, driving back Pilsudski's troops from Kiev, followed the broken invaders almost to Warsaw the

Ambassador was at once hurried off to stimulate the Polish resistance with offers of British help. He is exceedingly discreet about this episode. But it was, in fact, he who, in co-operation with Weygand, stiffened the Poles and organised the successful counter-attack.

This first volume takes us from the beginning of his embassy until the Genoa Conference and the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo partially defeated—not by his fault—his patient, able and persistent efforts to lure the Germans into the “Western camp” and to confront the “Asiatic Communism” which he detested, and the Russia which was the traditional enemy of his Constantinople days as Sir Edgar Vincent, with a European alliance.

And now turn from the seriousness (though by no means dullness) of the Ambassadorial diary to the clowning of the Secretarial memoirs. There was much solemn shaking of solemn heads over his chatterings: much feeling that this public exhibition of irresponsibility on the part of an ex-Assistant Secretary of State would lower the prestige of the Foreign Office. People, said the solemnities worriedly, will think that the Foreign Office is not a serious place, and that our high officials are not responsible people.

The solemnities, as usual, were silly. And so will anyone else be who is misled by all these pages of rather cheap badinage and rather silly gossip to believe that the late Assistant-Secretary was not a serious and not a responsible person. All this flippancy was a cover for a very intense seriousness, and for very hard and clever work. The affectation of flippancy is a characteristic English habit: it has often lured foreigners to their doom as fatally as golf lured M. Briand.

If you want—and this is significant—to find the serious Gregory under the cloak of flippancy, you have only to turn to the middle portion of his book, where in between the silly stories, he unburdens his soul about Bolshevism.

You will find nothing there about Bolshevism or about Russia that is worth a row of pins. For Gregory—as indeed the whole Foreign Office—was hopelessly misinformed as well as hopelessly prejudiced. For nearly ten years he was in charge in the Foreign Office of Anglo-Russian relations. He never troubled to learn a word of Russian. He relied on information that was tainted with inaccuracy at the source.

But really it mattered little what his information was, for his mind was rigidly made up. To him—as to most of his colleagues—Soviet Russia was (and still is) a synonym for every conceivable abomination—a “sort of modern Manicheism”—an “advanced stage of neurotic disease”—“a disease in the body politic which the State is entitled to root, carve or burn out.”

That was the premise with which Gregory started. No evidence could shake it. He just disbelieved the evidence. It was, indeed, disturbing to him to find that the Bolsheviks he came into contact with—Krassin, Klishko, Rakovsky and the rest—were not only human beings, but quite obviously not diseased and indeed rather likeable. “There have been times when I would willingly have burned Bolsheviks at the stake; but I would rather have burned those whom I had not seen than those whom I had.” But the theory of incarnate devildom was proof even against personal observations. “Those whom he had not seen” became doubly diabolical. That was all.

“There are only two men in the whole office with whom you can talk

about Russia without feeling yourself in a lunatic asylum," said a third Foreign Office man, also with some pretensions to sanity, to me one day. Gregory was not one of the three, nor was any high official, nor any of the staff of the "Northern Department" (which deals chiefly with the East of Europe).

Read his book carefully—not for the funny stories (though some of them are quite funny), not for the cheap wit (though most of it is very cheap), but for the revelation of the attitude of mind that lies behind these things, and you will understand quite a lot more about Anglo-Russian relations in the years of Gregory's power. If he had been more frank and more accurate in his account of certain episodes, the revelation would be even more valuable. But that could scarcely be expected of him.

Lord D'Abernon has retired. Mr. Gregory has been dismissed. But the Foreign Office remains. And with the Foreign Office, Soviet Russia is still an enemy to be crushed.

W. N. E.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Is Labour Leaving Socialism?* By L. Haden Guest, M.C. (John Murray, 132 pp., 3s. 6d.)
- Present Day Labour Relations.* A Critical Examination of Methods of Collective Negotiation between Employers and Employees. By Paul F. Gemmill, Ph.D. (Chapman & Hall, London; John Wiley & Sons, New York, 312 pp., 15s.)
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- The Russian Land.* By A. Rhys Williams. (Geoffrey Bles, 286 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- Only Communism Can Conquer Unemployment.* By J. R. Campbell. (C.P.G.B., 16 pp., 1d.)
- Labour and the Empire.* By C. P. Dutt. (C.P.G.B., 16 pp., 1d.)
- Four Years of Labour "Opposition."* By Reg. Groves. (C.P.G.B., 16 pp., 1d.)
- Conservatism and Wealth: A Radical Indictment.* By Oliver Baldwin and Roger Chance. (Williams & Norgate, 50 pp., 1s. 6d.)
- Anakapoltics: An Excursion into the Bio-psychology of Politics.* By Richard Hope. (John Bale & Sons and Danielsson, 103 pp., 2s. 6d.)
- Platform and Oratory Debate for Schools and Colleges.* By John Rigg. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 125 pp., 3s.)
- Offinger's Pocket Technological Dictionary.* Part I, Vol. II. (Allen & Unwin, 250 pp., 6s. 6d.)
- The Commonsense of World Peace.* By H. G. Wells. Address delivered in the Reichstag, April 15, 1929. (The Hogarth Press, 52 pp., 2s. 6d.)
- The Labour Outlook.* By Arthur Greenwood, M.P., with an introduction by the Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, P.C., LL.D., M.P. (Chapman & Hall, 246 pp., 5s.)
- The World in Pawn to the Money Trust.* A Way Out via the Martians' Plan. By S. and S. E. Bottomley. (The Martian Publishing Co., 60 pp., 50 cents.)
- Labour and Internationalism.* By Lewis L. Lorwin. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 682 pp., 12s. 6d.)
- Victorian Working Women.* By Wanda Fraiken Neff. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 288 pp., 12s. 6d.)
- Danger Zones of Europe.* A Study of National Minorities. By John S. Stephens, M.A. Merttens Peace Lecture. (The Hogarth Press, 86 pp., 2s.)
- Origins and Aftermath of the War.* By Harald Hewitt. (Harald Hewitt, 7 pp.)

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A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 11

July, 1929

Number 7

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June 26, 1929.

DEAR COMRADE READER,

One thing the manager of a paper should try to avoid is wearying readers by constant appeals for support. On *The Labour Monthly's* Eighth Birthday, after I have been manager, office-boy, cashier and sub. for over four years, I venture to break the golden rule for managers and approach the readers of *The Labour Monthly* on its affairs.

The Labour Monthly has now been published for eight years without a break. That is an achievement for a journal of revolutionary theory, for an independent paper without the official backing of any organisation. The Labour Party Literature agent sells the Labour Magazine as a duty, the I.L.P.-er reads the *Socialist Review*, and the good Communist reads all the official organs of his Party, but *The Labour Monthly* is nobody's baby, and is read for one reason only—that it is worth reading.

The test of a paper is the extent to which it has faced up to and pointed out the real significance of events as they have occurred. If you will consider the articles and the Notes of the Month on the General Strike and the Miners' Lock-out in this country, or on the Chinese revolutionary ferment in 1927, to take only two examples, you will agree that *The Labour Monthly* passes this test.

The comments of our readers show that *The Labour Monthly* is appreciated. I have only space to quote two, received during the last week or so. The first is from an English reader, enclosing a donation:—

“Now, more than ever, we need the keen, courageous, and well-based and documented criticism its friends have learned to expect from *The Labour Monthly*.”

The second comes from an Australian miner:—

“It is mostly the readers of *The Labour Monthly* and those they give it to afterwards who are putting up the fight here against the ban on literature. If I could afford it, I would get extra copies of *The Labour Monthly* and give them away, as anyone who once reads it is always looking for its appearance again.”

Yes, *The Labour Monthly* is appreciated. Many a regular reader would pawn his watch, if he had one, rather than miss the Notes of the Month. And yet *The Labour Monthly* is in imminent danger of ceasing to exist. Although we have reduced our costs to the barest minimum, there is still a monthly deficit. To raise the price of the magazine is impossible—many of our readers are on the “dole”—to expect a revenue from capitalist advertisements in a revolutionary paper is utopian, consequently this deficit can only be met by donations from our readers. It is due to their generosity that *The Labour Monthly* has reached the age of eight years. But the support of *The Labour Monthly* has hitherto fallen on too few shoulders. To those who have already helped us, I offer my thanks. To those who enjoy *The Labour Monthly*, but take its existence for granted, I appeal to insure themselves against losing it, by sending a donation or by ordering a few copies to sell to their friends and workmates.

With revolutionary greetings,

K. BEAUCHAMP,
Manager, *The Labour Monthly*.

NOTES OF THE MONTH

*Second Labour Government—For What?—1924 and 1929—
A Solid Capitalist Government—No Socialism—A “Nook” for
the Workers—Crowning Triumph of Baldwinism—Capitalism
In Their Time—Opportunist Illusions—The Real Revolu-
tionisation—Fictions and Realities—The Contra-
diction of the Labour Vote—Communist Fight
—Meaning of the Communist Fight—
Labour Government Perspective—
Coming Economic Struggles—
Peace Gestures and War
Preparations—India
—The Next
Stage*

THE Labour Government has been set up, as in 1924, by the will and decision of the bourgeoisie, who hold the direct majority in Parliament. It is, as anticipated, a Labour Government by the grace and assistance of Lloyd George and Baldwin. It is a Minority Government, which is a euphemism for a Coalition Government. It can take no single action, it can carry no piece of legislation, save with the support and approval of either of the older capitalist parties. It is thus, in a very close sense, a capitalist coalition government in a thinly veiled form. But in fact this direct capitalist control is unnecessary and of secondary importance. Had the Labour Government a majority, its line would still be in essentials the same. Not by the chance of parliamentary figures, but by the whole character of its programme and policy, the Labour Government is a government of capitalist coalition. It is the counterpart in the political field of the Mondist F.B.I.-General Council alliance in the trade union field. In this sense, *the Labour Government is the logical continuance and the coping stone of the work of the Baldwin Government.*

WHAT are the purposes of the bourgeoisie in setting up this Labour Government? A host of Labour writers are at present engaged in speculations of

what should be in their opinion the programme of the Labour Government, of what the Labour Government should do, of what they would do if they were the Labour Government. It would be more to the point if these writers would consider what are the bourgeois intentions with regard to the Labour Government, for the deciding word is theirs. What is the programme and tasks for which the bourgeoisie has called the Labour Government into being? What are the prospects of their being fulfilled? What is the actual perspective of the Labour Government in relation to the international situation and the home situation? What are the prospects of the working-class struggle? What are the lessons for the revolutionary working class both of the elections and of the period now opening? These are the questions which need now to be considered.

THE similarities with 1924 are great, but the dissimilarities are greater. On the face of it, the old triangle is repeated. MacDonald once more forms his minority government; once more the Liberals hold their slightly weakened balance and wait ready to pounce; once more Baldwin has gone into an election almost openly asking for defeat, in order to have the pleasure of watching the discrediting of a Labour Government and at the appropriate moment either resume the old Conservative majority or form, if necessary, some national coalition majority. But these similarities are superficial. The dissimilarities are basic. In 1924 the Labour Government was still a precarious experiment. There was considerable doubt and dissension in the bourgeois ranks as to the advisability of taking the risk of permitting it. The Labour Party was still loose and incompletely disciplined. The trade unions were not yet subject to the Labour Party or divorced from the class struggle. The Labour Government ran an uneasy course trying to bridge the chasm of the classes. Eventually, working-class pressure forced its partial capitulation on the two issues of the Soviet treaty and the dropping of the Communist prosecution. Immediately the bourgeois policemen, Asquith and Baldwin, closed in and quietly but firmly marched the indignant Labour Government off the scene, the Labour Government meanwhile justly

protesting its innocence and fidelity to the bourgeoisie. It had been a failure, or rather a rehearsal. It was the first breaking in of the Labour Party for its work.

CONTRAST this with the scene in 1929. The Labour Government enters office as a solid capitalist government, aiming at a normal humdrum existence of a capitalist government of several years' tenure, on a definite programme of legislation and administration acceptable to the other capitalist parties and clearly marked out in advance. There is no question of dissent or disapproval in any quarter, no reflection in the City save a slight upward movement of stocks, no ripple of excitement or interest more than at the normal succession of one set of Ministers by another. In 1924 there was a considerable measure of opposition in the Labour Movement at the idea of a minority government, voiced both by the I.L.P. ("it is no secret that in the first few days after the election some members of the Party—and we include ourselves—were not enthusiastic over this prospect" *New Leader*, February 11, 1924) and by the so-called Clyde brigade ("it was true none of them wanted to see the Labour Party getting into office, not power. They would prefer to remain for the present in opposition," Maxton at Glasgow, January 6, 1924). It was still felt that a minority government under the good graces of capitalism was a surrender to capitalism and that the task of the Labour Party was first to win a majority and to take government only for the purpose of introducing socialism.

THIS old-fashioned milk of the early gospel of the Labour Party is hardly a memory to-day. Instead, the *Glasgow Forward*, whose editor has been accorded a suitable minor post in the administration, comes out from the first prominently on its front page with the declaration :—

The mandate, so far as it runs, undoubtedly covers a large scale reduction in unemployment ; it covers peace, pensions and housing. But it does not cover Socialism. (*Forward*, June 15, 1929.)

This exactly reflects and echoes Lloyd George's own definition of the conditions of the Labour Government's existence :—

The mandate ends when the Government fails to pursue a Liberal policy. The very hour the Ministry decides to become a Socialist administration, its career ends.

Lloyd George and the Glasgow *Forward* are in complete accord. The bargain with the Liberal Party does not need to be made ; it exists already in practice, and requires no signature.

IN the same way, the *Daily Herald* defines the Labour Government as a " Cabinet of National Reconstruction " (*i.e.* capitalist reconstruction). The aims of the workers are declared by this Labour organ to be

redress of long-standing and pressing grievances. They want more houses, more generous health provisions, fair treatment when unemployed, better education for their children, more jobs, fewer hours of labour when they are in work, and a chance to live a decent self-respecting life. Labour will not disappoint them.

" More jobs," " fair treatment "—this is the 1929 slave-manager's version of the " New Social Order." So, too, the Labour Prime Minister in his election address defined anew the " inspiring " purpose of the Labour Party :—

The worker, his wife and family now make claim for a nook in their own country where they can have a chance to give service to others and enjoy the results of their work. In a sentence, this is the purpose inspiring the Labour Party.

After all, it would be a singularly unpractical slave-owner who would grudge his slaves a " nook."

WHAT is the meaning of this development? From the point of view of the bourgeoisie, it means that the work of 1925-29, the work of the Baldwin Government, has been successful. The Labour Government of 1924 was a capitalist government, but it was a capitalist government at the head of a Labour Movement which had not yet been disciplined to capitalism. Therefore it could not maintain its position, and had to be replaced by the Baldwin Government of ruthless class war. The rising workers' movement had first to be broken ; the General Strike had to be smashed ; the whole system of shackles embodied in the Trade Union Act had to be imposed ; the Labour Party had to be combed through, disciplined, its best local sections expelled, and free election from below abolished

within it; the trade unions had to be dragged through the mud of Mondism and tied to the chariot of the F.B.I.—*and only on this mountain of wreckage of all that was most honourable and strongest in the workers' movement could the elections at last be held and the second Labour Government be safely enthroned as the culmination and crowning triumph of Baldwinism—a stable capitalist Labour Government at the head of a capitalist Labour Party and of trade unions in the employers' pocket.*

DOES this mean that the process of revolutionisation has come to an end, that reformism, reaction and capitalism have triumphed, and that the new organic period of capitalist advance towards a higher plane of organised State capitalism with capital-and-labour harmony has set in? So all the bourgeois and Labour reformist spokesmen hasten to conclude, and sing their pæans of joy at the salvation of Capitalism In Their Time. Have not eight and a half million workers voted for MacDonald and Mondism? Were not the votes of the Communist candidates, the only candidates who raised the issue of socialism as against capitalist reconstruction, a mere handful of fifty thousand, fit only to excite laughter? Are not the trade unions and the employers joined at last in bonds of official matrimony after the long Mondist courtship? Are not all three parties drawing ever closer, as the interchangeable election programmes and happy coalition conditions of the new Parliament reveal, on the common ground of progressive social advance (“the nook for the worker” from which he can “have a chance to give service to others”) and rationalisation, that magic solution of all the nonsense about decline, of peace and disarmament, of the League of Nations and the British Empire? Are not profits and security values rising (“Business Men Welcome Labour Policy” says the *Daily Herald*), and the tribute from abroad flowing in higher than ever before.

MINERS starving. Indian strikers shot in the streets. Textile wages cut. These are details. It is the hour of Labour “victory.” Lansbury has his top hat again; the postilions at Windsor were never so smart; and Cook has promised that the miners will not press the Labour

Government unduly. Who speaks of revolution? Capitalism is stable again. Politics are back at the real division of "progressive" and "conservative." A writer in the imperialist organ, *The Round Table*, comments :—

The gradual approximation of party programmes to one another, the steady movement towards common sense away from extremism, the unconscious but powerful forces of gradualism as opposed to revolution, all these are welcome indications that the old country is at last recovering from the shocks and ravages of war and settling down to the quieter controversies of peace. Parliamentary and constitutional government becomes possible when all parties accept the general structure of society. It is impracticable, as Lord Balfour once pointed out, when the citizens of a great nation disagree profoundly about fundamentals. And it may perhaps be said without exaggeration that socialism is dead in all except the rank and file of the Socialist Party. The leaders have ceased to believe in it. (*The Round Table*, June, 1929.)

The writer in his self-satisfaction has failed to note that in his last sentence he has betrayed the contradiction that will explode his complacency. But in his issue of principle he is correct. The harmony of parties, the peaceful processes of parliamentarism, the coalitions of minority governments, the union of employers and employed, are only possible "when all parties accept the general structure of society." But when that structure is itself basically unstable and breeding contradiction and conflict at every pore, then all the professions of harmony in the world, all the coalitions and shams of "Labour" Governments, all the engines of repression and machine-made stabilisation cannot check the growth of conflict to the ultimate bursting of that whole structure.

THE power to see the process of revolutionisation that is going forward in and through the present conditions of reaction (which are themselves a reflex of revolutionisation), and not least in and through the existence of the Labour Government, to see the gathering contradictions and the rising wave, to see and fight in advance the path to which the mass movement of the workers must come—this is the test of Marxism in the present period. The present period is not a period of harmonious capitalist development and stabilisation, but of sharpening class antagonism,

gathering economic and political struggles, intensified capitalist contradictions, and the approach to war. This is the rock upon which all the shams of Labour Governments and Mondist harmonies will break. It is one of the characteristics of the period that capitalism and social democracy are brought into ever closer organic union. But this does not mean that capitalism and the workers are brought into closer union. On the contrary, it means that social democracy and the workers are brought further apart, that the workers' struggle is compelled to find new forms, to face more basic issues.

THE shallow-headed opportunists and bourgeois theorists see the triumphs of capitalism, but they do not see at what a cost of complete transformation these triumphs are achieved, and to where they lead. Because a Baldwin has imposed a temporary industrial peace of death with a bludgeon, at a cost of leading the whole society to the edge of civil war, they conclude that social antagonisms have grown milder, but they do not see that the bludgeon is the strongest evidence of their growing greater. They see the minimum record of days of industrial disputes in 1927, and faithfully register diminished class conflict. But they do not see the no less striking record of 1927 in modern class legislation—the Trade Union Act, a very considerable evidence of intensified class conflict. Because the official Labour Movement has been dissected, purged, chemically treated and put into a strait jacket, they observe that the tone of the Movement is a little lowered from what it used to be, and conclude that the workers are turning their backs on the revolution. But they do not see that the very imposition of these measures, unthinkable in the days of the old “free” movement of the period of Liberal capitalism, is the strongest evidence of the real forces at work. Because the workers vote in a mass for Labour at the election, they conclude that the workers have accepted the philosophy of reformism and industrial peace. But they do not see that the very volume of this vote represents a sweeping advance of the mass movement which will ultimately destroy the conditions of reformism and lead to the revolution. Because the Labour Government is received with acclamation by

the bourgeoisie, they see the triumph of peaceful methods and stable progress. But they do not see that the very fact that the bourgeoisie has to depend for its support on a Labour Government is the strongest evidence of the growth of instability.

THE great mass of the workers who wanted change voted Labour at the election. This is not surprising. For ninety-nine workers in a hundred there was no alternative visible, if they wished to express their dissatisfaction. The Communist Party was effectively debarred from contesting more than a tiny fraction of the seats, and even in these had not the resources to reach more than a fraction of the workers. For the vast mass of the workers, only the three parties existed as the basis of their choice ; and in voting Labour they were expressing as clearly as they could see how to do within the limits of this choice their antagonism to the existing régime. But those who imagine that, because they voted Labour, the workers will proceed to embody the Labour philosophy of industrial peace and unity with capitalism, are destined to be disillusioned. For the vast mass of the workers in the great industrial centres and mining areas, who voted Labour with such overwhelming solidarity, their vote represented a direct assault on wealth and class privilege ; it was for them an act of class war. But the assembled company of trade union officials, parsons, pacifists, dons and scions of the nobility who have gone to Parliament to " represent " them, represent in fact something very different ; their whole basis and programme is social peace, rationalisation and the maintenance of capitalism. *From this arises a contradiction which will sooner or later blast like dynamite the whole structure of the " Labour " triumph, and lay bare the true issues of the class war.*

THE Communist vote reflected the first pioneering stage of the independent revolutionary fight. Not the figure of the vote, but the fact of the fight, is the achievement which lights the path for the future. The actual measure of strength represented by the vote is not easy to estimate, because of the reactionary electoral procedure which prevented more than 4 per cent. of the constituencies being contested, thus

ruling out a straight vote throughout the country. Were the figures reached to be treated as sample results and calculated on the same basis for the whole country, the resultant national strength shown would be 1,200,000 ; but deduction needs to be made from this to allow for the more favourable character of the constituencies fought. A more useful test is afforded by the relative Communist and Labour vote in the constituencies fought ; in the twenty-five constituencies fought, the Communist vote reached an average of 10 per cent. of the Labour vote.

DOES the smallness of the Communist vote indicate that the Communist fight was "premature" or "too much in advance of the masses"? This question could only be asked by those completely unfamiliar with the reason for the Communist intervention. The reason for the Communist intervention did not depend in any degree on the numbers of votes that might be obtained, but on the absolute necessity of the independent working-class fight being fought against the ruling coalition of the three capitalist parties. *Had this fight not been fought, had the complete unification of the three capitalist parties and the final passing of the Labour Party to capitalism been accepted without challenge, then the 1929 election would have represented a step backwards in the history of the working class. The Communist fight at the 1929 election marks instead the historical starting point of a new advance.* By this fight the Communist Party is established on a national plane in the consciousness of the workers, whether agreeing with it or not, as the challenger, as the new revolutionary alternative to the Labour Party. The Communist message could not reach the mass of the workers ; but the fact of the fight could, and that is the first essential at the present stage. The justification and correctness of the fight will steadily become more clear to them. The Communist Party is now in a politically strong position to press forward the fight against the Labour Government, and gain strength from its exposure.

WHAT is the outlook? The Labour Government is set in office by the bourgeoisie, primarily to maintain industrial peace and keep the workers quiet during

the painful process of rationalisation ; secondly, to carry through certain turns and manœuvres in foreign policy which were already in preparation in the later period of the Baldwin Government, but which were not easy for that Government to carry through in view of its record (the approach to the United States, resumption of relations with the Soviet Union), and in general to cover the present period of war preparations with pacific gestures ; and thirdly, to carry through the work of the bourgeoisie in relation to the Empire and gathering colonial movements, especially India. The Labour Government begins with certain short-term advantages. In foreign policy, it can make use of the previously-arranged Reparations bargain, the Rhineland evacuation, and the negotiations with America, to make a show of "achievements." In home policy, it takes office in a period of slightly rising trade ; it can make a show of small concessions in unemployment benefit and social legislation to conceal its true rôle ; the conditions for a larger rationalisation drive are ready prepared ; the temporary effects of new construction work may for a period diminish the unemployment totals.

BUT if we turn from these short-time calculations to the basic issues and outlook, the picture changes. The basic contradiction of the home economic position remains. Rationalisation, coming after the United States and Germany, and less effectively, can never solve the problem of the British loss of world trade and consequent weakening financial position, but only intensify the world crisis. Secondly, Rationalisation means unemployment, despite any short-time artificial stimulus that may be given to construction ; it involves, not only in the long run, a net increase in unemployment, but also heavy immediate displacement problems in the main industries. Thirdly, rationalisation can in practice only be carried through at the expense of the workers, and therefore raises the prospect of big industrial conflicts. The precarious position of the gold standard, the sharpening world gold crisis, and the compulsory raising of the Bank Rate to 5½ per cent. since February under the pull of New York, all rule out any likely possibility, if the promised line of "sound finance" is to be followed, of an easy credit policy to

smooth the transition. Speaking at the end of May, just before the election, Professor J. J. Jones, Professor of Economics at Leeds, had occasion to refer to the "empty talk about industrial peace"; he pointed out that since the adoption of the gold standard in 1925 the world price level had fallen 15-20 per cent., and concluded:—

If the world price level did not come up again, the internal price level would have to come down, and *the process of reducing it would mean a process of industrial strife of the first order and magnitude.* (*Daily Herald*, May 25, 1929.)

The position already in coal and textiles is only the first foreshadowing of what is to come.

IN the same way, in international affairs the basic drive to war will not be affected by the pacific gestures of the Labour Government. On the contrary, *pacific gestures are the invariable accompaniment and diplomatic cover of war preparations*; and the Labour Government, like the Liberal Cabinet of 1906-14, is invaluable to the bourgeoisie for this. The Labour Government will at the same time, as in 1924, be engaged in pushing forward the war preparations of the British Empire to a point far exceeding any other Power. Nor will the international situation be an easy one, as the recent speeches of Hoover and Stimson have already indicated; and there is every probability that the loudly-boomed Anglo-American approach will have to end either in a capitulation or a failure. This question, however, and new developments in Anglo-American relations need separate treatment and analysis. In relation to the Soviet Union the Labour Government will represent in the narrowest and most exacting fashion the claims of the bourgeoisie; nor will any question of recognition change or delay for a moment the war plans of the military staffs.

HEAVIEST of all the questions immediately in front is India. The Labour Government is set for the rôle of the hangman of the Indian revolution. Cawnpore in 1924 is followed by Meerut in 1929. The maintenance of British imperialist power depends on the holding asunder of the British workers and the Indian masses from realising their

common interests and common struggle. *To throw on the Labour Government the rôle of the repression of the gigantic developing Indian mass struggle means, in the first place, that the Indian masses are taught to look on the British working class as their enemy equally with the British bourgeoisie ; and in the second place, that the entire power of the Labour Party and trade union machine is used to stifle and kill the sympathy of the British workers for their Indian comrades and paralyse all common action.* Already the process is in full swing. Just as the General Council sent out its lying and infamous communiqué to vilify the heroic mass struggle of the Bombay millworkers for elementary trade union rights, so now with Meerut. The direct refusal of trial by jury and insistence on arbitrary executive trial rests with MacDonald.

THE fight now is to awaken and to organise the working class opposition to the Labour Government of capitalism, and *to carry forward the new work of struggle in the face of that government.* It is no longer to-day a question of "pressure" on the Labour Government, save in the sense that the workers may cease to extort concessions from any capitalist government. The Labour Government is itself the sharpest instrument of capitalism, of rationalisation, of the whole capitalist offensive. In the economic struggle this will become rapidly clear, as the Labour Government is revealed as the protector of property interests and executive head of the whole capitalist state machine of repression of the workers. But it applies equally in every sphere, and not least to the Labour Government as the preparer of war and the Labour Government as the gaoler of India. The fight for the immediate objectives of the class struggle is inevitably a fight against the Labour Government. To awaken the workers to the true rôle of the Labour Government as their enemy is now the condition of the workers' future ; for the Labour Government is the principal buttress of capitalism just because and in so far as it has a hold upon the minds of the workers. The Communist fight at the election was the first stage to a wider struggle. That wider struggle now opens.

R. P. D.

LOOKING AHEAD

By A. F. ROTHSTEIN

THE Labour Government takes office as a government of capitalist rationalisation and of suppression of colonial revolts. It was far from accidental that Lord Melchett declared during the election his disbelief that there was any difference "in the long run" between Tory, Liberal and Labour. And when the complaints came from the constituencies (except where the Communist Party had put up a candidate) that this was a "dull" election, the *Manchester Guardian* justly pointed out that this was simply due to the identity of the programmes of the Tory, Liberal and Labour Parties on all fields with the exception of a narrow economic sector, and even there the average man would be more inclined to find points of similarity than of difference!

MacDonald confirmed these impressions in his wireless speech after the General Election. "Peace in industry," "the peaceful development of industry and finance," "stability of government"—this was the refrain of his appeal. It did not fall on deaf ears. All the City correspondents of the capitalist newspapers had remarked the stability of the Stock Exchange when the Labour majority was known, compared with the kind of panic that prevailed for a short time in 1924. After MacDonald's speech, the captains of industry—Lord Inchcape and others—spoke up and sent their best wishes to the Labour Government, which they were sure would safeguard national interests. Their voices merged into a general chorus of hearty good feeling and fellowship from the Tory and Liberal leader-writers.

The Labour Government has not been slow in giving the capitalist class an earnest of its reliability. The terms of the King's Speech are not yet known at the time of writing. But MacDonald has already made his bow as Prime Minister of the employers against the workers, of British imperialism against the colonial peoples, and of the capitalist world against the Soviet Union. He has "settled" the Dawdon dispute, not by persuading Lord Londonderry to "give Labour a chance"

and withdraw his demand for wage reductions, but by persuading the miners to accept an agreement with Londonderry which means wage reductions in a month's time. MacDonald has not only continued the infamous "trial"—before a paid Civil servant—of thirty-one Indian working-class leaders and trade union officials, but has added one to their number, in the person of a young Socialist journalist of twenty-four, just to show that national interests are safe in Labour's keeping. And, while finding time for lunches, talks and fulsome speeches with the Ambassador of American imperialism, MacDonald has found no time during the first fortnight of office for the simple administrative act of resuming diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

These are only the young buds ; the full blossom still lies ahead.

This does not mean that the Labour Government will open its heavy broadsides against the workers, the colonial peoples and the Soviet Union all at once. It does not mean that a policy of small reforms and petty concessions will not be attempted. Had this been the intention of British capitalism, it would not have taken the trouble of putting a Labour Government in office, by promoting five hundred Liberal candidatures, by Tories voting Labour to keep out the Liberal, and by Liberals voting Labour to keep out the Tory. Capitalism has a different function in view for the Labour Government. It still has a shot in its locker, and intends to use it.

The Labour Government intends to build a new basis for reformism within the working-class movement, by a sweeping series of "reforms." So much has been clear for a long time, particularly since the publication of *Labour and the Nation*. MacDonald has more than once declared that the Labour Party has taken the torch of progress from the hands of the Liberal Party which it bore for so many years ; and it is only natural that the example of the Liberal Government after 1906—the school in which MacDonald learned the methods of Liberal-Labourism—should not allow him to rest. A few shillings extra for sections of the unemployed ; changes in the pensions of certain groups of aged workers ; a scheme for the superannuation of sections of the older miners ; possibly the extension of the Overseas Credits

Scheme to Russia ; a few manœuvres with the employers, by which they ask for a 10s. wage cut in order that the Labour Government may "mediate" and secure a 5s. cut—may not measures such as these ensure a new and long period of relative contentment amongst the workers with the capitalist system? Not to speak of the volumes of pacifist phrases which the Labour Government has already begun to emit, and with which it will, if possible, conceal from the workers the mechanisation of the Army, the improvement of the Air Force, and the preparations for chemical warfare. This is MacDonald's calculation.

But there is a fly in the ointment. Up to 1914 British industry was declining relative to its competitors on the world market, but absolutely was expanding. Although real wages were falling, it was in consequence of a rise in the cost of living rather than of large scale attacks upon the standard of living of the working class. British imperialism still had before it the prospect of considerable expansion, given a victorious struggle against its young and inferior rival, Germany.

To-day, times have changed. During the last ten years British industry, as a whole, and with it the prestige and power of British imperialism, have been declining—not merely relatively but absolutely. The basic industries have been contracting, the parasitic features characteristic of any imperialist country expanding far beyond what is normal for the other imperialist powers. The workers have been through great experiences and great battles. Rationalisation and simple attacks on the workers may—as in the first quarter of 1929—bring improvements in production, win a little ground in the world market. But two, or maybe three or four, can play at that game.

The decline may be arrested for a period, but it must continue : because there is no room in the imperialist world for both the United States and Old England in her former glory—not to mention industrialised, trustified, Imperialist France or reorganised Germany. Striking deeper even than these, one-sixth of the globe has been wiped off the map as a field of activity for British finance-capital, and in its place a Socialist State is rapidly being built which is a standing call to arms for the four hundred millions of oppressed colonial peoples in the British Empire.

The decline of production in the basic industries is only one side of capitalist decline. As Lenin long ago pointed out, there is another side—that the masses become less and less willing to live “in the old way.” Ten years’ decline of industry has moved the masses of British workers a pretty considerable distance along the road of unwillingness to live in the old way : and what does capitalist rationalisation bring them? More unemployment, lower wages *for the majority*, longer hours, greater intensity of labour. Does this spell more “industrial peace”? On the contrary, it spells mass disillusionment : *it spells a further stage in the revolutionisation of the mass of the British proletariat*. It is not by accident that the figures of industrial disputes (working days “lost”) for the first five months of 1929 amount to 708,000 days, as against 475,000 in the same period last year. For in these months, as the Board of Trade points out in its *Journal*, output in the industries undergoing rationalisation—coal, iron and steel—shows for the first time a small increase over the previous year.

This is the price which British capitalism must and will pay for its rationalisation schemes and its “industrial peace” propaganda, carried through with the help of a Labour Government. It is rather costly—particularly when there is no guarantee that it will bring a new period of organic development for British capitalism, and when the chances, on the contrary, are that Britain’s younger and more advantageously situated competitors will begin pushing her down hill once again. Certainly, the process of capitalist rationalisation, together with the already existing development of secondary and luxury industry, helps to crystallise out a new labour aristocracy, which can serve as a social base for Labour reformism and the Labour Government. But it does not require a long analysis here to show that the limits of such an aristocracy are very much narrower to-day than they were before the war.

This is the background on which the Labour Government will have to function, and it is one which opens up somewhat different prospects from the course of events under the pre-war Liberal Government. In one respect, it is true, the outlook is much the same : namely, that the Labour Party, even more than the pre-war Liberals, is patriotic and imperialist enough to keep the

masses amused with pacifist gestures and propaganda, while preparing a magnificent war as solution for capitalism's troubles at home and abroad. To this question we shall have to return again and again. We shall have to knock out of our heads the idea that we are living "after the War," and remember every minute of our lives that, with the coming of the Labour Party's "National Government," we have begun to live "before the War."

But in other respects, notwithstanding all the concessions and all the "reforms," the Labour Government cannot expect such a slow course of evolution, and in particular such a slow progress of mass disillusionment, as the Liberals enjoyed between 1906 and 1914. Wage struggles, the miners' demand for the 7-hour day, the fight of the unemployed for their new National Charter, will open the eyes of large sections of the workers to the real nature of this Labour Government which they have put in power, while the Labour Government's championship of the bondholders in its negotiations with the Soviet Union, and its continued policy of repression in India, will do still more. No doubt the capitalist class will do all possible to protect its Labour Party from discredit, by removing it from office before it has lost too much of its reputation. But who knows what two years of "peaceful development of industry" may bring forth? At all events, the trend is unmistakable.

Here it is necessary to speak frankly. Those who believe that we are in for a period of organic and *relatively* peaceful internal development in Great Britain, in which the contradictions which capitalism encounters will be of a purely international order, are on the wrong track. The facts and the day's news belie them. But equally false and dangerous is the idea that the workers' disillusionment, *which, however slow, is inevitable*, must necessarily bring them to active support of the revolutionaries. Here, too, facts are against theory: Italy in 1920, and still more closely the history of the Labour Party in Queensland and South Africa, as exemplified in recent election results. *Disillusionment of the masses in reformism and Parliamentarism may give an opening for Fascism* (and in Britain, like Germany, for Labour-Fascism) if there is no active revolutionary Communist Party, with its roots struck

deep amongst the workers, and leading the masses against the capitalists and reformists in small as well as in big struggles.

One of the features of the General Election was the utter contempt of the Labour leaders for all their past, for all phrases about Socialism, for all necessity to "play to the gallery" with revolutionary pledges. In this new arrogance of the Labour Party, symbolising the complete break with the first years after the last war, there was no distinction between "Right" and "Left." It was not a mere incident: it springs direct from their defeat of the General Strike. They broke with the workers on that occasion once and for all, and their tongues (and hands) were correspondingly loosened. Since the formation of the Labour Government, this note of complete detachment from the workers, and of irresponsibility to them, has become still more pronounced. It speaks in every phrase about "national interests" and "national government." And it opens up prospects, not only of a Grand Parliamentary Coalition of the three capitalist parties, but of the ending of the "democratic" phase of capitalist rule in Britain altogether and of transition to open Fascism, as the masses become more and more disillusioned and aggressive. For this new phase the Labour Party is already becoming ideologically prepared, and the narrow layer of labour aristocracy—insufficient basis for a prolonged era of "democratic" reformism—might still serve as the social basis for Labour-Fascism.

The new era opened by the second Labour Government, therefore, in our opinion, brings the menace of Fascism in Britain a definite stage nearer. But history provides the antidote too. Under strong, conscious and well organised revolutionary leadership, the masses will be able to turn the process towards the Socialist Revolution instead of towards Fascist reaction. In this lies the great achievement of the Communist Party's independent fight in the General Election. The task of the hour for all class-conscious workers is to strengthen the Communist Party, both by joining its ranks and by fighting opportunist tendencies, so that it can take the lead of *every* struggle of the masses, and be confident of rising to the occasion when critical moments arrive and historic decisions have to be made.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN INDIA

By CLEMENS DUTT

The Meerut Trial

THE trial of thirty-one Indian working class leaders at Meerut occupies the centre of the political stage in India to-day. Attempts may be made to disregard it or belittle its importance (the *Daily Herald*, more shameless than the capitalist Press, at first suppressed all mention of it), but it remains the most important event of the period in India, giving the truest indication of what is happening there and throwing the clearest light on the alignment of class forces at the present time. All the vague chattering about strained relations between "India" and "Britain," and the need for "statesmanship" in the Labour Government's handling of this delicate problem, all the conjecture and wrangling over the possibilities of the Simon Commission Report, all the intrigue and manœuvring in the Indian puppet legislatures, all the commotion over Hindu-Moslem differences, serves only to hide the reality of the situation and pales almost into irrelevance before the issues comprehended in this signal of the coming mass conflict with British imperialism. The Meerut trial reveals and expresses the new stage of acuter class antagonisms in India, it marks the ripening of the strength and consciousness of the Indian proletariat, it tests and exposes the insincerity and cowardice of the Indian bourgeois nationalists, and it provides the admission by British imperialism itself of their own recognition of the greatest threat and danger to themselves.

The big strike movement in India during the last eighteen months has been only one sign of the new period characterised by the emergence of the proletariat as an independent political force. The Meerut trial marks a further stage in which the centre of gravity of the anti-imperialist struggle and the main line of imperialist attack definitely shifts from the bourgeois nationalist movement to the proletarian movement. British imperialism seeks

to reduce its enemy to impotence with one blow. But just as the "Bolshevist Conspiracy" trial at Cawnpore, during the period of the Labour Government in 1924, denoted the beginning and not the end of revolutionary consciousness and Communist sympathy among the Indian workers, so now the Meerut trial means, not the extinction of the Communist movement but a turning point from which the period of the struggle of the Indian working class for leadership in the mass movement against imperialism takes on a new and definite character.

The Cawnpore trial was a small thing in itself, in spite of its significance and its results. There were only four victims and they were all young men whose association with the labour movement in India had only just begun. In the present trial not only do three of the former victims again appear, and this time with considerably greater standing as recognised leaders of the organised workers' movement (Comrade S. A. Dange, for example, is the present assistant secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress and General Secretary of the large militant union of textile workers in Bombay that has conducted the strike there), but the majority of the arrested men are prominent leaders of working-class organisations, most of them officials of trade unions, and all of them more or less directly associated with mass movements of workers or peasants.

It is no accident that the men now on trial are so closely identified with the strike movement. It is precisely the fact that they are not theorists or conspirators but the actual leaders of the proletarian revolt against intolerable conditions of exploitation that is at once the reason for their arrest and the proof that the intention will be frustrated. For the movement among the workers has already too deep a foundation to be destroyed by the arrest of its leaders. It is only necessary, in this connection, to refer to the events in Bombay. Not only was practically every member of the Executive Committee of the Girni Kamgar Union, which was leading the textile strike, included in the arrests, but the capitalist Press openly noted and commented that the arrests were made just prior to and in preparation for the publication of the Government Fawcett Committee Report on the issues in the textile dispute, a report which was of such a nature that it was

likely to provoke a further strike. This strike actually took place in spite of the arrests.

British Imperialist Policy

The policy underlying the Meerut case has, however, a much wider basis than merely the attempt to stifle industrial unrest. The Meerut arrests are only one of the most significant items in a general offensive of British imperialism, characterised by the display of despotic brutality and by a policy of ruthless repression directed first and foremost against the working class and mass movement rather than against the nationalists.

While the bourgeois nationalists were crowing aloud at their bravery in declaring for independence and a "life and death struggle" against British autocracy, and boasting of the heavy attack that would be made against them, British imperialism has almost contemptuously disregarded them (Gandhi is fined one shilling and sixpence for his defiance of British law in burning foreign cloth in Calcutta) and struck determinedly at its chief enemy. It is a sign of the times that most of the repressive measures recently forced through and most of the vindictive punishments meted out by the courts have been devoted to decapitating and undermining in all possible ways the rising mass movement. Particularly, the object has been to crush the alarming growth of the proletarian revolt before the peasant millions could be set into motion.

The weakness of international labour has played a great part in facilitating the attack against the workers in India. British imperialism has so many fronts on which to fight that its success on one immediately enables it to adopt stronger measures on another. The temporary defeat of the Chinese revolution, and especially the "industrial peace" surrender of the British workers and their obedient support for the policy of imperialism in India, participation in the Simon Commission, &c., have been important factors in making possible the present campaign of terror. Additional security has been furnished by the successful destruction of the dangerous development of independence in Afghanistan, by the obtaining of allies among the most reactionary feudal elements in India with the proposal to create an Indian "Ulster"

out of the so-called "Native States," and by the absence of effective opposition from the Indian bourgeois nationalist movement.

The Indian bourgeois nationalists, their fears of the mass movement being greater than their opposition to foreign imperialism, have retreated in proportion as the proletariat has advanced and they have been only half-hearted in their resistance to the imperialist attack. They allowed the passage of the Trades Disputes Act, and even the Public Safety Bill was only rejected by the intervention of the President in the Assembly. The Government is sufficiently secure in its power to be able to take such a step as the postponement of the Indian elections without great outcry.

The plans of imperialism have been well-laid. After the challenge of the Simon Commission, which provoked the nationalists to do their worst and exposed it as nothing so terrible after all, the imperialist rulers proceeded to deal with the greater menace. The brutal suppression of strikes last year, by victimisation of leaders, free use of police and military forces, wholesale arrests and imposition of heavy sentences on various charges (as in the case of the Bauria jute workers and the ten-year sentences on the leaders of the South India railway strike), prepared the way for the campaign against the "Communist menace," in which even the Viceroy was made a propagandist, and the subsequent legislation and "conspiracy trial." At the same time less direct means have also been employed in order to guide working-class activity into safe channels, notably by encouragement of the reformists and, particularly, the appointment of the Whitley Royal Commission on Indian Labour.

These plans are being carried forward and even extended by the British Labour Government. The "conspiracy of silence" on India during the election was a guarantee, if any were needed, given by the Labour Party, that they would faithfully carry on the work of imperialism if they were given the responsibility. Their Government is still only a few days old, yet it has already implemented its pledges by adding another victim to the Meerut trial, a young English journalist about whom there could be no pretence that he was an agent of the Communist International,

but who, at the sight of the Government terror in Bombay, had dared to raise his voice in protest and come out in defence of the workers. It has continued the arrest of workers, intensified repression in Bombay, and further attacked the few working-class organs still being published.

Class-Conscious Nationalism

The events of the last two years have provided an interesting test of the class alignment of the different sections of the bourgeois nationalist movement. Its main representative, the Indian National Congress, although sometimes termed "extremist" in comparison with the loyalists and liberals who, in the main, support British rule, is dominated by the bigger bourgeois elements, but contains a mixture of elements in its membership ranging from big landlords and capitalists down to petty clerks and pauperised intellectuals. It has very few proletarians in its ranks. The heterogeneity of its social composition has given rise to a complicated variety of tendencies within it, but the struggle between them becomes more and more concentrated round the chief cleavage—for the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie or for the proletariat and peasantry. The reconciling of these interests is becoming increasingly difficult, and the radical section is being driven to follow the lead of the proletariat and even to the support of Communism, often in spite of itself.

Taken as a whole, the bourgeois nationalist movement is on the decline, because it can no longer lead the struggle of the whole nation, and it is adopting a more definitely class-conscious hostile attitude towards the proletarian struggle. A year and a half ago, the wave of indignation against the Simon Commission, seemed to have put an end to the decline which followed the collapse of non-co-operation in 1922. The Madras Session of the National Congress, in December, 1927, reflected the new orientation of the national struggle, consciously directed against imperialism, as seen in the resolution for complete independence, the resolution against British imperialism and imperialist war preparations and the support given to the League against Imperialism. We pointed out at the time, however, that these resolutions were adopted by the old leaders rather as a means of holding the allegiance of the

somewhat rebellious rank and file and of preventing the leadership being taken out of their hands, than from any intention of prosecuting a revolutionary policy.

The truth of this has now been borne out. The masses have not been drawn into the Congress; even against the Simon Commission the severest limits were set on mass demonstrations. The heralded rejuvenation of the bourgeois nationalist movement has come to nothing. There has not even been a marked improvement in the dwindling numerical strength of the Congress ranks. Some figures recently given to Gandhi, on the occasion of his visit, by the Congress organisation of the Nellore district, north of Madras, are fairly typical. In 1921, they had 10,000 members and collected nearly 16,000 rupees for the Congress funds. In 1922, after the débâcle, their membership dropped to about 4,000 and their collections to 2,000 rupees. Since then their finance has dwindled year by year. In 1926, it was 445 rupees, in 1927 there was a slight increase, but by 1928 it was down to the lowest level of 278 rupees, and the membership was about 250.

In the face of the aggressive attitude of the British Government, there has been forced a confession of the unreality of the anti-imperialist gestures of the Congress. Already, at the Calcutta session last December, the independence resolution was virtually abrogated, and although the actual adoption of Dominion status as a goal was accompanied by the most extravagant threats of mass civil disobedience in 1930, not even their sponsors took these seriously. The Independence League, which started with such a flourish of trumpets, is practically dead. It has carried out no mass activities, it has hardly held a meeting. Its president, Srinivasa Iyengar, has resigned from it, and has jumped straight into the camp of the liberal Right Wing, raising anew the old cry of the "responsive co-operators," who left the Congress in 1925 and 1926, that it was necessary that Congress members in the Legislative Councils should be free to accept Ministerships under the dyarchy system. This demand was put forward by Madras representatives at the All-India Congress Committee in May, 1927, and was only dropped because of the postponing of the elections by the Government.

The reversion to Liberalism was implicit in the acceptance of the Nehru Report, based as it was on the voluntary limitation of the demands of the Congress to the maximum acceptable to the Right-Wing nationalists outside. On this basis some of the latter have rejoined or been recruited into the Congress, and proposals were being actively made for common action in the elections. In Bombay a committee was appointed which included alongside of the Congress leaders, such men as Jinnah (the Muslim leader of the "independents" in the Assembly), and Jayaker (one of those who left the Congress on the "responsive co-operation" issue). It is not unlikely that the old reactionary, Pundit Malaviya, will be chosen as next year's Congress president.

Most significant of all is the growing sharpness of the anti-working-class attitude adopted by even many of the younger leaders. The talk about support of the mass movement and labour organisation remains as much a phrase as ever. In spite of all the pious mention of it in innumerable speeches and articles, there has not been even the simplest practical step, such as support for the Bombay strike. The debate on the Public Safety Bill in the Assembly, which became a discussion about Communism, was practically an invitation by the nationalists to the Government to prosecute the alleged Communists.

The attitude towards the Meerut arrests, as expressed at a number of provincial conferences of Congress organisations, has been revealing. A high-sounding Defence Committee was appointed, but very little has yet been done in giving concrete assistance. Its President, Dr. Ansari, reported:—

In spite of issue of appeal and a thousand letters sent to individuals, the response has been very poor. . . . Rich people had failed in their duty. Now it was for the middle class and the poorer people to come to the rescue. (*Liberty*, May 19, 1929.)

At the important Bengal Provincial Conference in March, 1929, the president, S. C. Bose, one of the younger "independence" leaders, who led the fight against Gandhi at the Calcutta Congress session, used the Meerut trial to deduce the need for suppressing the difference between revolutionaries and reformists in the Indian working-class movement. Incidentally, in the same speech he put in a plea for Fascism as well as for

Socialism. He announced that the "lessons" of the Meerut arrests were as follows :—

- (1) It is necessary to remove all causes of friction between the different sections of labour.
- (2) The Whitley Labour Commission ought to be boycotted.
- (3) There ought to be closer co-operation between the labour movement and the Congress.

It is worthy of note that earlier in the year, the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee turned down a resolution calling for support of the working-class struggle on the grounds that they were opposed to "class war."

The Talk of Socialism

In opposition to the anti-working-class attitude of the big leaders, there is an important Left Wing in the Congress which reacts under the influence of the pressure of the mass movement. The conflict between the two wings is becoming more and more definitely a class cleavage. To a certain extent, the Left Wing in the Congress has shared in the repression exercised against the proletarian movement owing to its sympathy with the latter. It is being pulled in two different directions, representing as it does the field of battle in the fight for leadership between the proletarian and bourgeois elements.

As a result of the pressure of the mass movement, a large part of the Left Wing has taken its stand under the banner of "Socialism," more often expressed as a vague ideal than as connected with any concrete action on behalf of the class struggle. The young Jawaharlal Nehru, Secretary of the National Congress and President of the Trade Union Congress, has led the way in this propagation of socialism in the abstract. The talk of socialism has been particularly marked in the organised nationalist Youth movement, which has developed rapidly of late but is confined to middle-class and petty-bourgeois elements.

To a considerable extent, the talk about socialism on the part of the leaders represents only the same sort of radical clap-trap as is talked about independence, and has no greater significance. At the All-Parties Convention which adopted the Nehru Report, the ultra-reformist president of the All-India T.U.C.

put forward an agreed resolution of that body in favour of a socialist constitution. The representative of the Political Sufferers' Conference (the organisation of political prisoners) also declared for socialism but added "much as we feel strongly on this subject, we do not propose to hamper the work of this Congress."

One of the outstanding socialist declarations is the resolution passed almost unanimously last April by the United Provinces Political Conference. It runs:—

The following recommendation be made to the All-India Congress Committee. That, in the opinion of the Conference, the great poverty and misery of the Indian people are due, not only to foreign exploitation of India, but also to the economic structure of society which alien rulers support so that their exploitation may continue. In order, therefore, to remove this poverty and misery and to ameliorate the condition of the Indian masses, it is essential to make revolutionary changes in the present economic and social structure of society and to remove the gross inequities that subsist under it. As a first step, it is essential that provision be made for a living wage for every worker and to tax heavily all unearned incomes, and for peasants to have adequate land and be protected from interference of middlemen.

It is interesting to notice that this resolution, *minus the last sentence*, was passed by the A.I.C.C. in May, 1929.

At the Sind Conference, in May, 1929, the President was Mr. Chaman Lal, who is able to combine a reputation for extremism with securing such marks of official favour as being appointed on to the Government Whitley Commission. He spoke in favour of socialism, and proposed co-operative purchase of the land which will be made available for cultivation by the new Sukkur barrage. The *Bombay Chronicle*, the leading organ of bourgeois nationalism in Bombay, has an interesting comment. It begins its leading article with the words:—

Socialism is in the air. For months past, socialistic principles have been preached in India at various conferences, especially those of peasants and workmen.

It sees no hope of realisation, even of Chaman Lal's "mild Socialistic" scheme, but it remarks with great frankness:—

It is, however, good for the classes to assure the masses that they would not continue to be exploited under Swaraj.

After this candid confession, it considers the practical application and finds it in

carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress. That programme, Khaddar in particular, is nothing if not socialistic in the best sense of the term.

These comments are representative of the nationalist Press. We have here a curious phenomenon where the representatives of bourgeois interests are found supporting a typical example of what Marx called "feudal socialism." In general, translation of socialist aims into practical support of a reactionary programme is inevitable when the nationalists who profess them are not ready to take action in support of the class struggle actually being waged by the workers and peasants.

The Working-Class Struggle

In spite of the hammer blows directed against it, the Indian proletariat is not only unsubdued, but is still advancing. The fight of the Bombay textile workers has the most tremendous significance for the future. It shows in the clearest form the development towards independent class leadership of the working-class struggle which is the most important tendency now arising.

Through bitter experience, amid incredible hardships, the Bombay workers are winning through to taking full charge of their own struggle. In 1924, it was almost surprising when some of them refused to accept the counsel of the middle-class nationalists who negotiated on their behalf. In 1929, they have not only repudiated the reformist trade union leaders, but they have built up their own organisation with a factory committee basis. All efforts to smash them have failed. They have scorned the manœuvres of the reformists and deserted the always stagnant textile union, run by the reformist General Secretary of the T.U.C., which has now hardly 6,000 members. The Bombay riots represented a provocation on a large scale, which failed to entangle them. The repression, arrest of all their leaders, drafting in of troops, introduction of "curfew" and martial law has failed to intimidate them. They have carried on the strike against all odds, and yet they were ready also to levy themselves for the support of the Meerut prisoners.

The second feature of the present period is the growth of political consciousness and emancipation from the political domination of bourgeois nationalism. In spite of illiteracy, isolation, &c., the workers are adopting Communist, revolutionary working-class aims. Their demonstrations are being made with such slogans as "Down with Imperialism" and "A Soviet Republic for India." The march of the workers to the Congress Session in Calcutta last December, when they were met by the lathis of the Congress "volunteers," whom they brushed aside to take possession of the meeting tent, was a significant sign of the contrast between the two movements.

Clearer political consciousness brings also a sharper fight with reformism. When the Trade Union Congress leaders, Joshi and Bakhale, come out openly as strike-breakers in the present Bombay mill strike, their real rôle can no longer be misunderstood. The trade union reformist leaders work hand in hand with the nationalists for industrial peace. For some time past, such notorious agents of British reformism as Kirk, in Madras, and Indians like Shiva Rao, with the encouragement and support of the British T.U.C., have called for the expulsion of "reds" from the trade unions in India. Naturally, they look almost with complacency on the Meerut arrests and use it to further their propaganda.

The nationalist attitude is to seek to prevent "class war" in the interests of Indian industry. The following quotation from the leading article of the foremost nationalist paper in Calcutta, on the treacherous settlement by S. C. Bose, of the strike of the Tata iron and steel workers last year, is a frank admission of this viewpoint. It remarks:—

It was the recognition of the importance of a flourishing national industry struggling for a place under the sun that induced S. C. Bose to sacrifice much of his valuable time in promoting cordial relations between labour and capital at Jamshedpur. (*Liberty*, May 18, 1929.)

The alliance of British and Indian reformism is becoming still more clear. British imperialism seeks to crush the struggle of the Indian workers, not for the sake of Indian industry, but because of the revolutionary menace to British imperialism involved in it. In their actions they are ably seconded by the

General Council of the British T.U.C., as well as by the Labour Party, as seen in the recent falsified and anti-working-class communications issued by the T.U.C.

Against all these enemies, the Indian workers are engaged in a severe and difficult fight. The path towards building up their independent organisations in alliance with the peasants' movement is beset with obstacles. The campaign of terrorism has succeeded in breaking down the organisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Party. Already, before the arrests, it was showing signs of weakness owing to the variety of class interests it attempted to represent and the mixture of semi-reformist and class-conscious elements within it. The attack against it has shown that it is not a mass party and does not fulfil the needs of the proletariat. It is inevitable that in spite of the repression, and partly because of it, the workers will advance towards the formation of a firmly-based revolutionary Communist Party.

It is not possible to deal here with the development of the peasant movement. Numerous partial struggles and other signs point to the approach of a critical situation. At the present time, the workers in India are advancing in the face of a world of enemies. When they succeed in allying themselves with the peasants, they will have a support which will make them irresistible.

THE WORLD STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM

By R. BRIDGEMAN

(Secretary of the British Section of the League against Imperialism)

THE struggle of the workers of the world against the thralldom of imperialism is largely a struggle against the present imperialist ascendancy of the British Empire and the United States of America. The British Empire is already controlling more than 400,000,000 of the world's population, while the United States, by means of foreign investments, are rapidly advancing towards what has been called "the creation of an American Empire of subordinate states."

America does not wish to annex territory. The fisc at home and financial control abroad are the instruments of American imperialism. Professor Benjamin H. Williams, of Pittsburg University, in his book, *Economic Foreign Policy of the United States*, writes :—

At present the expansionist ambitions of the United States are venting themselves in obtaining over certain countries a system of financial control backed by strong protection methods. Such controls do not require annexation, and do not affect trade through the manipulation of tariffs."

The new American Tariff Bill has been called an economic freak, because it appears to be inspired by the belief that the sale of foreign goods in the United States is a definite injury to the country's interests. Canadian trade with the United States is seriously endangered by the new proposals for Tariff revision, which practically amount to an embargo on foreign trade, and it must be emphatically stated that Naval Disarmament and the Freedom of the Seas are not the only sources of disagreement between the English-speaking peoples.

The British Empire, on the other hand, has expansionist ambitions, which may be observed in the proposals for the closer union of the three territories in Central and Eastern Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika, with a view to the formation of a

new East African Dominion. Germany regards this East African project as a device for annexing to the British Empire the mandated territory which before the war belonged to the German Empire. It will be remembered also that during the war President Wilson declared that, "in the interest of the nations of Africa," America could not sanction the annexation of the German possessions by the Entente and demanded "joint sovereignty" over the former German possessions, and the American viewpoint did not alter when America withdrew from the League of Nations and the German colonies in Africa became mandated territories. Mr. Hoover described the "formal control by the League of Nations" as "a ridiculous farce" and President Harding declared that a mandated territory could be acknowledged as such only in case the Power mandated by the League of Nations held a mandate from America as well. These demands were rejected by the British Foreign Office, but the question between Britain and America still remains undecided. France and Belgium have concluded "mandate treaties" with America regarding their African mandates.

Another part of the world in which Britain appears to be pursuing an expansionist policy is Afghanistan. The reforming zeal of King Amanullah was regarded with mistrust by the Government of India, which maintains its position because of the way popular education has been neglected in India, so that the mass of the people remains in extreme and helpless ignorance. Were India educated, as Amanullah desired that Afghanistan should be, then it is probable that foreign rule would be terminated.

British relations with the Arab countries are not as cordial as they should be. Iraq chafes under the financial burden of the double administration which the mandate involves, and attempts to reach an agreement with the King of the Hedjaz have ended in failure, while the British Colonial Secretary declared at the beginning of this year that Britain would not allow the territory of Koweit at the head of the Persian Gulf to become the object of incursions by any foreign power.

British versus American Imperialism

The struggle between the United States of America and Britain for neutral markets is especially keen in South America and may

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be expected to develop in China. The Shanghai Municipality, for example, desires to transfer the municipal electric works at Shanghai to private enterprise. Several tenders came in response to the Municipality's appeal. The highest bid was £10,000,000 by the American and Foreign Power Company of New York. The British Trusts Association offered £6,380,000.

The United States now exercises control over the finances of Liberia and of seven Latin-American and Caribbean countries—Bolivia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Panama, Salvador and Nicaragua, by direct Government action or by private American bankers. In 1913, British investments in South America amounted to £680,000,000, of which £178,000,000 were invested from 1910 to 1913. Other European countries were also investing rapidly. The war put a stop to these investments and the United States took the place of the European investors. In 1926, American advances to South American countries amounted to over £100,000,000. In 1928, American investments in Latin-American countries were about £1,000,000,000, of which a little over half was invested in Cuba and Mexico. The total American investments abroad at the end of 1927 were about £2,600,000,000 and investments in 1928 alone were nearly £300,000,000, or nearly twice the foreign loans of Britain who was formerly the world's great creditor nation. When, therefore, there is a move on the part of each of these great imperialist countries to draw closer together, as we witnessed in the visit of President Hoover's new Ambassador to Morayshire in June to meet the British Prime Minister, then there is reason for every weaker nation to be on the watch and for the colonial peoples to concert measures for self-protection in the closest possible co-operation with the workers in the conquering and imperialist countries. Referring to General Dawes' visit to him in Scotland the Labour Prime Minister speaking at Lossiemouth a few days later remarked:—

We did not meet to threaten other nations, to dominate other peoples, nor indeed did we meet to form allowances or pacts . . .

We met inspired by the hope that it might be instrumental in preparing a Board round which other nations might ultimately sit in a co-operative fellowship, studying the parts and ways of peace.

The workers, both in the conquering and in the colonial countries must exercise a careful choice of the chairman of the proposed

Board, and Lord Melchett, who last year so successfully formed a great Finance company of Great Britain and America with resources estimated to amount to £500,000,000 behind it, should not be permitted to appoint himself to the chair. For British national policy, in so far as it has been influenced by Sir Alfred Mond in the past and may continue to be influenced by Lord Melchett in the future, aims at safeguarding home industries with colonial development based upon the administration of the British Empire as an economic unit. That is a policy of pure imperialism pursued in the interest of profits on invested capital and with a view to ensure new opportunities and new controlled spheres to make constant reinvestment possible. Such a policy is contrary to the interests of the workers who more and more perceive the need for world organisation in the interest of the working class, if war is to be avoided and the present standards of the working class are to be improved. With the idea of international organisation on a world scale in their minds as a substitute for imperialism, the workers of any country will not be satisfied with the conclusion of a mere yard-stick agreement between the naval Powers for the rationalisation of navies. Such a step by itself would be entirely insufficient to restore the world economic balance. The workers in Britain are anxious for international working-class organisation. They wish to be brought into direct contact with the workers in other countries and especially with the colonial workers.

The second Anti-Imperialist World Congress of the League against Imperialism and for National Independence, which is to take place in Paris from July 20 to July 31, is of the highest importance to that ever growing number of men and women throughout the world who are menaced either with unemployment or exploitation by reason of the growth of imperialism. It is to the working class both in the capitalist countries and in the colonial countries that anti-imperialist organisation is particularly important.

The Situation in India

Upon the agenda of the anti-imperialist Congress stands first and foremost the Indian question. When the first World Congress of the League was held in 1927 the Chinese Nationalist Revolution was at the summit of its astonishing triumph. Desertions from the

working-class cause led to a serious, if temporary, check in the advance of China's working millions towards freedom from foreign control and capitalist exploitation. In 1929, the Indian freedom movement has attained a higher development than ever before owing chiefly to the organisation of Indian labour, not only industrial but also agricultural labour, and to-day, by openly challenging capitalist organisation of industry, the Indian workers are leading the way to world freedom for the working class. They must be sustained in their heroic efforts with all the might and determination of the British workers in particular and Britain must send a strong and representative delegation to the Paris Congress to take part in the working out of an effective anti-imperialist policy capable of giving back freedom to those peoples who have been deprived of it.

Besides the Indian question, China, the Arab countries and the struggle for the emancipation of the negroes in Africa and America will be among the subjects to be examined by the forthcoming Congress.

To the workers of Britain the accession to office of a Labour Government has brought encouragement and hope, but unless the Labour Government takes advantage of its power and does actually reverse the imperialist policy of domination and economic exploitation of the weaker by the stronger nations, which, as *Labour and the Nation* has pointed out, is creating the revolt of Asia and constitutes a still graver menace in Africa, there can be no relief for British workers from their intolerable conditions.

Let us examine for a moment the situation in India as it affects directly the textile workers of Lancashire and, indirectly, the workers in many other industries. In order to bring the British people to the point of recognising India's right to complete national independence, the All-India National Congress Committee has created a special organisation, with Mr. Gandhi as chairman, for burning foreign cloth, wherever it is met with in India. The bulk of the foreign cloth imported into India is British and the British textile industry is consequently the principal sufferer from the boycott, which is directly and indirectly responsible for the stoppages and short-time in centres like Blackburn, Oldham, Bolton, Rochdale and Stockport. The depression in the cotton

industry of course affects the subsidiary industries of mining, engineering and transport. The well-being of half a million persons is involved in the cotton-industry and if there is any meaning in the international importance of trade unions, the British textile workers cannot afford to permit any attack being made on the Indian textile unions, while the whole country must be brought to realise that until India obtains complete national independence there can be no real peace for the world or prosperity for Britain.

The present attack upon organised Labour in India, of which the Trade Disputes Act and the Public Safety Ordinance, which was passed by the Viceroy over the head of the President of the Legislative Assembly, the arrest of trade union leaders, their transference for trial to Meerut, where jury facilities are not available as they are in Presidency towns where a High Court of Justice exists, the long detention of the thirty-one trade union and Nationalist leaders in prison before the opening of the trial, are warning features, and must not be allowed to pass unchallenged by the workers in European countries. If the present attack is not defeated, Jawaharlal Nehru, chairman of the All-India Trade Union Congress, anticipates that it will put an end to labour organisation in India. A defeat of the Indian textile workers makes it easier for the Master Cotton Spinners' Federation to secure the cut in wages in Lancashire, and the issue does not only affect Indian and Lancashire textile workers.

It has been asserted by the Government of India and repeated in Britain that the fact that labour organisation in India is being extended not only among industrial workers but also among agricultural workers in the villages as well is an indication that some sinister external revolutionary influence is at work. This is an ignorant and misleading suggestion, because a moment's reflection will show that in a predominantly agricultural country such as India, China or Russia, where the industrial population forms only a small proportion of the total population (some 25,000,000 in India out of a total population of 319,000,000) it is indispensable to form workers' and peasants' organisations, otherwise, in the event of an industrial dispute, the employers are easily able to replace strikers by means of labour recruited in the rural areas.

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Workers' and peasants' organisations are in fact the starting point of working-class organisation in an agricultural country.

The League against Imperialism

The League against Imperialism has been formed for the purpose of enabling the workers in the capitalist countries to join hands with the colonial workers in a combined endeavour to secure working-class emancipation from capitalist and imperialist exploitation. The League has been in existence for more than two years. It has been successful in achieving real working-class organisation. It has given new hope to the workers, especially in Latin-American countries, in the Dutch East Indies and in British India. The first World Congress held in Brussels in 1927 was attended by nearly 200 delegates representing 134 organisations from 37 countries. There are now National Sections of the League in five imperialist countries : Germany, France, Britain, Holland and the United States. The All-Russia Federation of Trade Unions is affiliated to the League, as are the India National Congress and the All-India Trade Union Congress. At the second World Congress of the League one of the most important delegations will be that of the Philippine Confederation of Peasants. The Philippines are the most important colonial possession of the United States of America, they have been called "the spearhead of the United States' interest in the Orient." Before being appointed Secretary of State in March last by President Hoover, Colonel Stimson was Governor-General of the Philippines. While holding that office, he was successful in persuading the conservative landowning class in the islands that steps towards complete independence should be gradual. In his speeches Governor Stimson advocated an intensified investment of American capital in the islands as the surest road to complete autonomy. Mr. Stimson's policy in Manila was of especial importance because it appeared to be closely co-ordinated with American policy in China. The Philippine Confederation of Peasants stands of course for "complete, immediate and absolute independence for the Philippines."

Now that the national revolutionary struggle in China is once more entering an acute phase, it is important to remember that

men well acquainted with China have declared that there is no man in the United States who possesses a better appreciation and knowledge of the remarkable opportunities for development which China offers than President Hoover.

The Nanking Government is in need of money to consolidate its position, Chiang Kai-shek cherishes the ambition to reconstruct and rehabilitate China. Hoover and Stimson, possessing a special knowledge of the Far East, are peculiarly well-placed for pursuing the imperialist policy of subordinating the largest state in the world to the American Empire. While America is placing an embargo on foreign goods entering the United States by means of her revised tariff, she is at the same time actively seeking outlets for her manufactured goods, and fields for the investment of her capital.

American imperialism is able to offer the Chinese more than British imperialism can. Hoover and Stimson may charge General Dawes to talk about disarmament, but their attention will be mainly concentrated upon the task of establishing American financial control of China. Financial control of a country is liable to lead to intervention in its affairs. The Americans have intervened in the affairs of foreign countries a great many times. Interference in the affairs of a foreign country is one of the most likely causes of war.

We are familiar with the financial control which the United States have established in European countries. An important example of this procedure in Britain occurred last February when the Utility Power and Light Corporation, one of the principal public utility systems in the United States, acquired the entire stocks of seven of the principal British power companies with substantial interests in others.

Amid all the manifold dangers of oppression and war to which capitalist imperialism gives rise, it is essential that the workers in every country should take advantage of the opportunity which the Second World Congress of the League against Imperialism affords of building up a strong working-class anti-imperialist organisation. British labour organisations and trade unions should do their best to see that delegates are sent.

THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

By EARL BROWDER

IN order to understand the split in the Congress Obrero de Filipinas (Philippine Labour Congress) which occurred at the First of May Congress, we must understand the character of the Philippine Islands and the nature of their relations to American imperialism : this is made doubly necessary because little is known of the Philippines in the international trade union movement.

Instead of picturing the Philippines as a group of small islands of second-rate importance, we must understand they have a total land area of 115,026 square miles and ten of the islands have more than 1,000 square miles each. The Island of Luzon is as big as Holland, Denmark and Belgium combined, and the Island of Mindanao is as large as Portugal. The total population is approximately 12,000,000, while 325,000 live in Manila.

Strategically these islands are of first-rate importance and extend 1,152 miles from North to South, and lie across some of the main Oriental trade routes. It is here the chief naval base for the U.S. Asiatic fleet is maintained and they lie abreast of the East coast of Asia, stretching from within a few miles of Japanese territory, Formosa, in the North, to within a few miles of British Borneo in the South ; and will no doubt play an important part in the next world war centred in the Pacific.

Like all other colonial countries the Philippines are predominantly agricultural. The aim of the American imperialists, of course, is the control of the basic products and raw materials, and to utilise the Philippines as a market for U.S. manufactured goods. The Philippines rank first in the production of coconut, furnishing more than one-third of the world's supply of copra, and hold a natural monopoly in abaca which produces an unequalled hemp for rope manufacture. Together with tobacco and sugar these products form the basic exports of

the country. In recent years, however, much attention has been given to rubber and cocoa production, because of a monopoly in the former by the British ; and regarding the latter, U.S.A. does not possess colonies with climatic conditions favourable for growing cocoa. The country has fairly rich mineral resources, but with the exception of gold, these are undeveloped, as the United States is not concerned in developing native industry to compete with her own manufactures.

To intensify the exploitation of the Filipino workers and peasants and to enslave them economically and politically, the American capitalists develop their policy in harmony with their own requirements. The tendency is towards larger farms and towards large plantations. This is an attempt by U.S. financiers to obtain a monopoly of the basic products. The latter are developed on a purely capitalist basis ; large corporations own the plantations, the factories, transport and warehouses, and control the products that make up the chief exports of the country. They are also aiming to control rice production, the chief product of domestic consumption, by constructing large irrigation schemes in rice districts. In this way American imperialism tightens its grip on the Philippines.

This development already tends to change the character of agricultural life, although farming, carried on by primitive methods, is dominated by very small ownership, and only a few hundred native landowners own 100 hectares or more. However, already this new tendency has the effect of driving the peasants from the land and adding to the unemployed in the towns.

To carry through this "economic development" so much emphasised by the former Governor-General Stimson (now U.S. Secretary of State), the U.S. imperialists find it necessary to completely subjugate the Philippines. This is being done by utilising the same brutal methods as is practised by every other imperialist power, while, in typical American style, camouflaging their suppression by hypocritical phrases and gestures about "ultimate independence."

This democratic mask is intended to serve two purposes ; first, to fool the so-called Liberals and the workers at home who may still believe that colonial suppression is "un-American,"

and to enable the native bourgeoisie in the Philippines to cooperate with U.S. imperialism, in return for which they will receive a few extra crumbs that drop from the imperialist table. In this way the American capitalists, with the co-operation of the native bourgeoisie, hopes to deepen the exploitation of the protesting workers and peasants by centralising the control of the land and developing new processes for extracting wealth from agricultural products.

The fact that the U.S. government granted the Filipinos a Legislative Assembly and a Senate will fool no intelligent worker or peasant, for this must be regarded also as a "sop" to satisfy the native bourgeoisie. This also serves as a democratic mask to conceal the complete suppression of the Philippine people. These parliamentary institutions have no power to pass laws affecting foreign policy, nor can they pass any measure affecting American interests. Formally the "Insular Government" is given control of domestic affairs, but in reality even this cannot be attained within the narrow limits prescribed above, to say nothing of the Acts passed by the American Congress: the Jones Law demands that "*all laws enacted by the Philippines Legislature shall be reported to the Congress of the United States which hereby reserves the power to annul the same,*" and that, "*all Executive functions of the government (Philippine) must be directly under the Governor-General or within one of the Executive Departments under the direct supervision and control of the Governor-General.*"

The degree to which the U.S. imperialists try to preserve their sole right to exploit the Filipino workers and peasants is shown by the fact that out of the total value of exports from the Philippines in 1928, amounting to Pesos 310,112,092, America took a total amounting to Pesos 231,171,751, and out of the Philippine imports valued at Pesos 269,313,796, imports coming from U.S.A. amounted to Pesos 167,716,135. Thus we see the beneficial results of economic and political enslavement of the Filipino workers and peasants which is being carried out with the assistance of the native bourgeoisie and American armed forces.

How far the native bourgeoisie has capitulated can be judged by Senator Manuel Quezon's statements. He is the President of the Senate and erstwhile leader of the Philippine independence

movement, as well as leader of the Nationalist Party, which originally stood for independence. But previous to the departure of Governor Stimson from the Islands, he said :

The United States are in the Philippines, not for the purpose of exploiting the Filipinos, but to help or develop our country for our own benefit and for the purpose of establishing here a free self-governing community. . . . If the United States really meant to adopt the policy of exploiting the Filipinos, there would be no power that would stop her from doing it.

This is the complete abandonment of the struggle for independence on the part of Quezon and his followers, and represents the capitulation of the native bourgeoisie to American imperialists together with their guaranteed assistance in further suppression of the workers and peasants.

This process of development goes on side by side with the evictions of thousands of peasants from public lands, who had inherited their small farms from their fathers' forefathers who cleared and improved these lands, which are now being sold in large tracts to rich landowners. And lest anyone should think these poor peasants should have become rich enough to compete in the open market for ownership, let them not forget that all the methods of usury practised in China, India, Africa, &c. are all prevalent in the Philippines, and after paying 50 per cent. of the crops as rent in kind, together with exorbitant interest on loans, the poor peasants have not enough to support their families. Kept in poverty many of them often find their homes and tools sold by the grafting usurers and cruel landlords who are backed by the United States constabulary.

This is causing a differentiation in the social life of the Philippines which is growing, and is sharpening the class struggle. This accounts for 50,000 workers and peasants marching in the demonstration which was organised by Comrade Evangelista and his colleagues on May 1, primarily in protest against the evictions and arrests of the struggling peasantry. This class differentiation has been noticeable during the last two years and since the C.O.F. affiliated to the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat. It is especially noticeable that during the last few months the politicians have once more begun to mobilise the henchmen and reactionaries for a definite challenge to the militant workers.

The C.O.F. (Congress Obrero de Filipinas) has been traditionally class collaborationist, but under the leadership of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat the progressive and revolutionary leaders have shown determination to make a change. They have developed Marxian theories and propounded new organisational measures in opposition to the reformist and bourgeois theories and tactics. During recent months the militants have led partially successful strikes, and compelled a unity pact between the organised Chinese workers in the Philippines and the C.O.F. ; they advocated the building of factory committees as a basis for building industrial unions ; they took up the demands of the increasingly numerous unemployed workers ; they issued manifestoes declaring for complete independence, and for a workers' political party ; they denounced the politicians of the old parties and announced themselves in favour of the class struggle, all of which is but a reflex of the changing economic and political situation which is directly influenced by the events arising from the Chinese revolution and its betrayal by the Kuomintang, and also by the work of the P.P.T.U.S.

The above constructive proposals, together with others, constituted an accurate political perspective embodied in a thesis submitted to the Congress on May 1. The reformists and political agents of the old parties found themselves too weak to oppose the militants on the Executive of the C.O.F., so they resorted to cunning manœuvres. At the Executive meetings before Congress, they even accepted the draft thesis which included a proposal for a collective leadership to replace the old system of a president with executive powers. At the same time they were preparing to "pack" the Congress in violation of the rules and constitution of the C.O.F.

Tejada, the leader of the Tobacco Workers' Union, member of the Democratic (Conservative) Party, and tool of the wealthy native bourgeoisie and American imperialists, was selected to lead the attack, and instead of fifty-four delegates being legally elected from the Tobacco Workers' Union, with a membership of 12,000, he sent 188 ; while sixty-five appeared from a Stevedores' Union of only 250 members. In this way Tejada and his clique claimed

a majority vote of the Congress and hoped to defeat every progressive measure.

It is no accident that the struggle developed on the question of the election of a Secretariat to control the Congress, for this was an issue upon which the bourgeois politicians chose to split the C.O.F. Comrade Evangelista was in duty bound to challenge the number of delegates entitled to vote, which he did. The Credentials Committee expressed their doubt as to the legitimate number, and thereupon Tejada (who was chairman of the Congress) insisted upon putting the question to the "packed" Congress, when the delegates belonging to the militant section led by Comrade Evangelista, left the Congress. This is the third time, in its twenty-seven years of existence, that disruption of the Philippine trade union movement has been caused by bourgeois politicians and their agents who seek to control the movement for selfish motives and to aid their imperialist masters.

Apparently this time the damage will not be so great. The militant leaders have the accumulated experience gained by contact with the P.P.T.U.S. The political awakening of the masses is also seen in the response made to the call to hold a separate conference immediately after the split. The capitalist newspapers also reported that more than half the delegates left the Congress, and out of thirty-five unions representing a total membership of approximately 80,000 members, twenty-seven are reported by them to have attended the Provisional Conference.

This provisional conference launched the Congress Obrero de Filipinas (Proletariat), and decided to issue a manifesto explaining the splitting, fraudulent and disruptive tactics of these agents of Filipino capitalists. They also decided to call another full Congress on May 12.

The policies of the two groups are well-defined, for Tejada's pro-capitalist faction rejected the pact of unity with the Chinese by declaring it "illegal" to admit them to the C.O.F., but the Proletarian C.O.F. admits them. The reactionaries also voted to ask for the co-operation of the Government Bureau of Labour, declared for national isolation by a demagogic statement to the Press that they are for the Filipinos and against alliances with workers of other countries. This shows the hand of American

imperialism, which seeks to isolate the Filipino workers and peasants ; it is also seen in the fact that the capitalist (American) Press of the Philippines reports this struggle was brought about by a desire to maintain the A.F. of L. presidential form as against the "Soviet methods." However, this should not carry much influence as it is clearly shown already why the imperialists and their agents oppose collective leadership in favour of individual control of the unions.

There are some indications that the reactionaries are doubtful as to their ability to control the rank and file of those unions they were able to retain, for they have created a "Conciliation Committee" to make a "treaty of peace." However, to regard this otherwise than an offensive measure would be a tactical mistake. But the C.O.F. (Proletariat) will accept the overtures, and lay down their conditions ; there cannot be any unity except that the unions remaining with the old C.O.F., controlled by capitalist agents, agree to abide by the constitution and rules, elect new delegates to attend an Extraordinary Congress, and proceed to deal with all proposals submitted in the thesis and agree to new elections. In this way the militant C.O.F. will expose the hollow proposals of these reactionary tools who resorted to dishonest and unconstitutional action. The leaders of the Proletarian C.O.F. will prove to the masses that this attempt was made in order to bind the workers and peasants more firmly in the slave pens of imperialism.

The future progress of the Filipino workers and peasants lies in supporting the C.O.F. (Proletariat), and already Jacinto Manahan, the leader of the Peasants' Confederation, who also participated in the Provisional Conference, declares his allegiance to the militant policy of the Proletarian C.O.F. There is also discontent among the tobacco workers as indicated above, and one union engaged in the cigar-making industry joined with the new organisation. The direct appeal which will be made to every branch of the tobacco workers will constitute a complete exposure of Tejada's clique. It will set forth the policy of the proletariat as against the policy of co-operation with imperialism in the exploitation of the workers and peasants.

The new C.O.F. will show the ultimate result of this uneven

“ economic development ” which develops farms on a large scale and capitalist-owned plantations which drive the peasants from their land. This policy can only have disastrous effects upon the peasantry and the working class, and cannot be compared with development in capitalist countries, for without a corresponding development of industrial enterprises (which will be prevented by American imperialism), the eviction of the peasants can only increase unemployment in the towns and lead to the ultimate pauperisation of the countryside. Already there are nearly three million wage-earning farm labourers and 600,000 are included as migratory workers, while the urban workers only amount to 300,000 with about 112,000 organised into the much divided and scattered trade unions and mutualist organisations.

The C.O.F. (Proletariat) will not neglect to organise the unorganised and consolidate its forces, while making an energetic fight against the agents of capitalism infesting the ranks of the workers. The 10,000 unemployed workers in Manila and the tens of thousands more in the provincial capitals and towns must be organised for their own protection. Factory committees must be organised even in unorganised factories to become the basis of forming industrial unions. And with the preparations for founding a real workers' political party to lead the independence struggle which will develop the political consciousness of the masses, the demagogic appeals of Quezon and his henchmen will no longer fool the masses. The class struggle has been lifted on to a higher plane. The C.O.F. (Proletariat) is now the centre of real trade unionism and prepared to cope with all the problems of the workers and those arising from the evictions of the peasants with the consequent intensified exploitation of the masses. It will assist the peasants' organisation to fight usury and extortionate rents and demand Governmental financial relief for the poor farmers to develop farming on a co-operative basis as against the policy of capitalist exploitation. This is the alternative to selling public lands to foreign imperialists and rich landlords resulting in evictions to make way for capitalist enterprise and large farms. The shorter working day and higher wages for all wage workers will also be demanded. This will be the proletarian answer to the splitting tactics of the united enemies of the workers and peasants.

THE ROLE OF THE CENSORSHIP

By GRAHAM POLLARD

THE very invention and exploitation of the printing press was part and parcel of the disintegration of feudalism. The earliest products of the press were editions of the *Vulgate* and theological works which undersold manuscripts from the monastic *scriptoria*. They were produced in commercial centres ; first at Strasburg and Mainz, midway on the most important trans-continental trade route, and marketed throughout the monastic establishments of Central and Western Europe. Printed books were only one of the commodities whose production and distribution established the bourgeoisie.

Foremost in the organisation of trade and finance in the Middle Ages were the Jews. Unfettered by the Catholic condemnation of usury, their exclusion from power and position in the Christian Church drove them to trade. They were perhaps the first to establish the printing press [? at Avignon in 1444], and their books were certainly widespread at a very early date. The Church and the incipient national bourgeoisie had a common enemy in the Jews ; they were driven from Spain and Portugal to found presses at Constantinople [before 1500], Salonika, and Fez in Morocco [1503]. The Italian Jew, Jerome Soncino, who officially published works of Christian piety and editions of the classics, also printed Jewish religious works in secret. He was driven from his birthplace at Soncino in the middle of the prosperous plain of Lombardy to spend a few precarious years successively at Fano, Pesaro and Ortona down the Adriatic coast, and was finally forced to fly to Constantinople. In Italy, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, periodic examinations of Hebrew books were held, those heretical were burnt, and in some cases their owners as well.

The Lutheran revolt against the Catholic Church was based in the first place on a refusal to pay for the "Indulgences" and to remit other taxes to Rome ; it went on later to deny the

unlawfulness of usury ; and it arose in South-Western Germany, where, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, commercial activity was more developed than elsewhere in Europe. The authority to which Luther (and the Zwinglians, Calvinists *et alii* later on) appealed was the individual interpretation of the Bible in contradistinction to the authoritarian exposition of the *Vulgate* by the Roman Church. This made the translation of the Bible into the vernacular an issue of tremendous political importance ; the first translations of the Bible into English [Cologne, 1525], French [Neuchatel, 1532], and Spanish [Basle, 1562], were all surreptitiously issued outside the country for which they were intended, and rigorously suppressed when imported.

To fight the spread of Protestantism, which was based on the commercial requirements of the bourgeoisie, the definite organisation of the censorship was started. The first lists of books heretical [The *Index Expurgatorius*] were compiled by the Faculties of Theology at Louvain [1543] and the Sorbonne at Paris [1544]. The first printed edition of the Roman Index [The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*] was published in 1546, after having been promulgated by the Council of Trent which was first mooted to heal the Protestant schism. Not only were the works of Luther and Calvin included, but also those of scientists like Copernicus and Galileo. Further, the *realpolitik* of Machiavelli and the lubricity of Aretino were added as no less dangerous than avowed heresy or infidelity.

In England the later Tudor and early Stuart monarchy was in a position analogous to that of Social Democracy to-day. Feudal in origin, it was nevertheless forced to depend on the support of the bourgeoisie, whose militancy it distrusted. Thus, during the Armada period and later, it censored the Martin Marprelate and Brownist tracts just as vigorously as the Roman propaganda from Douai and St. Omer's. This censorship was largely carried out through the Church of England and by means of the Stationers' Company : and it was against episcopacy that the extreme wing of the commercial classes directed their attack. Milton in his *Areopagitica: a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*, discerned in controversial vigour the triumph of the bourgeoisie ;

. . . it betokens us not degenerated nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption, to outlive these pangs and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday sun. . . .

But the Commonwealth was never sufficiently firmly established to relinquish the censorship ; and it was not till 1698, ten years after the glorious bourgeois revolution, that the deliberate lapsing of the printing laws allowed the press to spread throughout England instead of being confined to London and the two University towns of Oxford and Cambridge.

The French intelligentsia of the eighteenth century looked at England with an admiration not dissimilar to that of the working class for Russia in our own day ; the bourgeoisie, hampered by customs barriers and the heavy taxation of a centralised feudal court, regarded England as the land of freedom. The French government, in an increasingly precarious financial position, had to exercise an omnivorous but ineffective censorship. The most important literary and philosophical works were all published outside France, and officially banned within its frontiers ; they were nevertheless widely circulated. Voltaire's most famous works [particularly the collected edition published from 1785 on at Kehl, on the opposite side of the Rhine to Strasburg], Rousseau's *Du Contrat Social* [Amsterdam, 1762], Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* [Geneva, 1748] shared the same fate as the delicate indecencies of the younger Crebillon. The luscious *Fermiers Généraux* edition of La Fontaine, produced for presentation by the tax-collectors of France, had to be issued with a false Dutch imprint. Mirabeau's *Erotika Biblion* [à Rome, de l'imprimerie du Vatican, 1783] was a symptom, just as much as his *Essai sur le Despotisme* [London, 1775], of the political rôle that he was going to play. Thus the intelligentsia, the most conscious section of the bourgeoisie, were ranged against the government, and their artistic brilliance had no small share in the disintegration of the old régime.

At the time of the French Revolution, the industrial revolution in England was not sufficiently developed to give any effective support to the sporadic agitation of Priestley, Godwin and Paine ; but by the end of the Napoleonic wars the factory owners were organised and demanding a share in political power ; the farmers were seething with discontent over the fall in prices ; and the proletariat was becoming a potent force in the reform agitation, in the Luddite riots, and in the organisation of Trade Unions. The censorship was more widely exercised in England at this period than at any time since 1688. Such famous poets as Shelley, *Queen Mab* [1813]; Byron, *Cain* [1821]; *The Vision of Judgment* [1823]; and Leigh Hunt *The Examiner* [1813], were all prosecuted for sedition as well as avowedly political publishers and agitators like Cobbet, Carlile, Hone and Hetherington. When the industrial bourgeoisie who had been admitted to the franchise by the Reform Bill of 1832 secured free trade under the menace of the Chartist agitation, England entered on a fresh period of expansion and the necessity to the ruling class of a widespread censorship disappeared.

The brief historical sketch in the foregoing paragraphs shows that the exercise of the censorship cannot be considered as an isolated phenomenon. Its very existence implies that the works it would suppress are influential ; and its most vigorous use whether against blasphemy, sedition or obscenity, has always been called forth by a decaying class system. A decaying class does not only fear attack from outside ; it must also fear its own disintegration : Calvin or the Communist International may be its open enemies, but it is Aretino and D. H. Lawrence who sap its class morale.

The censorship has a dual function. During the war the Allied newspapers suppressed not only reports of the Kienthal Conference, but also news of allied defeats. It was useless to preserve the masses from Bolshevism if at the same time the middle classes were allowed to lose their nerve ; and defence is still as vital as attack on the ideological front of the bourgeoisie.

Comrade T. A. Jackson, in April issue of the *LABOUR MONTHLY*, took a very limited view of the censorship : on the case of Wilkes [p. 236] he wrote :—

The object of the prosecution was to silence an inconvenient agitator ; and it, temporarily, succeeded. That has been the barely concealed motive of all the chief prosecutions for "obscene" libel from then till now.

Are the Misses Radclyffe Hall and Norah James, then, such inconvenient agitators ? Comrade Jackson takes merely a nineteenth-century Radical point of view ; he lays the traditional stress on Wilkes and Bradlaugh, both extreme middle-class radicals, whose personal victories and defeats at a time of rapid commercial expansion were all achieved within the fabric of a legal system based exclusively on private property. But he cannot put the prosecutions of *The Well of Loneliness* and *The Sleeveless Errand* in this category. Their authors are obscure, and their importance is due to this very insignificance. It is obvious why a capitalist government should proscribe the Statutes of the Communist International : but the prosecution of these "obscene" books must be an attempt to stop the disintegration of the bourgeoisie themselves ; it is the action of an aged beauty smashing the mirror that reveals too clearly the wrinkles of her own decay.

Again Comrade Jackson mentions the betrayal of Mazzini's correspondents by Sir James Graham, and remarks [p. 238] : "To-day, it seems, such things pass without comment . . . even when they are distinguished men of letters. If this can be done without uproar, what is there not possible ?" Could the authentic bleat of the intelligentsia be more aptly mimicked than this ? Comrade Jackson, in bringing together the cases of Mazzini and D. H. Lawrence, omits the vital facts in which they differ. Mazzini was a middle-class Liberal fighting the feudal domination of the Hapsburgs with the support of the prospering British bourgeoisie. But D. H. Lawrence is undermining the property basis of the bourgeois family, when their whole class supremacy is growing more precarious every day.

As an old man must eschew the pleasures of the flesh, so the ageing bourgeoisie can have no place for unremunerative art. Standards of taste must give way to standards of market price, and the works of genius which cannot earn as high a dividend as motor-cars or india-rubber had better remain in the garret. This

inevitable increase of philistinism goes hand-in-hand with the censorship of those topics whose insistent presence has been the raw material of many masterpieces. The pathetic case of "Captain Barker" adds colour to the Well of Loneliness, and the divorce court news, before it too was censored, had revealed many a sleeveless errand. Bound to a commercial philistinism on one hand, and hedged in by a growing official prudery on the other, the artist cannot help being forced into revolt against the system which treats him thus. This objective situation is not unrecognised by some intellectuals. Mr. Wyndham Lewis, for instance, in the third number of the *Enemy* [p. 28] writes :—

In Anglo-Saxon countries to-day then a first-rate or very talented artist or man of letters or philosopher is invariably (with the exception of the theologian) a destructive political revolutionary idealist. In their several ways these persons are as fervent propagandists as was Tolstoy.

It is true that Mr. Wyndham Lewis on this as on nearly all other issues is merely a voice crying in the wilderness ; neither he nor the bulk of the intelligentsia have yet realised their dilemma. They lament their failing prestige, their lack of influence on the government of the day, and say, with Comrade Jackson, "If this sort of thing is possible, what shall we come to next ?" They cannot see that their old allies among the bourgeoisie dare not listen to them any longer, and that capitalist decay must force all those who genuinely care for the freedom of art into the revolutionary ranks.

In contrast to the repression of the artist in Great Britain, and the dearth of outstanding imaginative production in these post-war years, stands the achievement of Soviet Russia. First and foremost in the newest form of art, her films, banned from public exhibition in England, are admitted to be the world's masterpieces. Her novelists, like Gladkov and Libedinsky, are finding more and more readers throughout the West ; and the eyes of intellectual Europe are gradually looking up to her. Slowly but inevitably it is being realised that the only hope for the future of art is the united front of the intellectuals and the proletariat against the dead hand of the philistine capitalist censorship.

The World of Labour

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FINLAND

Trade Union Congress

THE eighth Congress of the Finnish T.U. Confederation opened at Helsingfors on May 10. The Federation includes all the organised workers in Finland, and represents over 90,000 members. The division between Social Democrats and Left Wing is very acute and the difference in outlook is summarised by the conflicting attitudes of class collaboration and recognition of the class struggle. In the campaign for the election of delegates the opposition was clearly expressed and the result of the ballot was a victory for the Left Wing by 109 to 28, all the strongest unions voting by large majorities for Left Wing candidates. It is said that, but for the faking of the ballots by some branches of the Textile Workers' Federation, the disproportion would have been even greater.

The three chief questions at the Conference were International Relations, Political Neutrality, and the Copenhagen Conference, and all these were closely related problems. The maintenance of political neutrality was agreed upon, and it was decided not to affiliate either to the I.F.T.U. or the R.I.L.U., but to continue to work for a united trade union international, which should include all trade union organisations the world over.

The crucial question was the action to be taken in connection with the agreement reached in February, 1928, between the T.U. Confederations of Norway, Finland and the U.S.S.R. at Copenhagen. The Left Wing delegates were anxious to ratify this agreement in the interests of international unity, but in order to avoid splitting their own movement and in view of the threat of the Swedish T.U. leaders to sever relations with the Finnish Confederation in case of ratification, the following resolution was finally agreed upon:—

The Congress of the Confederation recognises the great significance of the Copenhagen agreement for uniting the T.U. movement and for bringing about co-operation between the T.U. Confederations in Norway, the Soviet Union and Finland. The Congress is, therefore, in favour of ratification, but in view of the internal situation in the Finnish T.U. movement at the present time it postpones ratification. If later on a possibility arises for ratification of the agreement, the E.C. committee of the Confederation can again raise the question.

In spite of this effort to preserve internal unity, the prospects of avoiding a split are not very hopeful. Both sides accuse each other of political bias, and the Social Democrats seem to be looking for an opportunity to leave the Confederation, which they stigmatise as a Communist body, in the hope of

getting it suppressed by the authorities. Although offered places on the new E.C., including the post of chairman, they refused all offers of participation, and are holding aloof from the work of the Confederation.

GERMANY

Social Democratic Party Congress

THE annual conference of the German Social Democratic Party was held at Magdeburg from May 26 to 31. The party membership was reported to have increased to 949,306. The party owns 196 papers, with over 1½ million subscribers, and has 153 members in the Reichstag.

In his report on the work of the Parliamentary fraction, Otto Wels, the chairman, made an impassioned defence of the official attitude in the Reichstag. It was their duty to keep the Government in power as long as possible in the interests of the workers and in order to avoid dictatorship. If the enemies of the Republic (by whom he appeared to refer to the Communists rather than the Stahlhelm or Hugenberg) succeeded in injuring democratic government to such an extent that no alternative was left except a dictatorship, then Social Democracy would be able to administer even a dictatorship. The right to the dictatorship would belong to Social Democracy and to no other party, for it alone could guarantee a return to democracy.

Hans Vogel elaborated the same theme. The coalition was necessary and inevitable and it was unfortunate that so many members of the party saw only what their representatives failed to carry through, and never noticed what perils to the workers they succeeded in averting. No one in the party denied the class-war character of the party: "The fight goes on but we are Socialists in deed, and not only in word."

This note of apology was sounded again and again during the Conference. The Reich fraction was not satisfied with the Coalition, but only by making certain concessions could it defend the workers' interests in such questions as Unemployment Insurance. Germany was no longer a purely capitalist country, but was already in a state of transition to Socialism, and the Socialist elements were growing. There must, however, be no testing of the practical value of this advance in any of the vital issues, lest a trial of strength between the parties revealed the unreality of the contest and the subservience of Social Democracy to the party of big business, as in the Ruhr crisis of last December.

On the concrete questions of armaments and the building of the cruisers the democratic policy was to give way to the majority in the Cabinet. The Social Democratic Ministers were of course opposed to the building of the cruisers, but if they had voted against it they would have had to resign, and if they came out now against the cruisers they would make themselves eternally ridiculous."

Herman Muller, the Chancellor, further urged that, recognising it as a duty to the workers never to go to war again, they must not leave the bourgeois parties to govern alone; conveniently forgetting the patriotic record of Social Democracy in the Great War, he had the effrontery to suggest that if the Social Democrats had not been excluded from the German government and if Jaures had not forbidden the French Socialists to join a bourgeois Ministry, the disaster of 1914 might have been avoided.

To show the reality of their pacific intentions, they turn sharply on the U.S.S.R. and declare—it is Breitscheid speaking—that the party does not want a military alliance with Russia. It requires that the Soviet régime in its relations with Germany should behave in a manner becoming to a “culture state.” In this manner they hope to efface the effect of their surrender to the militarists of their own country. The opposition in the party was considerable but unorganised; the leaders: Seger, Levi, Seydewitz and Eckstein were themselves not united, and the official element was therefore able to hold its own without difficulty. The draft programme in its revised form was finally adopted by 244 to 147, and all the official resolutions were carried.

FRANCE

Paris Postal Workers' Strike

A GENERAL strike of Parisian postal workers lasting twenty-four hours took place on June 4, as a protest against the suspension of 191 postmen, who struck for five hours on the previous Friday. The causes of the original strike were two-fold: the retention by the authorities of the postmen's monthly clothing allowance as a forced contribution towards the official pension fund, and the more general grievance of the Civil Service Grant. Great indignation was aroused by the allocation of the £4,000,000 voted by the Chamber to increase the wages of civil servants, instead of being used to raise the wages of the lowest paid workers, being largely handed over to the higher grades, and the postmen, whose yearly minimum wage amounts to no more than 8,000 francs, or less than those of the average girl typist, felt themselves defrauded. A vigorous agitation was set on foot, which culminated in a spontaneous outburst on May 31, and this was pounced upon by the authorities with the utmost severity. All the strikers were suspended for a month, and this savage reprisal caused still deeper resentment which found expression in a twenty-four hour strike of all grades.

The success of the strike was immediate and paralysing. At a monster demonstration of 8,000 postal workers, the strike order was given and was instantly obeyed. No letters were delivered in the business quarters of Paris, and no mails left for the provinces from the Central and most of the divisional Post Offices. At the Central office the postmen stood at their posts, but refused either to work or to leave the building, and food had to be brought to them. In all, over 10,000 postal workers were involved, belonging to both Right and Left Wing Postal Federations, although the active leadership was supplied by the Left or Unitaire elements.

A special meeting of the Cabinet was summoned which issued an ultimatum, threatening severe measures against all those who failed to resume work immediately, and the workers, having made their protest, went back.

As a direct consequence and justification of their strike action, the Cabinet agreed to reduce the period of suspension for the majority of the original 191 strikers from one month to ten days. The opportunity was taken, however, to penalise the leaders of both strike movements, who were all members of the Left Wing Postal Federation, some of whom were dismissed, while others were suspended for three months without pay. The Communist faction in the Chamber supported the right to strike of the postal workers and

reiterated their demand for a minimum of 10,800 francs, but the Socialists abstained from voting against the Government, and the Cabinet's action was approved by 325 votes to 260. Germain Martin, the Under-Secretary of State for Posts and Telegraphs, defended the retention of the 24 francs in the workers' interests, and went on to justify their wages on the ground that they only worked for six or seven hours, and, therefore, had the time to follow other trades—"they could act as concierges." He also declared that tips made the wages up to a reasonable amount—an astonishing attempt at justifying low wages in a public service, which could apparently be dishonoured by strikes but not by sweating.

The strike is significant as the first outward expression of the discontent among the mass of government and municipal workers, a section of the working class whose conditions are often worse than those of their comrades in industry, while their hopes of redress are slighter, owing to their disabilities as public servants. Apart from sectional demands, the right to strike is a right that will have to be fought for and won by the "functionaries" of the French Republic.

INTERNATIONAL

Meeting of the I.F.T.U. General Council

A MEETING of the General Council of the I.F.T.U. was held in Prague from May 23 to 25. W. M. Citrine, in his Presidential address, claimed that the Trade Union movement was advancing both in the economic and political field, and instanced the International Labour Office as evidence of this advance.

The Secretary, J. Sassenbach, reported a membership of 13,450,000. Germany alone showed an increase, 400,000, but this was offset by a drop in other countries, notably Britain, which had lost 175,000 members in 1928, and the net increase was something over 300,000. Speaking of the "Amsterdam-Moscow problem," he claimed that the R.I.L.U. attack was slackening, and that Tomsky's remark: "The game with Amsterdam is played out," marked the end of a phase in the campaign against the Federation, which might be regarded as a victory for Amsterdam. He believed that the war against Moscow would be brought to a successful conclusion, for the Federation would refuse all proposals for Unity Committees and World Congresses, and he expressed the hope that the Soviet trade unions would of their own free will offer sincere co-operation in the work of the I.F.T.U.

Citrine and Sassenbach presented a report on their recent visit to Italy, and a resolution was adopted noting that the normal legal activities of free trade unions were absolutely impossible under the Fascist system, and proposing that the "Problem of Trade Unions in Countries without democracy" should come up for discussion at the 1930 Congress.

There was a long discussion on the economic programme of the I.F.T.U., introduced by Leipart, the German Social Democrat, Vice-president of the Federation. The new policy is to extend the economic functions of the trade unions—so as to place them on the same footing as the political functions, and so that the unions should co-operate in every field of economic action. The International Labour Office is to be supplemented by an International Economic Office, and there must be constant contact between Geneva and

Amsterdam. Trusts and monopolies are to be checked by the peaceful methods of questionnaires, publicity and statistics.

Such constant supervision is necessary :

because rationalisation is changing the economic structure of the world with ever growing rapidity. It is important that there should be unanimity in the attitude towards rationalisation. The trade unions desire to promote ordered growth, rational concentration, and the application of new methods. Rationalisation means saving in capital, labour and time. The right kind of rationalisation means a larger output with the same expenditure of capital, labour and time. And if the output is greater, then there will be more to divide, and the standard of living of the workers can be raised. When they thus advocate rationalisation, the trade unions do not deny the fact that as a rule the first results of rationalisation will be the dismissal of workers. But this must be endured for the sake of the advantages to be expected from rationalisation. In the meantime, it is the duty of the trade unions to see that the unemployed receive proper assistance.

The I.F.T.U. Press report lays great stress on the unanimity of its economic policy, a unanimity which might well extend to beyond the borders of the Federation to the opposite camp of the employers, as they recognise the wholesale adoption of the old capitalist fallacies. It is true that the British representatives are described by the *Daily Herald* as "dissatisfied," but their opposition was based, not on a repudiation of its surrender to capitalist rationalisation, but to the excessive gradualism of the removal of tariff and customs barriers. It was stated, apparently without contradiction, that the organised working class has no ground for opposing this natural process of development ; on the other hand the Federation is to work with the unions in preparing the way for and carrying through rationalisation on the largest possible scale.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Danger Zones of Europe. A Study of National Minorities. By John S. Stephens, M.A. Merittens Peace Lecture. (The Hogarth Press, 86 pp., 2s.)

Rego and Polikoff Strike Songs. (United Clothing Workers' Trade Union, 30 pp., 6d.)

The Next Ten Years in British Social and Economic Policy. By G. D. H. Cole. (Macmillan, 459 pp., 15s.)

Joy in Work. By Henri de Mann. Translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul. (Allen & Unwin, 224 pp., 8s. 6d.)

An Introduction to the Procedure of the House of Commons. By G. F. M. Campion. (Philip Allan & Co., 308 pp., 12s. 6d.)

Lenin. The Revolution of 1917. Collected Works. Volume XX. Parts I and II. (Martin Lawrence, 331 and 428 pp., 10s. 6d. each part.)

Bill Hayward's Book. The Autobiography of William D. Hayward. (Martin Lawrence, 368 pp., 7s. 6d.)

China's Struggle for Tariff Autonomy. By Edward Bing-Shuey Lee. (International Relations Committee, 90 pp.)

The American Labour Year Book, 1929. (Rand School of Science, 302 pp., \$2.50.)

Boycott of British Goods. By Maneklal H. Vakil. (M. H. Vakil, 55 Girgaon Road, Bombay. 59 pp., 4 annas.)

Soviet Union Year Book, 1929. (Allen & Unwin, 624 pp., 7s. 6d.)

Direct Building. With an Introduction by the Rt. Hon. John Wheatley, M.P. (Labour Research Department, 74 pp., 1s.)

BOOK REVIEW

COLE'S RETURN TO THE FABIANS

The Next Ten Years in British Social and Economic Policy. By G. D. H. Cole (Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 15s.)

G. D. H. Cole has rejoined the Fabian Society. He has written a long and wearisome book to advocate as a new truth the old Fabian idea of experts administering industry in the name of the State. It is a pompous book which makes it plain that time has added nothing to Fabianism save dullness.

Cole, who had rejected Fabianism and become the academic advocate of Workers' Control, after many years of propaganda, found himself faced by a reality—the Workers' State of Soviet Russia. His propaganda weakened and he abandoned politics for education. Oxford is a pleasant town for "thinkers."

Cole tells us he had "grown aware of something wrong." When he made speeches "an inner voice" began to ask him "Do you believe that?" Disturbed by this internal heckler, Cole retired to Oxford and there, in a "Lead, kindly light" sort of way, he has been attending to the demands of that "inner voice." This book is the result.

Oxford plays nasty tricks. It was there that Newman attended to his "inner voice" and he, who had been really rude to the Scarlet Woman on the Seven Hills, was lured into the Roman Church. So, at Oxford, Cole, who had only been pertly insolent to the panjandrums of the Fabian Society, now repents him of his Fabian nursery peccadilloes and says quite nicely that he "especially wishes to thank Mr. Clifford Allen, the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, Mr. George Lansbury, the Rt. Hon. Sydney Webb and Mrs. Sidney Webb. They have helped me greatly."

The preface tells us that Cole's "conception of Socialism has changed with a changing world." Yet this book might well be the work of any Fabian who finished his thinking late in the nineteenth century. On page 31, Cole admits that "general reasons can be advanced for the upsetting of the highly artificial economy of international commerce on which the pre-war prosperity of Great Britain was based," reasons which can "readily be developed by doctrinaires into a plausible illustration of the 'inherent contradictions of capitalism.'" But he contends that "we shall get more light on our present perplexities not by philosophising about these 'inherent contradictions' but by asking ourselves how and why each of the great industries on which we have hitherto relied has fallen into its present troubles." So Cole puts out a policy which ignores the "inherent contradictions."

In his chapter "Politics, Old and New," he avoids consideration of the "inherent contradictions" so carefully that even the war danger is completely taboo. Except for one or two slight, incidental, passing references, the war danger is not considered in this book.

In Chapter V, "The New Capitalism," Cole says: "If anything can rejuvenate the capitalist system Lord Melchett and his colleagues are the men for the job," and later states dogmatically "capitalism is not going to perish to-morrow." Yet several years ago Cole wrote with equal emphasis "capitalism was half-rotten before the war; it is three parts rotten now and

nothing can save it from being all four parts rotten before many years have passed."—"We see capitalism dying and are well aware that were it worth saving no effort of ours could avail to save it."

Though Cole claims that his conceptions have "changed with a changing world," he writes a chapter on Rationalisation which fails to record the least interest in the rationalisation of industry in a Workers' State carried through in Soviet Russia. The Russian Revolution, the greatest change in a changing world, a change which has unprecedented significance for the working class, Mr. Cole completely ignores. His suggestions on "The Unemployed" have been received with interest by the Press. The proposals for a National Labour Corps—a "disciplined" body—suggest a fusion of the "Servile State" proposals which figured in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission in 1909 and the social schemes of the sentimental supporters of Fascism. Cole produces, in support of his plan, the fact that Bellamy in *Looking Backward* "envisaged a period of labour service for the youth of his Socialist Community"; this is Cole's defence of his disciplined National Labour Corps in this *Capitalist State*. Mr. Cole does not seem much concerned with the *character* of the State so long as it acts.

In this book, as in his previous books, Cole ignores the basic issue: the method of effecting the conquest of Class Power. This book gives no lead on this issue. To spend hundreds of pages on how State Control can be applied without facing the question of the seizure of State Power by the working class, is either futility or propaganda for Fascism.

Those who oppose Mondism are accused of "boggling at talking things over with Lord Melchett." Surely Cole realises that the Mond-Turner negotiations are a part of a scheme for the "rejuvenation of the capitalist system," and that the rank and file trade unionist must oppose such schemes. Cole would not trust his affairs to be settled between Melchett and Turner were he one of Melchett's employees, neither do we.

Not only does Cole disregard the war danger and the lessons of the Russian Revolution, the record of the Labour Government of Queensland in its action against the sugar and railway workers has also taught him nothing.

Most significant of all, so complete is his insularity, that he is able to write of the Next Ten Years in British Economic and Social Policy in relation to "The Empire-Foreign Affairs" without more than the slightest reference to India. Yet it is plain to any man who has eyes to see that the battle of the British workers is now being fought on the strike fields of India. This omission of Cole's is not accidental; it is deliberate blindness.

Cole's early Guild Socialist propaganda was deceptively easy, because it avoided the reality of the struggle for power. His new Fabian propaganda has the same determination to avoid realities. He refuses to consider the "inherent contradictions" of capitalism; this renders his British Social and Economic Policy quite simple, and quite futile. To those who face the realities of social development and class conflicts, international conflicts, and above all of colonial conflicts, this book is valueless.

S. P.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE NEW TRANSLATION OF "CAPITAL"

To the Editor of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

DEAR COMRADE,—In his letter in your issue of May, 1929, dated Moscow, April 18, 1929, Comrade Riazanov writes :—

A hasty perusal of their (E. and C. Paul's) book resulted in my discovering the following errors : (list follows).

We are sure that our Comrade does not intend any *suggestio falsi*, but most of those who read his letter will believe him to be charging us with certain mistranslations from the text we used, that of the fourth German edition. Actually Comrade Riazanov has scanned the list of alleged misprints or conjectural emendations in the German text given by Karl Kautsky on pp. xiii and xiv of his editorial preface to the *Volksausgabe* of *Das Kapital* (Vol. I, 1914). Naturally our translation from the fourth edition (1890), containing the last text revised by Engels, does not tally with Kautsky's revised text of 1914.

Apart from this technical point, are all the five instances mentioned by Riazanov errors ?

(1) He says that on p. 282, instead of "Arbeitervolk" (working people) we have "French people."

Now the word "French" is in the text anyhow. What Kautsky shows is that the word "Arbeiter" has been dropped from the compound word "Arbeitervolk" by the printer. The English text ought to read "the French workers" instead of "the French people," and shall be corrected accordingly.

(2) He says that on p. 318, instead of "Arbeitszeit" (labour time), we have "labour power." The German fourth edition has *Arbeitskraft*, Kautsky says that this is a misprint for *Arbeitszeit*, as used in the second edition. We agree, and admit that we had not become fully conscious that there was a misprint. But in our translation, "the expenditure of the necessary labour power for eight hours daily," the use of the word "labour power" is correct ; and the translation conveys the meaning of Marx's German quite as efficiently as would have a literal translation of Kautsky's revised text.

(3) He says that on p. 552, instead of *Lehrfabrik* (factory for learning), we have "tannery." Here, once more, we agree with Kautsky that *Lederfabrik*, in the fourth edition, should have been *Lehrfabrik*, as in the second. We had not detected the actual misprint, but had marked our German text in the margin, indicating our awareness of something wrong. It was, for translators from the fourth edition, a case for a conjectural emendation (a "wangle," if you like), and ours was good enough to satisfy any one but a pedant. We did *not* translate so as to suggest that a school of that date was a tannery—though Marx was not incapable of the grim jest ! (Compare the famous passage at the close of Part II.) But we are glad to

have had the error pointed out, and are correcting it in the reprint now being made.

(4) He says that on p. 593, instead of "politische Oekonomie" (political economy), we have "English economics." The German fourth edition has "Englische Oekonomie," but Moore and Aveling, translating from the third edition, have "political economy." Here we differ from Kautsky, who regards "English" as a misprint, and wants to go back to the earlier text. We think that any well-informed English reader of the footnote in which the passage occurs will agree that the substitution of the less general term for the more general one in the fourth edition was probably a deliberate emendation made by Engels.

(5) He says that on p. 866, instead of "hoffnungsvoll," we have "unhappy." The fourth German edition has "hoffnungslos"; Moore and Aveling, translating from the third, have "unhappy." Kautsky says it is a misprint. We will spin a coin with him as to who is right, but we think "hoffnungsvoll" more likely to be a misprint than "hoffnungslos." It seems more in keeping with Marx's sardonic humour to write "a mishmash of knowledge through whose purgatorial fires the unhappy candidate for a post in the German bureaucracy has to pass," than to write "the sanguine candidate."

Having dealt with the specific charges of mistranslation, let us turn to generalities. Riazanov says that until we convince him by a thorough criticism of the old translation that a revision was absolutely impossible, he will continue to think our new translation superfluous. (He reminds us a little of an old Scottish lady of our acquaintance, who, when in the mood for a battle royal, would say defiantly: "Conveence me, Ah'm only waiting to be conveenced!"). How can we convince him? Not, we fear, by splitting hairs as to what is a "literary" translation, and what a "scientific." We must counter by a general statement. He admits that a revision of the old translation is necessary. Well, a revision would have been a devitalised botch. If the old translation was difficult to read (of that anon), a pedantically "accurate" *revision* would have been—will be, if ever made—hopelessly unreadable.

What is a good translation? The requisites of good medicine are said to be that it shall "cure quickly, safely, and pleasantly." In like manner, the requisites of a good translation are that it shall convey the author's meaning in a foreign tongue, and shall do so quickly, safely, and pleasantly. A publisher who considered that the Moore and Aveling translation did not fulfil these demands commissioned us to make a new one, and to use the fourth German edition, finally revised by Engels, as our text. Agreed that it might have been preferable to use Kautsky's *Volksausgabe*, but that is still copyright, and the English publisher, wishing to produce the translation at as low a price as possible, did not want to burden his undertaking with royalty or outright payments to the Germans. Besides, many, perhaps most, of Kautsky's modifications concern German readers, and have little bearing on the possibilities of an English translation. But some of the remarks he makes in his preface have so close a bearing on the canons that have guided us in our translation, that we venture to reproduce them here:—

He has incorporated certain passages from the French translation, "for my business was to make the German text more readily comprehensible, in so far as this could be done without impairing the profundity and character of the work."

"In the choice of these passages, I did not feel bound to be guided by the English translation revised by Engels, since my main concern was to produce a German text easy to understand."

As regard the question whether there are any important differences between his text and earlier ones, he writes: "Of my own 'editing' of the text I need only say what Engels said of his in his preface to the fourth German edition, 'that the laborious process of rectification has not modified any of the essential contents of the work.'"

In questioning the expediency of a new translation, and in his doubts as to whether ours is a good one, Comrade Riazanov has two notable supporters, the *Socialist Standard* and *The Times*. The former says: "We are quite certain that the majority of readers will hold that the present translation . . . is no way superior to, if as good as, the Sonnenschein edition." The reviewer in the *Thunderer* writes more guardedly. He finds it "surprising" that there should be a new translation. There are only "small verbal alterations, sometimes to the advantage of the new, sometimes to that of the old." Certainly the new volume is "easier to read than the other; but since there are no great differences, we wonder at the venture."

Just as we have no intention of complying with Comrade Riazanov's demand for a detailed (and "convincing") demonstration of the faults of the old translation, so we feel no call to sing the praises of our own. "We have done our level best," and there it is. But, at the cost of undermining the *Socialist Standard's* certainty as to the opinion of the majority of readers, we should like to wind up by quoting a few voices from what, with the exceptions named, has been a universal chorus of approval. Reviewers are "readers," sometimes; and there is internal evidence to show that many of the reviewers of the new translation of *Capital* have undertaken a less "hasty perusal" than that on which Riazanov bases his criticism.

The *Socialist* and *Labour Press* has so far been chary of notice: but the *Daily Herald* says, "At last a great book has been worthily translated"; and from the *Socialist Review* we learn that "the translation which has hitherto passed current has been a rather bad one," but "this new translation will go far to instruct the uninitiated in what Marx really thought and wrote." *

Yours fraternally,

EDEN and CEDAR PAUL.

LONDON, *June 2*, 1929.

* Comrades Eden and Cedar Paul append seven further approving notices from the bourgeois press, which we are compelled to omit from reasons of space.—Ed.

THE
LABOUR
MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 11

August, 1929

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

1914—1929

An Appeal—International Red Day—Pre-War Again—The Old International and War — 1914 — Why? — Imperialism and “National Defence”—Bourgeois Pacifism—Sequel of 1914—The International General Strike Against War—The First Condition—What is the Future 1914?—International Civil War—New Antagonisms—Forerunners of War—The New Second International Prepares War—The Real Fight Against War

FOR the first time since the founding of the LABOUR MONTHLY it is necessary to begin these Notes with a warning and an appeal on the position of this journal. The present number of the LABOUR MONTHLY is in danger of being the last, unless help from friends is rapidly forthcoming. This warning is not lightly given. The essence of the situation is that, after all expenses are reduced to a minimum, we have to meet a net loss of £20 a month, which is not covered by existing subscriptions or occasional donations. Those who are acquainted with the conditions of publication will recognise that this is a very low figure. But unless we can count on this loss being met, we are only piling up an already existing debt, with no prospect of meeting it. The immediate question is not one of circulation, although we ask for help in this too; the circulation of the LABOUR MONTHLY is in fact rising. But the basis of the capitalist press, advertisements, is closed to us; and we have to depend on donations to make good the deficit. To enable the LABOUR MONTHLY to continue, it is necessary for a sufficient number of friends to combine to guarantee a total donation of £20 a month. If, for example, one hundred friends of the LABOUR MONTHLY who are in a position to do so can combine to guarantee a fixed monthly donation according to their means, whether of £1, 10s., 5s., 2s. 6d. or 1s., so as to reach a total of £20, then the LABOUR MONTHLY can continue. Can this be done? We ask for a special effort from all our friends, and for them to seek the co-operation and interest of others.

If this can be done, the future of the LABOUR MONTHLY is secured. But speed is essential. If this basis cannot be secured, the journal will be closed down, as there is no intention of continuing it only to pile up a debt and close down later with that debt unpaid. The work we are doing will go on in other forms ; but the definite position won by the LABOUR MONTHLY, and the contacts of a journal which has its circulation in every leading country in the world will be lost and not easily regained. Therefore we ask our friends to come to the rescue quickly.

THE war issue this month dominates all others, and in particular the question of the International Red Day organised in every country in the world as the simultaneous world demonstration and preparation of the revolutionary working class against the coming war. At the outset, it is necessary to say something of the significance of this as the first large-scale attempt at an *international action* to combat the war danger. It is a commonplace on all sides that imperialist war can only be fought by the action of the international working class. Yet such action is impossible except on the basis of previous preparation. How can an army go into battle that has never been marshalled or had one day's training in peace? The old Socialist International pledged itself by the Stuttgart and Basle resolutions to international working-class action against war. But no attempt was made to get beyond the phrase and prepare and organise such action beforehand; the phrase remained on paper, and the paper shrivelled up in the first burst of cannon. *To prepare such common international action by the one-day international strike and demonstration against war is worth more than a hundred resolutions, even though the action to begin with is only of the vanguard of the working class.* It is the action that awakens the consciousness, that spreads the idea in the masses, that represents the first gathering of the international working-class army for the coming fight. And particularly important is this in Britain, which is the very centre of imperialist war preparations, where the national limitation of the working-class movement is strongest, and the revolutionary working-class forces are still small; it is above all important that we should play our part in Britain, on

the widest possible united front basis, without fear of our present smallness, with confidence in the future and consciousness of the historic significance of our task, that we should march parallel with our comrades in every country in this international preparation against war, and show the imperialist warmongers that the international working-class army exists as a living force and is advancing consciously in every quarter of the globe to the future revolutionary fight when the warmongers let loose the call to slaughter.

THE most serious feature of the present-day situation is that, after 1914 has shown once and for all the true character of capitalism and war, the impotence of bourgeois pacifism and the deadly outcome of "Socialist" pacifism which bases itself on the support of the existing imperialist states in the name of "national defence" and thus inevitably turns into social-chauvinism, and the necessity of the revolutionary working-class struggle against imperialist war as the sole means to overcome it, these lessons have not yet been learnt, and the pre-war situation is repeating itself on a far larger scale with terrible identity. The differences are great, and we shall come to consider them; but they are differences in scale and in the degree of world development; the basic root problems remain the same. Once again capitalism, saved and restored by the aid of social democracy from the end which threatened it as a result of the last war, is driving visibly before the eyes of all to renewed world war. Once again the empty talk of bourgeois pacifism echoes on every side to delude the peoples and pave the way to war. And once again the mass of the working-class movements in Western Europe and America, following national-reformist leaderships, trusting in phrases of peace, and intent on winning small social reforms, are treading the path to the pit of war, when their national-reformist leaders will at once become recruiting-sergeants and butchers, while the whole machinery of bourgeois pacifism and its League of Nations will be turned to demonstrating the "justice" of the war. The whirr of the bombing aeroplanes, the sound of cannon, is in the air. But the revolutionary awakening that can alone end all this has still to be achieved. And the first

step to understand the present situation is to understand the experience that has gone before, the experience of the international Socialist and working-class movement in the fight against war, the lessons from which we must learn at our peril.

WHY did the Socialist International break down in 1914? The world war was no unforeseen event; its coming, its very outlines, were discerned beforehand on every side; the last Congress of the old Socialist International was the Special Congress at Bâsle in 1912, held solely to deal with the question of the near-approaching world war. The duty of International Socialism in the fight against war and in the event of war was explicitly laid down; its lines had been elaborated at every Congress. At the Zürich Congress in 1893 it was laid down:—

The representatives of the working-class party are under the obligation to vote against all military credits.

At the Paris Congress in 1900 it was laid down:—

The duty of the Socialist representatives in all parliaments is unconditionally to vote against every military, naval or colonial expenditure.

At the Stuttgart Congress in 1907 the famous decisive formulation of the task of International Socialism in relation to war was laid down, and was repeated word for word in the resolutions of the Copenhagen Congress of 1910 and of the Bâsle Congress of 1912. It is still of value to recall this formulation, which provides the kernel of Marxist policy in relation to war, for the benefit of those who have come later into the movement and to-day unconsciously follow the Second International as "Socialists," without realising that the present-day "Second International" has long ago thrown overboard all the basic and universally-accepted principles of International Socialism up to the war, and that the only successor and carrier forward of International Socialism to-day is the Communist International. The declaration runs:—

If war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working class in the countries concerned, and of their parliamentary representatives, with the aid of the International Socialist Bureau as a means of co-ordinating their action, to use every effort to prevent war by all

the means which seem to them most appropriate, having regard to the sharpness of the class war and to the general political situation.

Should war none the less break out, their duty is to intervene to bring it promptly to an end, and *with all their energies to use the political and economic crisis created by the war to rouse the masses of the people from their slumbers, and to hasten the overthrow of capitalist domination.*

This declaration, it is worth noting, was originally drafted and submitted as an amendment to the proposed resolution by Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and others at the 1907 Congress. It was universally adopted at the Congress by all the parties present, including the British Labour Party, the French Socialists, the German Social Democracy, &c. The task of the revolutionary working-class struggle against war, and, in the event of war, the task to transform it into the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, is here explicitly laid down. It may further be noted that Lenin, according to a subsequent statement by him, originally drafted this declaration in very much sharper terms, making clear the full task of revolutionary action, and that this was subsequently modified, not on the basis of any disagreement, but on the insistence of Bebel, the leader of German Social Democracy, that, while in full agreement with the sense, and ready to guarantee that German Social Democracy would not fail when the time came, he considered it necessary for police reasons, in order to prevent the party being prematurely declared illegal, to use more guarded language, and accordingly the above formula was after long discussion laboriously worked out to point to the same objective in more "legal" language. There was thus no dispute as to the meaning. (See Zinoviev, *Der Krieg und die Krise des Sozialismus*, footnote to page 619.)

WHY did this universally agreed and pledged policy of International Socialism become a dead letter in the hour of crisis in 1914, so far as the majority parties in England, France, Germany and a number of other countries were concerned, and give place to exactly opposite action? It is important to note that the international line was faithfully carried out by the Socialists of invaded Serbia, who had to bear the first brunt of war, by the Russian Bolsheviki,

and step by step by the other revolutionary Marxist elements and sections in every country, in proportion as they were able to break from the official parties. There was thus no question of the collapse of an impossible ideal or aspiration, which could not be fulfilled, but of a definite betrayal by the majority parties, for definite social reasons. The formula of the revolutionary working-class fight against war, and the transformation of imperialist war into social revolution, which constituted Lenin's greatest contribution to the decisions of the old Socialist International, was no paper emptiness, but the mighty seed of future growth; it became the rallying point and guiding light for the revolutionary Left in every country in the dark days of the war, led to the formation of the Zimmerwald grouping, and so, through the 1917 Revolution, to the Communist International. It is manifest that, had the entire Socialist International, with its twelve millions strength, carried out without hesitation its pledged line in 1914, not only would the imperialist war have been smashed at the outset, but the entire power of capitalism in Europe would have been overthrown, and we would be to-day engaged in the task of building up socialism over the greater part of the world, in place of the situation which exists to-day. The failure of the Socialist International in 1914 was the greatest historical failure of human progress. The hour for the ending of capitalism had struck; but the international working class was not ready. Only the partial victory of International Socialism in 1917 was able to redeem that failure and usher in the new era, the Socialist era; but that new era has now to fight a long and heavy battle against the renewed forces of world capitalism and imperialism, saved for a further lease of life by Social Democracy. This issue is at the heart of the world situation to-day. *To understand aright the failure of 1914 and the partial victory of 1917 is to reach the basic contradictory forces of the present world situation.*

THE correct understanding of the failure of 1914 is the condition of the successful fight against the new 1914 that is now approaching. But the answer to this question brings us to the root of the weakness of the old Second

International, and to the basic issues which still confront, unsolved, the working class in Western Europe to-day. The old Second International represented in reality a compromise between contrary forces; and this compromise increasingly paralysed its action until the final collapse in 1914. The basis and framework was international revolutionary Marxism; but within this framework, as the movement developed under the conditions of the epoch of imperialism, there grew up a contrary force, which was in reality the reflection of imperialist influence on the privileged sections of the workers in Western Europe. This contrary force found its conscious expression in revisionism, reformism or opportunism; but the reality of its influence went very much further than its conscious expression, which was in name still condemned. The essence of this reality consisted in growing adaptation to the existing imperialist states. The phraseology of international Marxism still remained; but within this outer façade the working-class parties were growing up more and more as national parties on an increasingly legal basis, *i.e.*, on a basis of adaptation to the existing States, agitating for reforms within the existing order, tied by a thousand threads to their respective States, and weakening in their basic revolutionary aim. This situation could long continue up to 1914 as a gradually growing latent contradiction, as an inner controversy within the working-class movement, and as an unstable equilibrium. But with 1914 the break finally came, and opportunism was once and for all revealed as inevitably the betrayal of the working class.

WHY did the break inevitably come with the issue of war in 1914? Because the issue of war, just as it brings all the issues of capitalism to a head, brings all the issues of the class struggle to a head. It presents an "Either—Or." Either unity with the imperialist state in mutual slaughter of the working class. Or unity with the international working class in revolutionary struggle against imperialism. There is no middle course. On this rock the old Second International broke, as all opportunism must break. *If the interests of the working class are bound up with "their" capitalist State, then they must go to war in its "defence" against their fellow-workers.*

This becomes the inescapable position alike of the Jingo Right and of the "Pacifist" Centre; in England, equally of Henderson and of MacDonald (who declared "Whatever our views may be of the origin of the war, we must go through with it," "Victory must be ours. England is not played out," &c.); in Germany, equally of the Right Wing Scheidemann and of the Left Centrist Kautsky; in France, equally of Right Wing Renaudel and of the Left Centrist Longuet. In the name of "national defence" the workers must kill one another for the plundering aims of rival world imperialism. Only the revolutionary line can break through this dilemma, and replace the sophistries of "offensive" or "defensive" wars, "national defence," &c., with which the war-Socialists of each country sought to justify their positions, by the real issue of imperialism or revolution, *i.e.*, that the interest of the workers does not consist in promoting the aims of their imperialist rulers, but in overthrowing their imperialist rulers, and that, only when they have won power, can the question of Socialist defence arise. Socialism, as Marx and Engels abundantly showed in theory and practice, does not deny "national" wars, *i.e.*, wars of national liberation, such as the colonial peoples to-day have to fight against their imperialist oppressors. But to apply the "national" conception to modern inter-imperialist wars is a mockery. The statesmen of the old Second International endeavoured to combine the conceptions of "national defence" and of "internationalism," which, under the conditions of the imperialist epoch, means to combine the service of capitalism and of the working class. In all the voluminous debates up to 1914 the issue was never cleared, but remained in a fog. But the war soon cut through the verbal jugglery and exposed the reality. *The war of 1914-18 demonstrated once and for all that internationalism can only be realised on the basis of the revolutionary working-class struggle, of revolutionary Marxism, and on no other basis.*

WHAT collapsed in 1914 was thus in reality not international Socialism (in the sense of revolutionary Marxism), but bourgeois pacifism which had eaten its way into the heart of the old Second International. For the

essence of bourgeois pacifism is the combination of the profession of peace with the support of the existing capitalist régime, which is based on violence and war. Bourgeois pacifism is thus inevitably a contradiction, like bourgeois democracy. Bourgeois democracy professes the liberty and equality of all men; its reality is class slavery. Bourgeois pacifism professes the peace and brotherhood of all nations; its reality is imperialist domination and commercial competition, leading inevitably to war. Up to the point of war, bourgeois pacifism can indulge in wholesale protests, aspirations, eloquence, international congresses, judicial machinery for settling legal disputes, &c. So soon as war comes, and the reality of imperialism breaks through the flimsy texture, bourgeois pacifism can only join up with its state to which it belongs; for the alternative is the line of revolutionary struggle. This essential hypocrisy of all bourgeois pacifism was faithfully, if crudely, expressed by one of its most famous leaders, the American silver-tongued Bryan, who led the agitation against American entry into the war. In a telegram to a great anti-war meeting in Chicago in February, 1917, he declared:—

If it comes to war, then of course we shall support the Government ; but up to that moment it is our most sacred duty to do everything that lies in our power to save the people from the horrors of war.

Could the rôle of pacifism as the tool and servant of imperialism and war be more shortly expressed? First, harmless resolutions and manifestoes to draw the anti-war feelings of the masses into a useless channel; then, at the moment of war, inevitable betrayal.

BUT does this crudest and unconcealed hypocrisy of bourgeois pacifism differ one iota from the attitude of the "Socialists" of the Second International or the Amsterdam Trade Union International? Let us see what Kautsky had to say in October, 1914, representing the "pacifist Left" Wing of German Social Democracy:—

If in spite of all the efforts of Social Democracy a war will break out after all, then each nation will have to do its best to save its skin. Hence it follows that the Social Democracy of all nations will have the same right or the same duty to take part in this defence, and none of them need reproach the other.—(Kautsky in *Die Neue Zeit*, October 2, 1914.)

A splendid "right" of the proletarians of the united International to slay one another; and "none of them need reproach the other"! This is the essential position of the British Labour Party, the German Social Democracy and the other parties of the Second International to-day, except that they have in fact advanced very much further along the same line, beyond the mere support of war "if war breaks out," to the direct and active preparation of war in their rôle as capitalist governments. Or take the statement of the present Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, Ben Tillett, at the Vienna Congress of the Amsterdam Trade Union International in 1924:—

We must fight more energetically than hitherto against war. Till now the Communists were the only energetic opponents of war, we must not leave them this monopolist position. We must take timely preventive measures against war, for *if a war breaks out, every one of us stands by his own country.*

To-day, as noted, Social Democracy has advanced far beyond this position; they are no longer merely the accomplices of war, but the active preparers of war. But the root of the whole tree was fully displayed in the hour of 1914; the rest is only the inevitable sequel.

THE essential lesson of 1914 is thus that the fight against war, the fight for internationalism, can only be fought as part of the revolutionary working-class struggle against imperialism and for the overthrow of the existing imperialist régime. Without this, all talk of the fight against war is idle deception. But the revolutionary working-class struggle can only be conducted by a revolutionary working-class movement, by a working-class movement which already in time of "peace" breaks all ties with the bourgeoisie, which is led by a revolutionary party, which is prepared for the conditions of illegality, which sets before itself the aim of the overthrow of the capitalist state. Without this, all talk of "war on war," &c., even the most revolutionary sounding, is criminal hypocrisy. This is most clearly shown by the whole discussion and subsequent practical experience of the formula of the International General Strike against war, which is still occasionally played with

as a slogan by the Second International and Amsterdam International. This formula was put forward in the old Socialist International by the British and French sections, that is, by two of the most backward and opportunist sections, and reached its fullest discussion over the Keir Hardie-Vaillant amendment at the Copenhagen Congress in 1910. It was opposed by the German and Austrian sections, and finally shelved for "inquiry." Does this mean that the British and French Socialists were "more revolutionary"? On the contrary. It was precisely because they were less revolutionary that they were able to play with such revolutionary phrases. French pre-war Socialism was notoriously rotten with opportunism and parliamentarism; Keir Hardie and the Labour Party were actually supporting in thinly veiled coalition the Liberal Government of war-preparation. On the basis of such practice, corrupting and paralysing through and through the most elementary action of the working class, to talk light-heartedly of "promising" beforehand the highest forms of revolutionary mass action, only attainable on the basis of prolonged revolutionary agitation and a rising wave, and inevitably reaching, if seriously persisted in, to civil war and the struggle for power (as even the limited example of the incomplete General Strike of 1926 already showed), was nothing but criminal deception and frivolousness and wilful refusal to face the real fight, as the subsequent experience plentifully revealed. It was precisely the British and French Socialists, from right to left, who failed most completely in the war, and showed themselves, even in the Left Wing groups of opposition to the war, most completely unprepared and helpless to raise a fight. It was precisely the Russian and German Marxists who raised the serious mass fight.

AND when to-day the reformists, with the blood of the workers upon their banners, in alliance with counter-revolution, maintaining capitalist governments and capitalist war preparations, again dare to talk light-heartedly of the international general strike as the magic formula to "prevent war," in order to conceal their own betrayal of the real struggle and lull the workers to sleep, we would say to them: "First

show yourselves capable of some more elementary tasks. Break with the bourgeoisie. End industrial peace. End Mondism. End the governments of capitalist coalition. Vote against war credits. Smash the Trade Union Act by a general strike. Lead the working-class struggle against capitalism. And when you have shown yourselves ready for this, then and then only will it be time to talk with you of revolutionary mass action in the highest and most difficult fight of all, the fight against war, which, seriously tackled, can mean nothing less than the advance to civil war and the revolutionary struggle for power." Only on the basis and practice of the revolutionary class struggle can there be meaning in the conception of the general strike against war; then and then only the general strike can take its place as a weapon and a stage, according to the degree of ripeness, in the total struggle. For those Socialists, of whatever tendency, who are serious in their desire to realise the general strike against war, the test of that seriousness is ready to hand to-day in their preparedness to co-operate in the united front of the International Red Day, the preparatory action of the working class against war.

UP to this point we have concentrated attention deliberately on the lessons of 1914, because this is the indispensable first basis and starting point for correct policy to-day. But there could be no greater mistake than to imagine that the new 1914 will simply prove a repetition of the old in some further variant. The new 1914 will differ from the old as much as 1914 differed from 1870. The whole world conditions have profoundly changed and advanced at a gigantic pace. The basic situation of both world capitalism and the revolution has radically changed. The existence of the Soviet Union over one-sixth of the earth, and the existence of the Communist International, alike transform the situation. The struggle of the colonial peoples is to-day no longer a subsidiary, but a primary factor. The rôle of Social Democracy has entered on to a new and more advanced stage. The character of the coming war, whose outlines we can still only doubtfully discern, is likely to differ basically, not only in technique, but in its whole social and political form, from

all that have preceded it. Completely new issues confront us. Our task is to prepare ourselves to face these new issues. Once we have mastered the lessons of 1914, once we have gathered up the experience of the international movement to the present point and the teachings of Marxism and Leninism, our task is to carry these forward to meet the new conditions and the new world situation in which we find ourselves.

WHAT is the essence of the new world situation? Its first and most important character is that the struggle of world imperialism and the revolution has entered on to a new stage. The struggle is no longer only social within each country, but is at the same time also geographical. The war of 1870 gave rise to the Commune. The war of 1904-5 gave rise to the First Russian Revolution. The 1912 Manifesto of the old Socialist International laid stress on these two fore-runners to point the way to what should be the outcome of the coming world war. But both these were still only episodes, and indications of the future. From the war of 1914-18 the world Socialist revolution has for the first time won its fortress in the Soviet Union in the midst of the capitalist world and has maintained it for twelve years. This gives at once the decisive character to the present period and the coming struggle. The primary aim of world capitalism is to destroy that fortress. The primary aim of the international working class is to maintain and extend it, to defeat the attacks of the capitalists on the Socialist fortress, and to create new Socialist fortresses in union with the first, leading on along the path towards the future world union of Soviet Republics. Whatever the starting point of the future world war, this character is likely to become dominant. In the most likely event of a direct imperialist attack on the Soviet Union, which will be supplemented by the attempted fomenting of counter-revolutionary war within it, at the same time as the workers in the imperialist countries will be fighting against the attack, the inner war and outer war take on a new and closer unity: it becomes no longer a war between *nations*, between "England" and "Russia," but between *classes*, between imperialism and the international working class. Such a process

was already foreshadowed in its first primitive form in the years of intervention, and especially after the collapse of the inter-imperialist war, in 1919-21, when the inter-imperialist war passed into the background before the issue of revolution and counter-revolution in Europe. *To prepare the consciousness of the widest numbers of workers for this character of the coming struggle, to replace chauvinism and bourgeois pacifism by class-thinking and action on the lines of international working-class solidarity, is our first and foremost task.*

IN the second place, the character of the antagonisms giving rise to war has changed. Not only has the first and foremost antagonism of to-day, that of imperialism against the Soviet Union, no counterpart in the pre-1914 world, but the whole world situation has advanced to larger and more complicated issues. In the pre-1914 world the war situation centred round the six European Powers, and, more particularly, round the conflict of the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, which in its turn centred round the dominant guiding thread of the Anglo-German antagonism. The question was not of *what* war, but *when*. To-day, not only have the wider issues extended from Europe to the world, but, in place of the previous single dominating inter-imperialist antagonism, there run parallel three basically differing types of antagonism, first, between imperialism and the Soviet Union, second, between the rival imperialist Powers and in particular the Anglo-American rivalry, and third, between imperialism and the colonial peoples, now rapidly advancing along the path of liberation.

EACH of these issues complicates the others. A whole series of partial struggles, small-scale wars and civil wars in every quarter of the globe during the past ten years, each reflecting wider antagonisms (the war of France and Spain on Morocco, of England on Afghanistan, of the Chinese Revolution, of the Chinese Counter-Revolution on the Soviet Union, of the United States on Nicaragua, of Bolivia-Paraguay on Poland-Lithuania, of the civil wars in Afghanistan or China, to take a handful of examples of differing types), as well as a whole

series of diplomatic incidents, explosions, sharp breaks and turns (the Rhur plunder expedition, the Arcos Raid and Anglo-Soviet rupture, the Anglo-French Naval Pact, the British-American conversations, the series of counter-revolutionary dictatorships in Europe, to take again a handful of examples of differing types), all in varying forms foreshadow the gathering larger issues and future world conflict. Again, the alliances and groupings are shifting, and reflect the instability of the whole present period of capitalism. Only in proportion as partial stabilisation has been effected, has the central Anglo-American antagonism come increasingly to dominate the situation, and even here the groupings around it are still fluid. The League of Nations represents one type of war alliance on the basis of Versailles, the point of which may eventually be turned either against the Soviet Union or against America. The Pan-American Federation and Kellogg Pact reflect alternative attempted groupings. The French scheme of the United States of Europe, if successful, may build up a new combination as a third factor against both England and America, as well as against the Soviet Union. These varied combinations are all still unstable and in process of development. But the gathering intensity of imperialist economic conflict, following on the advance of technique, rationalisation and mass-production, forces the pace even more rapidly forward. What becomes increasingly clear is that, with the ever more interlocked character of the world situation (and not least with the new "peace" mechanisms of the League of Nations, Kellogg Pacts, &c., guaranteeing to universalise the future war), a wider conflict, once it develops, will rapidly extend to the whole world and draw into its wake the thousand waiting issues in every part.

IN the third place, Social Democracy has advanced to a new stage. It is no longer merely the passive accomplice of imperialism and betrayer of working-class solidarity. It is now the direct spokesman, and even an integral leading force, of imperialism and direct preparer of war (Paul-Boncour Militarisation Act, Labour Government armaments building, &c.). In 1914 the collapse of the Second International resounded through the world. If now on the outbreak of war the present

Second International were to break up, the fact would hardly be noticed; for it is now, visibly, no longer an instrument of peace even in appearance, but an instrument of imperialism (Kautsky's recent pamphlet on the Armaments question, insisting on the right of Germany to equal armaments with the other Powers, illustrates the current trend). But in fact the Second International is not even threatened with serious break-up in the event of war to-day, since it represents in fact a relatively narrow imperialist grouping on the basis of the League of Nations and the interests of Western European imperialism and, in particular, the principal agency of imperialist preparation of war on the Soviet Union. Kautsky's call for "foreign intervention" in the case of a question of war involving a country where "dictatorship" exists, is as open in his recent pamphlet as in his previous publication on *The International and Soviet Russia*. With this may be compared the Labour Government's recent Air Force demonstration of the bombing of a Soviet port, under the form of an assumed war against a country which refuses to submit itself to the League of Nations. And it is in connection with this principal war aim of present imperialism that lies the principal significance of the present Second International. The old pre-1914 Labour Party was simply the passive accomplice of the Liberal Government which prepared war. The present Labour Government is the direct preparer of war, and occupies the position of that pre-1914 Liberal Government.

THIS changed position of Social Democracy throws on the working class new conditions of struggle, and the need of new forms of organisation and action, not only for the immediate economic and political struggle, as has already been driven home by the experience of the past two years, but above all for the coming supreme fight, the fight against imperialist war. Just as in the economic struggle, we have seen that we have to fight against not only the machine of the state and the employers, but equally against the machine of Social Democracy in the working-class organisations, this applies with a hundred-fold greater force to the fight against war. The fight against war will have to be fought against conditions of intensified illegality

and repression both from the state machine and from social democracy. For capitalism has also learnt the lessons of 1914-18, and above all of 1917. Capitalism has learnt by experience the Marxist lesson of the connection of war and revolution. The bourgeoisie know that the menace to their war plans lies, not in the phrases of pacifism, which they bless, or in the elaborate machinery of the Leagues of Nations and the Peace Pacts, which serve their war purposes, but in the revolutionary struggle of the working class. And they have prepared their machine of coercion with a completeness exceeding all the experience of the past war. The incidents of May Day (in Paris 4,000 revolutionary workers were arrested overnight to prevent the demonstration of the workers and cut all the lines of their organisation, and in Berlin the police and their armed cars swept through the streets shooting at random at the unarmed workers) were only a fore-taste of the conditions of the future struggle against war. Against these conditions we shall have to fight. The revolutionary working-class struggle will rise the stronger against these conditions, and will smash its way through all the machinery of coercion, as it smashed its way through the machine of Tsarism. But these conditions of struggle we shall have to face, and be prepared to face, or bow the neck beneath the yoke of imperialism and imperialist war. The talk of peace and "war on war" is cheap to-day and plentiful on every side. To all those who make this talk to-day, we would say: "Face this fight, the revolutionary fight against the machine of capitalism and imperialism, or drop the talk of peace."

R. P. D.

FACING THE WAR-MAKERS

By W. GALLACHER

THE question of war is, or should be, in the forefront of all our immediate activities. Day by day the evidences of war preparations and war alliances are more and more coming out into the open. Never was there greater need of working-class activity, yet so far as this vital issue is concerned we must frankly face the fact that the workers are almost entirely indifferent. They must be awakened to the seriousness of the war danger.

This will be no easy matter, for the screen of peace is being assiduously constructed so that the workers may not see the preparations going on behind. They take the protestations of Labour Leaders and other "Peace" advocates at their face value, failing to realise that such "Peace" protestations are an essential part of war preparation. It is this Peace propaganda which gives the war-mongers the opportunity of swinging the masses of the workers over to their support when war is declared. It is so easy in such a period of national excitement to satisfy the workers that British policy was a "Peace" policy and that war was forced upon Britain by an aggressive enemy. It is essential to expose the fraudulent nature of Capitalist "Peace" manoeuvres and drive home to the minds of working men and women the lessons to be drawn from the existing situation of terrific struggle for the markets of the world, rising tide of colonial revolt and steady advance of social construction in the First Workers' Republic.

In the fight for markets all the Capitalist countries are engaged, but standing out as the principal protagonists are Britain and America. We are often told by shallow-minded pacifists that war between Britain and America is impossible. We speak the same language, these people tell us, and that itself is sufficient to prevent serious misunderstanding and to ensure everlasting peace. Nominally, of course, we do speak the same

language, but in the actual fact of business life an entirely different language is spoken. American Imperialism speaks the language of the Dollar, British Imperialism speaks the language of the Pound. And there can be no question about the fact that war is raging to-day in every part of the world between the Dollar and the Pound.

In South America, in Canada, in Australia, in the East, as on the Continent of Europe, the dollar forces its way. The British Imperialists feel its attack everywhere. When Beaverbrook launches his campaign for "Imperial Crusaders," he, and those he represents, are declaring war on American finance. "Win back the Dominions from the menace of American penetration," would be their slogan, if they dared come out openly. Of course, we have just recently witnessed very friendly exchanges between MacDonald, the representative of British social democracy, and Dawes, the representative of American high finance; they even planted a tree of Peace. All very fine for the films and for deluding the workers, but having no other value than as a temporary Armistice for the purpose of allowing time to deal with the Workers' Republic before coming to a show-down on the question of World Domination.

So long as the question of war with America is in its present stage, MacDonald will be allowed to go around mouthing vague indefinite generalities. But the American Imperialists are not deluded. They are not looking for vague moral precepts. They have an abundance of such from quacks on their own doorstep. The American Imperialists are looking for profit, for markets that provide the profit, for spheres of influence, for colonies.

Can MacDonald give them these? Only at the expense of the British Empire, and the task of the MacDonaldites is to save the Empire, not to give it away. Saving the Empire, the Slave Plantation of the Plunder-Gang, means War with America.

But while the fight for the market rages, all of the combatants are faced with the fact that one-sixth of the world's surface has been taken out of the orbit of Capitalist exploitation and is being used by the workers for the construction of Socialist Society. This is a serious menace to the stability of Capitalism in two respects. In the first place, it means a very great restriction of a world market,

already too small. At the moment, however, the defeat of the Workers' Government and the re-establishment of capitalism in Russia would provide a measure of relief. The ultimate result would be the same. For, with Russia developed along Capitalist lines, the problem of markets would become more acute than ever before. But it is immediate relief that is wanted, and as Russia would provide this, all of the imperialist countries are united in their desire to destroy the Workers' Government.

There is another—more serious aspect: capitalism with its deadly exploitation and starvation of the workers cannot face the competition of a workers' form of society. In the early years of the Workers' Government the competition was not serious. But now, with the progress that has been made in Russia, comparisons favourable to capitalism cannot any more be drawn, and with the completion of the five years' plan, the comparison will be very obviously the other way about. The five years' plan will explode all the vain pretensions of social-democracy. So social-democracy openly joins forces with capitalism, for the sabotage or destruction of the First Workers' Republic.

True, America threatens the British Empire, and will sooner or later force the issue to the arbitrament of war. But before that day Britain must get her rear protected. The workers at home must be tied down through Mondism or other means to complete submission. It is impossible to go to war while the workers are in a position to rise in revolt before the war has got properly under way. Once the war is well started, then the most extreme measures can be taken to suppress any projected rising, but in the earlier stages passivity on the part of those who have not been swung over to rabid patriotism is absolutely essential.

Now while in Britain the home workers are fairly well under the control of the Labour leaders and the Trade Union bureaucrats, in India, the seat of Empire, the situation is entirely different. There the tide of revolt is steadily rising, and, in the event of war with America, would most certainly express itself in an open revolutionary struggle for complete independence. India is therefore an outstanding danger point in the rear of British Imperialism. Before Britain can even hope to face America, India must be crushed down into complete submission. But this task is an

impossible one while the example of Russia stands out before the exploited workers and peasants of the East. To the Imperialist-ridden masses of these countries the victories of the workers and peasants of Russia bring new hope and new inspiration. What the Russian masses have achieved by heroic endeavour they also can achieve.

America's immediate threat is its penetration of the Dominions and its general attack on the world's markets. But the threat from Russia is the example it sets to India, and to the workers as a whole. If India is to be retained, if the Empire is to be kept going, the Soviet Workers' Government must be destroyed. MacDonald and the lackeys of capitalism who constitute the Labour Government will do their utmost in this direction. *The danger of war against the Soviet Union is an immediate danger.* The whole diplomacy of capitalism is centred on this first task.

In Britain, the Labour Government will enter into negotiations which are ostensibly directed towards recognition of Russia, but in actual fact will be concerned with an attack on the Communist International. Never was there a time when greater watchfulness, greater activity, was necessary. Steadily, the enemies of the workers gather their forces and make their preparations for war. We must go to the factories, and to the Trade Union branches and arouse the masses of the workers. We must shatter the illusions that are so sedulously cultivated by the Labour leaders and their Left apologists. These latter will be exceptionally dangerous. Already we have Maxton and Cook, fresh from their election betrayal of the workers into the hands of MacDonald and Capitalism, posing as the champions of Indian freedom, while actually they are endeavouring to lead the Indian movement into "safe" Parliamentary channels.

Against all such as these the Communist Party will fight. Placing its faith in the workers, and the workers alone, it will arouse them to the true meaning of present day events. It will organise them as it arouses them, swinging them into action through mass demonstrations and strikes, and so preparing them for the great task of destroying capitalist war by the Workers' war against Capitalism.

SOCIALISM AND WAR

By N. LENIN

[The following article comprises the first two chapters of a pamphlet with the above title written by Lenin in collaboration with Zinoviev in August, 1915. The pamphlet was prepared for the Zimmerwald Conference, but technical reasons delayed its appearance until after Zimmerwald. German, French and Russian editions were illegally distributed during the war by the Zimmerwald left groups. The translation below has been prepared specially for the LABOUR MONTHLY from the Second Russian edition of Lenin's works, Vol. XVIII. The reader should bear in mind throughout that in August, 1915, Russia was still under Tsardom and that there was still no Communist International in existence to carry on the traditions of revolutionary social-democracy.]

SOCIALISTS have always condemned the wars that have occurred between nations as a barbaric and beastly thing. Nevertheless, our attitude to war is fundamentally different from that of bourgeois friends of peace (pacifists) and anarchists. From the former we are to be distinguished in that we understand the causal interconnection of wars with the class struggle inside the country, and understand that the abolition of wars is impossible without the abolition of class society and the victory of socialism ; we are further to be distinguished from them in that we regard civil wars, *i.e.*, wars of the oppressed classes against the oppressors, of slaves against slave owners, of serfs against landowners, of wage-earners against capitalists, as lawful, progressive and necessary. As Marxists, we are to be distinguished as much from the pacifists as from the anarchists in that we consider necessary an historical analysis, from the standpoint of Marxist dialectical-historical method, of each war in detail. In the course of history there have been not a few wars which, in spite of all cruelty, bestiality, suffering and torture inevitably associated with any war, were progressive, *i.e.*, they contributed to the development of humanity, inasmuch as they helped to destroy particularly harmful and reactionary institutions (for example, absolutism and serfdom), the most barbaric despotisms in Europe (Turkish and Russian).

Consequently it is necessary to analyse the historical peculiarities of the present war.

Historical Types of War in Modern Times

The French revolution opened a new epoch in the history of mankind. From this time up to the Paris Commune, bourgeois-progressive national wars of emancipation formed one of the types of war. In other words, the main content and the historical significance of these wars was the overthrow of absolutism and feudalism, its undermining, the shaking off of the yoke of a foreign ruler. Precisely on this account they were progressive wars and all honest revolutionary democrats and socialists during such wars always hoped for the success of that country (*i.e.*, of that bourgeoisie) which was contributing towards the overthrow or weakening of the most dangerous supports of feudalism, absolutism and national oppression. For example, the revolutionary wars of France contained also an element of plunder and conquest of foreign lands by the French, but that does not alter in the slightest the fundamental historic significance of these wars, which shattered and destroyed the feudalism and absolutism of the old serf-owning Europe. In the Franco-Prussian war, Germany robbed France, but this does not alter the basic historical character of this war, which freed many million Germans from feudal dismembering and oppression by two despots, the Russian Tsar and Napoleon III.

The Distinction Between Defensive and Aggressive Wars

The epoch 1789-1871 left behind deep traces and revolutionary memories. Up to the throwing off of feudalism, absolutism and foreign rule, there could be no talk of the development of the proletarian struggle for socialism. When the socialists spoke of the justification of "wars of defence" in relation to the wars of such an epoch, they always meant just these aims, *i.e.*, the revolution against feudalism and serfdom. The socialists understood by a "defensive war" always one which was "*just*" in this respect (Wilhelm Liebknecht on occasion also used the term in this way*).

* Lenin has in mind Liebknecht's speech at the Erfurt Congress of the German Social Democratic Party in 1891.

Only in this sense have socialists recognised the lawfulness, progressiveness and justice, of "defence of the fatherland," and so they do to-day. If to-morrow, for example, Morocco were to declare war against France, or India against Britain, or Persia and China against Russia, these would be "justifiable" "defensive" wars independently of who had begun them, and every socialist would hope for the victory of the oppressed dependent states over the oppressing, slave-owning predatory "Great Powers."

But let us suppose that an owner of a hundred slaves carries on a war with an owner of two hundred slaves for a more "fair" division of the slaves. It is clear that the application of the conception of "defence of the fatherland" or "defensive war" to this case would be historically false and practically a sheer deception of the uneducated common people and petty bourgeoisie by clever slave-owners. In precisely this fashion does the imperialist bourgeoisie betray the people by means of national ideology and the conception of defence of the fatherland in the present war between the slave owners, in a war which aims at the maintenance and extension of slavery.

The Present War is an Imperialist War

Almost all recognise that the present war is an imperialist war. But for the most part this understanding is distorted or only applied to one side, or the possibility is conceded that this war can have a bourgeois-progressive national-emancipatory significance.

Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalist development, which was first reached in the twentieth century. The old national states, without the formation of which feudalism could not be abolished, have become too narrow for capitalism. Capitalism has gone so far on the path of concentration that whole branches of industry have been seized by syndicates, trusts or groups of capitalist millionaires and almost the whole globe has been partitioned among these "rulers of capital," either in the form of colonies, or by the envelopment of the lands overseas by a thousand threads of financial exploitation. Competition and free trade were replaced by the tendency towards monopoly, towards conquest of spheres for investment of capital and sources of raw material, &c. From a liberator of the nations in the period of the struggle against

feudalism, capitalism in the imperialist epoch has become the greatest oppressor of nations. Formerly progressive, it has become now conservative. It has developed the productive forces so far that mankind stands before either transition to socialism or before a year, or even a decade-long, war of the great powers for the artificial preservation of capitalism by means of colonies, monopolies, privileges and all kinds of national oppression.

The War of the Big Slave-owners for the Maintenance of Slavery

To explain the significance of imperialism, the following data are given on the division of the world among the great powers (*i.e.*, the powers which have been most successful in robbery) :—

Figures in Millions

Great Powers	Colonies				Motherland	
	1876		1914		1914	
	Square kms.	Pop.	Square kms.	Pop.	Square kms.	Pop.
England	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	.3	46.5
Russia	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2
France .. ..	.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	.5	39.6
Germany	—	—	2.9	12.3	.5	64.9
Japan	—	—	.3	19.2	.4	53.0
U.S.A.	—	—	.3	9.7	9.4	97.0
6 Great Powers ..	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2

This shows how the nations, which in the period from 1789 to 1871 marched at the head of the struggle for freedom, have now on the basis of highly developed and over-ripe capitalism become converted into oppressors of the majority of all the peoples and nations of the whole globe. Between 1876 and 1914 the six "Great Powers" have plundered 25 million square kilometres, *i.e.*, a territory two and a-half times as large as Europe. Six states oppress *more than half a milliard* (523 millions) inhabitants of the colonies. For every four inhabitants of the "Great Powers" there are five in "their" colonies. And it is well known to all that the colonies were conquered by fire and sword, that the colonial peoples are treated like cattle, and that they are exploited in a thousand ways (through export of capital, concessions, cheating in sale of goods,

subjection to the power of the "ruling" nation, &c., &c.).

The French and British bourgeoisie deceive the people by maintaining that they are carrying on the war for the liberation of Belgium and other peoples. In reality, they are carrying it on in order to keep in their grasp the colonies that they have stolen in such quantity. The German imperialists would immediately liberate Belgium if the British and French would "fairly" divide the colonies with them. The peculiarity of the position is that in this war the fate of the colonies is being decided by war on the continent of Europe. From the standpoint of bourgeois "justice," "national freedom" (or the right of nations to existence), Germany would be completely in the right against Britain and France because it owns "too few" colonies. Its enemies oppress a greater number of peoples than Germany does, and in the kingdom of its ally, Austria, the oppressed Slavs enjoy more freedom than in Tsarist Russia, this veritable "prison house of nations." *But Germany fights not for the liberation but for the oppression of nations.* It is not the duty of socialists to help the younger and stronger robber (Germany) to plunder the older robber already fed to satiety.

The socialist must utilise the fight between the robbers in order to overthrow them all. With this object, the socialist must in the first place tell the people the truth, viz., that this war is in a threefold sense a war of slave holders for the strengthening of the worst slavery. Firstly, it is a war for the strengthening of slavery in the colonies by a "fairer" division and by a further more "united" exploitation of them. Secondly, it is a war for the strengthening of the oppression of foreign peoples in the countries of the Great Powers themselves, for both Austria and Russia (Russia in a much higher and worse degree than Austria) only exist on the basis of this suppression, which they want to strengthen by the war. Thirdly, it is a war for strengthening and extending wage slavery, for the proletariat is split and driven under, while the capitalists win and enrich themselves in the war, in the course of which they inflame national prejudices and strengthen reaction, which in all—even the most free republication countries—has come to the forefront.

War is the Continuation of Politics by other (violent) Means

This famous phrase comes from one of the clearest and most thorough-going military authors, Clausewitz. Marxists have always justly held it to be a statement of the theoretical foundation of views on the significance of every war. Marx and Engels always regarded wars from precisely this standpoint.

Apply this conception to the present war. It will be seen that in the course of decades, almost for half-a-century, the Government and ruling classes in England, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Russia carried on a colonial policy of robbery, brought foreign nations into subjection and oppressed the labour movement. Exactly this policy, and it alone, is being continued in the present war. In Austria and Russia especially, the policy alike in peace time and in war has consisted in the oppression of nations and not their liberation. On the other hand, we see in China, Persia, India and other dependent countries during the course of the last decades a policy of awakening of tens and hundreds of millions of men to national life, to freedom from the yoke of the reactionary "Great" Powers. War on this historical ground can even now be bourgeois-progressive and national-emancipatory.

It suffices to consider the present war from the standpoint of the continuation of the policy of the "Great" Powers and of the chief classes inside them in order to see at once what a crying historical falsehood and hypocrisy is the opinion that one can defend the thought of "defence of the fatherland."

The Example of Belgium

The social chauvinists of the Triple Entente (now the Quadruple Alliance) like most of all to appeal to the example of Belgium. But this example declares against them. The German imperialists have shamelessly violated the neutrality of Belgium, as has been done everywhere and always by war-making States, which tread underfoot *all* treaties and engagements if they find it necessary. Let us suppose that all States which have an interest in the preservation of international treaties were to declare war against Germany with the demand for the liberation of Belgium and its compensation. In this case the sympathy of socialists would naturally be on the side of the enemies of Germany. But the matter

is that the Triple Entente (and the Quadruple Alliance) are *not* carrying on the war on account of Belgium. This is very well known, and is not spoken of only through hypocrisy.

Britain plunders the German colonies and Turkey, Russia plunders Galicia and Turkey, France wants the conquest of Alsace-Lorraine and even the left bank of the Rhine, a treaty is concluded with Italy for the division of spoils (Albania and Asia Minor), and haggling goes on also with Bulgaria and Roumania for the division of spoils. On the basis of the present war, of the present governments, it is only possible to help Belgium by helping to strangle Austria or Turkey, &c. What has this to do with "defence of the Fatherland"? In this lies precisely the peculiarity of the imperialist war, of a war between reactionary capitalist historically-outlined States, which is carried on for the purpose of oppression of other peoples. Whoever justifies participation in this war, perpetuates imperialist suppression of nations. Whoever promotes the utilisation of the present difficult situation of the Governments for the purpose of the fight for the social revolution, defends the true freedom of all peoples, which can only be realised in socialism.

What is Russia Fighting For?

In Russia, capitalist imperialism of the most modern type has found its complete expression in the policy of Tsarism towards Persia, Manchuria and Mongolia. But, taken as a whole, there predominates in Russia military and feudal imperialism. Nowhere in the world is the oppression of the majority of the inhabitants so great as in Russia: the Great Russians form only 43 per cent. of the population, *i.e.*, less than half, and all others are deprived of rights as of "foreign origin." Of the 120 millions of the Russian population, about 100 millions are without rights and oppressed. Tsarism carries on the war with the object of the conquest of Galicia and the final suppression of the Ukrainian freedom movement, with the object of conquering Armenia and Constantinople, &c.

Tsarism sees in the war a means of diverting the growing dissatisfaction inside the country and suppressing the growing revolutionary movement. At the present time, for every two Great

Russians there are between two and three of "alien" race without rights. By means of war, Tsarism seeks to increase the number of peoples oppressed by Russia, to seal their oppression and so to weaken also the struggle for freedom on the part of the great Russians. The possibility of oppressing and plundering other peoples promotes economic backwardness; for very often, instead of the development of productive forces, semi-feudal plundering of the "alien" races provides the source of revenue. In this way the war on the part of Russia has a pronounced reactionary and anti-liberating character.

What is Social-Chauvinism?

Social-chauvinism is the foundation of the conception of "defence of the Fatherland" on the present war. From this conception is derived further the renunciation of the class struggle during the war (voting of war credits, &c.). *In reality, the social-patriots conduct an anti-proletarian bourgeois policy*, for in reality they stand not for the defence of the Fatherland in the sense of a struggle against subjection by a foreign ruler, but they defend the "right" of one or other of the Great Powers to plunder the colonies and oppress foreign peoples. The social chauvinists repeat the bourgeois deception of the people, as if the war was being carried on with the object of defending the existence and freedom of nations, and in this way they range themselves on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. To the social-chauvinists belong both those who defend and protect the governments and the bourgeoisie of *one* of the groups of war making world powers, and those who, like Kautsky, recognise the right of socialists of "all" warring countries to "defence of their Fatherland." Inasmuch as social-chauvinism in reality defends the special rights and privileges, plundering and oppression of "its own" (or any imperialist bourgeoisie), it represents a complete betrayal of all socialist principles and of the decision of the socialist international congress of Bâsle.

The Bâsle Manifesto

The manifesto on war unanimously adopted at Bâsle in 1907 applies precisely to this war between Germany and Britain with their present allies which broke out in 1914. The manifesto declares

directly that no popular interest can justify this war, which will be conducted "for the profit of the capitalists and in the interest of the ruling dynasties" on the basis of the imperialist predatory policy of the Great Powers. The manifesto expressly declares that the war is dangerous for the "Governments" (without any exception), it points to their dread of the "proletarian revolution," and points expressly to the example of the commune of 1871 and the example of October and December, 1905, *i.e.*, to the *examples of revolution and civil war*.

In this way, the Bâsle manifesto lays down precisely for the present war the tactic of revolutionary struggle of the workers on an international scale against their own governments, the tactic of the proletarian revolution. The Bâsle manifesto repeats the words of the Stuttgart resolution: *that in case of outbreak of war, socialists are pledged to utilise the "economic and political crisis" occasioned by the war in order to "hasten the fall of capitalist society," i.e., it demands the utilisation of the difficult position of the Governments caused by the war and the mobilisation of the masses of the people for the social revolution.*

The policy of the social-chauvinists, their defence of the war with bourgeois arguments about "liberation," their recognition of "defence of the Fatherland," the voting of war credits, the entry into ministries, &c., is a direct betrayal of socialism, a betrayal which can only be explained, as we will see below, by the victory of opportunism and of national-liberal labour policy in the majority of the socialist parties of Europe.

The False Appeal to Marx and Engels

The Russian social-chauvinists (with Plechanov at the head) make appeal to the tactics of Marx in the war of 1870. German social-chauvinists (like Lensch, Dand and Co.) make appeal to the declaration of Engels in the year 1891 in relation to the duty of defence of the Fatherland for the German socialists in case of a simultaneous war with Russia and France. Finally, the social-chauvinists of the type of Kautsky, who wish to reconcile and show the justification for all parts of international social-chauvinism, base themselves on the fact that Marx and Engels, although they condemned wars, nevertheless in the period from 1845-55 until

1870-71 and 1876-77 always took up the side of one of the war-making states when once war had broken out.

All these appeals constitute a shameless falsification of the views of Marx and Engels for the benefit of the bourgeoisie and of opportunism, just as the writings of the anarchists, Guillaume and Co., falsify the views of Marx and Engels in order to white-wash anarchism. The war of 1870-71 was, up to the fall Napoleon III, progressive on the part of Germany, for Napoleon III had for years, together with the Tsar, oppressed Germany and supported its feudal dismemberment. When the war was converted into a plundering of France (the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine), Marx and Engels unmitigatedly condemned Germany. At the outbreak of the war also, Marx and Engels were in agreement with the refusal of Bebel and Liebknecht to vote war credits and they advised the social democrats not to unite with the bourgeoisie but to defend the independent class interests of the proletariat.

To transfer the estimation of this bourgeois-progressive and national-emancipatory war to the present imperialist war is to do violence to the truth. The same thing applies even more to the war of the year 1854-55 and all the other wars of the nineteenth century at a time when there existed in all the warring countries neither modern imperialism, nor mature objective conditions for socialism, nor socialist mass parties, *i.e.*, at a time when all the conditions were absent on the basis of which the Bâsle manifesto laid down the revolutionary proletarian tactic to be followed *in the case of a war between the Great Powers.*

Whoever relies now on the relation of Marx to wars of the epoch of the *progressive* bourgeoisie and forgets the words of Marx, "the workers have no Fatherland"—words which are especially applicable to the *epoch of the reactionary, outlived bourgeoisie*, the epoch of social revolution—whoever does this, shamelessly falsifies Marx and substitutes a bourgeois for a socialist point of view.

The Collapse of the Second International

The socialists of all countries solemnly declared at Bâsle in 1912, that they regard the coming European war as the "criminal" and reactionary work of *all* governments, which must hasten the

collapse of capitalism and inevitably give birth to the revolution against it. The war broke out, the crisis arrived. The majority of the social democratic parties pursued instead of a revolutionary tactic, a reactionary one, placing themselves on the side of their Governments and their bourgeoisie. This betrayal of socialism signifies the collapse of the Second International (1889-1914) and we must take account of that which caused this collapse, which gave birth to social chauvinism and which gave it its power.

Social-Chauvinism is Perfected Opportunism

During the whole course of the epoch of the Second International there went on everywhere inside the social democratic parties a struggle between the revolutionary and opportunist wings. In a whole series of countries a split took place on these lines (England, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria). Not a single Marxist doubts that opportunism expresses bourgeois policy in the labour movement, the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and the union of an insignificant portion of "bourgeoisified" workers with "their" bourgeoisie against the interests of the mass of the proletarians, the mass of the oppressed.

The objective conditions at the end of the nineteenth century especially strengthened opportunism, converting the exploitation of bourgeois legality into servile worship of it, creating a small stratum consisting of the bureaucracy and aristocracy of the working class and attracting into the ranks of the social-democratic party many petty-bourgeois "travelling companions."

The war hastened this development, converting opportunism into social chauvinism, converting the secret alliance of the opportunists with the bourgeoisie into an open one. Further, the military authorities everywhere introduced a "state of war" and laid a muzzle on the working class. The old leaders of the workers passed almost completely into the camp of the bourgeoisie.

The economic basis of opportunism and social-chauvinism is one and the same: the interests of an insignificant stratum of workers and petty bourgeoisie who insist on their privileged position, on their "right" to the crumbs of the profits received by "their" national bourgeoisie owing to the plunder of foreign

nations and the advantages derived from the position of being a Great Power.

The ideological - political content of opportunism and chauvinism is one and the same : class collaboration instead of class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary means of struggle, support of one's " own " government in its difficult position instead of utilising its desperate situation for the revolution. Taking into account all the European countries as a whole, and disregarding the attitude of individuals (even if very influential), it becomes apparent that it is precisely the opportunist *tendency* that has become the most important support of social-chauvinism, and from the camp of the revolutionaries one hears almost everywhere a more or less determined protest against it. If, for example, one takes the grouping of tendencies at the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress of 1907, it will be seen that international Marxism was against Imperialism while international opportunism, on the other hand, already at that time came out in support of it.

Unity with opportunism is a union of the workers with " their " national bourgeoisie and a splitting of the international revolutionary working class.

In the earlier epoch before the war, opportunism, although regarded as a " deviation " or an " exaggeration," was all the same frequently taken to be a legitimate constituent of the social-democratic party. The war demonstrated the impossibility of this view for the future. Opportunism has become " ripe," it has carried through to the end its rôle of emissary of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. Unity with opportunism has developed into complete hypocrisy, as we see in the example of the German social-democratic party. In all important cases (*e.g.*, in the voting on August 4) the opportunists came with their ultimatum, carrying it through by the aid of their manifold connections with the bourgeoisie, their majority in the leadership of the trade unions, &c. *Unity* with the opportunists signifies now *in reality* subordination of the working class to its " own " national bourgeoisie, alliance with it for the oppression of foreign nations and for the struggle for the privileges of the Great Powers, *denoting a splitting of the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.*

However arduous in individual instances may be the struggle

against the opportunists who predominate in many organisations, however differently in different countries the process of cleansing the labour parties from the opportunists has to be conducted, this process is necessary and fruitful. Reformist socialism is moribund ; the socialism now arising " will be revolutionary, uncompromising, rebellious " as the French socialist, Paul Golay, correctly expresses it.

" *Kautskyanism* "

Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, represents an, in the highest degree typical and lurid, example, how the recognition of Marxism in words has led in reality to its conversion into " Struvism " or " Brentanism. " * We see this also in the example of Plechanov. By barefaced sophisms, Marxism is robbed of its revolutionary living soul ; *everything* in Marxism is recognised, *except* revolutionary means of struggle, propaganda and preparation for them and education of the masses just in this direction. Kautsky " reconciles " without thinking the basic ideas of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic apparent concession to the lefts in the form of abstention from voting credits and verbal affirmation of the oppositional character of the party. Kautsky, who in 1909 published a whole book on the coming epoch of revolution and of the connection of war with revolution, who in 1912 signed the *Bâsle Manifesto on the utilisation of the coming war for the revolution*, now uses all arguments to justify and eulogise social-chauvinism, and like Plechanov, joins with the bourgeoisie in jeering at all thoughts of revolution, all steps towards immediate revolutionary struggle.

The Slogan of Marxists is the Slogan of Revolutionary Social Democracy

The war has undoubtedly evoked the acutest crisis and incredibly intensified the suffering of the masses of the people. The reactionary character of this war, the shameless lies of the bourgeoisie of *all* countries, who hide their robber aims under the cloak

* Struve was the leader of the opportunist section of the Russian social democrats at the beginning of the century. He soon became a renegade, later an extreme reactionary. Brentano was a German economist, a bitter anti-Marxist and champion of " class harmony. "

of "national" ideology, all this on the basis of the objectively revolutionary situation inevitably creates revolutionary moods among the masses. It is our duty to make these moods conscious, to deepen and to shape them. This task is only correctly expressed in the slogan of "conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war," and *every* determined class struggle during the war, every seriously conducted tactic of "mass action" inevitably leads to it. We cannot know whether the powerful revolutionary movement will blaze up as a consequence of the first or of the second war between the Great Powers, whether during or after the war, but in any case it is our bounden duty to work systematically and steadfastly precisely in this direction.

The Bâsle Manifesto appeals directly to the example of the Paris Commune, *i.e.*, to the conversion of the war of the governments into a civil war. Half a century ago the proletariat was too weak, the objective pre-requisites of socialism were not yet mature, the collaboration of the revolutionary movements in all the warring countries was unthinkable, the enthusiasm of a section of the Paris workers for "national ideology" (the tradition of 1792) was its revolutionary weakness, as Marx showed, and one of the causes of the collapse of the Commune. Half-a-century later, the conditions which weakened the revolution then have vanished, and to-day it would be unpardonable for a socialist to wish to renounce action in the spirit of the Paris communards.

The Example of Fraternisation in the Trenches

Bourgeois newspapers in all the warring countries give examples of fraternisation of the soldiers even in the trenches. The draconic edicts issued by the military authorities (*e.g.*, Germany and England) against such fraternisation proved that it was regarded very seriously by the Government and the bourgeoisie. If, under conditions of the complete domination of opportunism in the leading circles of the West-European social-democratic parties (as shown by the support for social-chauvinism given by the entire social-democratic press and all authorities of the second international), cases of fraternisation were possible, it proves to us how greatly it would be possible to shake the present criminal, reactionary slave-owners' war and to organise a revolutionary international

movement, if even only the left socialists of the warring countries had systematically worked in this direction.

The Significance of Illegal Organisation

The leading anarchists of the world in this war have been tainted with social-chauvinism (in the sense of Plechanov and Kautsky) no less than the opportunists. One of the most useful consequences of the war will be that it will destroy both opportunism and anarchism.

While in no case, under no circumstances, renouncing the utilisation of the slightest legal possibilities for organisation of the masses and socialist propaganda, the social-democratic party must, however, break with worship of legality. "You fire first, gentlemen of the bourgeoisie," wrote Engels, hinting precisely at civil war and the necessity to break with legality, *after* it has been violated by the bourgeoisie. The war has shown that the bourgeoisie does violate it in all countries, even the most free, and that it is impossible to lead the masses towards revolution without creating an illegal organisation for the propaganda, discussion, valuation and preparation of revolutionary means of struggle. In Germany, for example, everything honest done by the socialists is done against despicable opportunism and hypocritical "Kautsky-anism" and is done illegally. In England one is sent to prison for printing manifestoes against recruiting.

To regard as compatible with membership of a social-democratic party, denial of illegal methods of propaganda and jeering at them in the legal press is treachery to socialism.

On Defeat of One's "Own" Government in the Imperialist War

The champions of the victory of one's own Government in the present war and those who utter the slogan "no victory, no defeat," alike adopt the standpoint of social-chauvinism. The revolutionary class in a reactionary war must desire the defeat of its own government, it must see the connection between its failure in the war and the making easier its overthrow. Only a bourgeois who holds the belief that a war begun by the Governments will inevitably end as a war of the Governments, and desires this, can find the idea "ridiculous" and "nonsensical" that the socialists of *all* the

warring countries should proclaim the desire for the defeat of *all* their "own" Governments. On the contrary, precisely such a proclamation corresponds to the secret wishes of every class-conscious worker and lies in the correct line of our activity which is directed towards the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war.

Undoubtedly the serious agitation against the war of a portion of the British, German and Russian socialists "weakened the fighting strength" of the Governments concerned, but this agitation was to their credit. The socialists must make clear to the masses that there is no salvation for them without the revolutionary overthrow of their "own" Governments and that the desperate situation of these Governments in the present war must be used just with this object.

On Pacifism and the Slogan of Peace

The pacifist mood of the masses frequently denotes the beginning of protest, revolt and consciousness that the war is a reactionary one. To utilise this mood is the duty of all social democrats. They will most cordially participate in every movement and every demonstration on this basis, they will, however, not deceive the people by assenting to the idea that without a revolutionary movement it is possible to obtain a peace without annexations, without oppression of small nations, without plunder, without seeds of new wars between the present Governments and ruling classes. Such a deception of the people would only assist the secret diplomacy and the counter-revolutionary plans of the warring Governments. Whoever is for a lasting and democratic peace, must be for civil war against governments and the bourgeoisie.

Self-determination of Nations

The most widespread deception of the people on the part of the bourgeoisie in this war is the masking of their robber aims by the ideology of "liberation of peoples"—the British promise to free the Belgians, the Germans promise to free the Poles, and so on. In reality, as we have seen, this is a war of the oppressors of the majority of the nations of the world for the strengthening and extension of this oppression.

Socialists cannot attain their great goal without combating every oppression of nations. They must, therefore, certainly demand that the socialist parties of the *oppressing countries* (particularly of the so-called "Great Powers") recognise and defend the right of self-determination of the *oppressed* nations, and notably in the political sense of the word, *i.e.*, as the right of political separation. A socialist of a big State or colony-owning nation who does not defend this right is a chauvinist.

The defence of this right not only is not an incitement to the formation of small states, but leads, on the contrary, to a more free, fearless and consequently more extensive and general formation of great states and alliances of states, which is of greater advantage to the masses and corresponds more with economic development.

The socialists of the *oppressed* nations must for their part come out for the complete (including organisational) unity of the *workers* of the oppressing and of the oppressed nations. The idea of juridical separation of nationalities from one another (the so-called "national cultural autonomy" of Otto Bauer and Renner) is a reactionary idea.

Imperialism is the epoch of progressive oppression of the nations of the whole world by a few "Great Powers," and consequently the struggle for the socialist revolution against imperialism is impossible without recognition of the right of self-determination. "A people cannot be free that oppresses foreign peoples," said Marx and Engels. That proletariat cannot be socialist that condones the slightest act of violence of its "own" nation against other nations."

THE FUTURE OF REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONISM

By HARRY POLLITT

THE development of trade unionism in this country since the end of the General Strike has been clear to every acute observer in the working-class movement. The betrayal of the General Strike by the leadership was, in my opinion, a deliberately conscious act, not merely to escape from an inconvenient situation, but in order that this failure might be used as the basis for the development of their present policy of class collaboration.

Since that time every step which has been made has been in the direction of developing trade unionism as a direct part of the apparatus of capitalist exploitation. We have not yet reached the final stage, but the present position is such that the whole problem of the trades union policy of the revolutionary workers calls for review and clarification, particularly so because of the advent of a Labour Government which will be found to intensify the drive considerably.

It was no accident that, within a few weeks of the Trades Union Dispute Act becoming law, the Edinburgh T.U.C. in 1927 should have taken the first step towards the policy of class collaboration. From that time on the race has been accelerated in every move that has been made, right through the Mond Conferences, and now through the joint co-operation with the Federation of British Industries and the National Confederation of Employers.

At the same time the attacks upon the workers have been steadily increasing, not so much in the direction of national demands on national unions for wage reductions, but in a carefully planned policy of taking factory by factory, pit by pit, or the union concerned with a particular district of an industry, and in all cases making inroads upon workshop customs and practices, reduction of piece-work lists, speeding up and abolition

of concessions formerly won in acute class struggles. If it were possible to collect the data showing the exact effect upon the workers of this planned policy, it would be discovered that colossal inroads have been made upon the workers' conditions.

The statements of workers all over the country comparing their conditions of to-day with those of two years ago constitute the practical proof of the correctness of this claim.

For a time this planned policy of the capitalists and the trade union leaders was carried out without much resistance, just because its nature did not make it a national issue. Yet a study of the trade union journals in which the district organisers' reports can be found over a period of the last two years shows how acute the process has become.

There is now a new awakening taking place. This has manifested itself in such struggles as the Rego strike, the Austin strike, the London Busmen's dispute and the Dawdon dispute. All, be it noted, in industries where the capitalists are precisely those engaged in industrial peace negotiations with the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

In every one of these disputes, as well as in those negotiations which have taken place in other disputes, the central feature has been the deliberately defeatist rôle of the trade union leaders and the fight that the workers themselves have had to make against both the capitalists and their own leaders. The best example of how far this policy has been carried out was shown during the middle of the Dawdon dispute, when Lord Londonderry could openly issue a Press statement saying he had no quarrel with the miners' officials, either national, county or local. This statement was never repudiated even by the local officials who were actually facing the men.

Simultaneously with these events there is a growth of non-unionism, but this growth represents an entirely different attitude from that which has formerly characterised non-unionism in this country. It is also accompanied by a continually decreasing attendance at trade union branch meetings, and the open scoffing and jeering of the workers in the workshops at the trade union leaders.

This is the situation that the revolutionary workers have to

face. It does not mean, however, that trades unionism is played out. It does mean that trades unionism has now to be adapted to modern conditions of struggles in the pursuit of capitalist rationalisation and intensified class struggle, and this can only be done by the revolutionary workers frankly discussing the existing situation and how this reorganisation of trades unionism as a fighting force against capitalism and not an appendage of capitalism, can be brought about.

The period of the Labour Government will be one in which, under cover of skilful small concessions, the Government will carry through schemes assisting the rationalisation of industry. These schemes will lower the standards of the workers as a whole. Preparations for new wars will be made under hypocritical phrases of "pacifism," and "no more war," attacks will be prepared on the U.S.S.R. under cover of giving recognition to the U.S.S.R. Attacks will be made on the revolutionary peoples of the colonial countries.

These factors, in conjunction with the hopes aroused amongst large sections of workers that wages advances will be given through a Labour Government, points to a situation in which the Minority Movement has to lead the independent struggles of the workers against the trade union bureaucracy and the Labour Government.

This independent rôle and leadership of the Minority Movement is the most important thing that needs to be understood in the present period. The old fetishism of "constitutional action," of "honouring national agreements," of trade union legalism must be destroyed if we are to fight against the capitalists and their agents, the existing leadership.

This issue, therefore, of fighting independently the daily struggles of the working class, in a period of "Courts of Inquiries," of "Independent Arbitrators," and Labour Government betrayals and treacheries, means a complete break with all the old conceptions of confining our activities within the constitutional framework of trade union branches, district committees, &c. New forces have to be won, and new forms of organisation have to be found. I believe that the following line of approach is the one which must be made as a start towards the

winning of the mass of the workers, organised and unorganised, both to our policy and organisation.

(1) *Factory Organisation and Activity*

It is directly in the factories that our strength lies and it is precisely here that so little actual effort is put in to win over this strength. We assume that nothing can be done by factory agitation and organisation, when, as a matter of fact, six months' concentration on any factory in this country on the right lines will win the mass of the workers to our policy and against that of the existing trade union leadership.

It is impossible to be in any workshop two days without being struck by the bitterness, cynicism, sarcasm and disillusionment that is expressed in workshop conversation regarding the existing trade union leadership, and our job is to concentrate our forces upon winning these workers to our constructive policy of militant trades unionism.

What does this mean? It means that in every factory where there is a small group of comrades they should begin to initiate discussions amongst one or two of the workers with whom they have influence, showing the meaning of events which are happening, taking the initiative in calling a meeting of all workers in that particular shop or department, without regard to craft, occupation, union organisation or whether these workers belong to a union at all. Not many will come to such a meeting at first, but some will, and this is a start. At such a meeting as this shop conditions can be frankly discussed and a direct approach made to get outstanding grievances remedied. This will immediately bring our work before a larger mass of workers, who will contrast the efficacy of this method with the long-drawn-out process which has to be gone through in the trade union machine before grievances can be attended to.

Then will come the desire for such work to be put on a permanent basis, and a factory committee can be appointed representing all workers, organised and unorganised. This committee will not be working long before it will feel the need of other weapons with which to fight, and the first of these will undoubtedly be a factory paper. In this paper not only

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shop questions, but wider issues of policy can be discussed, so that the stronger this work becomes the less fear there is of the management being able to operate a victimisation policy. Everybody knows that when an active worker gets sacked, the average man in the workshop who has never been inside a trade branch will say it is a "bloody shame" and he should be backed up, but just because under present conditions in nine cases out of ten this question is left till the complicated trade union machine begins to operate, the sense of grievance and resentment has died down. Whereas a group of comrades could take advantage of such sentiments and make their positions in the factories immeasurably stronger than they are at the present time.

But what the delegates to the Minority Movement Conference have to frankly realise is that without effective factory work and organisations there can be no fight made for better conditions for the working class and no real fight made against the Labour Government and trade union bureaucracy.

(2) The Problem of the Unorganised

It is necessary to state frankly that until recent events the average non-unionist represented the most backward section of the working class. There is always a section of workers who, because of backwardness and apathy, have never been prepared to fight and pay for better conditions, and these have formed the bulk of the unorganised workers.

To-day the situation has changed. Whilst I believe that this type of worker still forms the larger proportion of the unorganised, and they must be frankly spoken to about this attitude because of what trades unionism under the present leadership has become, there are thousands of good trade unionists who have left the trade unions because they disagree with the policy.

I believe that this attitude is fundamentally wrong. Serious revolutionary workers do not leave organisations voluntarily, they intensify their efforts within them and in the factories with which they are associated, to fight for a new leadership and a new policy. If in the pursuance of this course they are suspended or disqualified from holding office in a particular union, our duty is to fight with all our strength to maintain the positions we have got,

and in the degree that we have strengthened our factory organisation we can prevent the process of automatic exclusion and suspension which the bureaucrats have only found possible to operate because of our inherent weakness in the factories.

Therefore we have now to intensify our work amongst the unorganised to bring them into closer relations with the rest of the workers. The approach to this question is not to put the issue of which trade union they shall join as the first step in this direction, but to get them in and around the Factory Committees and factory organisation that we have to set up.

In many recent strikes the unorganised have played a more important rôle than the trade unionists. Austins is the most important case in point, because it was a direct fight against one of the most important employers who have collaborated with the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. Many trade unions have always recognised the rôle of the unorganised in strikes or lock-outs by paying them dispute pay to preserve the solidarity of the men. We have to get them into trade unions to-day, as the basis of new forces, to strengthen our work and task of reorganising trade unionism under our revolutionary new leadership fighting a class battle against capitalism and its agents the General Council.

So that the problem of which union they shall join becomes not the primary, but the secondary issue; the first is to get them clear on the value of factory organisation under our leadership, so that we recruit them for trades unions on a class conscious basis, they will then form the new elements under our control, who in organised fashion are then fighting both the capitalists and the trade union leaders.

At the same time we must face the possibility of the Belfast Trades Union Congress passing a series of recommendations that will carry still further their policy of disrupting and splitting the trade union movement. We cannot fight the existing leaders with only a small number of active workers, the mass of the workers must be with us. This mass are never in the trade union branches, but they are in the factories, and it is this problem of effective factory organisation that comes up every time we consider how best to fight for better conditions, which to-day

involves a fight against two enemies and active participation in what are stigmatised as unofficial movements, but which in reality are the real movements of the workers.

The approach, therefore, to the problem of the unorganised is through the factories, and in that approach we kill stone dead the conception that any section of workers can get anything without fight or personal sacrifice. We are not advocates of non-unionism, we are not now attempting to glorify a section of workers whom yesterday we looked down upon because they were prepared to take all the benefits of trade unionism without paying anything in return.

On the contrary, we want to bring the unorganised into a more effective form of organisation than now exists, and we must not be afraid to assert that where factory organisation exists and all workers are members, that this is better trade unionism, in the real meaning of the word, than is provided by the policy of company unionism, the aim towards which the existing leaders are working. By this method alone can we solve the problem of how to rally all the workers in struggle, at the same time laying down the future basis of the organised working-class movement of this country.

(3) *Work Inside the Trade Unions*

One of the great mistakes we have made in the recent period has been the calm assumption that it was impossible to do any further effective work inside the trade unions, and from the moment the policy of the "Document" was introduced there has been a widespread conception that to fight any further to win official positions in the unions was hopeless, with the result that the bureaucracy has now been able to operate this policy on a much wider scale, and more effectively, I am convinced, than they themselves ever thought was possible.

So far from deserting this field of work, we must intensify our work in winning official positions, particularly in branches, and this follows naturally from our intensification of activities within the factories. This policy must be pursued, even where the "Document" is in operation, and an open fight made with the backing of the workers in the factories to retain these positions. It will lead to the suspension of branches, the withholding of

benefits, the taking of legal proceedings against the revolutionary workers, but in the very degree that we force the bureaucrats to resort to the methods of capitalist repression, so we increasingly demonstrate the correctness of our analysis of the rôle of the trade union leadership to-day before an ever-increasing number of workers.

We do not surrender the fight for the conquest of the unions, but we do look round for new methods to lead the workers in actual struggle in order that we can win the leadership of the workers.

To assist in this struggle we, therefore, not only link up the unorganised workers through the medium of factory organisation, but we should recruit them into the new unions where they exist or the old existing unions as the basis of new forces fighting under our leadership for our policy.

By this combination of increased factory activity and the greater drive within the unions themselves upon the basis of our leadership in all economic struggles, we are taking the concrete steps towards developing the form of organisation and the outlook which alone can effectively realise the conquest of the organised working class under the leadership of the revolutionary workers.

New Industrial Councils

This involves a new outlook in regard to local unifying centres of factory and trade union organisation, and the work begun by the London Industrial Council is an indication of the lines upon which this work should be tackled. The existing Trades Council organisation has become simply a part of the bureaucratic apparatus of the General Council and Labour Party leaders. Our job now is to popularise the formation of new local Industrial Councils that shall serve as the local leadership in all phases of industrial activity. They should be representative of factory committees and trade union branches actually in revolt against the present leadership.

The beginning of this work will develop local strength and contacts, thus enabling more effective leadership and drive in all strike movements in which the workers direct from the factories must assume the leadership, and together with the

local Industrial Council be able to mobilise the whole of the workers in a particular locality for their support.

I believe that the above represent the main lines upon which the revolutionary movement in its work in the factories and trade unions must now proceed. It will be the task of the Sixth Annual Conference of the National Minority Movement to formulate finally the policy that must be adopted as a result of the analysis that will be made at that Conference of the present situation of British capitalism and the rôle of the trade union leadership. If that Conference gets clear on what is the actual position of British capitalism and the real rôle of its agents, the Labour Government and the trade union bureaucracy, there will be a tremendous support given to the future work of the Minority Movement.

In this new period, the chief tasks of the Minority Movement are to lead and organise strike movements ; independent fights for higher wages, shorter hours, the general effects of rationalisation ; a co-ordinating centre for the activities of the revolutionary workers ; a better and more intense fight in support of our colonial comrades ; the fight against the growing war danger ; struggle in defence of the U.S.S.R. ; for the unity of the workers nationally and internationally.

In the sphere of organisation, its tasks are to consolidate its wide influence into definite organisations. Increase its individual membership, strengthen its groups, win new union branch and district committee affiliations, strengthen its work in the factories to win positions in the trade union branches ; win the unorganised workers to our side ; take the initiative in forming new unions in the new industries that are springing up ; extend its work to new local industrial councils.

If these tasks are undertaken with energy, then in twelve months a situation will exist in which many of the theoretical speculations in regard to problems of strike strategy, the rôle of the unorganised, the problem of new unions, &c., will have been worked out in the actual field of experience and a much clearer conception of the actual day-to-day fight have been realised.

The test of all revolutionary workers is the test of what they are prepared to do in the factories. That is where the face of the Movement must be turned. It is the most important and the

most neglected field upon which the future tactics of the whole organised working-class movement have to be worked out. The test of the genuineness of militant trade unionists and of those who have left the unions because they say they disagree with present policy is what they are prepared to do now towards the development of effective factory organisation from which alone can grow the new forces and leadership that can successfully carry on the fight against the policy of surrender and defeatism that characterises the whole tactics of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Government.

LABOUR'S PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE

By W. JOSS

THE second Labour Government has fulfilled its promise. It is a government of capitalism. On July 2, the introduction of the first King's Speech by a Labour Government indicated how far promises would become performances.

The speech was one of studied moderation and as a document raised very little contention from either the Conservative or Liberal benches. It had a "good" Press (*i.e.*, it conformed to the general policy of the capitalist class). Some, indeed, praised it fulsomely. The only objections raised were to its vagueness with regard to the Miners' Hours, Trades Disputes Act and relations with the U.S.S.R. Since then, the assurances of Mr. MacDonald and his cabinet have entirely reassured these critics, who are now looking forward to a period of statesmanship from His Majesty's Labour Government when it has emerged from its process of "thinking" how best to restore British capitalism.

That the restoration of British capitalism is the rôle to which the Labour Government aspires is confirmed by the King's Speech and subsequent statements by the Labour Cabinet. The main points dealing with Foreign Policy were the confirmation of the "Young Plan" dealing with reparations. It is interesting to recall that the first "Labour" Government was also placed in office to confirm the "Dawes Plan." The conversations on Naval Disarmament with U.S.A. are indicative of the growing tension between the two main imperialist groups and are not making much headway towards closer relations. The consultations with the Dominions regarding the signing of the Optional Clause are not likely to be entirely successful. The peculiar situation in which Britain finds herself in solving the contradictions of foreign relations is becoming increasingly apparent in the schemes of Empire Economic Unity. These questions arise sharply and are the basis of the diplomatic manœuvring which precedes war. The counterpart of this preparation for war also finds expression in Home Affairs. Rationalisation and not the Unemployment problem is the main issue.

Schemes are promised for the improvement of the transport system, for stimulating exports, for economic development of the colonies; iron, steel and cotton are to be subjects of immediate inquiries in order that these depressed industries may recapture foreign markets. These measures, which will intensify the competitive struggle between the imperialist groups for markets, naturally lead to war. Some writers on the Labour Government, while admitting the role of the Labour Government to be mainly imperialist, still hold the belief that the Government will play a rôle similar to the Liberal Governments from 1906-1914 and by a series of minor reforms create a social unity behind the Government which will carry the nation into war in support of the Government.

The reasons advanced are that in the field of unemployment, widows' pensions, housing provision, education, Trades Dispute Bill, and miners' hours and wages, there is a field on which all parties in the State can agree. While it is true that all these subjects were referred to in the King's speech the events of the past fortnight indicate that the fulfilment of these fine election pledges is conditional, as the notices of motion by the Minister of Health and the Attorney-General on July 2 indicate. On that day Mr. Greenwood gave notice at an early date he would ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Law relating to widows and orphans' pensions. On Saturday, July 6, MacDonald addressing the Durham Labour women said that "they had been baffled in this one of their first Administrative acts." Sir Wm. Jowitt, the Attorney-General, gave notice to present a Bill to *amend* the Trades Dispute Act of 1927. Its character when introduced will in all probability only amend the part dealing with the Political Levy, but the major questions relating to strikes, picketing, the illegality of the General Strike will remain untouched.

Curing Unemployment

The plans outlined by J. H. Thomas for reducing unemployment will provide cold comfort for the unemployed. His speech on July 3 earned the approval of the Conservatives and Liberals when he declared that there was no remedy but a revival of trade.

His attempt to minimise the million constantly unemployed, his support for extended industrial transference and the deportation of the unemployed to Canada and the Empire caused confused mutterings amongst the Labour back benches but no real revolt. Maxton's dissatisfaction was only verbal, no attempt was made to raise any real opposition.

During the election the raising of the school age and the provision of maintenance for extended education, the increasing of pensions at 65 and the probable pensioning at 60 was stressed as a means to assist unemployment. This has now been remitted to a committee. The old age pensioner who voted for a Labour Government, and on the Friday following the instalment of the Government in office demanded 20s. at the post office when producing his pension book, has had his disappointment and can express his dissatisfaction with the timorous policy of the Labour Government. The widow with children excluded under the present provision of the Act, the miners who looked forward to the repeal of the 8-Hours Mines Act, the rank and file trade unionist who expected the repeal of the Trades Disputes Act, the unemployed—workers generally are disappointed. It will not be healthy for the Government when they become dissatisfied. The problem of Labour Peers to the workers is too remote from the realities of life and it is on these realities that the shams and illusions created by the Labour Government will be dispelled by a rising wave of working class revolt.

That rationalisation is the main measure before the Labour Government was well presented by J. H. Thomas at the N.U.R. Conference, when he said :—

Another difficulty was to meet the world's situation to-day. *We* found ourselves with industries that were out of date and obsolete. Rationalisation was essential to those industries and was the only means by which they could face the world position. Then, again, in that inevitable process rationalisation meant masses of our people being thrown out of employment. (*The Times*, July 6, 1929.)

Foreign Policy

Continuity of Baldwinism in domestic affairs. So also continuity in foreign affairs. Mr. Arthur Henderson in the debate on Foreign Affairs confirmed the Baldwin policy in China on the question of

extra territoriality, the commercial agreements, the evacuation of Wei-hai-wei, the utilisation of the Boxer indemnity. On the resumption of diplomatic relations with Russia, he adopted the Imperial Conference decision to consult the Dominions before recognition, and stated that "even if there had been no such records on the minutes of the Imperial Conference he would have given it serious consideration before he agreed to take such an important step as this."

Again on the question of propaganda :—

In 1924 I think the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary of that date (J. R. M.) made it unmistakably clear that we were not going to tolerate any propaganda that interfered in the internal affairs either of this country or any of the Dominions of this country or any part of the British Empire (Opposition cheers) That is our position to-day and that will continue to be our position.

Sir Austen Chamberlain could not have stated it better nor more concisely than Mr. Arthur Henderson.

A further departure from election pledges was also apparent when the Labour Foreign Secretary accepted the principle of joint evacuation of the Rhineland. His statement on July 5 was repeated in replies to questions.

With regard to the evacuation of the Rhineland he had come to the conclusion that, while it was of the greatest importance that the evacuation should take place at the earliest possible moment, it would not be in the interests of peace in Europe if that step had to be taken by degrees. They ought to get both the French and Belgian Governments to take the step with them. (*The Times*, July 6, 1929.)

In addition, despite no mention of India in the King's Speech, MacDonald and Wedgwood Benn give complete assurance to the Conservative benches of continuity of policy on the Simon Commission and on the Meerut trial. Continuity at home, abroad and in the Empire.

New Wage Struggles

Less than two months have passed since the General Election and the return of the Labour Government, but it would be wrong to suppose that the futility of Parliament is the end of progress. The great masses of workers who voted Labour are still advancing. The increased resistance in the industrial field is apparent in the number of days lost during the past six months. Wage and hours disputes are imminent throughout the whole coalfield with actual struggles

of an isolated character breaking out day by day. The Blackpool conference of the M.F.G.B., despite its packed character, will demand that the Labour Government will declare its intentions regarding wages, hours and a National Agreement. No amount of procrastination by MacDonald and Mondist Turner will prevent the miners moving forward. The decision taken by the N.U.R. conference and the Joint presentation by the three railway unions for restoration of the 2½ per cent. cut of last July is being heralded with alarm by the railway directors, who propose to present counter proposals for a further reduction of wages or, alternatively, the drastic dismissals of employees both in the shops and in the traffic grades.

The lock-out notices of the cotton employers to enforce a 25 per cent. reduction off list rates (2s. 6d. in the £1 off wages) on July 29 will be met by the resistance of the workers in the cotton industry who voted Labour and who will look to the Government to protect them against the vicious attack of the employers. Negotiations through the Ministry of Labour on the basis of Labour policy can only mean sacrifices from the cotton workers.

The wage demands of the engineers for 8s. increase is to be discussed on July 25 and a policy outlined. The rank and file are ready to reply to Sir Allan Smith and are moving forward despite the restrictions imposed by the cumbersome machinery of negotiations. The Austin strike at Birmingham, Armstrong Whitworth strike at Coventry and the aircraft workers at Howden are all indications of the pressure from below. Even the unemployed after a period of quiescence are moving forward again as a result of the tightening of the administrative machinery of the Labour Exchanges and the Guardians. It is the rôle of the Labour Government and the Mondist Trade Union bureaucracy to hold back and defeat the rising wave of working class resistance to capitalist rationalisation.

It is the rôle of the Communist Party to lead and make conscious the opposition of the workers, to mobilise and organise the working class against the Labour Government of rationalisation and war. The perspective and conditions of revolutionary struggle are favourable. Now is the time to rally our forces.

AN ECHO OF THE GENERAL ELECTION

By SHAUKAT USMANI

[Below we print the election message sent to Spen Valley from Meerut Jail by one of the Indian working-class leaders now being tried on a charge of "conspiracy to deprive the King of his sovereignty of India." Owing to a hold-up by the authorities, it arrived too late for more than a few copies to be circulated in the constituency. Furthermore, as a statement of the position of the Indian Communist leaders in relation to the present trial, we believe it is worthy of the attention of a larger audience.—ED.]

I HAVE been selected by the Communist Party in Spen Valley to stand as a candidate for Parliament and I wish, though separated from you by 6,000 miles and prison bars, to place before you an appeal. I appeal to you, not on my own behalf but of the 300 million toiling masses of India.

For never before in British political history has the question of the colonies been so clearly presented as in this election, and never before have the workers of Britain been given the chance to return the true working class answer. You have in your Liberal Candidate, Sir John Simon, the best possible representative of the Imperialist predatory force which rules the world to-day—Capitalist Imperialism. Sir John Simon is a brilliant scholar, an eminent lawyer, the foremost defender of his class against your General Strike of 1926. He has been selected for the highly responsible position of the Chairman of the Statutory Commission for the purpose of riveting still more firmly upon India the chains of slavery and exploitation. To India to-day, Simon more than any other individual personifies and represents British Imperialism.

On the other hand, as your Communist Candidate, I claim to be a humble representative of the vast mass forces of revolt which are now so quickly gaining strength in India and throughout the entire colonial world. I have been working for the masses of this country since 1920. Imprisoned without trial in

1923, I was tried and sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment in 1924 for Conspiracy as a Communist. Since my release in 1927, I have been engaged in working-class organisation, as a result of which I have again been imprisoned in March of this year. My experience is not exceptional. All in India who take part in the struggle for emancipation or who assist the exploited masses must suffer more or less the same fate as I have done. I come before you as a rank-and-file worker in the cause of the freedom of the colonial masses. I am asking you to support me rather than Sir John Simon. I am asking you to disregard personal consideration, the claim of traditions and the ties of race and colour, and to prefer the weak to the strong, the poor to the rich, the absent to the present. I ask you to make this sacrifice not for my sake, but for the sake of the solidarity of the workers of the world.

India and the Simon Commission

We in India boycott Simon and the Statutory Commission because they represent to us the Imperialism which we rightly and justly hate. Under the rule of the British Imperialism, India is the poorest country in the world. Our vast masses of the peasants exist on an average income of 2d. a day. More than 90 per cent. of the population is illiterate. We are even denied a representative government. If we attempt to assert our own rights to determine our own destiny or merely to organise Trade Unions we are beaten back by armed forces of autocracy, our demonstrators are shot dead and our leaders imprisoned.

I claim your support on grounds of class solidarity also, since our movement is essentially one of the oppressed and the exploited masses—the workers and peasants. In recent years the organised workers have rallied to the fight against Imperialism. When Simon first came to India in 1928, he was greeted on landing by the strike of tens of thousands of workers who demonstrated under the lead of their union and burnt an effigy. The workers' movement is becoming so menacing to Imperialism that special legislation is being enacted to suppress it: the Public Safety Ordinance to cut us off from the international movement, the Trades Disputes Act to break our solidarity; the Press Act to stifle even the voice of criticism. The renewed campaign of

Imperialism against the national revolution begins with the imprisonment of thirty-one Labour leaders at Meerut (including two English comrades). The working class is taking its rightful place as the leader of the world movement. This is what gives its special significance and importance to your Election. It is a straight fight between the acknowledged leader of Imperialism and a Communist worker—a fighter in the front rank of the opposition to Imperialism. I ask you electors to realise your responsibility, to remember that the eyes of the millions of the toiling masses of India are upon you and to do your duty by them and by yourselves. For by striking a blow against Imperialism in India you are also striking a blow for your own class.

Your Exploiters are our Oppressors

The same clique of exploiters which so hideously oppresses the masses of India also rules and exploits you. Imperialism means colonial slavery, but it also means economic depression and collapse in the Imperialist countries. You cannot compete against Indian miners and textile workers, whose wages are less than 20 per cent. of yours. Imperialism which in India brings sweating, famine, illiteracy and autocracy, in Britain means unemployment, reduction of wage rates, worsening of conditions, smashing of Unions. The capitalists have regularly promised you a trade revival which has never come. It can never come while the colonial workers are forced to work below your rate. Nothing can deal with this situation but the control of all economic life by the workers in their own interests. While imperialism rules, neither you nor we can be free from these, its inevitable consequences. The only way in which unemployment can be abolished, the standard of life improved and peace and freedom established for all, both in the capitalist countries and the colonies, is by the overthrowing of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. In this task the workers of Britain and the workers and peasants of India must co-operate and fight side by side. In standing by the workers of India you will be fighting for the best interests of your own class.

I ask you not to be misled by the bogy of Communalism which the defenders of Imperialism will use to justify their

oppression. The conflicts of different communities so far as it exists is mainly due to the activities of Imperialism which must divide in order to rule. The working class is not concerned in the least with Communalism. The accused in the Meerut Conspiracy Case include members of all the principal communities of India, all fighting for one cause.

I must warn you also against the attempts which will be made to condemn the Indian Communists as assassins and bomb-throwers. The oppression of Imperialism has driven many to this course, but they are not Communists. As you know, Communists do not believe in individual terrorism and no Communist has ever practised it.

Against Liberal and Labour Imperialism

I am asking you to repudiate the open, unashamed representative of predatory imperialism. I am informed that the other capitalist candidates will withdraw as is fitting in view of the complete identity of interests and policy between the two capitalist parties. But I am also asking you to repudiate with equal determination the representative of the half-hearted, vacillating Labour Party. You know it from your experience how the compromising policy of the Labour Party has repeatedly placed it in direct opposition to the interests of the workers and how in all times of crises, such as the Labour Government of 1924 and the miners' strike of 1926, it proves to be identical in action with the capitalist parties. It acts in the same way in regard to the colonies. It is identified equally with the capitalist parties with the Simon Commission. The Labour Government in 1924 was responsible for a policy in every way as reactionary and repressive as that of an openly capitalist government. It bombed villages in Iraq, rejected the demands of the Egyptian Nationalists, despatched warships to overawe the Chinese workers, and in India shot down workers on strike at Cawnpore and Bombay, promulgated the Bengal Ordinance whereby over 200 men were imprisoned for three to four years without trial. It launched the Cawnpore Conspiracy Case. I was myself a victim of the Cawnpore Case and in company with other Comrades, Nalini Gupta, Muzaffar Ahmed, and S. A. Dange, I was sentenced to four years rigorous imprison-

ment for being a Communist. Such a party claiming to stand for the working class deserves only contempt.

Workers of ALL Countries Unite!

In India, we are in a position to witness the feverish preparations of British imperialism for war which is to be fought from bases in India and Iraq against the Soviet Republic. We realise, as you do, that this war would be a catastrophe of the first magnitude for the working class throughout the world. We know that no efforts and sacrifices must be spared to fight against this war danger and to prepare for an effective action if it actually breaks out. I ask you to remember that a vote for imperialism is a vote for war, a vote for Communism is a vote against war.

As a Communist I stand by the Communist programme, pledged always to fight on behalf of the working class. I do not believe that the salvation of the workers or the establishment of Socialism will be effected through Parliament. Indeed, Parliamentary institutions are one of the greatest obstacles which the workers will have to overcome. You can best assist to free the minds of the workers from the illusions of Parliament by sending as your representative a Communist who will not attempt to use Parliament, but to expose it from within.

Dear Electors, as I am in prison I am unable to express fully all that I have to say to you, but I appeal to you to do your duty as the members of the working class. The workers of Britain first taught the world to form Trade Unions and to fight capitalism, and its lessons we in the working-class movement of colonial countries are still eagerly learning. The workers who have shown the way so long cannot fall behind in this test of consciousness and solidarity. I appeal to you, confident that you will rise superior to limitations of race and colour, and, in spite of all obstacles, stand by your class.

Long live the Revolutionary Solidarity of the Masses of the East and West!

SHAUKAT USMANI

The World of Labour

INDIA

Tinplate Workers' Strike at Jamshedpur

A STRIKE has been in progress at the works of the Tinplate Company of India, Ltd., Golmuri, Jamshedpur, since April 5. The E.C. of the Union presented the following resolutions framed by the E.C. of the Union and embodying the grievances of the workers which were passed at a mass meeting held on January 9, 1928, with about 3,000 workers present :—

- (1) Eighteen detailed demands including a general increase of 25 per cent. in wages; system of provident fund, acting allowances, overtime pay, bonus, maternity benefit, half-hour interval for eight hours' continuous work, all as obtaining in the Tata's Iron and Steel Works; proper housing accommodation; reduction of foreign supervision; six days' minimum wage per week; shoes, aprons, &c., to be supplied; and removal of corruption in matter of appointments.
- (2) That the Union be recognised by the Company.
- (3) That all persons dismissed or suspended since the formation of the Union, especially the eight men suspended for refusing to do menial work, be reinstated.

M. Daud, President of the A.I.T.U.C., speaking at the meeting, counselled moderation and patience and concluded with a warning that if within a reasonable time the Company did not remove the grievances he would advise the workers to start an emergency fund.

The unrest prevailing was intensified when the Company posted notices on January 18 to the effect that the tinplate works would in future only operate at 50 per cent. capacity, and the works would, therefore, finish work on Wednesday each week. This would affect the bar yard, hot mills, foundry roll shop, shear and opening department. The finishing department to work every alternate week and all workers to be paid only for days worked.

At a mass meeting on the 20th, J. N. Mitra, Vice-President of the Tinplate Workers' Union, stated that:—

The "over-stock propaganda" of the Company was a huge hoax. There was no heavy stock of tin boxes anywhere and normal practice was to keep three months' consumption as reserve . . . the Company produced 700,000 boxes in 1928 as against 895,000 in 1927, so that granting it ordered 100,000 from South Wales the production of 1928 still fell short.

Negotiations were begun between the Company and M. Daud, to be taken up later by Manek Homi, who had been elected by a unanimous vote

as President of the Union. Manek Homi, had been prominent in leading the strike there last year.

At a mass meeting on March 26, Homi announced that a settlement had been arrived at. The Union was to be recognised by the Company; all discharged men were to be reinstated, and as far as practicable full time to be given to the workers. The hot mill workers were to be given an extra 2 annas per day (7 per cent. increase) and the principle underlying the other demands was accepted, to be worked out in detail later on.

Nothing was done by the Company. On April 2 J. Mitra, at a meeting, charged the Company with breach of faith, stating that the wage increase agreed upon had not been paid and all the other items withheld. Also when a mill worker was dismissed and his fellow-workers downed tools, the Company agreed to reinstate him but this was not done, and, disgusted, the hot mill men again downed tools, which led to the dismissal of eight more leaders.

By April 5, 3,000 tinsplate workers at Golmuri had struck work. By the 17th the situation took a serious turn. Attempts were being made by the Company to obtain blacklegs, the police escorting them in lorries to the works.

The area surrounding the works was continuously guarded by Gurkha military police. It is alleged that some stones were thrown by the strikers at the blacklegs, which resulted in twelve strikers being arrested.

Orders prohibiting meetings were issued and more military requisitioned; meanwhile the Union intensified picketing arrangements.

On May 13 a statement was issued by the Secretary of the Union enumerating the grievances of the workers, and adding:—

Manek Homi, supported the strike on the second day, but after the twenty-sixth day asked the workers to resume work unconditionally. This somersault on the part of Homi was vehemently resented by the men who rejected his leadership and elected one of their own comrades and worker, J. N. Mitra, as acting president, and are continuing the strike constitutionally.

The Union officials appealed to various leaders to intervene in the dispute. V. V. Giri met the executive and tried to see the management but was refused an interview. He was followed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Diwan Chamanlal. Meanwhile appeals for financial support were sent out supported by Nehru and others. On May 19 M. Daud was authorised by the Union to open up negotiations for settlement on certain minimum demands.

Daud interviewed the management, but was told that the demands were not acceptable and that nearly 2,000 were working at the plant and it would be difficult to dispense with these, but the Company would endeavour to accommodate as many strikers as possible.

That evening, at a mass meeting, when told the "compromise" terms offered, those working decided to join the strikers.

The stubborn attitude of the Company stiffened the strikers and a more intensified picketing was resorted to, and despite the attacks of the Company's paid touts to prevent the "loyalists" from joining the strike, on June 4, the fifty-eighth day of the strike, those working joined the strikers in a body, and a complete deadlock prevailed. This was the position up to June 18.

BOOK REVIEW

Trade Union Documents. Compiled and Edited by W. Milne-Bailey, Secretary Research Department, T.U.C. (Messrs. G. Bell & Sons, 552 pp., with index, 8s. 6d.)

UNDER the guise of a compilation of documents to facilitate the securing of a "first-hand acquaintance" with the trade union movement, the secretary of the T.U.C. Research Department has produced a volume of propaganda for Mondism and defence of the class collaboration policy of the General Council. We have no hesitation in saying that the reader who attempts to get a conception of the movement and confines himself to the avenues opened up in this volume will get a completely distorted view.

Mr. Bailey has arranged 247 documents in four sections, introduced by an abridged historical survey of the trade union movement :—

- I. Value, Aspirations and Objects of Trade Unionism.
- II. Structure and Organisation.
- III. Functions and Methods.
- IV. The Place of Trade Unionism in the Community.

While fully appreciating the difficulty of picturing the real life of the movement from its written records, we are nevertheless left with a feeling that Mr. Bailey has completely failed to interpret the life and spirit of trade unionism.

Out of 247 documents, not *one* is from a rank and file source, while such trade unionists as Sidney Webb, G. D. H. Cole, Professor Laski and R. H. Tawney are reproduced almost with reverence! Obviously Mr. Bailey's conception of the trade union movement is not that of a worker, but that of a bourgeois civil servant to whom his superior officials constitute the powers to be regarded with respect, the rest of the population existing, like Mr. Bailey's trade union membership, only to pay.

His treatment of the General Strike in 1926 will perhaps best illustrate this attitude. This turning point in the history of the British working class is accorded some twelve documents, and the selection gives the impression that the strike was a slight incident, almost an accident. Nothing is included which gives an adequate estimation of the class forces at work, the material issued by the Communists, by the Minority Movement Conference of Action, by the hundreds of local Trades Councils' Strike Committees is entirely ignored. The shameful agreements signed by various executives, some of which abandoned whole sections of the workers to the employers, are also omitted. The selection should be compared with the documents quoted by R. Page Arnot and Emile Burns in their small volume on the General Strike in order to see how effectively Mr. Bailey's method of selection operates in favour of the General Council.

The index introduction and the document headings all refer to the "National Strike" (the patriotic phrase adopted by the General Council to cover its doubled track in retreating from the brink of a revolutionary crisis)

although he has included one document (150) in which the "British Worker" itself deals with the "General Strike."

It should not be thought that evasion and suppression constitute our Research Secretary's only means of painting his rosy picture. He is not beyond unadorned misrepresentation when he thinks it necessary. This is shown by his references to the international trade union unity situation and his statement that the R.I.L.U. and the Communists pursue "wrecking tactics" inside the unions.

But it is in his last section that Mr. Bailey departs altogether from any pretence at collecting trade union documents and becomes an open propagandist for Reformism. Headed "The Place of Trade Unionism in the Community," a phrase which in itself indicates the bourgeois, this section contains fifty-two documents, dealing with the legal status of unions, trade union recognition by employers, victimisation, representation on managing bodies, works committees, wage boards, the Industrial Conference and a National Industrial Council. The earlier documents are at any rate issued by trade unions, but as he approaches 1929 Mr. Bailey prefers the vapourings of high-brows like Prof. Laski to documents reflecting the real place of trade unionism in the "community." One would gather from this section that in an atmosphere of philosophic discussion, the trade unions were advancing, after an accidental strike, to the peaceful penetration of the capitalist system and had almost, if not quite, succeeded by their invincible logic in persuading the capitalist that they could manage his industry better than he himself. There is no indication of the real situation since May 12, 1926, the depression among the membership, the loss of members, the savage dismissals and victimisation, the loss of privileges gained by years of struggle, the breaking up of shop organisation, the cutting of rates, the speeding up and intensification of labour, the rationalisation offensive of the employers. He includes pages about the Mond-Turner discussion, but nothing about the starvation of the miners, the shame of capitalist charity, or the baton charges on men, women and children, nothing about the official sabotage of every forward move, every attempt by the rank and file to get out of the morass in spite of official strike-breaking and blacklegging. He talks about unity in the abstract, but says nothing about the break with the Russian unions, nothing about the driving out of the unions of the best fighters and militants, nothing about the disruption of branches and districts because they fought against the official betrayal.

Neither these omissions nor the appearance of the book at this moment are accidental. Mr. Bailey has totally failed to present a true picture of the development or the present state of trade unionism, but he has shed a vivid light on the workings of the official minds at Transport House, has shown their conception of the goal of trades unionism to be, not the overthrow of capitalism and the emancipation of labour, not the solidarity of the workers of the world and the building of a new life, but the absorption of the unions into the official apparatus of the capitalist state and the big combines.

J. A. M.

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P R I C E S I X P E N C E

KARL MARX: HIS LIFE AND WORK

by OTTO RÜHLE. Translated by EDEN & CEDAR PAUL

This is the first full-length biography of Marx to appear in English, and truly fills a gap in our literature. The historical setting of Marx's activities is vividly sketched, and his character analysed with sympathy and insight. This brilliant study should help even his opponents to understand what manner of man Marx was, and what was his outlook on life; it shows, too, how his teaching bears on the pressing problems of to-day. *Illustrated 15s.*

George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 40 Museum St., London, W.C. 1

Militants s'amusement

Newspapers perform many varied functions these days. The "Sunday Worker" cannot afford to become the appendix of an insurance office nor share with powerful American interests the exploitation of mining reserves in far parts of the world. So it runs dances and bazaars in its spare time.

THE bazaar this year—the emphasis is for the benefit of all those comrades who share in the pagan festival of December 25—will be the Press and Prisoners' Bazaar run by the "Sunday Worker" and the I.C.W.P.A. in conjunction. It will be all that we say of it. But we need the help of all comrades who can perform any social functions, however feebly and gracelessly. Time is short; we have only to the first week in December. But the machinery is set up and the work beginning. Co-operation from "Labour Monthly" readers is cordially invited.

Write to Eva Davey, c/o "Sunday Worker," 91 Gray's Inn Road, London, for particulars.

Readers of the "Labour Monthly" are also cordially invited to the dance to be held on October 5 at 7.30 p.m. at the Surrey Masonic Hall (Gamberwell New Road). We shall only mulct them of 1s. 6d. for the pleasure of their company. Beer (and other refreshments) commodiously provided.

All this has very little to do with newspapers? True enough—till you try to run one without any capital. If any of the "Labour Monthly" readers care to relieve us of the pressure of need we will perhaps run dances and bazaars for the promotion of good fellowship among the workers. These are no joking matters. It has seemed once or twice since the last issue of the "Labour Monthly" as if no more advertisements might have to be written on behalf of the "S.W."

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 11 SEPTEMBER, 1929 NUMBER 9

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The "Labour Monthly"—Three Months of Labour Government—National Non-Party—Left Reformist Vacillations—Revolutionary View—The Issue—Dreams and Realities—Why a Labour Government—Soviet Relations—Hague Conference—Open Imperialist Conflict—"Socialists" as City Representatives—"Worth Hundreds of Thousands of Votes"—Jingo Labour Press—A Trial War Mobilisation—Towards Social Fascism.

THE response to our appeal last month on behalf of the LABOUR MONTHLY has been very encouraging. We had to announce last month that, unless we could receive guarantees of regular donations from friends to total £20 a month, it would be necessary to close down. At the time of writing, guarantees totalling £16 17s. 6d. a month have already been received, and replies are still coming in. We are confident that those who are able and have not yet done so will hasten to guarantee the remainder, and we appeal to them to do so. There is thus every reason to state with confidence that the immediate future of the LABOUR MONTHLY is saved, and we wish to express our very sincere thanks to all donors. But we would now wish to turn to the bulk of our readers, who are in no position to make donations without very heavy sacrifice, to help us in a no less important way—in circulation. We appeal for a common endeavour to double the circulation of the LABOUR MONTHLY by December. Will every reader try hard to secure one more subscriber, or take one extra copy to pass on and thus help to make our journal known? To increase our circulation will not only strengthen the position of the LABOUR MONTHLY; it is a work of political education and propaganda which will win good fruits, and mean the further strengthening and equipping of the conscious revolutionary vanguard in the working class for the storms ahead.

WITHIN three months of its existence, the Labour Government has flown its true colours with a completeness and a speed which few would have ventured to predict ; and the colours it has flown are the colours of the jingo, the usurer, the wage-cutter and the war-maker. Snowden's chauvinist rôle at The Hague, and its warlike echoes throughout Britain and the world ; the enforcement of a wage-cut arbitration on the half million textile workers ; the break in the Soviet Union negotiations, and encouragement and assistance to the Chinese war-lords ; the Egyptian jackboot "settlement" with the puppet dictator Mahmoud ; the reign of police terrorism, wholesale imprisonments and shootings against the Indian workers—these are the first signs and foretaste of the character of the new Government. "The people of this country, irrespective of all party ties and alliances, are coming to the conclusion that the country is at last being governed, and really governed. . . . We all feel to-day at least that England once again counts in the Councils of Europe ; we are once again a nation." Thus an aristocratic Labour Minister proudly vaunting at a Labour Party fête ; and through him spoke the true accents of the Labour Government. Every revolutionary Marxist prediction of the true character of the Labour Government is being fulfilled with a completeness which smashes to empty nothingness the pitiful half-hopes and promises, the dismays and entreaties of the Left reformists and "socialist" pacifists. *It is a Government, not of a mildly "Left," reforming, cautiously "progressive," peace-seeking character ; but on the contrary, beneath the pacifist and reformist propaganda, an ever more openly aggressive Government of national unity, jingoism and the beginnings of fascism.* This is above all the significance of the Labour Government which needs to be understood in the present period.

THREE types of view are dominant in the working-class movement on the question of the Labour Government. The first is the official Labour or reformist view. This sees in the Labour Government a national Government, representative of all classes, engaged on the task of national reconstruction and industrial peace at home, with the hope of better conditions

and social benefits for the workers, and peace, combined with the maintenance of British prestige and imperial interests, abroad. This view, which is in reality closely similar to the essentials of the fascist type of programme, has no relation to Socialism ; indeed, a leading Cabinet Minister, when cross-questioned as to the relationship of his programme to Socialism (as J. H. Thomas was by W. J. Brown), is not only nonplussed for an answer, but is unable to understand the question. On the basis of this view, all distinctions of parties disappear ; the appeal is for a " Council of State " to realise a common programme. This political coalition, which is the counterpart of the employers' trade union coalition in the economic field, is the real basis of the Labour Government.

THE second type of view is the Left reformist view, or that of the would-be " Socialists " within the Labour Party, represented by the Independent Labour Party. This viewpoint is based on a contradiction. On the one hand, it professes the desire still for a Socialist policy, or for a policy in the interests of the working class. On the other hand, it gives its support to the Labour Government, which is a government of Capitalism. In consequence, their expression is a continual vacillation between hope and disappointment, approval and disillusionment, support and vows of withdrawal of support, protests, complaints, warnings, entreaties, &c., according to the particular action or inaction of the moment on the part of the Labour Government. When the Labour Government, whose policy is necessarily determined by the totality of capitalist interests, is frequently compelled to deny concessions or break pledges, act openly against the workers or to strengthen capitalism, then these elements raise a loud lament, express disillusionment, ask what use it was to set up a Labour Government, declare themselves " ashamed " to face the workers to whom they have made promises, &c. But they remain " hoping " to the last ; for to cease hoping would mean that they would have to face practical conclusions as to the character of the Labour Government and of the Labour Party, which they are not prepared to face. Their agitation is consequently confined to detail issues, particular grievances, demands for concessions, &c. But the

central issue of the Labour Government itself and its function as a servant of capitalism they cannot face. Their implication all the time is that, if only this or that concession were granted, if only this or some future Labour Government would move a little to the "Left" all would be well. Their practical rôle thus becomes, not merely to serve as a harmless safety-valve of opposition sentiments, but *above all to keep alive the hopes of the workers in the Labour Government as the eventual solver of their problems*, even though immediate realities are black and disillusioning. "Despite the distressing things that were now happening, he was more convinced than ever that Socialism in our Time would be achieved, and that the instrument of its achievement would be the Labour Party."—(Maxton at the I.L.P. Summer School—*New Leader*, August 16, 1929.)

THE third type of viewpoint in relation to the Labour Government is the revolutionary viewpoint. This view is based on the Marxist understanding of the antagonism of classes. A Government can govern in the interests of capitalism, or in the interests of the working class ; there is no third course. The Labour Government, not only by its programme and policy, but by its whole basing on the existing capitalist dictatorship and its state machine, can only be a government of capitalism ; and its policy can only reflect the current needs and aims of capitalism, whatever its label, professions, promises or pledges. This is independent of whether it holds its own parliamentary majority, or is directly dependent, as at present, on an open capitalist majority in Parliament. When a Ministry with a "Labour" or "Socialist" label is enthroned at the head of the capitalist dictatorship, this only means that the capitalist dictatorship is endeavouring to conceal its true character, in order to defeat, confuse and paralyse the gathering workers' struggle. If the workers in consequence weaken their struggle, in order not to "embarrass" the Labour Government, become passive and look to the Labour Government to carry out their aims, then the manœuvre of capitalism is successful. But if the workers instead go forward the more irreconcilably with their struggle, realise that to fight capitalism they must fight the Labour Government which is its figure-head, carry forward their

independent struggle in spite of and against the Labour Government, and refuse to be put off with the sham of "power" and demand its reality, then the manœuvre of capitalism is defeated, and the real advance to Socialism goes forward, *i.e.*, the advance to the fight for the working-class dictatorship, which can alone end capitalism and realise Socialism.

IT is between the latter two types of viewpoint that the real issue in the working class lies: between the Left reformist line, which seeks to tie down the hopes of the workers, if not to this Labour Government, then at any rate to some future Left Labour Government, and on this basis to damp down the actual class struggle; and the revolutionary line, which seeks to lead the independent working class struggle against the Labour Government, as the bulwark of capitalism, forward to the revolutionary conquest of power. Which of these is the correct line for the working class? It is from the point of view of the central question that the present experience of the Labour Government needs to be studied, and the lessons drawn. For the record of the existing Labour Government, and its growing evolution towards a national fascist type, is the most powerful demonstration of the correctness of the revolutionary Marxist analysis of its character as an organ of capitalism at its present stage, and of the emptiness of the Left reformist hopes of the eventual realisation of Socialism through such an organ.

WHY is the Labour Government of 1929, based though it is on a far stronger electoral vote and a far greater parliamentary strength than ever before, far more openly reactionary in character than its vacillating predecessor of 1924? This is the fact which smashes to atoms all the Left reformist dreams of a gradual advance to Socialism through a growing Labour Party vote and successive Labour Governments. From the Left reformist point of view, this fact is inexplicable and incomprehensible, a matter for helpless lamentations and imprecations, met only by ever more utopian dreamings of what a Labour Government *might* do, instead of by a frank facing of realities of what a Labour Government *does*. But for the Marxist understanding, that a Labour

Government corresponds, not to the aspirations of the working class, but to the needs of capitalism at the given stage, this fact is completely explicable and comprehensible, and the clearest pointer to its true rôle at the present stage. *For it is the whole character of the present period of capitalism, the period of increasing antagonisms, and of the needs of capitalism at the present stage, that it does not permit to the Labour Government an easy course of peaceful reforms, but throws on it instead rough and bloody tasks.*

WHAT was the purpose of capitalism in setting up the Labour Government at the present stage? The throwing to the front of the MacDonald Labour Government in Britain, and of the Müller Social-Democratic Government in Germany, is a distinctive feature of the present period. In the same way, the MacDonald Labour Government of 1924, and the Left Bloc Herriot Government, supported by the Socialists, in France, was a distinctive feature of the phase of five years ago. Common to both is the character of a rising working class wave, following on a period of open reaction. The primary task of the Labour and Social-Democratic Governments is to head off the rising working class wave, to defeat the workers from within by attaching them to capitalist politics and the capitalist governing machine. But the general character of the capitalist situation within which this task has to be accomplished, and of the politics to which the workers have to be attached, has changed. In 1924, the situation of capitalism required first and foremost the policy of stabilisation and "pacific" settlement on the lines of the Dawes Plan. In Britain, a slight net increase in wages could be recorded. But to-day the situation is one of rapidly sharpening imperialist and social antagonisms and the drive to war. The Young Plan is the scene of a battleground. The typical achievements of the German Social-Democratic Government become the May Day shooting of the Berlin workers, and the new high-power cruiser building programme, carried through in defiance of their own election pledges. And the typical achievements of the Labour Government in its first three months become the 6½ per cent. wage-cut of the half million textile workers, and the chauvinist stand of Snowden at The Hague.

CONTRAST the treatment of relations with the Soviet Union in 1924 and to-day. In 1924, working-class pressure compelled the establishment of political relations with the Soviet Union almost immediately after the formation of the Labour Government. A draft treaty was reached, again under working class pressure, which aroused the united opposition of the Liberal and Conservative Parties and led to their combination to end the Labour Government. In 1929, the Labour Government delays the opening of even preliminary negotiations until six weeks after its formation, pledges itself to maintain the full Chamberlain terms, pledges itself in no case to establish relations until the second meeting of Parliament, *i.e.*, after five months, sends a Note in terms calculated to make negotiations very nearly impossible, and finally ruptures negotiations, almost as soon as begun, by insisting on acceptance of the full bourgeois moneylenders' and counter-revolutionaries' terms as a prior condition. It is the Liberal Party that now takes on the rôle of Left critic, and demands the immediate establishment of relations without conditions. The Labour Party has taken on the rôle of Chamberlain.

CONTRAST again the experience of the Dawes Plan and of the Young Plan. In place of the easy smooth working of the London Dawes Conference, with Anglo-American co-operation and the bankers in unchallenged control, with France reluctantly acquiescent and Germany impotent, we have the essential character of the whole negotiations connected with the Young Plan that they reveal at every point, not the reconciliation of interests, but the open bursting forth at every point of violent imperialist antagonisms. The Paris Conference of Experts was already one continuous crisis and menace of deadlock. The Hague Conference, even before it met, was already one long-drawn battle on the place of meeting. Why such a fierce and obstinate struggle of the Great Powers upon a "detail"? Because the place of meeting carried with it the leadership of the Conference, and the probable placing of the International Bank, the supreme and decisive issue. At Paris Britain was defeated by the American bloc with France and Italy against Britain, granting France and Italy gains at the British expense. The British experts were faced with the alter-

natives of bearing alone the onus of rejection and failure of the Conference, or capitulating ; they capitulated, for the battle was too serious to be fought by the experts and had to be fought on the political field. On the question of the place of meeting, Britain was again defeated. Now, with The Hague Conference, has come the decisive battle ; and British Imperialism has had to throw pacific pretences to the winds, and come out in full fighting array.

IT is not a question of two and a half millions a year. It is not for this that the whole British fighting front would be thus mobilised. The big bourgeois organs in Britain, such as *The Times* and *Economist*, have on more than one occasion let slip that the actual nominal issue is a bagatelle, affecting a hypothetical margin ten years hence. But behind this issue, bigger stakes are in the ring. The whole position of London's financial supremacy and world leadership is now in the balance. New York and Paris combined have let loose a deadly offensive on London's gold position ; and the outcome is still uncertain. The gold reserve falls steadily ; and the raising of the New York discount rate to 6 per cent., or above the London rate, has carried the crisis a stage further. Not since 1914 has the City and Bank of England had to face so heavy a crisis. At the same time, America and France play into each other's hands on the strategy of the Young Plan ; and the Briand-Stresemann projects of an economic United States of Europe are again a threat with the point turned against Britain. If the International Bank becomes established, not merely in name, but in fact, as the principal gold-holding centre outside New York (for, as with the League of Nations, America initiates, but has no intention of itself coming in and subordinating its independent rôle), and is established, not in London, but in Brussels or some other centre, with London subordinate to it, then the financial position of London is ended. Faced with this situation, British imperialism is fighting like a beast at bay, ready to wreck the Conference rather than suffer defeat. And while Snowden is maintaining the fighting front at The Hague, MacDonald is manœuvring desperately against time in Britain to buy off the American offensive, and reach on a basis of naval concessions a paper agreement, and economic help to save the pound. But the American price is

likely to be a high one, both in respect of naval concessions, and for economic help. It is probable, however, that Britain will have to make concessions to America in order to find a temporary way out of the present impasse, and greater strength for the future conflict.

IT is an appropriate irony that this battle of the City of London has to be fought through the persons of "socialists"; that the trampers of the pretence of internationalism and proclaimers of the sacred rights of national egoism at the Conference should be the leaders of the "Labour and Socialist International"; that the former leaders of I.L.P. "pacifism," who denounced the war and all reparations and were denounced therefore, should now be demanding their pound of flesh to the last drop of blood, amid the applause of the jingoes; and that the former leaders of the simulacrum "Workers and Soldiers' Council" in Britain in 1917 should now be leading the bondholders against the Workers' Republic. But this is something more than a passing coincidence or time's revenges; it is the very essence of the present situation. It is the whole character of bourgeois democracy that, when political issues have to be faced, the City cannot appear in person; for who would pay attention if a little group of stockjobbers came on to a platform and asked the masses kindly to die for their dividends? Popular heroes must be found. If in 1914, Lloyd George is the legendary "radical revolutionary," then Lloyd George must be the war hero. Briand, the former preacher of the General Strike, must represent the Paris Bourse. Wilson, the golden voice of international idealism, must represent Wall Street at war. And so to-day, if now the Labour Party has the ear of the people, then MacDonald and Snowden, the former anti-war heroes, must become the true voices of British imperialism and lead the nation to the coming war.

*"It was largely our attitude on reparations to which we owed our immense advance at the last general election. It was alone worth hundreds of thousands of votes to us.—(Mrs. Snowden in *Le Journal*, August 14, 1929).*

THUS Mrs. Snowden in the course of an interview to the correspondent of the *Paris Journal*. In the course of the same interview she explained that her husband, since his House of Common speech on reparations just before the election,

had received thousands of letters of enthusiastic approval "not from members of our Party, but from our political adversaries." She then went on to her remarkable estimate, as above, of the basis of the Labour Party's election success, and of the market value of a jingo reparations policy ("worth hundreds of thousands of votes to us"). How far her estimate is accurate is not for the moment important; it is very probably accurate enough. What is important is the outlook and political mentality here revealed; for her expression is a symptom of the condition of the upper circles of the Labour Party. *Here, through the mouth of this typical snob, is expressed with blatant unconcealment the true soul of the Labour Party.* What does it matter that reparations are dragged from the impoverishment and exploitation of the German workers, who had no part in the causing of the war? What does it matter that the principles of international socialism are trampled in the dirt? A jingo reparations policy is "worth hundreds of thousands of votes to us." There was once a time when Messrs. MacDonald and Snowden, in temporary divergence from the Labour Party, opposed a war—with very diplomatic reservations, it is true, but sufficient to be thought of as opposing it—and in consequence came out at the bottom of the poll in the subsequent general election. They have learnt better since. They no longer oppose the jingo Labour Party; they are at the head of it. A jingo reparations policy is "worth hundreds of thousands of votes to us." Yes, ladies and gentlemen of the Labour Party, but continue your principles a little further. *If a jingo reparations policy is worth hundreds of thousands of votes to you, how many millions of votes will a war be worth?*

THE expression of the Labour Press on the jingo rôle of Snowden at The Hague is instructive. Apart from the liberal idealist anxieties of Brailsford, the Labour Press is united with the capitalist Press in patriotic enthusiasm behind the "strong stand" of its "popular" leader. The *Forward* admits that :—

All of which, by the way, is apt to make one reflect how the jingo spirit can be whipped up, and how, given little more of a pretext, the Press could create a big popular enthusiasm for another war.

“The Press !” Not the Government, which is responsible ; not the Labour Party leaders, who have given the cue which the Press is only following. But the *Forward* concludes that, with regard to Snowden, “as far as we can make out, he has not been sinning against the light” ; and “perhaps this incident at The Hague is all to the good” ; since, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is “popular,” he can tax the rich more successfully. Thus this organ of the Independent Labour Party holds out the petty bait of a Lloyd George taxation policy to hide the real drive to war. The *Daily Herald* is more open and unashamed. “Mr. Snowden Winning” is its type of heading ; “persistency and grit” declares its editorial. With pride it finds in Snowden a—Disraeli, *i.e.*, the Conservative prototype of unscrupulous imperialism :—

Not since Disraeli has any British statesman uttered across a conference table words so sharp in their challenge, so pregnant with ardour, so significant in their implication.—(*Daily Herald*, August 13, 1929).

No further step is needed for the Labour organ to become, like the *Daily Citizen* before it, the organ of the warmongers, when the time is ripe.

THE significance of Snowden's rôle at The Hague, and its echoes in Britain and throughout the world, is wider than the immediate crisis. *It is a trial mobilisation for war that has been made ; and the Labour Party has been found ready for its task.* That sudden unison of Press and parties from Right to Left, the virtual suppression of all contrary news and every contrary voice, the lashing up of enthusiasm and indignation about an obviously meaningless pretext, the applause of the Churchills and Lloyd Georges, the enthusiastic baying and yelping of the entire capitalist Press behind the bellicose utterance of the ex-pacifist turned national spokesman, the intoxication of the Labour Government with its first taste of blood as the jingo leader of the nation—here in all this is already the authentic ring of 1914 once again. The warning is plain for all to see. The revolutionary Marxist predictions of the Labour Government as a government of war-preparation, which but three months ago might still have sounded fantastic to the eight and a-half million electors who voted for the Labour Party and its programme of “peace and reform,”

to-day already receive echo and confirmation on every side. "I have not in my time seen" writes an old member of the Independent Labour Party, "such unanimity excepting only once, and that was when Lord Grey made the speech which ushered this country into the war" (William Stewart in *Forward*, August 17, 1929). But Snowden's bellicose line is only a symptom and a foretaste. Remember the break already in the Soviet negotiations; remember the present direct provocation of the Chinese warlords, who receive the approval and practical support of the British Labour Government, which has only just arranged to send them a Naval Mission; remember that all this is only in the first months of the Labour Government; and the signposts are already clearly pointing for all to see. Let the working class take warning before it is too late.

WITH the advance to war abroad goes the advance to fascism at home. The policy of industrial peace, the policy of national capitalist reconstruction, the policy of increasing the secret police and suppressing revolutionary propaganda, the policy of building the Labour Party into a disciplined national-capitalist party, composed of mixed petit-bourgeois and working-class elements, and ruled from above through a rigid machine—all these are the first beginnings of the development. It is not for nothing that the capitalist Press has begun to praise Snowden as a Mussolini. Already the liberal *Manchester Guardian* has begun to scent the new tendency. Commenting on the break of the Soviet negotiations, in practical violation of election pledges, it writes :—

In a speech at Durham only a month ago Mr. MacDonald explained that when the House has "ceased to meet," then he had "a free field for work," and that he would "want that free field." *These words have not a democratic ring; they are not in harmony with the most cherished traditions of this country. And the plant that has begun to grow on this "free field" is not one that has sprung from the great sowing of May 30.*

Compare with this the utterance of the Labour Under-Secretary for War, Earl De La Warr, already partially quoted at the outset of these Notes :—

Some of their Tory opponents were sneering at them and saying that after all they were only carrying out the Tory policy. But it was

something the Labour Government had done if it had helped people to discover what the Tory policy was . . .

The ordinary man in the street does not care a hoot whose policy it is, so long as it is being put into operation for the good of the country as a whole and appeals to the commonsense of the nation as a whole, and that is exactly what our policy does do. *The people of this country, irrespective of all party ties and alliances, are coming to the conclusion that the country is at last being governed, and really governed, that there is a Cabinet in control of the country that is prepared to take full Governmental responsibility for its actions. We all feel to-day at least that England once again counts in the Councils of Europe ; we are once again a nation.*—(*Daily Herald* report, August 19, 1929.)

Strong government. The united nation. Irrespective of party ties. This is already the typical language of fascism. And this is the direction to which the Labour Government is leading, while the Left reformists talk of "Socialism in our Time." The advance to war abroad, the advance to social fascism at home—this is where the reformist "path to socialism" through a Labour Government will lead the workers, if they are not strong in time to break free from it, to fight it, and to go forward on their own path to the working class conquest of power.

R. P. D.

SOCIALISTS AND THE HAGUE CONFERENCE

By "PRAVDA"

THE deadlock at The Hague continues. Telegrams report a coming "definitive" meeting of the representatives of France, Italy, Japan, and Belgium with the British delegation. At this meeting a "final" attempt will be made to come to an agreement with Snowden on the extent of the concessions with which he could be satisfied in his devotion to the financial department of the British bourgeoisie. It will, however, be exceedingly difficult to arrive at an agreement. Snowden in one of his Press interviews revealed the cards played by the British delegation at The Hague. He declared :—

We are attempting to put British rights in their proper place again. During recent years Britain has been so yielding that no further account was taken of her, and others have taken advantage of that. The time has come for Britain once again to take its place in the world.

The question at issue, therefore, is not that of the two or three additional million pounds which would accrue to the British Treasury from the general sum of German reparations. It is true that it is far from being a matter of indifference to the British bourgeoisie whether they receive reparation payments ear-marked unconditionally for them or whether from a share which can be actually annulled if German finance is in a bad situation. In the same way, the British owners of coal mines and steel works are not a little interested in the question of the cessation or diminution of German payments in kind. But the central issue does not lie here. Britain wants to win back its "place in the world." The question turns on the intentions of the British bourgeoisie to advance to the re-conquest of positions taken from them by their rivals and competitors both in the economic and in the political sphere.

That England's opponents at The Hague in their turn do not mistake the real meaning of Mr. Snowden's tactics, is borne out by the angry replies which have been evoked in the authoritative

sections of the French Press. Thus, Briand's official organ, *Le Temps*, writes (August 15, 1929) :—

In responsible British circles there can hardly be any mistake in regard to the impression created by the tactics of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The bloc of the Powers which desire the preservation of the Young Plan in its present form, *i.e.*, France, Italy, Japan and Belgium, has not been shattered ; the Powers less interested in reparations, as, for example, Roumania, Greece, Jugo-Slavia and Czecho-Slovakia, are displeased because satisfaction can only be given to England at their expense. Finally, the watchful distrustfulness of the U.S.A. may produce a special impression in political circles at the moment when MacDonalld is attempting to arrive at an agreement with America on the subject of naval armaments.

British claims to a " place in the world " are, thus, confronted with a very real combination of Powers, which are interested in this place being as circumscribed as possible. On the financial ground, in connection with German reparations, we are witnessing the enactment at The Hague of one of the episodes in the driving out of decaying British capitalism from all its positions. It is, of course, obvious that the defeat of England in the question of the distribution of reparations will denote its defeat also in the question of the Reparations Bank, as to its location and the number of places on its Board of Management.

The agreement of the English delegation to the satisfaction of their claims from the share of reparations allotted to the small Powers, would mean the embitterment of relations with the States of Central and Southern Europe. It must be considered that such an outcome would be received by the U.S.A. without any special dissatisfaction. In the present relationship of forces, the English delegation is by no means interested that there should be a successful termination of The Hague Conference at all costs. If not a rupture, then a postponement of the Conference, would fully correspond to their interests. Consequently, there is considerable basis for supposing that the English delegates will remain irreconcilable.

The British Labour Party Government in its policy at The Hague has fully earned the right to call itself a " national " Government, *i.e.*, a Government of the national bourgeoisie. Snowden's tactics have aroused the warmest sympathy and approval even in the circles of the most bourgeois Conservatives.

Chamberlain or Baldwin could hardly have been more zealous in defending the interests of British imperialism. No less measure of approval has been accorded to the activity of Henderson, for these two "Labour" leaders at The Hague supplement one another. In an equal measure, their activity is directed towards putting forward demands capable of causing difficulties for France and of winning back England's position, which was lost by Chamberlain, as arbiter in European affairs. But the position of the social-democratic parties in those countries which are victims of Snowden's policy is truly a difficult one. The French bourgeois Press confronts "its" socialists with the question how they regard the behaviour of the British "socialist" ministers who are working against the coming together of nations.

At first, the central organ of the French Socialist Party, *Le Populaire*, attempted to justify MacDonald. In its issue of August 13, it wrote :—

It is impossible to smooth out the entangled affairs of the bourgeoisie without bargaining. Socialist reconstruction under a capitalist regime cannot be conducted in any other way. . . . Precisely the necessity for this bargaining compels socialists to adapt their actions to the requirements of international capitalism. And this capitalism, alas, is still strong at The Hague, as everywhere.

This admission leaves nothing to be desired in point of frankness. Snowden and MacDonald are nothing more than victims of their ministerial positions. If one lives with wolves, one must act as wolves do. The British Labour Party, having become the head of a Government under a capitalist regime, is bound to defend the latter's wolfish interests.

A day later, August 14, the leader of the French socialists, Leon Blum, finds himself compelled to express himself afresh on the policy of the British Labour Party. The fact is that, in carrying out the orders of the British bourgeoisie, the Labour Party ministers grievously injured the interests of the French bourgeoisie. Consequently, this time Leon Blum is very severe to Snowden. The British Chancellor of the Exchequer has, it seems, "violated the decision of the Second International." Blum writes in the *Populaire* :—

I, no less than everyone else, have grounds for regretting that the British Labour Party has not been able to secure through the British

Labour Government the realisation of those ideas which it accepted as a section of the Second International. . . . Snowden is wrong, firstly, because his manœuvres give rise to harmful conflicts, but he is still more wrong in principle.

Thus, the French socialists also have not betrayed their "national interests," *i.e.*, the interests of their national bourgeoisie. They regard Snowden as a "violator of the decisions of the Second International."

The Austrian social-democrats, however, are not interested in reparations, but they are hostilely disposed towards France. The actions of the English delegation at The Hague do not arouse among them such feelings of grief as in Leon Blum. Thus, in the Viennese *Arbeiterzeitung* of August 15, we read :—

It is true that the British Labour Government is defending not only the interests of British workers, but also the demands of the British State, which means the demands of British capital. But, is the defence of national interests in contradiction with international obligations? . . . British socialists are ready, as are the socialists of all countries, as quickly as possible to realise the decisions of the Second International ; but as long as political conditions in Europe, especially the power of American capitalism, render impossible the fulfilment of these demands, for so long it is impossible to forbid the representatives of British workers to demand for the British unemployed what would otherwise go to the French militarists.

Thus, Snowden appears not only as a betrayer but as a faithful son of the Second International, "ready as quickly as possible to realise its decisions," if only the "power of American capitalism" would not interfere. The reparations demanded from Germany through the voice of Snowden by British imperialism, will go, if one is to believe the Austrian social-democrats, to the assistance of the British unemployed. On the other hand, the "national interests" of France, which the French socialists consider it their duty to protect, are nothing more than the demands of the "French militarists."

But the Austro-Marxists do not stop here. The *Arbeiterzeitung* continues :—

Everything which increases the scope of action of the British Labour Government is to the advantage of the whole proletariat ; everything which strengthens its position serves the cause of the International. Snowden's financial adroitness provides the basis on which Henderson can develop his activity for peace.

This "activity for peace" consists at the present time, as is well known, in the more than equivocal policy of Britain with regard to the Chinese-Soviet conflict and in the refusal of the British Labour Government to restore diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. The activity of Snowden and Henderson at The Hague consists in strengthening the position of British imperialism and in conquering for it its "rightful place" in the capitalist world. But such places, it is well-known, are not to be got without fighting. The British "Labour" Government, therefore, is still more zealous than even the Baldwin Government in preparing for war.

There is not the slightest doubt that Snowden's policy, as the *Arbeiterzeitung* put it, "serves the cause of the Second International." The open recognition of this fact in the pages of a "Left" social-democratic organ constitutes truly a sign of the times. Social democracy ever more openly and blatantly is revealing itself as a weapon of imperialist policy—external and internal. Not the international interests of the working class, but the predatory interests of the "national" bourgeoisie, of the "national" imperialism—such is its highest criterion of policy.

PREPARING WAR ON SOVIET RUSSIA

By ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

THE sharpest of the many contradictions with which world capitalism is faced is the contradiction between the Imperialist States and the Soviet Union. The development of capitalist rationalisation in the Imperialist States, and of socialist rationalisation and industrialisation in the Soviet Union, has raised this contradiction to a higher degree than at any previous time since the wars of intervention. The adoption of the Five Years' Plan of socialist industrialisation in the U.S.S.R., with its object lesson to the world of how Socialism, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, can beat capitalism, has faced world imperialism with the question of life or death.

Rationalisation plays a special part in sharpening the contradiction up to this point. The bourgeois economists and their social-democratic echoes see in rationalisation merely the transition to a higher form of industrial technique and organisation. But the comparison between capitalist rationalisation and socialist rationalisation reveals the shallowness of this view. Capitalist rationalisation aims first and foremost at a higher rate of profit, and leads directly to intensified class antagonism, sharper conflict between metropolis and colonial peoples, bigger imperialist rivalries. Socialist rationalisation aims primarily at building up a socialist economic order, which is based on the well-being of the workers and the peasants.

It is characteristic that capitalist rationalisation in 1929 brings vast class battles in all countries, developing into an offensive of the proletariat against the capitalist State. Socialist rationalisation brings to the Soviet Union in 1929 the tremendous and historic wave of "socialist rivalry"—the movement in which non-party workers of one factory challenge the workers of another to lower overhead costs, increase output, diminish absenteeism, raise productivity, eliminate illiteracy and drunkenness, &c., as their contribution to the building up of Socialism. The lock-out and wage reduction of the British cotton workers on the one hand,

the outstripping of the Five Years' Plan in the first nine months of its application on the other—these are the characteristic signs of the difference between capitalist and socialist rationalisation, a difference which is becoming decisive for all the capitalist Governments.

Amongst these the Labour Government is not the least energetic. Two months ago we wrote that it had taken office as "a government of capitalist rationalisation and imperialist war." Two months have furnished abundant proofs of the assertion, and in no sphere more than in that of relations with the Soviet Union.

The first big event in this sphere after the coming to office of the Labour Government was the seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway by the counter-revolutionary militarist clique at present in power in China. There are innocents who believe that this was merely an adventurous act on the part of Chiang Kai-Shek, "presuming" on the support he previously enjoyed from the Imperialist Powers, but actually creating serious "embarrassment" for them. We refer them (1) to Henderson's announcement that Sir Miles Lampson, the British Minister in China, is working on the same instructions as under Baldwin; (2) to the continuing preparations for the despatch of the British Naval Mission to China; (3) to the unanimous cry for "mediation" and "arbitration" which arose from the capitalist Press, and was taken up by the Labour Government in associating itself with the American Government's "reminder" to Russia and China about the Kellogg Pact—not when Chiang Kai-Shek seized the railway, but when the U.S.S.R. showed signs of preparing to defend itself; (4) to the publicity given to the lying Press reports emanating from the Chinese counter-revolutionaries about Soviet "raids" and "invasions"—obviously to prepare the workers for a big attack on the U.S.S.R.—and the general suppression or minimising of the Soviet Notes giving date, time and place of Chinese and Russian White raids.

The danger of the theory of Chiang Kai-Shek's "adventurousness" is shown when in the *Sunday Worker* a comrade compares the seizure of the British Hankow Concession by a revolutionary mass movement, at the peak of the Chinese Revolution, with the seizure of the C.E.R. by the counter-revolutionary scoundrels who had in 1927 and 1928 drowned the first wave of the

Chinese socialist revolution in a monstrous bath of blood. For a month later we find the Executive of the Second International, of which the leaders of the British Labour Party are one of the brightest jewels—whose radiance is not dimmed by its temporary absence “on other duties”—passing a formal resolution that the seizure of the C.E.R. is also part of China’s struggle against foreign imperialism: with the obvious moral that you should not support the Soviet demand for restoration of the *status quo* on the railway as a preliminary for negotiations.

The rôle of the British Labour Government in China, however, is a matter for commonsense inference at present, to be “proved” to the doubters when some chance or the revolutionary act of the British workers opens the Foreign Office files. There is no excuse for doubt about the question of resuming diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

The Labour Party programme, *Labour and the Nation*, issued shortly before the General Election campaign, made the following declaration of policy regarding Soviet Russia: “A Labour Government . . . would at once take steps to establish diplomatic and commercial relations with it, would settle by treaty or otherwise any outstanding differences, and would make every effort to encourage a revival of trade with Soviet Russia.” The workers who voted Labour at the General Election did so in the belief that they were voting for immediate and unconditional restoration of relations, leaving disputed questions to be discussed once relations were re-established. They were encouraged in this belief by every Labour candidate and propagandist, and by such official publications as *e.g.*, *Fifty Points for Labour*, reprinted from the *Daily Herald*, which stated: “Labour in power would entirely reverse the Tory policy.”

The Communist Party told the workers during the elections that this was bluff and lies, but the faith of the workers in the Labour leaders was too strong. After the elections, and during the first six weeks of the Labour Government’s activity, any kind of fairy story was sufficient to transform even mildly critical members of the Labour Party into zealous defenders of MacDonald for not immediately carrying out the pledge. “MacDonald has not an absolute majority”—although the exchange of Ambassadors would be a

purely administrative question. "Parliament broke off relations, and Parliament must restore them"—although in the General Election and in Parliament the Liberals had gone much further than the Labour leaders in demanding immediate diplomatic relations. "The Dominions must be consulted"—although Baldwin did not consult them, nor did MacDonald in recently offering a "compromise" to the Egyptian bourgeoisie. But any and every excuse served the purpose, and was duly puffed and enlarged upon by the Labour Party Press and propagandists.

Then MacDonald—also "adventurously," like Chiang Kai-Shek, but as events showed not very rashly either—created a *fait accompli*. He gave a public pledge in Parliament to the Tories that there would be no resumption of diplomatic relations without satisfaction on outstanding questions (particularly propaganda)—satisfaction on which Parliament would be able to pass an opinion before relations were restored. As this was within a week of Parliament's three months' recess, it meant postponing relations for that time. But this was a minor point. The outstanding thing about this pledge was that it was a public challenge to the Soviet Government and to the British working class. Everyone knows that the Soviet Government will never agree to negotiate on any questions except on a footing of perfect equality: to make negotiations a condition for diplomatic relations means to put the Soviet Government in the position of a suppliant. Everyone knows that the Soviet Government in particular does not and will not accept Baldwin's excuse about "propaganda" as justifying the outrage against the Trade Delegation and the rupture of diplomatic relations in 1927. The British workers never accepted this excuse as genuine. But MacDonald gave his back-handed endorsement to Baldwin's action by making agreement on "propaganda" the condition for *resuming* relations.

MacDonald followed up his pledge by action to prove to the capitalists that he was serious. He invited a representative of the Soviet Government to London on false pretences—to talk about "procedure." Having got Dvoglevsky to Downing Street, Henderson proceeded to reveal MacDonald's policy: there could be no diplomatic relations before October, and therefore why not spend the time in discussing outstanding questions? If "a sufficient

measure of agreement" were reached by October, Henderson would then boldly go to the House of Commons and ask it to sanction the resumption of relations. *In other words, there was to be discussion of outstanding questions (including debts and propaganda) before resumption, and resumption was to be conditional upon agreement.* By a little adroit (or "impetuous") manœuvring, MacDonald had returned to Baldwin's exact position.

The Soviet Government exposed this manœuvre and recalled Dovgalevsky. The whole matter is to be reported to the Central Executive Committee of Soviets. An uneasy silence has descended on the Labour Press and the Labour M.P.'s. But it would be the biggest mistake to see in the whole affair an unsuccessful manœuvre on the part of MacDonald. On the contrary, in the light of the antecedent period, we realise that it was a further successful manœuvre on the part of MacDonald—to maintain the workers' illusions about his desire to resume relations, without altering in the least British imperialism's policy of isolating the U.S.S.R. If MacDonald for tactical reasons were ever to bring matters again to the point of discussions with the Soviet Government on a footing of equality, the handsome features of the bankers and bondholders would be seen peeping out from behind the Labour Party mask even more openly. It is a fact that even in 1924 negotiations with the first Labour Government were brought to the point of rupture by the latter's championship of British factory owners dispossessed by the Russian workers. The second Labour Government has already given ample earnest of its willingness and ability to put its predecessor well in the shade.

In this connection the proceedings at The Hague Conference, and their effect upon the British Labour Party, are of particular importance. The full significance of the British Government's policy at The Hague—Snowden's reply to the French attack on the pound sterling, the manœuvres to consolidate Germany into the anti-Soviet bloc by evacuation of the Rhineland, the courteous retort to America by shifting half the striking force of the Mediterranean fleet to the Atlantic, the coming fight (still only hinted at) on the U.S.A. scheme of an International Bank for Reparation Settlements, situated *outside* London—all this requires separate treatment. But one aspect of Labour policy deserves

special mention : the hearty and unanimous support it has received from all sections of the capitalist class, and the frenzy of social-patriotism this in its turn has evoked throughout the Labour Party.

“Once again a nation,” declares Earl De La Warr, prostituting the Irish revolutionary slogan with all the aristocratic impudence of the “Labour” careerist. “The will of the people of this country,” says E. T. Palmer, M.P., fathering the monstrous forgery that the will of the British workers is to exploit the nine-hour day and the low wages of their fellow-workers in Germany, France and Italy. “Other nations” have tried to “get away with an unjust and inequitable share of reparations,” says the *Daily Herald*, lumping together the Lille textile-worker and the Milan metal-worker with Briand and Mussolini, and helping British Imperialism to corrupt the British workers with the idea that to rob their German brothers is all right, providing everyone gets a fair share. “Fairness towards *one’s own country*. . . . The rapacity of *our* one-time allies. . . . *Our* attitude of excessive deference towards France,” write excited correspondents to the *New Leader*, identifying themselves with the capitalist class which rules our country and which concluded imperialist alliances in war-time, and incidentally abandoning all pretence of revolutionary Socialism. And so on.

The whole campaign has brought to the surface for a moment the huge nauseating reserve of social-patriotism, of social-jingoism, of sympathy with and support of British imperialism in defending “our” country (*i.e.* “our” right to exploit the whole world) which still swells and festers within the corrupted aristocracy of the British working class. The fact that the one-time “pacifist” I.L.P. is now cock-a-hoop with this social-patriotism only shows the sharp differentiation which has taken place as the class struggle in Britain has become fiercer. And it shows not only (as the *Forward* shamefacedly admits) “how the jingo spirit can be whipped up,” but what a tremendous machine for preparing and waging the war against Soviet Russia—in defence of “our” country and “our” Empire, of course, and to vindicate “our” traditions of industrial peace and selling the workers—the capitalist class has at its disposal in the Labour Party and the Labour Government.

To fight the Labour Party and to destroy its influence over the

mass of the workers : to fight against the Labour Government, widening partial struggles for immediate demands into political mass strikes and revolutionary action for a revolutionary Workers' Government : to strengthen the Communist Party which alone leads and can lead this fight (particularly by helping its campaign for a daily paper), to support its struggle to win the majority of the workers to its side—these are the bounden duties of all class-conscious workers in this era of intensified class and world antagonisms, of social-imperialism and social-fascism. There can be no fight for Socialism, no fight against the peril of imperialist war, no defence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, except through the sharpest fight against the Labour Government and the Labour Party.

BEFORE THE BELFAST TRADES UNION CONGRESS

By J. A. MAHON

THE Sixty-first Trades Union Congress at Belfast will mark a very definite stage in the development of the trade union movement in this country. Let us first see who will compose the Congress, and the nature of the situation in which it meets.

It will be a Congress of full-time trade union officials dominated by a leadership which has evolved into a social-democratic political party which bids fair to surpass in a short time the achievements of its Continental colleagues. The "delegates" themselves are elected by varying methods. Last year between 80 and 90 per cent. of them were full-time officials of the unions or Executive members. This year the proportion will be even higher. These "delegates" are sometimes "elected" by the higher organs of the unions, the annual delegate conference or the national, area or county executives, or take their turn in attending on the basis of a "rota" system. In a very small proportion of cases is there any consultation or ballot of the rank and file, and in such cases there is no preliminary discussion in the branches or shops as to the policy of the candidates, who in most cases do not even issue an election address from which their policy can be ascertained. In many cases militant workers who support the policy of the Minority Movement or the Communist Party have been prevented from standing for election by the social democrats, whose "democracy," like their "socialism," exists merely as a stock platform phrase to cover up their undemocratic and anti-socialist practice.

Thus the very composition of the Congress guarantees the acceptance of the line of the General Council, the line of linking up the trade union apparatus with the capitalist state in order to speed up rationalisation and prepare war on the Soviet Republic.

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Such militant delegates as will be present, in all cases elected by the rank and file of the union concerned after a ballot, will only be able to voice the denunciation of the militant working class against the whole proceedings and composition of the Congress. It is also clear that the Congress is not entitled to speak in the name of the trade union masses, it is a packed Congress representing the trade union officialdom and their hangers-on only.

It is not necessary here to bring forward evidence to illustrate the line of the Labour Government, but it is valuable to see how the trade union wing of the social-fascists will endeavour to use the trade union apparatus in support of the rationalisation government. Social democracy is expert in the division of labour between its different sections in order the more effectively to shackle the working-class movement to the service of capitalism. The task of the General Council will be to damp down and head off the growing working-class resistance to rationalisation, preventing strikes if possible, and certainly betraying them, and to link the trade unions with the government apparatus as directly as was done during the war period.

In other words, while the Labour Government and the Parliamentary Party function as the most virile governing party of capitalism, directly allied to finance-capital and ready to deal sternly with those capitalist elements who are hesitant on the questions of rationalisation or the war, the General Council and its trade union machine are to use their position at the head of the industrial movement to prevent, or at least to deflect, the inevitable attack of the militant masses on the Government which has so betrayed them.

The General Council has, therefore, to secure the adherence of the Congress to a perspective of (1) direct alliance with the employers and the State; (2) preparation of the trade union machinery for strike breaking, supplying blacklegs and otherwise smashing such disputes as cannot be stifled; (3) establishment of compulsory trade unionism and compulsory arbitration.

A scrutiny of the General Council's Report shows clearly that this will be the line. Such hard words are, of course, not used, nor will the Congress be asked to record its vote on such

sharply formulated issues; the proprieties must be observed. But the endorsement of the General Council's Report on the "Progress of Industrial Relations" can only mean the continuance of the whole official movement along this line. A perusal of this section of the Report (K, pp. 112, *et seq.*) shows open advocacy of the most energetic measures for trying to restore capitalism with trade union participation. Taken in conjunction with the resolutions of the World Economic Conference on rationalisation, endorsed by the Swansea T.U.C. and the Memorandum of the I.F.T.U. on rationalisation, in which the effects of rationalisation are openly admitted to be disastrous for the workers, this section makes the path of the General Council clear for the blind to see.

But this forward march in coalition with the capitalist State will be hidden, if the General Council can do it, by the usual social-democratic screen of phrases and calculated spreading of illusions among the working class. The linking up of the trade unions with the management of industry is to be presented as a *step forward towards workers' control*. Compulsory membership of unions functioning as labour departments of the employers is held out disguised as the realisation of the workers' old slogan of *100 per cent. trade unionism*, the difference between compulsion applied by the militant workers to recalcitrant blackleg elements and compulsion applied by the management and the state being carefully obscured. The march towards compulsory arbitration, the taking away of the right to strike, will be camouflaged as the determination of the Labour Government not to allow the employers to do as they like.

The carrying through of this programme of surrender and betrayal of everything the masses of trade unionists have fought and suffered for will only be possible if the revolutionary elements under the leadership of the Minority Movement and the Communist Party are rooted out of the trade unions. Therefore, the Report contains a carefully prepared and documented "Report on Disruption" attacking the Communists and the militants generally. This Report has obviously been compiled by a more competent hand than that of Citrine, whose previous efforts in this direction considerably embarrassed the

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General Council propagandists. The new effort purports to embody the views of the various unions who have been consulted on the alleged "disruptive" activities of the militants, but it is significant that the National Union of General Workers and the Boilermakers, two of the most vicious bodies of officials, have neither of them dared to report on the real situation in their ranks; or if they have, the General Council has not dared to print it in its report and thus expose to the world the methods adopted by these unions against their own members. Had the facts been reported they would have shown that in order to prevent the workers from supporting the Communists and Minority Movement members, on a declared policy, it is necessary for the bureaucrats to penalise and expel individual members, shut down branches, and deprive the union membership of most elementary rights, all this being done in a dictatorial manner in defiance of the rules and constitution.

The Report takes the line that revolutionary activity in the trade unions cannot possibly come from inside, it can only exist when fomented from outside the movement. The conclusion, therefore, is that while the trade union movement officially welcomes (1) criticism and discussion this must be genuine and not inspired from outside sources. When the facts too glaringly bear witness to the hypocrisy of this attitude, such as in the case of the Scottish Miners' situation, then the facts are just distorted to fit the argument. Thus the Report states that a determined effort was made by the militants in the Scottish Miners' county unions to secure the leadership, and then a new union was formed. The implication is that the militants formed the new union after being defeated in the old ones, whereas the facts are that the militants secured the leadership in the two biggest county unions, after repeated ballots of the membership, and the old officials simply refused to get out.

The whole Report carefully avoids any statement of the declared policy of the revolutionary trade union elements, and quotes not a single one of the Minority Movement Conference resolutions on policy. It gives not a single instance where "disruption" of the unions has taken place as a result of Minority Movement or Communist work. It blandly assumes that the

interests of the present office holders are coincident with those of the union, and that any attack on them and their policy is disruption.

The revolutionary and militant delegates present at the Congress will have hard work to state their case on the agenda as it is framed.

Resolution 9, in which the Tailors' and Garment Workers' Union asks for the condemnation of break-away unions, may give an opportunity for the statement of the real facts regarding the formation of the United Clothing Workers' Union.

Resolution 28, in which the A.E.U., in its half-hearted rôle of the "Maxton" among the trade unions, asks for the repeal of the Trade Union Act of 1927, will no doubt be defeated in favour of 29 in which the Miners' Federation in the proper statesmanlike manner asks merely for the removal of the "anomalies" created by this Act. This should afford the Congress the humorous spectacle of Mr. Brownlie shining on the left of A. J. Cook. No. 34, in which the E.T.U. asks for the Labour Government to bring in a Bill to make trade unionism compulsory, will doubtless disappear from the agenda as being too open a declaration.

Nos. 43, 44 and 45, provide the best opportunity for a statement by the militant groups among the delegates. In No. 43, the A.E.U. preserves its air of virtuously rejecting the advances of the employers to discuss collaboration. In No. 44, the only resolution on the agenda containing a statement of working-class policy, the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades expose the hypocrisy of the peace parley with employers, who at the same time ruthlessly attack the workers' standard of living, and they demand the termination of these parleys. No. 45 shows the cynical effrontery of the officials of the National Union of General Workers who put down a resolution calling the attention of the workers to the dangers resulting from rationalisation! It also illustrates the policy of the general workers' union of fighting to secure the unskilled workers' subscriptions rather than allow the craft unions to develop into industrial unions.

Whatever the difficulties of procedure and of numerical weakness, any delegates at Belfast who represent the rank and

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file of workers will state the position of the Minority Movement and the militant working class. They will be guided by the discussion and decision of the Sixth Annual Conference of the National Minority Movement held at Shoreditch on August 24 and 25. They will declare the determination of the Minority Movement to take the independent leadership of the militant workers to carry on over the heads of the General Council the work of organising the struggle against capitalist rationalisation, of smashing through the triple alliance of employers, Labour Government and Mondist trade union bureaucracy, of establishing factory and workshop committees, of linking up with the trade union movement of the colonies, establishing direct factory and district connections with the workers of Soviet Russia, and leading the trade union masses to the final fight for power.

THE COTTON LOCK-OUT

By H. LEE

[The following article was specially written for the LABOUR MONTHLY from the centre of the dispute.]

THE lock-out of the Lancashire cotton workers is the biggest industrial struggle in Britain since the miners' lock-out of 1926. The experiences of the workers in this struggle have most important lessons for all workers, since in it we have seen the full alliance of the employers, Mondist trade union officials and the Labour Government.

The long-planned attempt of the Master Spinners' and Spinners' and Manufacturers' Federations to cut the wages of the mill workers ended on July 27 in the lock-out of 500,000 cotton workers. The demand of the employers was for a 12.82 per cent. reduction on current wages—a demand which, if effected, would reduce the wages of the cotton workers by 3s. to 8s. per week. This demand of the employers was given in a month's notice which expired on July 27.

During the month of notice, the unions in the cotton industry conducted a ballot of their members on the issue of the demand, the ballot papers containing a resolution for ceasing work rather than accepting the new terms of the employers. The results of the ballots showed a solid opposition to wage cuts, the members of the Spinners, Cardroom, and Weavers' Amalgamation voting 95 per cent. to 98 per cent. for ceasing work.

In the week ending July 27, when the notices were fixed to expire, the Minister of Labour, Margaret Bondfield, sent Sir Horace Wilson, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry, to Manchester to bring the trade union officials and the employers together in order to discuss a way of settling the dispute without the lock-out taking place. During these negotiations, the representatives of the Spinners and Cardroom Amalgamation offered to discuss the "principle of wage reductions" and to settle the amount of this reduction by negotiation. The Weavers' Amalgamation objected to this proposal, offering to submit the issues of the dispute to arbitration, and to abide by the findings of the court. The employers' representatives stood firm for their demand, and negotiations broke down. The lock-out commenced on July 29.

The stand of the Weavers' Amalgamation can be explained when the facts of the weavers' conditions are considered. The average wage of the weavers is 33s. per week; during the past twelve months the Weavers' Amalgamation has concluded agreements with the Manufacturers' Federation which have worsened the conditions of the workers in the weaving sheds of N.E. Lancashire. They had agreed to lower piece price lists for working re-wound weft, agreed to the introduction of artificial humidification and the introduction of automatic and semi-automatic looms, as well as the system of making weavers work eight looms, where previously they had attended to four, at the maximum six, looms. Their offer to submit the employers' demand to arbitration was an attempt at "face-saving."

The cotton workers supported their ballot vote by complete solidarity. Thousands of unorganised workers, who would receive no lock-out pay, stood out against wage cuts. A few mills continued to work on the basis of agreements made with local trade union associations; these agreements provided for the payment of the old rates of wages, with a clause stating that adjustments of wages would take place when a general settlement was reached. These agreements were a further indication of the fact that the union officials were planning the betrayal of the cotton workers.

At the end of the first week of the lock-out, the Spinners' Amalgamation organised a series of mass meetings of spinners and piecers for the purpose of asking for full power to be given to the Executive Council to negotiate the best terms possible. The results of these district meetings showed decisive majorities against giving full power to the Executive Council, the votes expressing the growing opposition of the rank and file to the officials who had proposed discussion of the principle of wage reductions.

In the second week of the lock-out, the Trades Union Congress General Council sent a deputation to Manchester ostensibly to bring the three main unions—Spinners, Cardroom, and Weavers—together to discuss united action. Some Lancashire Labour M.P.'s announced their intention of doing something—and Mr. J. Compton, M.P. for Gorton, wired to the Prime Minister

to intervene. Sir Horace Wilson, by instruction of the Government, cancelled a journey to Canada (with Mr. J. H. Thomas), in order to remain in Lancashire while the attempts to reopen negotiations were being made.

The result of the T.U.C. delegation's interview with the officials of the three main unions was to get a unanimous decision to make an offer to the employers for arbitration. The result of the wire to Ramsay MacDonald was that he met the representatives of the masters' organisations in Edinburgh, and they declared themselves in favour of arbitration. Sir Horace Wilson brought the employers and the trade union officials together, and on August 15 a settlement was reached on the following terms:—

- (1) The application of the employers for a reduction of wages shall be referred to arbitration.
- (2) The terms of reference shall be:—

The employers' application for a reduction in the wages of those classes of workpeople covered by the operatives' amalgamations by 25 per cent. on the standard piece price list rates of wages, which in the case of operatives who are at present paid 95 per cent. on standard lists, will reduce the aggregate percentage additions on such lists from 95 per cent. to 70 per cent. and mean a reduction of 12.82 per cent. on their current wage, and a similar reduction of 25 per cent. from other lists which vary from 95 per cent. This reduction, in the case of operatives not paid on the basis of a standard piece price list, will be in proportion which the above reduction of 25 per cent. on list prices bears to the current wages.

- (3) The arbitrators shall examine the merits of the application, and after hearing the evidence of both sides, make an award determining whether, and if so, to what extent the employers' claim to a reduction of wages is sustained.
- (4) The employers and the operatives pledge themselves to abide by the award.
- (5) The arbitrators shall be a Board of Arbitration, consisting of two persons nominated by the employers, two persons nominated by the operatives, and an independent chairman to be mutually agreed upon, the chairman to have the full powers of an umpire in the event of the other members of the court being unable to agree.
- (6) Full liberty of action to be given to mills capable of doing so to resume work on Monday next, August 19, at the usual time.

- (7) Pending the award of the Board of Arbitration, wages shall be paid at the rates correct prior to the stoppage of work.

The following statements were issued after the settlement; the employers' representatives put the following question to the officials of the unions: "Are you in favour of future major questions of disputes which threaten to lead to a stoppage of mills being referred to arbitration?" The officials stated that they would give this question their careful consideration.

A further suggestion was made by Sir Horace Wilson:—

That in order to ensure a means for co-operating with the Government Committee of Inquiry, and the Cotton Trades Organisations' Joint Committee, and for discussing jointly proposals that may be made to improve the state of the industry, and to strengthen its competitive position, it should be agreed between the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations and the Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Association on behalf of the employers and the several organisations concerned on behalf of the operatives that there shall be established a joint consultative committee who shall invite an independent chairman to sit with them from time to time with no powers except the powers of a friend.

The representatives of the employers and the unions welcomed the suggestion, and agreed to hold an early joint meeting to consider it.

At the moment of writing Sir Horace Wilson is busy finding the independent chairman for the Court of Arbitration. There can be no doubt that the finding of the Court will be for a reduction of wages.

This is the story of the outward moves, the public "spotlight" actions in the official negotiations in the great cotton lock-out.

The real significance of the lock-out and its conclusion can be understood only when an examination is made of the plans of the Lancashire mill owners for the rationalisation of the cotton industry.

The employers' justification in making the claim for lower wages for the workers is that it was one of the main methods of cheapening the costs of production, and so enabling them to re-enter the world's markets with competitive prices. This claim has been exploded over and over again. It has been shown that the proposed reductions in wages would mean a very considerable reduction in the price of the finished cotton piece goods,

and certainly would not enable the Lancashire manufacturers to regain the lost export trade.

The factor that has been responsible for reducing Lancashire's cotton export trade by 25 per cent. is the cotton manufacturing industries of America and Japan, where a highly developed technique is lowering costs of production far beyond the present level in Lancashire. A report on the cotton manufacturing industry in U.S.A., made after a tour of investigation by Arno Pearse, Secretary of the International Federation of Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Associations, showed that there had been developed an expert system of speeding up, efficiency in the mills, and the use of the most modern automatic machinery. In the spinning mills, the spinning mule, commonly used in Lancashire mills, was rarely seen; in the weaving sheds, weavers were attending to as many as 120 looms, with the assistance of some unskilled workers, whereas in Lancashire the weavers have been accustomed to look after four and six Lancashire (non-automatic) looms. Arno Pearse in his report, points to increasing spindleage, with a decreasing number of workers, to higher wages in individual cases, with a lower aggregate wages cost. This competition had broken Lancashire's monopoly in the world's markets. And after eight years of short-time working, speculative recapitalisation, borrowing and bankruptcy, the millowners see increasing numbers of mills pass into the hands of the bond-holding banks.

In numerous statements of leading cotton manufacturers it has been made clear that they do not hope to regain the pre-war level of production; they desire to arrest the decline and stabilise the industry at the present level of production.

The demand for wage reductions and longer hours (in 1928 repeated attempts were made to get the employers united for the purpose of demanding the present 12.82 per cent. reduction, together with an increase of hours to 52½) has been accompanied by other attempts at reducing costs of production. There have been the usual methods of speeding up, introduction of semi-automatic and automatic looms, and the formation of combines and amalgamations. The largest of the combines, the Lancashire Cotton Corporation, Ltd., aims at controlling eight million

spindles, and has already bought about thirty-five mills. Offers for many others are now under consideration. One of the declared objects of the Corporation is to close down "inefficient" mills, to allow the better equipped mills to run full time. (It is significant that Mr. Tattersall, the deputy chairman of the Corporation, issued a statement in favour of arbitration.) All the various plans of the employers for the reorganisation of the industry, and reducing the costs of production have been carried through with the active assistance of the cotton trade union officials. These officials are members of committees that are engaged in discussing the best method of reducing costs of production, and recently the leading members of the Spinners' and Cardroom Amalgamations signed a joint report of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce in favour of combinations, new machinery for manufacture, and for the full productive week. The latter points means the abolition of a long-standing agreement in the spinning section of the industry that workers shall be allowed two to three hours, included in the forty-eight hour working week, for cleaning and oiling machinery.

Two of the main obstacles in the way of the employers' plans for extending the attempts at reorganisation have been the lack of capital with which to purchase the new automatic machinery, and the difficulty of getting some of the mills to accept the terms offered by amalgamations. A reduction in wages will provide the employers with more finance to meet the cost of new machinery, and will also be the basis of making the banks more favourable to making bigger loans, &c. And the effect of the lock-out will be to close down a number of mills, since the terms of their existence were such that they could only continue if they are constantly working. Some of these mills, with machinery fifty years old, will be thrown on the market, and bought for a song by one of the newly-formed amalgamations whose plan will be to keep them permanently closed, causing wholesale unemployment amongst the cotton workers.

The lock-out was, therefore, one of the big steps of the cotton masters in the process of rationalising the industry. Now they will commence the drive for increasing production at the lower rates of pay. Here can be seen the real meaning of the

suggestion of the employers that permanent arbitration machinery be set up. The drive of increased production, the speeding up, the breaking of old mill customs, will produce resistance on the part of the workers, and this suggestion is aimed at obtaining an assurance from the trade union officials that no strikes will take place as the workers revolt against the effects of rationalisation.

The trade union officials will not be opposed to the suggestion for arbitration to be the method of settling all disputes; already at the last conference of the United Textile Factory Workers' Association, with which the main unions are associated, a resolution in favour of compulsory arbitration being instituted by the Government was passed.

In this attack on the cotton workers, the masters have had the valuable assistance of the Labour Government. The Labour Government takes part in the struggle in order to assist the employers and the trade union officials to betray the workers. This is the logical outcome of the policy of the Labour Government. The policy of the Labour Government in the cotton industry is to assist in the restoration of the trade's prosperity, which is also the policy of the cotton masters. The Government has set up a Committee of Inquiry into the cotton industry, the guiding lines of which have been made known, *i.e.*, reorganisation, scientific marketing, introduction of new machinery, &c. In the dispute, the Labour Government's first act was to send in Sir Horace Wilson as a mediator. In the Alma Mill dispute in May, 1929, when a lock-out was threatened, the Baldwin Government sent in Sir Horace Wilson as mediator, and the result of his mediation was to force the Alma strikers to accept the wage reductions imposed by the owners. Here is the Government, the more it changes, the more it remains the same. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour Premier, makes it his chief business to meet the cotton masters, no doubt to assure them of further assistance from the Government's inquiry. The Minister of Labour on test cases refuses to grant unemployment benefits to the locked-out workers. The Minister of Health issues a statement that it is against the law to relieve workers who are in dispute. The Labour Government is a capitalist government, supporting

the attacks being made on the workers, and using its state authority for arbitration against the workers' struggle.

In the conduct of the struggle the cotton trade union officials adopted the same slogans as the T.U.C. did in the general strike of 1926. They advised the workers to stay at home, to assist in the washing, and not to make any ugly scenes when scabs were working in the mills. The long-established bureaucratic rule of the officials in the cotton unions, where in some of the unions, branch and Association meetings take place only quarterly, was fully used in the lock-out.

The lock-out will now enable the union officials to say in the coming struggles that the funds are down by £250,000, and therefore, any question of struggle must be postponed until they are in a position to fight the employers, *i.e.*, when the funds are built up again, &c. The workers are handled like pawns by the trade union strike-breakers.

The Communist Party alone conducted a revolutionary struggle in the lock-out. Prior to the lock-out considerable agitation and organisation had been carried out amongst the cotton workers on the basis of a programme of positive demands, including the demand for the forty-hour week, increased weekly minimum wage, abolition of fining, compensation for bad material, &c. The lead of the Communist Party was for the workers to take strike action to improve their conditions, so meeting the demand of the employers with a big offensive struggle. It called for a struggle for these demands to be carried on by rank and file mill committees and strike committees, composed of representatives of all sections of workers, organised and unorganised.

Immediately the lock-out opened, the call for the formation of rank and file lock-out committees was issued. The functions of these committees were detailed, *viz.*, the organisation of the struggle for relief for those without benefits, mass picketing, appeal for wide assistance, defence activities, &c. In addition, the political slogans of "Down with the Labour Government," "Fight for a Revolutionary Workers' Government," were put forward.

The importance of the fight for the revolutionary workers' government was constantly brought out, as the analysis of the

situation showed that the cotton masters would be making further attacks on the workers, and that the Labour Government acted as their agent.

The revolutionary forces amongst the cotton workers have been very weak. The militant opposition in the unions was very small, and the party organisations very small and weak. This meant that there was no alternative leadership for large masses of cotton workers.

The plan of the Communist Party was to concentrate on the main centres like Oldham and Bolton, and there to carry on intensive work. This campaign met with success in Oldham, where in the middle of the second week of the lock-out great mass meetings of locked-out workers were held, and marches to the Guardians organised. A rank and file lock-out committee was elected at a mass meeting of three thousand workers. The first job of the committee was to set about building a feeding kitchen.

The experiences in this lock-out show that the workers are prepared to fight the rationalisation offensive of the employers. The condition for such a fight is to build up the Communist Party, to supply the revolutionary leadership. The work in the lock-out will help in this task, many workers joining the party during the course of the lock-out.

The Communist Party is continuing its campaign against the arbitration settlement, fighting for the formation of rank and file committees to conduct the struggle. The first task of the workers in the face of the alliance of the employers, Government and trade union officials is to build up their own organisations in the mills, which under the leadership of the Communist Party will be the organs of struggle against the attacks that will follow the lock-out.

The formation of rank and file mill committees will be a most important task, especially in view of the fact that 45 per cent. to 50 per cent. of the cotton workers are unorganised.

The cotton lock-out opens a new period in the struggle for the revolutionary independent leadership of the workers, and is part of the forward struggle for the establishment of a Revolutionary Workers' Government.

THE W.I.R. IN THE DAWDON LOCK-OUT

By JIM ANCRUM

THE fifteen weeks' struggle of the Dawdon miners has valuable lessons for the whole of the working class. It was fought, as the strikes of the future will have to be fought, in spite of the open sabotage of the trade union officials. The Dawdon miners learnt to stand out not only against Lord Londonderry, but also against their own Lodge officials. For this reason the lessons of the Dawdon lock-out are lessons which must be learnt by every body of workers faced with the alternative of accepting the effects of the employers' drive for rationalisation, or fighting against them, with the direct opposition of their trade union officials and trade union machinery.

How to Feed the Strikers

The function of the W.I.R. during a strike is to prevent the strikers being starved back to work. I am going to give an account of the work of the W.I.R. during the Dawdon dispute to show how and to what extent it succeeded in doing this.

Soon after the struggle had started the National Committee of the W.I.R. sent a donation of £30 to start a feeding centre. As district secretary of the W.I.R. I wrote to the Dawdon Lodge asking for their co-operation. The Lodge officials, knowing that only half of the men were affected by Lord Londonderry's attack, held up the branch meeting for over three weeks, thinking that the men would go back after the first ballot. As the men refused to go back, a branch meeting was at last held, and the letter from the W.I.R. read. The local officials made a vicious attack on the W.I.R., and our offer of co-operation was turned down.

This meant that we would have to go ahead in spite of the local officials. We held a public meeting to explain what the W.I.R. is, what it has done in other strikes, such as the great metal-workers' strike in Germany, and what we wanted to do in Dawdon. From this meeting we managed to get a committee of thirty men and women.

Finding Headquarters

Our next job was to find a committee room, and we soon found that the fear of the landlord, Lord Londonderry, prevented anyone from letting us a room, until at last one comrade allowed us the use of his own room. Our next difficulty arose when we tried to get the feeding started. The most suitable place for this was the Miners' Hall, fitted with boilers and cooking arrangements. But this the Lodge refused to let us have, although they did not intend to start a communal kitchen of their own. The next place was the Parish Hall, which had been used during the miners' lockout of 1926. To get the use of this it was necessary to interview the Vicar, who said that he thoroughly agreed with our objects and allowed us the use of the hall. We then made all our preparations to open the feeding centre two days later, but the next day we found that the Lodge officials had been to the Vicar and had persuaded him that as the W.I.R. was a Communist organisation he should not allow it the use of the hall.

The Local Committee decided that even if we could get another place, we could not start feeding the next day, so instead we decided to give out parcels of tea, sugar and milk. The Seaham and Horden Co-operative supplied these, and we were able to distribute 300 parcels on the following day.

As a regular feeding centre we secured the use of the Co-operative Hall. There was a great deal to be done before it could be opened, but as we had a splendid team of workers we were able to do this in a few days. With the help of cooks who had gained their experience in the army, the feeding commenced. Each striker in need of help brought his union card, or if he was not in the union, the fact that he was working at Dawdon was sufficient to get him a meal. We started off the first day by feeding 270.

Raising the Funds

This was a good beginning, but to keep it up we had to raise funds. We started to do this by getting a permit from the Chief Constable of Durham to collect at a neighbouring football match. In addition we got the Seaham Harbour Jazz Band to go out

each day with collectors and with slogans such as "Lord Londonderry talks of Industrial Peace, while he starves our wives and kiddies."

The success of our efforts forced the Lodge officials to do something, and five weeks after the lock-out had started they brought out the colliery band, got a choir going, and appealed to the other Lodges in the county for assistance. We had suggested these steps at the beginning of the lock-out, but it was not until it was half-way through that anything was done.

The attitude of the Lodge Committee all through is shown clearly by one example. We decided to run a concert to raise funds and provide some entertainment for strikers' families. We applied for the Miners' Hall, and received a letter from the Secretary of the Lodge allowing us the use of it. We arranged a splendid programme with artistes from all over the county. At two o'clock on the day the concert was to take place, we received a letter from the Secretary saying that the Committee had cancelled the letting.

To prevent the fight being lost through the sabotage of the Lodge officials, a Dawdon Miners' Vigilance Committee had been set up. This Committee, jointly with the W.I.R., issued a national appeal for funds to all working-class organisations. The *Miner*, the official organ of the M.F.G.B., tried to prevent the success of this appeal by printing a letter attacking the fund in these words :—

"Funds raised by the Communist Party and its 'aliases' are, it is alleged, being used at their discretion for the furtherance of their political objects."

In spite of this, the publicity given to the dispute by the workers' Press (not the *Daily Herald*) had made workers all over the country realise what a splendid fight the Dawdon miners were putting up. Donations poured in from trade union branches, through workshop and pit collections, and from individual workers. Accompanying the financial assistance came greetings and messages of solidarity which were an inspiration to us to carry on the fight. In all £354 12s. 2½d. was collected.

During the election campaign the Labour Party maintained that our support of the strikers was only in order to gain votes

for Harry Pollitt, the Communist candidate, and that we should close the feeding centre after the election was over. This, of course, was disproved by the fact that we kept it open until the very last day of the lock-out.

Altogether we gave 14,880 meals and distributed 1,200 parcels to organised and unorganised workers, and still had £31 11s. 3½d. in hand which we sent to the Binley miners to help them defeat the Warwickshire coal owners.

The experience of the Dawdon struggle showed that the workers cannot rely on the trade union machine to prevent them from starving during a strike. They must have their own commissariat. The W.I.R. provides that commissariat, but the time to prepare for a strike is before it takes place. One of the lessons of Dawdon is, that we should build up the W.I.R. now so that we shall have our class weapons ready for the struggles ahead.

THE WORLD CONGRESS OF THE LEAGUE AGAINST IMPERIALISM

By EMILE BURNS

THE first Congress of the League Against Imperialism was held in Brussels in February, 1927. The work of the first Congress was to form the League; and at that Congress the Kuomintang was officially represented and the Independent Labour Party was heavily, but not officially, represented. Fenner Brockway, George Lansbury, Ellen Wilkinson, John Beckett and R. W. Postgate were present. By the end of 1927 the Kuomintang had been expelled from the League, because it had become the open ally of imperialism, and had established its true character through the bloody suppression of the workers and peasants of China. The I.L.P. heard the crack of the master's whip and retired to its kennel without even a growl. And as for the individuals from Britain: Lansbury became chairman of the Labour Party and subsequently a Minister of the King-Emperor; Brockway, Wilkinson, Beckett and Postgate followed the same lead in less exalted spheres.

The second Congress of the League opened in Frankfurt-on-Main on July 21, 1929. In the two years since the first Congress, national sections of the League had been established in seventeen countries, and trade union and peasant organisations in all parts of the world had affiliated. The second Congress, therefore, marked a definite advance towards the building up of a powerful organisation, which was reflected in the number and world-wide distribution of the organisations represented. Koreans, Japanese, Chinese, Indo-Chinese, Indians, Indonesians, Arabs, Persians, Egyptians, Africans, Latin-Americans, American whites and negroes, Russians, English, French, Dutch, Belgians, Germans and other European delegates combined to make a Congress whose international character could be seen from a glance in the hall.

The agenda contained one general subject—the political situation and the war danger—and a number of more limited subjects, of which the most important was undoubtedly the position in India. But already before these points had been reached the main issues before the Congress had come to the surface. In the opening session, devoted to speeches of greeting, a declaration on the Chinese aggression in Manchuria and a message to the Meerut prisoners were included. And at the same time, the position of Maxton, whose opening speech had studiously ignored the British Labour Government, was sharply challenged.

It is not an accident that the MacDonal Government received such attention, and that Maxton's attitude to it was brought up on practically every question on the agenda. The MacDonal Government is at the moment the most dangerous enemy of the colonial peoples, just because, under the sacred name of Labour, it is carrying on the active work of British imperialism—the agreement with the reactionary Nanking Government; the carrying out of the Meerut trial, daily mass arrests of the Nationalists, and bloody repression of the Indian workers on strike against worsening conditions; the agreement with the reactionary Egyptian Government; and, although this became definite only after the Congress, the attempt to force imperialism's terms on Soviet Russia. The Labour Government's supporters excuse its failure to do anything for the British workers by pointing out that it has only been in office two months; but the speeches at the League Congress drove home the point that in those two months it had had time enough to do many things for imperialism. And where did Maxton stand? Speaker after speaker asked him for an answer, and pointed out that although he came before the Congress as an anti-imperialist, the organisation of which he was chairman, the I.L.P., was the main pillar of support for the MacDonal Government. What was Maxton doing about it? What did his presence in the anti-imperialist movement mean, if he did not mobilise the British workers, or at least his own organisation, in an open fight against the Labour Government? For six days Maxton lay low and said nothing, but at last on the evening before the closing session of the Congress

he made a public declaration of his policy. The essential sentences were:—

These facts impose upon me, as a Socialist, the duty of pointing out and opposing strongly the imperialist policy of the Labour Government put into office by the Labour Party. I pledge myself and those associated with me to the League to carry out this duty—openly and fearlessly recognising that the pursuance of an imperialist policy by the Labour Government constitutes the most deadly menace to the interests of the oppressed masses of the colonies. . . . There are elements in the Independent Labour Party who do not support my anti-imperialist policy and tactics and my association with the League. They may even be a majority of the Party, but I am the chairman of the Party and will fight for the adoption of a militant policy against imperialism, and those in the ranks of the party who wish a moderate reformist policy will be discarded.

The declaration was received with applause; but time alone can show its value. It is significant that the declaration has not (up to the time this article was written) been printed in the *New Leader*, and that the note on the League Congress signed "T. P. S." (*New Leader*, August 8, 1929) gives a completely emasculated version of Maxton's statement. No lead by Maxton himself has so far been published.

Again, it is no accident that the "Maxton question" was so prominent. The Brussels Congress in 1927 accepted Lansbury at his face value; but he is now a part of the imperialist machine. It is not a question of whether Lansbury was honest then or whether Maxton is honest now, but of where the policy of supporting an imperialist Labour Government inevitably leads, and what effect it has in diverting the masses from the real struggle against imperialism. The attempt to reconcile irreconcilables is only successful by means of self-deception. And self-deception, in the case of persons in the position of Lansbury or Maxton, means also deceiving the masses, and thus becoming part of the machine of imperialism. Lansbury has got inside; but they also serve who only stand and wait. The feeling of the delegates at the Congress was clearly that the colonial struggle had developed to such a stage that Left social democracy, with its anti-imperialist phrases combined with inaction in the actual struggle and even active support of imperialist governments, could only be a danger to the anti-imperialist movement.

A very similar point came up in connection with the nationalist movements in colonial countries, and especially in India. The India resolution at the Brussels Congress of the League in 1927 clearly laid down the aim of full independence for India. Since then the Indian National Congress, by a majority under the influence of the Right Wing, has temporarily pushed the demand for full independence into the background and substituted the demand for Dominion Status. Can the League continue to work with the Indian National Congress in such circumstances? This question came up both on the political resolution and on the resolution on India; and similar points arose in connection with the bourgeois nationalist movements in other countries.

The treachery of the Kuomintang since 1927 has made the answer to this question clearer. The anti-imperialist movement must unite all forces which at any particular moment are carrying on an actual fight against imperialism; but among these forces a distinction must be made between those whose economic interests and social composition will inevitably draw them closer to the imperialists as the struggle sharpens, and those other forces which, from their very nature, will remain anti-imperialist to the end. While working with all forces which in any particular colonial country and at any particular time are in the fight against imperialism, the League must nevertheless depend for its strength and its unwavering support on the workers and peasants. This was the conclusion of the discussions, and in this sense the resolutions were drafted, and the future policy of the League laid down. In each national section of the League, the main line of organisation must be to draw in the workers and peasants; to support their economic demands (which are objectively anti-imperialist) and to help the workers and peasants to build up organisations which are capable of effective action. If this line is followed, it is possible and useful to work with other elements also; but the weight and direction of the organisation must be with the workers and peasants.

The clearing of these issues was perhaps the most important work of the Congress. But also on each main section of the anti-imperialist fight resolutions were worked out by the groups most

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directly concerned and adopted by the Congress. It is not possible to do more than mention the chief subjects: India, China and the Far East, the Arabian countries, Latin America, the Negro movement, and—running through all areas—the trade union movement and peasant organisations. The mass of material contained in the reports and speeches made at the Congress covers practically every question in the anti-imperialist struggle, and, together with the conclusions drawn in the shape of resolutions, forms an invaluable source of reference for the future struggle. At the same time, the Congress was—a Congress. It brought together the anti-imperialist forces, and it worked out the lines of their common struggle; but how far the League can develop into a really effective force depends on the solid work of its supporters in each country. In Britain particularly, because of the immense struggles which are developing in the Empire, the League has very vital importance and a constant field of work, and all genuinely anti-imperialist elements in Britain must join it and help to strengthen its activities.

The World of Labour

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AUSTRALIA

Timber Workers' Strike*

THE Timber Workers' strike for the retention of the 44-hour week came to an end on June 24, after five months. The terms include resumption on the basis of a 48-hour week, pending an independent inquiry into the financial condition of the industry, which will ascertain whether the claim for the 44-hour week can be sustained. The employers agreed to raise a trust fund equal to the pay for the additional four hours in case the 44-hour week is restored. There is to be another conference to reconcile the anomalies of the marginal rates. The owners undertake to employ as many unionists as the state of the industry permits, but "the interests of volunteers are to be safeguarded." The Arbitration Court has since refused a joint application from both sides for an order ratifying the appointment of an accountant to carry out this inquiry, without giving any reasons.

The strike was noteworthy for its defiance of the Arbitration Amendment Act, which revealed the impotence of the Government to enforce its recently enacted anti-labour legislation. Following on the imposition of a £1,000 fine on the Timber Workers' Union, thirty-eight strikers were charged with absenting themselves from work, and were ordered to return under penalty of £100 fine or three months' imprisonment, but for five months, in spite of fines, prohibitions and threats, the strikers refused to go back, and the Government was powerless to make them.

The results of the secret ballot ordered by Judge Lukin under the Act also proved a victory for the strikers. The figures in Victoria and New South Wales were 5,000—700 against acceptance of the award. But even these figures did not fully represent the feeling of the strikers. At a demonstration on March 25, 25,000 Trade Unionists gathered at the Sydney Trades Hall to protest against the Lukin award and against the first attempt to enforce a secret ballot. As the 3,000 strikers gathered at the Trades Hall they threw their ballot papers into kerosene-soaked sacks, which were publicly burned. A procession was then formed which marched to Hyde Park and burned an effigy of Judge Lukin. This demonstration was described both by the

* Vide *Labour Monthly*, April, 1929.

Australian *Workers' Weekly* and the capitalist *Sydney Morning Herald* as an open challenge to the Arbitration Court and to the Government.

Throughout the strike solidarity prevailed: picketing was good and blacklegs were few, while as much as £3,000 a week came to the Dispute Committee from other Unions. The women were especially active. Weekly meetings of the strikers' wives were held, and a number were prosecuted and sent to jail for collecting.

At an early stage of the dispute the timber merchants handed over the control of their affairs to the Chambers of Commerce and Manufacturers, who carried on a campaign against the owners who were still working the 44-hour week, and tried to force them to close down, either by bribes or boycott. They also insisted on the reopening of the Melbourne mills on June 4, but this move met with little success.

A month after the strike was at an end, seven Trade Union leaders, including J. S. Garden, Secretary to the New South Wales Labour Council and Editor of the Pan-Pacific monthly, the Secretary of the Timber Workers' Union, and the Chairman of the Disputes Committee, were charged with "unlawful conspiracy by violence and threats of violence" to prevent the timber workers from continuing work. Unrest continues, and the strike was prolonged in Sydney and other centres after a settlement had been reached in Melbourne.

U.S.A.

Textile Workers' Strikes in Southern States

IN our June issue we reported the outbreak of the big textile uprising in the Southern States of Tennessee and the Carolinas. In the rayon mills' strike at Elizabethton the workers were tricked into a settlement on May 25 by the officials of the United Textile Workers and a packed committee, who forced the terms secured by Anna Weinstock, a mediator in the Department of Labour, upon an astonished and reluctant meeting of strikers. These terms, which are claimed as constituting a victory by the A.F. of L., do not include any of the strikers' demands, and do not even grant recognition, but this vital condition is waved aside by the A.F. of L. Bulletin, as "this was not the cause of the strike." There was a promise of no "discrimination" against members of the National Textile Workers' Union, but even here exceptions were made, and the President of the Bemberg-Glantzstoff Corporation announced that "we must decline to employ persons of undesirable character," or "unreliable workers." All that was conceded was that definite reasons would be given for non-reinstatement, with an appeal to an "impartial person"—E. T. Willson, the personal manager of the company.

Immediate efforts were made for a renewal of the strike by the N.T.W.U., and there seems a general conviction that a resumption of hostilities is bound to come in a few weeks' time. Only 1,850 out of 5,000 had registered at the company's employment office by the middle of June, and of these only about 1,200 had been given jobs, while a black list of militants had been compiled, and mill passes taken away even from some of those who had returned to work.

The Elizabethton workers have completely lost confidence in the U.T.W. and only about 200 continued to attend its meetings. Over fifty strikers were held for trial, of whom three were sent to jail, and the Judge, Chancellor Miller, took the opportunity to pronounce the dictum that "there can be no such thing as peaceful picketing."

A piquant incident of this strike was the kidnapping of two A.F. of L. officials—Hoffman and McGrady—by the agents of the company, under the impression they were militants and not conciliators.

Meanwhile, at the other storm centre in Carolina the strike was spreading to new mills and new districts—e.g., the Dixon mill on May 29, and on June 5 a spontaneous walk-out of 58,000 cotton workers at Greenville. Here again the U.T.W. constantly urged the strikers to go back and "arbitrate" all demands, but warned by the example of Elizabethton they held firm, preferring to rely upon their "shock troops"—the expression used by the *New York Nation* to describe the Communist leadership in Gastonia.

The outstanding event of this strike is the "frame-up" murder trial of fourteen strikers and organisers. Gastonia is a company-owned town, and the N.T.W.U. had been forced by the eviction of 150 families to set up a tent colony, and to build a bridge connecting it with their new headquarters. On the night of June 7 an attack was launched against the colony by the city police and the hired gunmen of the Manville-Jenckes Co., who came into conflict with the pickets guarding the strikers' headquarters. In the course of the struggle, the Chief of Police, Aderholt, was killed, and seventy strikers were arrested for murder and complicity. A few days later another raid completely wrecked the colony, but it was promptly rebuilt by the undaunted strikers. In the course of Habeas Corpus proceedings instituted by the International Labour Defence, it was admitted by the police, under cross-examination, that they were the aggressors, that they invaded the premises of the N.T.W.U. without a warrant, and that they had invited outsiders, not members of the force, to come along and assist in the work of destruction.

Most of the prisoners were held in jail at Gastonia, where they were beaten up and generally illtreated, while for fear of lynching, pickets kept an unceasing watch upon the prison—even so, tear gas bombs were thrown in through the windows. In order to hasten on the trial, the prosecution dropped the charges against all but sixteen of the prisoners—thirteen of whom are charged with murder in the first degree, which means the electric chair, while the three women are threatened with long terms of imprisonment. The date of the trial was originally fixed for July 29 at Gastonia, but since then several changes have been made. The Judge—Hoyle Sink—known to be in close touch with the mill-owners, was replaced by Judge Barnhill, who ruled that the prisoners would not get a fair trial at Gastonia, and ordered it to be resumed at Charlotte, some twenty miles away, at the end of August. Another sensational incident bearing on the trial is the indictment of the two chief witnesses for the prosecution—Gilbert and Roach—on a charge of murderously assaulting a storekeeper when drunk, two hours before the raid.

The case is causing the greatest excitement all over the country, and

large demonstrations of protest, leading to further arrests, have taken place in Chicago, New York, &c. The Government has shown its implacable hostility by refusing to allow appeals for money to conduct the defence to be sent through the post. *The Gastonia Weekly Defender* has been issued in order to make known the real facts of the case.

BULGARIA

Strike of Tobacco Workers

THE first general strike in any Bulgarian industry since the Fascist coup of 1923 has resulted in a partial success for the tobacco workers. They have always been regarded as the pioneer battalion of the Bulgarian proletariat, just as the tobacco trust has always been in the vanguard of capitalist enterprise and aggression. In consequence the struggle had a very special significance for all sections of the workers, and on its outcome hung more than the immediate issues involved—the restoration of the conditions obtaining before 1923 and the checking of the Fascist dictatorship. It was, in fact, the opening of the counter-offensive.

The strike broke out first at Haskovo on May 17, spread rapidly from factory to factory, until within a fortnight, it had developed into a general strike of the whole industry. Since it is the chief industry of Bulgaria, with more than 250 factories and workshops employing 35,000 men and women, or nearly 40 per cent. of the total number of workers, the effect of the stoppage was tremendous. The strikers demanded a rise in wages of 30 to 40 per cent. and the restoration of the eight-hour day; everywhere strike committees were formed, and the leadership was in the hands of the Independent (Left wing) Union of Tobacco Workers. No reformist organisation of tobacco workers existed, but during the strike a "community of tobacco workers" made its appearance and claimed to act in the name of the strikers. This move was attributed to the activities of Amsterdam, and was stigmatised as treachery by the Soviet food-workers' delegation to the International Foodstuff Workers' Congress at Stockholm.

The strike had the sympathy not only of the workers in the other main industries, but also of the tobacco producing peasants. In an appeal issued by the E.C. Bureau of the Communist Balkan Federation for international support, it is pointed out that the tobacco trust is closely allied to international capitalism (the capital invested is largely French), and that it is the chief organiser of the Fascist revolution in the Balkans.

Naturally the tobacco magnates were bitterly hostile to the strikers. For a long time they declined to listen to any talk of mediation, even from the Government, and refused to make any concessions. The Foreign Secretary, Burov, one of the chief shareholders of the Trust, announced that "the workers ought to give up the strike and leave the settlement of their disputes to the State." The local authorities began by declaring their neutrality, but, under Government instruction, they proceeded to harry the strikers—forbid meetings, and finally to subject most of the strike centres to a state of siege.

The organised workers, however, remained firm until the end of June, when the strike was settled by the Minister of Labour on the basis of a 10 to 15 per cent. rise of wages.

KOREA**Labour Movement**

THANKS to the policy of Japanese imperialism, which has always sought to keep Korea undeveloped industrially as a raw material base and a market for its manufactures, there are few industrial workers in this country. Towards the end of 1926 there were about a million workers employed in all branches of industry (comprising about 5 per cent. of the population), which includes labourers, agricultural workers and fisherman. Altogether there were only 83,000 industrial workers, of whom women and children comprised 28 per cent.

In the enterprises, Koreans are mostly employed, there being few Japanese, who form only 6 per cent. of the industrial workers. The Japanese workers are either skilled men, highly paid, or are foremen, &c.

Since the bulk of the Korean workers are absolutely illiterate, recruited for the factories straight from the villages, the Japanese capitalists can exploit them at their will. As working hours are unregulated, the average working day is twelve hours and frequently as high as fifteen. The men have to work in truly appalling conditions, there being no labour protective laws or sanitary measures.

The pay they receive for the hard work they are compelled to do (ranging from 30 sen to 1 yen), which is reduced by fines and compulsory saving, lags far behind the living minimum. Thus, the workers of Korea eke out a miserable existence, not infrequently having no roof over their heads. Neither are they sure even of this miserable pay. They have to face the competition of the large numbers of Chinese workers arriving every year in Korea who submit to even worse conditions than the Koreans. The position of women and youths who are employed mostly in the primitively developed branches of industry—rice cleaning, tobacco, match manufacturing and glass factories—is especially severe. Although they work longer hours than male workers they get only one-half or two-thirds of their pay.

Apart from this, the workers of Korea are rigorously subjected to a colonial regime. Japanese imperialism deliberately places the workers here in worse conditions than Japanese workers, who receive higher pay for the same class of work (Koreans usually receive only half the wages of the Japanese), are treated differently and enjoy various privileges. It is no wonder, therefore, that antagonism has grown between these two groups of workers, who are both exploited although in different degrees.

It was only recently that a start was made to organise the working class of Korea. Soon after the March days of 1919 the workers organised mutual aid and friendly societies (the membership consisting of workers, peasants, members of the middle class and the petty bourgeoisie), which immediately came under the influence of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. It is plain, of course, that this prevented them from properly defending the interests of the proletariat and they soon fell asunder. Subsequently, during the strike movement that arose with the post-war depression that set in about 1921-22, craft unions were organised.

Thanks to the lead given by the illegal Communist groups, the foremost elements among the workers began to realise that better organisation was necessary. A start was made to amalgamate the various workers' and peasants' unions and a Workers' and Peasants' Federation was formed at a legal Congress in 1924 embracing 220 workers' and peasants' organisations. In view of their different interests and functions, the workers' and peasants' unions affiliated to the Federation seriously considered the formation of two independent federations for the workers and the peasants—which were duly formed in 1927.

The workers are very weakly organised. In 1926, the Federation united 103 unions with a membership of 29,719 (about 3 per cent. of the workers). Apart from the fact that the movement exists illegally and the continual arrests and repressions hamper recruiting activities, the present policy of the Japanese Government to split the Labour movement and to encourage police-controlled organisations is proving a big obstacle. At the large-scale private enterprises and State works various mutual aid societies are being organised to foster a craft outlook among the workers and to promote harmony between labour and capital (for example, a Korean Seamen's League has been formed, the chairman of which is a State official).

The small section of Korean workers organised are mostly workers and labourers employed in small-scale industry. In 1926 the following categories of industrial workers were affiliated to the Federation: transport workers, 5,528; printers, 4,358; cotton-cleaners, 3,078; woodworkers, 1,354; metal workers, 753; leather workers, 974; bricklayers, 657; rice-cleaners, 2,584; labourers, 9,574. There are no women organised. The Japanese workers are organised separately under the patronage of the State.

It is not surprising therefore that the workers of Korea, owing to their weak organisation, were unable to put up any effective struggle for their vital interests. Still, despite all the difficulties, the movement is forging ahead, shown by the increase in the number of workers involved in the disputes (1913: six disputes involving 1,500 workers; 1919: a record year, eighty-four disputes involving 9,031 workers; 1924: forty-five disputes involving 6,751 workers; 1927: ninety-four disputes involving 10,503 workers).

The very character of these movements against capital has been changed. Previously there would be a spontaneous movement to improve conditions at a single factory or, not infrequently, in a single department. But now the movement is progressing on a higher plane embracing large masses of the workers, the demand for political equality (abolishment of national distinctions, better treatment, &c.) being made together with economic demands. The general strikes undertaken in various towns as demonstrations of class solidarity (the miners' strike in Enchin, the dairy-farmers' strike in Mokpu in 1927 and the recent transport workers' strike in Gendzan) show distinctly that the workers of Korea realise (perhaps not altogether fully) their class interests and are capable of showing a firm and organised front to the class enemy.

The Gendzan strike that occurred this year certainly opens a new stage in the development of the workers' movement in Korea. The proletariat of this country has shown that it is a definite social force able to take up its proper place in the struggle for the Korean Revolution. Of course, the workers'

movement, as social factor, is only just beginning to take shape and form. All the foremost elements among the workers are now confronted with the difficult task of lining up the workers in the unions, of educating them in a militant spirit and to outlive all the prejudices and lies fostered by the Japanese imperialists and their own bourgeoisie to unite all the workers to defend the interests of their class and their country. The proletarian discipline and solidarity seen already in Korea shows clearly that only the workers can unite all the various elements of the national-revolutionary movement and lead them to victory.

ASAGIRI.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Renewal of Culture.* By Lars Ringbom. With a preface by Professor E. A. Westermarck. Translated from the Swedish by G. C. Wheeler. (Allen & Unwin, 217 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- Les Hommes du 1905 Russe.* By M. Matveev. (Les Revues, 47 Rue Monsieur le Prince, Paris, 6c, 172 pp., 12 frs.)
- The Coal Industry of the Eighteenth Century.* By T. S. Ashton and J. Sykes. (Manchester University Press, 268 pp., 14s.)
- Karl Marx: His Life and Work.* By Otto Rühle. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. With thirty-five illustrations. (Allen & Unwin, 415 pp., 15s.)
- The Middle-Class Christians.* By Harold B. Shephard, M.A. (Allen & Unwin 80 pp., 3s. 6d.)
- The Soviet Union and Peace.* With an introduction by Henri Barbusse. (Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 280 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- The Gate of a Strange Field.* By Harold Heslop. (Brentano's, 289 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- Self-Determination for Austria.* By F. F. G. Kleinwächter. (Allen & Unwin, 74 pp., 3s. 6d.)
- Adventures with Bernard Shaw.* By Dan Rider. (Morley & Mitchell Kennerley, Junior, 37 pp., 2s. 6d.)
- The Bankruptcy of Marriage.* By V. F. Calverton. (John Hamilton, 320 pp., 15s.)
- Six Tragedies of Shakespeare.* By J. Dover Wilson. W.E.A. Outlines. (Longman, Green & Co., 90 pp., 2s.)
- An Introduction to Philosophy.* By Leonard Russell. W.E.A. Outlines. (Longman, Green & Co., 84 pp., 2s.)
- The Functions of Economic Analysis.* By A. C. Pigou. Sidney Hall Lecture. (Oxford University Press, 22 pp., 1s.)

BOOK REVIEWS

THE REVOLUTION THAT SHOOK THE WORLD

An Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution. Vol. II. Edited by W. Astrov, A. Slepikov and J. Thomas. (Martin Lawrence, 15s. net.)

THE second volume of the *Illustrated History* opens with Kerensky assuming the leadership of the Third Provisional Government after the events of July, carries us through to the November days, through peace, civil war and intervention down to the New Economic Policy and the first fruits of socialist construction. The circumstances under which the book has been produced, as a fruit of exhaustive research backed by the official resources of the Soviet State, are sufficient to guarantee its accuracy.

The method of writing is a mixture of the narrative and the documentary. The break is sometimes sudden, and occasionally some gaps are apparent, but on the whole the merits of both styles have been retained, and the result is interesting and extremely informative.

Here, for instance, is November 7 in all its aspects. November 7 against its historical background of capitalist collapse, reformist helplessness and revolutionary determination; November 7 as John Reed saw it, a fascinating world of armoured cars, breathless men and midnight meetings lasting till dawn; November 7, as it broke over the heads of the terrified and tearful Provisional Government hiding in the Winter Palace; November 7 at the front, bringing peace.

The policy of peace which the Bolshevik Government pursued from the first hours of its existence has continued to the present day. The "breathing space" which Lenin claimed for the revolution when the humiliating terms of the Brest-Litovsk peace aroused such indignation that it seemed the exhausted army would be forced back to the slaughter, gave the Bolsheviks a chance of proving to the Russian millions that, of all the parties which had tried to govern in Russia, they alone meant what they said, they alone were able to carry out the slogan of "Bread, Peace and Land" which embodied the elemental demands of the proletariat and peasantry at that time.

There is a good deal of statistical matter which, although it makes the book somewhat uneven in tone, gives a graphic picture of the chaos and ruin against which the proletarian dictatorship had to contend. The difficulties of that fight are well known. What is new in this book are the vivid accounts of the measures adopted spontaneously by the Russian workers to meet the collapse of all the old institutions and the sabotage of the old civil service and intelligentsia, particularly in judicial affairs and in financial, transport and communication services.

Through four years of civil war and intervention, surveyed briefly in the concluding chapters, the creative energy and revolutionary spirit of the Russian masses enabled the proletarian dictatorship to surmount the thousand and one difficulties which lay, or were placed, in its path.

There is, I believe, a fairly widespread impression in the working-class movement of this country that the introduction of the New Economic Policy was a retreat from the Bolshevik ideal of "militant Communism." The

chapters dealing with the N.E.P. should do away with this idea. The N.E.P. is set in its proper light—it would perhaps be more correct to call it the Old Economic Policy.

This book should be read in conjunction with Lenin's writing in 1917 which have now been issued in two volumes by the same publishers, for it offers us, by concrete example, a hundred lessons on the theory and practice of a revolutionary workers' party. Here is an account of the events and reasoning that led the Bolsheviks to drop the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" and to revive the same slogan, though with a different content, shortly afterwards—an excellent lesson on the necessity of changing slogans and tactics in accordance with changes in the objective situation, and of doing so at the right moment. Here is reformism exposed, not by the words of the Bolshevik Party, but by its own deeds.

No doubt a still better history of the Russian Revolution will be written in the future, but of all the works at present available in English, this is certainly the most comprehensive and adequate. Those who see the development of revolutionary forces in this country behind the apparent triumph of reformism, cannot fail to be inspired by the history of proletarian struggle and victory, by the tremendous faith in the Revolution, which strengthened and inspired the workers of Russia in the greatest struggle of modern history.

J. T.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY'S HEEL OF ACHILLES

Voici Ce Qu'on A Fait de la Géorgie. By Henri Barbusse. (Paris: Flammarion. 12 francs.)

FOR the best part of a decade the myth of "gallant little Georgia," ground down under the jackboot of "Bolshevik imperialism" has been dead and buried: though that has not prevented the social-democrats of all countries from regularly exhuming the unsavoury corpse, with appropriate beatings of the breast and gnashing of teeth, as a leading exhibit in their campaign as capitalism's principal anti-Soviet war-mongers.

Now comes this luminous and forceful study by Barbusse to drive the last nails firmly into the ramshackle coffin of social-democracy's holy relic. Barbusse has spent longer in observation and investigation on the spot than any other outsider and his book is the fruit of many months of travel, discussion and research in every part of Transcaucasia.

Barbusse's study has two aspects. One, the exposure of the role of social-democracy, of Menshevik rule in Georgia. The other, an impressive documentation of the successes that the workers and peasants of the Transcaucasian Republics are steadily achieving, under Communist leadership, in the building up of socialism.

What was this ideal "socialist" Government of "independent" Georgia?

The socialist government (writes Barbusse), though it flew the red flag, left the land in the hands of the big landowners who were supporting it. . . . Nothing was done in regard to the eight-hour day. The labour legislation was the same as under Tsarism. The factories were not nationalised, the

church was not separated from the State. . . . The administration and the legal system functioned, with a few modifications, in accord with the previous Russian laws. The army was constituted on Tsarist lines and with the Tsarist system of rank.

And the "independence" claimed by this gang of adventurers, who flung overboard whatever socialist principles they once possessed in order to maintain their personal position by identifying themselves with the blackest jingo nationalists, was, and is, on a par with their "socialism."

During their short-lived regime from 1918-1921 they maintained their "independence" under the aegis of German and Allied imperialism respectively. It is for such an "independence" that Jordania (the ex-President) and his friends have never ceased, in their comfortable Paris exile, to plot and plan.

Sandro Devdariani, an outstanding Georgian Menshevik leader, has confessed that

there is a definite and inexcusable alliance between Georgian social-democracy and the most notorious reactionary forces. . . . Politically, Jordania's work is a near relation of European fascism. Economically it would make Georgia a dependency of foreign capital.

The damning indictment can be indefinitely expanded: that it is appreciated by the toilers of Georgia they themselves showed conclusively when, rifle in hand, they came forward to defend their position as co-equals in the great brotherhood of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics against the externally fomented and abortive insurrection of 1924. The social-fascists may think that Georgia is their anti-Soviet spearhead; it is in reality their heel of Achilles.

G. A. H.

THE RISE OF COAL MINING IN BRITAIN

The Coal Industry in the Eighteenth Century. By T. S. Ashton, M.A., and Joseph Sykes, M.A. (Manchester University Press, 1929, 18s.)

THIS is a scrappy book, difficult to read and almost ascetic in its avoidance of purple patches, but it is also a pioneer book, crammed with original work and essential to students of British working-class history. It is the first attempt to present in detail a complete guide to the life of the British miner in the eighteenth century, covering wages, working conditions, technique and ownership.

In the earlier days of the coal industry the great landowners acted as their own entrepreneurs or leased the mineral rights to the lesser landed classes, with whom they acted in close co-operation. It was not till the nineteenth century, mainly between the 'forties and 'seventies, that the landowners—like the Duke of Norfolk in South Yorkshire, the Duke of Hamilton in Lanark and the Newdigates in Warwick—gradually shuffled out of activity, confined themselves to the position of royalty owners and passed the actual large-scale working to the new capitalist groups which made their money in the munitions industry of the Napoleonic War, in the cotton mills in Lancashire in the 'thirties and in the railway boom of the 'forties.

Eighteenth-century coal production (it totalled only 10,000,000 tons a year by 1800) was of the crudest and simplest type. In the North the average number of miners in a pit was probably about forty—the authors arrive at the figure mainly by the grim process of counting the number killed in explosions. Life was cheap. Clearing a pit of fire-damp was astonishingly easy.

In South Wales the practice was to make a hole just large enough to hold a man in the floor of the pit at that part where the gas had accumulated. The fireman fixed his candle to a board with clay, lighted it in a (free) area, and attached a string to the board. Holding the other end of the string he entered the hole, pulled pieces of timber over the top for protection and then drew the board with the lighted candle towards him till the explosion occurred. (p. 45.)

Wages fluctuated from field to field, running from 10s. a week in Scotland, where the collier remained a legal serf, to 15s. in Durham, the centre of the industry, where the yearly bond crippled the miners till the strike of 1844; in the Midlands, the "butty" system cursed the miner as it curses him to-day in Nottinghamshire.

This book claims to follow the philosophy of Unwin of Manchester, but beyond that is highly indefinite. It attributes the miners' riots of 1739, 1753, 1756, &c., to food shortage and not to the growth of any class feeling in a technically advancing industry. Casually, speaking of the close alliance between the landed interests and the entrepreneurs (an alliance existing to-day), it puts forward an economic interpretation.

On the hustings a Lambton might fight a Tempest (at Durham), a Lowther oppose a Curwen (at Whitehaven), but if their common interests were endangered they could act with a vigour and unanimity the effectiveness of which is attested by the highest of authorities. (p. 3)

The book is dear but is a valuable quarry.

W. F.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE I.L.P. IN SOUTH AFRICA

To the Editor of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

DEAR COMRADE,—The May number of the LABOUR MONTHLY has just been shown to me. Certain statements in Mr. Ballinger's letter cannot pass unchallenged.

Although I agree with the contents of Comrade Roux's reply, I am afraid that like most of our other English comrades he is inclined to exaggerate the strength and importance of the I.C.U.

Let me state at the outset that the I.C.U. has long ceased to be the important and popular organisation of the South African native worker. The mismanagement of funds, the great interest of the Chamber of Mines in the organisation and the treacherous reactionary policy preached by the leadership of the I.C.U. has caused it to become very nearly defunct. The membership of the I.C.U. is to-day very, very small. Apart from Mr. Ballinger, and the few Chamber of Mines friends, I doubt whether the membership consists of a few hundred followers. Under the leadership of Kadalie, an anti-communist policy was preached. The Communist Party was then refused any relationship with the I.C.U. Communist members were refused admission into the organisation and that was the beginning of the downfall of Kadalie and the I.C.U.

When Mr. Ballinger arrived in South Africa, he also commenced to deride and abuse the Communist Party and its followers. Mr. Ballinger desired relationship with the Federation. The Federation being the child of the Communist Party we refused to have anything to do with Ballinger and his bogey. Hence the downfall and the present position of the I.C.U.

The difference between the Federation and the I.C.U. is very big. Whilst the Federation consists of genuine trade union organisations with a very militant policy, affiliated to the R.I.L.U., the I.C.U. contains the Rheinold Jones, Howard Pims, and other gentlemen closely connected with the Chamber of Mines. It is affiliated to Amsterdam and in general its policy is not only contrary and antagonistic to the Federation, but also to every class-conscious worker irrespective of his colour. So long as the I.C.U. contains the present administration and its present policy of class collaboration, so long will the Federation refuse to associate or have anything in common with Mr. Ballinger and his organisation. Mr. Ballinger in his letter forgot to mention the number of times he has approached myself and the Federation to work in conjunction with the I.C.U., and was refused. Kadalie too, has applied for working contact and was also refused.

Mr. Ballinger denies that he ever attempted to set up a rival Bakers' Union. Not only has he failed in his attempt at setting up a rival Bakers' Union, but he also failed in his attempt to set up a rival Laundry Workers' Union, and he will fail in his present attempt at setting up this new Federation of Trades which he is at present contemplating. Native workers in South Africa will never again enter the ranks of the I.C.U. It is on its last legs now, and when Mr. Ballinger returns to England it will close up shop altogether.

Mr. Ballinger refers to the "disastrous clothing strike" conducted by the Federation. Let me assure your readers, Comrade Editor, that that strike was far from a failure. Very few were victimised and the strike was the means of making the Union a very strong organisation. Mr. Ballinger conveniently forgets to mention the other two successful strikes of that Union, as well as the eight or nine strikes won during last year by the Federation.

Let me assure Mr. Ballinger, that "Moscow" has a thorough knowledge of the difficulties prevailing for the unionising of the native worker. The militant policy preached by the R.I.L.U. is the only policy for the native trade unionist and only through this policy will the native worker better his economic and social position. There is no white antipathy towards the native worker either in the Federation or in the Communist Party. The Communist Party is clear of such chauvinism. It is true that house boys do kitchen work. It is also true that the policy of the I.C.U. leadership in preaching respect for the white boss is the cause of these houseboys being so tame. The Federation hopes to alter that in time.

Regarding the Pass Laws and Master and Servants Act which Mr. Ballinger claims to oppose, his attitude appears to me rather hypocritical. It is true that a meeting was recently called by Mr. Ballinger to discuss some of these anti-native measures. The Federation was invited but refused to attend because the Chamber of Mines and the boss class representatives were also invited. Surely Mr. Ballinger does not mean to say that the Chamber of Mines, Chamber of Commerce, Native Affairs Department and representatives of the Government stand for the abolition of native exploitation and oppression. This was the crowd that was invited to that meeting, and if Mr. Ballinger agrees with these gentlemen, then he must be honest and stop saying that he is endeavouring to solve a solution in the interest of the native worker.

In conclusion, whilst the I.C.U. is gradually fading away, the Federation grows stronger and more powerful every day. It is spreading its wings right through South Africa and its success is due to its militant and revolutionary policy.

South African Federation of Non-European
Trade Unions, Johannesburg.

June 15, 1929.

B. WEINBREN,
Chairman.

OCT 19 1929

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

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P R I C E S I X P E N C E



Remote Tasks

¶ We do not suppose that many *Labour Monthly* readers live in the country. This scene is remote for them. We know, it is true, many good comrades, friends and readers of the *SUNDAY WORKER* as well as the *L.M.* who do live and work for socialism in the countryside. We know, too, that "a storm is brewing on the Chiltern Hills," and when it comes it will be ferocious. But all the same, as we said, this scene is remote for most of our readers.

¶ In the same way Bazaars are remote from the business of the *S.W.*, or the *I.C.W.P.A.* That business springs from the class struggle to enlighten, to free —this is written as the news that the gallant Meerut prisoners are going on hunger strike is reported in *The Times* (but not in the *Daily Herald*). There's a moral in that. But all the same, the Bazaar will give us the sinews to carry on the work.

¶ *Come on! You can all help!* Write *EVA DAVEY*, Secretary, Press and Prisoners' Bazaar, 91 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. 1

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The Impressions of a Social Democrat <i>By R. D.</i>		

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*From Washington to Washington—Labour “Peace” Policy—
Evolution to Jingoism—Belfast—Social Peace and Imperialist
War—“Our Empire”—Jingo Propaganda—Palestine—
Hague “Settlement”—International Bank—British
Policy—British Isolation—U.S.E.—Geneva
Myths and Realities—Washington—The
Soviet Union*

WITH the present issue the LABOUR MONTHLY reaches its hundredth issue. The past eight years have seen the old “post-war” period develop into a new “pre-war” period. It so happens that the earliest numbers of this journal had to deal with the Washington “Disarmament” Conference, then preparing amid a blazon of boasts and vaunts of peace and a new era. To-day we are confronted with a new Washington Conference for disarmament once again. In the interval world armaments have increased; and the Anglo-American antagonism has come into the open with far greater intensity. The old Washington Conference had to confess its inability in the end to limit anything save the giant battleships, which many strategists were already declaring to be probably obsolete for modern warfare. The naval race was transferred to the new Washington cruisers of ten thousand tons; and it was the Labour Government of 1924 which began the race in these. To-day the threads of the disarmament pretence have grown thinner; the strategic calculations have become more unconcealed and intent. The proposals now announced for “limiting” cruisers are actually proposals for new building and increased tonnage on either side. And the sponsor of these proposals, on the side of British Imperialism, is now a Labour Government.

THE “peace” policy of the Labour Government has now been fully displayed for all to see: at The Hague, at Geneva, and, in its culminating stage, at Washington—not to mention in Palestine, Egypt or India. This policy is all of a single cut; and it is worth examining as a whole; for it

represents, as we are told on every side the "practical," "constructive pacifist" alternative to the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and war. The Hague was only the overture; it struck the note of "strong" and "fearless" voicing of imperialist interests, able to stand up to rival imperialisms, and so to earn the praise of their masters in the field of world politics no less than in the field of social peace at home. "We all feel proud to-day," declared the Labour Party fraternal delegate to the Trades Union Congress, "in reading a Press usually hostile to us congratulating our leaders for the stand they are taking." And again: "there was much applause when he compared Mr. Snowden's attitude at The Hague with the vacillation and weakness of some of his predecessors." (*Daily Herald*, September 5, 1929.) There is here no faltering apologetic compromise between pacifist idealism and the exigencies of practical politics. On the contrary, "We are stronger than Chamberlain" is the keynote. Just as Fascism looks down with contempt on the hesitating half-measures of its Liberal and Conservative predecessors, so Labour Imperialism, now grown to its full stature, and tasting for the first time the full rôle it feels reserved for it, exults in contemptuous superiority over the mere Conservatism which would have hesitated and temporised and diplomatised for fear of possible opposition.

THIS evolution of the "constructive pacifism" of the Labour Party into the "strong" Fascist type of realisation is no accident, but the essence of the whole present situation. For "constructive pacifism" does not exist except in the heads of a handful of earnest worshippers of paper schemes. What exists is Imperialism on the one side, and the revolutionary struggle against Imperialism on the other, and the practice of every policy has to take the shape of one or the other. So long, however, as the Labour Party was still building up its position on the backs of the workers and was still endeavouring to maintain a certain contact in phrases with working-class conceptions of internationalism, freedom of nations, opposition to capitalist exploitation, &c., so long its policy inevitably betrayed

a certain appearance of confusion and two-sidedness, a half-apologetic support of Imperialism and endeavour to cover it with idealist formulae, &c. Only when the union with capitalism is complete, and discipline has been established over its working class forces on this basis, can it come out with its full voice, and discover that it can represent "the nation," *i.e.*, Imperialism, far more blatantly and violently than any other party, since on the one hand it holds the workers in its grip, while on the other its policy is the policy of the bourgeoisie. Thus it comes about that, as *The Times* has pointed out, "no Conservative Government could have done the things that are being done by Labour in these days—the rushing of troops and battleships to Palestine, the risk of economic disorganisation in Europe—except in the teeth of a violent and perhaps an effective opposition." (*The Times*, August 29, 1929.) *Social Imperialism, when full-grown, feels itself the true expression of Imperialism, the predestined instrument, far more than the older parties with their "vacillation and weakness."*

THE social background of this policy is set out in the Presidential Address of the Belfast Trades Union Congress. The Address is noteworthy, because it is the necessary pendant of Snowden at The Hague; together, they reveal the whole system of Labour Imperialism. In contrast to the vague and shifty fumbblings after treachery of Hicks in 1927, or the woolly welfare worker's speech of Turner in 1928, the 1929 Address has the true stamp of the Labour Government and the fully developed new period. It has the same unconcealed, conscious, aggressive character, the same dropping of pretences, not merely of socialist pretences, but even of any mildly liberal-progressive pretences, as was already shown in Snowden's rôle at The Hague. It is fitting that Snowden sent his direct telegram of congratulation to Tillett on his Address. Let those who still hesitate on their orientation in conditions as they have developed to-day, who still hesitate to throw in their lot openly with the yet small revolutionary working-class minority because of the heavy bans and persecutions and obstacles under which these have to work at present to reach their future triumph, study well this Address; because here is expressed the alternative, here is expressed the

policy to which they must bow in irons without right of opposition, and here is expressed the direction where that policy will lead the workers. Two leaderships to-day confront the workers, and only two. Between Social Imperialism and Communism there is no mid-way point. The example of Cook is more than a personal history ; it is the ending of a phase.

TILLETT, who five years ago signed the Anglo-Russian declaration of war on capitalism, who forty years ago fought for socialism in the Trades Union Congress, now declares that the "goal" of Congress is nearly achieved ; with the conference with the employers, they are "within sight of the goal at which our Congress has been aiming." What is the goal ? It is "when the responsible bodies representing the wage-earners on the one hand and the organisers of industry on the other can sit down together to consider their mutual relations and the problems of industrial reorganisation without sacrifice of principle." The "goal" of trade unionism is thus declared to be alliance with capitalism. But the meaning of this is no longer expressed in the vaguely benevolent terms of a Ben Turner, in dreams of peace and harmony. Its true meaning is clearly expressed in terms of war, trade war, war for markets, war against rival imperialisms. The resources of trade unionism, it is declared, in organisation, in discipline, skill and knowledge, are "unrivalled."

These resources are at the disposal of the nation in a genuine endeavour to promote the regeneration of economic life, to recover lost markets, open new channels of trade, and to modernise our methods of production and distribution.

Lest there should be any doubt of the meaning of this, the fighting point against America is added :-

Much of the balance of international financial control has passed to the United States. The *Croesus* of the Western World awaits her interest and her sinking fund. The British have to supply.

To the rôle of Germany twenty years ago succeeds the rôle of America as "the enemy" ; and the General Council offers its unrivalled disciplinary control of the workers through the trade union machine as the auxiliary of British capitalism for the coming war.

WHEN he comes to his proposals of Imperialist organisation to counter the American Cræsus, he travels a little off the lines of immediate policy (for the "Empire economic unit" is at most a social myth to cover immediate drives of Imperialist policy), but reveals all the more clearly the whole mentality of the upper strata of the white aristocracy of Labour. He says :—

What in these circumstances can we do? We must organise as America has organised. We must mobilise our resources on an equal scale. An island nation cannot do this, but a world commonwealth can. The British Empire has a greater potential home consumption than the United States. She has a larger population, vaster territories, greater natural resources. . . . I hold, therefore, that the trade union movement must follow with the closest attention the proposals which are being made for the organisation of the British Commonwealth as an economic unit. The great Dominions are peopled by men and women of our own flesh and blood.

And he goes on to propose

Inter-Dominion Conferences of organised labour throughout the Empire, say, coincidentally with the official Imperial Conferences, or perhaps independently.

A LARGER population, vaster territories." "Our own flesh and blood." Observe how the commonest Jingo trick is here repeated. He does not say that six-sevenths of this population consists of other races held under despotic rule by the British sword. He does not say that the total white population of the Empire is some sixty millions, or three-fifths that of the United States. He does not propose, if he is so anxious to emulate the United States, as his first basis of a corresponding unification a single nominal citizenship and democratic forms. The despotic domination of the six-sevenths is taken for granted; the slavery is assumed; it is the possibility of exploiting them more that makes his mouth water. For the purposes of large-scale exploitation and competition with America, the slaves are counted in as so much property; "we" have "a larger population." But when it comes to the sentimental plea, the plea of unity, then the only tie, the tie of exploitation and the sword, cannot be mentioned; it becomes "our flesh and blood." This hypocrisy is typical of all Jingoism. When it comes to

sharing the profits, to sitting in humble subordination alongside the "official Imperial Conferences," then it is "Inter-Dominion Conferences of organised labour," *i.e.*, the tiny minority of upper representatives of the minority aristocracy of labour who are to come hopefully to their masters' board. The outlook of the corrupted imperialist aristocracy of labour is here expressed in all its crudity. The Left reformists of the Independent Labour Party type have criticised the speech as falling short of the international ideal, because the goal of the closed Empire unit may mean conflict with other imperialisms. They do not see that it means war, not merely with other imperialisms, but also against the six-sevenths within the Empire. The warships and bombing aeroplanes dispatched to Palestine are as much a part of the Labour Party policy of "peace" as the struggle with French or American Imperialism.

BUT while Tillet, Cook and the rest perform their rôle of preaching Labour Imperialism (with the accompanying acceptance of wage-cuts, rationalisation, &c.) to the workers at home, Snowden, Henderson and MacDonald perform theirs as the direct agents of imperialism in the struggle with other imperialisms and against the colonial revolts. The Hague and Palestine, occurring simultaneously, light up the whole line of Labour "peace" policy. It will be observed that the Labour Government knows how to maintain a nice gradation of bearing according to the rank and power of those with whom they have to deal. To the defenceless Arab population the Labour Government appears in blood and fire as the almighty god of bombs and machine-guns; its only answer to their aspirations for freedom is MacDonald's "Never." To the European Powers, on the other hand, more nearly, but not quite equal in strength, the Labour Government appears as the stern negotiator, rapping the table with its knuckles and demanding attention. But when it comes to the all-powerful American Imperialism, then the Labour Government appears as the obsequious suitor, hanging on every word from the All High, and seeking to smother him with honeyed courtesies. In this way the Labour leaders reveal, more eloquently

than with words, their true philosophy of might and obedience to the biggest guns, which lies behind all their talk of "law" and "peace" and "justice."

WITH the issues of The Hague we have already had occasion to deal last month ; but at that time the end had not yet come. That end is worthy of note ; for it shows how completely the real struggle still goes forward. Nominally, the end took the form of a last-minute compromise settlement, by which the British secured the major portion of their immediate financial demands, and the Young Plan was to come into operation for German payments. Whether outside pressure (the Lamont-MacDonald interview, and the threat of MacDonald's coming) played a part in bringing about this last-minute settlement, is not for the moment important. For the fact is that the "settlement" left the big issues untouched, and in particular the issue of the International Bank. The precarious and incomplete nature of the settlement was shown by the fact that no document of agreement was reached between the Powers' representatives, but only a note of the Secretary of the Conference. The Conference was in fact adjourned without a date, without having accomplished its task—the adoption of the Young Plan. The British were to this extent successful in their tactical objective, which underlay the prodigious fight over two-and-a-half millions : first, the "indivisible whole" of the Young Plan was broken, and the precedent established for attacking other items ; and second, the Conference had been kept busy for three weeks over these minor financial details, right up to the eve of Geneva which fixed a date for its inevitable adjournment, and thus compelled to adjourn without even reaching the issue of the International Bank. It is possible that Snowden had intended to maintain his blocking tactics to the end, deliberately wrecking the Conference and shelving once and for all the Young Plan as a whole ; the French had evidently expected this on the last day ; but that wider diplomatic considerations, and possibly American pressure, compelled at the last moment the appearance of a settlement. But the larger issues are thus held over.

ON the International Bank, we are informed in the Continental and American Press (the British Press has been singularly reticent, except to deny that the issue has any bearing on any of the proceedings) that Snowden at The Hague in the meetings of the Six Powers pressed for London as the site, but that the other Powers ruled this out of order, and the question went no further. The issue now comes before the special Sub-Committee. It was stated before the end of The Hague Conference that Britain had already lodged seventeen reservations to the proposals for this institution. The question goes beyond that of the site ; for if the British are unable to secure it for London, their aim is to minimise its rôle as much as possible and confine it to reparations and debts, *i.e.*, as simply a book-keeping agency, rather than an international credit centre. It is obvious, however, that there is no occasion for such a complicated setting up of an institution of this character ; since an enlargement of the existing Agency-General for Reparations would provide all that was needed ; and that the aim of the International Bank, as the Experts' Report makes quite clear, is vitally different, and looks to an international credit centre governing all central banks other than New York—*i.e.*, striking a direct blow at London. Not without reason does the American Press report that, from the point of view of Young himself and of American opinion, the International Bank is the central pivot of the Experts' Report, and that the New York bankers look forward to its achievement with enthusiasm as their greatest victory since the ending of the war.

BETWEEN the plan and the achievement, however, there are many slips possible ; Snowden has already given a foretaste at The Hague of the character of British opposition ; and the outcome of the present negotiations is still uncertain. The *Chicago Tribune* writes :—

London now is definitely abandoned as the site of the super-bank. The British prefer a Swiss town, if they are unable to obtain the selection of London, as City financial circles are determined to minimise the importance of the institution, and the Labour Government is supporting their stand. . . . *The British oppose the bank bitterly, since they failed to land it for London.*

The Paris correspondent of the *Economist* writes :—

The question of the capital in which the head offices of the Bank for International Settlements will be established appears likely to prove difficult of solution. There is undoubtedly a strong feeling here against the granting of the demand made by Mr. Snowden at The Hague that the new bank shall have its seat in London, and there is apparently an even stronger desire that Paris shall be selected. *This preference for Paris—which, it is asserted, the Belgians and the Italians, and probably the Germans, are also likely to support—is due in part to the difference in opinion which is believed to prevail between the Continental and the British bankers as to the future scope of the new bank's role. The British view, judging from the statements made in certain London newspapers, is that the bank's activities shall be limited strictly to handling reparations payments and war debts settlements, and that the "commercial" functions of the new institution, as set forth in the text of the Young Plan, shall be quietly dropped, on the ground that such an extension of its operations would be prejudicial to existing central banks of issue. The French, on the other hand, appear to be keenly anxious that the new bank shall speedily develop into a veritable world centre for international credit. The relation of this thesis and the French desire that the seat of the new bank shall be Paris needs no comment. The attitude of the American representatives, when the crucial vote is taken, will be interesting.*

In this issue the whole present stage of inner-imperialist antagonisms is mirrored.

IT will be seen from the above that the British fight at The Hague and subsequently has tended to produce a united European front against Britain ; and this situation came to the fore at Geneva. As with Curzon, so with Snowden, who may justly claim to vie with him in wooden-headed bull-doggery, a like policy is tending to a similar outcome. The negotiations at The Hague created against Britain the bloc of the Four—France, Belgium, Italy and Japan ; and, if the report of the Paris correspondent of the *Economist* is correct, then it appears as if, not only France, Italy and Belgium, but also Germany may act together against Britain on the issue on the International Bank. The prolonged exclusive Anglo-American negotiations have also furthered this result. It should be remembered that France had a special interest in the Young Plan as a means (by the parallel settlement of reparations and allied debts) of transferring the effective odium of reparations collections on to America and so

furthering collaboration with Germany. In an article after The Hague Conference, the well-known French diplomatic correspondent, Jules Sauerwein, reputed to be in close association with Briand, explained that (1) the British opposition to the Young Plan was due to the issue of the International Bank ; and (2) that the special value of the Young Plan for France, which made France ready to grant the minor financial concessions to Britain in order to secure the adoption of the reparations settlement, lay in the effective transformation of reparations for France into, first, a portion which could be commercialised, thus raising new capital for France and becoming private in character, and second, the remainder which would go straight to America, thus opening the way to a united front of France and Germany against the American creditor and for the re-establishment of European economy.

THIS line of French policy blossoms out into the propaganda for the United States of Europe, which is in effect a propaganda for the consolidation of French hegemony in Europe. The move to Franco-German collaboration, especially associated with Briand and Loucheur on the one side, and Stresemann on the other, has developed irregularly, owing to the still unsettled differences, ever since the Steel Cartel in 1926 and the Thoiry conversations of Briand and Stresemann. With the present line of British policy, this goes rapidly forward ; and Briand and Stresemann played into one another's hands at Geneva. For Germany, however, the main question still remains what economic and political concessions can be secured. The rôle of Germany necessarily continues ambiguous, especially because of the heavy dependence on America. But this dependence is diminishing ; the flow of foreign capital into Germany has markedly decreased, and Germany is increasingly raising its own capital. With this goes a move to increasing independence in policy. The recent speech of Stresemann, in which he spoke of the danger of all Europe becoming a colony of America, was a notable sign of the new tendency. This provides favourable ground for the French to push forward their United States of Europe propaganda. The point of the United States of

Europe conception is threefold, as has been abundantly clear in the whole Pan-Europe literature since its inception ; it can be equally turned against America, against the Soviet Union and also against Britain. The basic Franco-British Entente is temporarily pushed into the background.

THESE new antagonisms governed the proceedings of the Geneva Assembly of the League of Nations. MacDonald no longer found the ready welcome and easy triumph of 1924 ; he found himself in a measure of isolation and was pushed to the second plan. The election of the six Vice-Presidents already showed how the wind blew. It was Briand and Stresemann who held the first place together with forty-two votes each ; MacDonald had the humiliation of being relegated to the fifth place with thirty-eight votes. MacDonald's speech fell flat ; it was no longer the centre-point of the Assembly. He had nothing to offer save the insipid flourish of the promise to sign the Optional Clause—which is itself nothing but a solemn declaration to submit legal points to arbitration (as if these were the main cause or issue of modern wars !). Briand was easily able to outbid him with the offer to sign the General Act—*i.e.*, a convention to submit all disputes to arbitration (an easy offer for the French, since they make it dependent on the acceptance of the rejected Protocol, and since in any case the whole aim of French policy is to maintain the Versailles *status quo*). In the competition of pacifist humbug Briand won ; his speech received the grand ovation ; MacDonald left hastily, almost at the start—in order to fulfil the important engagement of seeing the Schneider race. The grand conception of the United States of Europe became the ideological focussing point of discussion ; and the British delegates had the ungrateful task of throwing cold water on any suggestion of infringing national sovereignty (Henderson at Briand's U.S.E. lunch). The antagonism ran right through the proceedings. The British unearthed again the trained reserves issue against France. The attempt to disinter this raised almost universal opposition. The tendency to British isolation was marked.

FACED with this general situation, the British Labour Government has staked all on reaching a temporary understanding with America in the naval discussions. What rôle other issues, including especially the financial issue, have played in these discussions has not been revealed. The comings and goings of the Normans, Lamonts, Dawes, and the rest with MacDonald have remained veiled in a considerably darker mist of secret diplomacy than the old ill-concealed secret diplomacy of before the war, against which the Labour Party used to inveigh. The report of the *New York Times* that Britain has received the guarantee of credits in New York to save the pound has been denied; but the character of the denials is formal. It is clear that in the immediate naval issue, British Imperialism is making marked concessions, compared with its previous standpoint; and the return for these concessions has still to be revealed. American Imperialism has openly brandished its superior resources; Colonel Stimson, speaking of the Naval Programme of \$1,170 millions (which will now apparently be carried out, under the "disarmament" agreement), recently declared:—

When you consider the amount we would have to face, and when you consider what *poorer nations than we*, who suffered far more in war, *would have to face if they remain in the armaments race*, you can see what the general world picture would be without an agreement. (*The Times*, September 14, 1929.)

On the final British figures, it was stated in Washington that members of the American Naval General Board "expressed themselves as amazed and gratified that the Admiralty had made such advances towards meeting the figures of the United States." At Geneva, in 1927, the Admiralty had made demands for a total in cruiser tonnage computed at 5 to 600,000 tons, as against the American proposal of 250 to 300,000 tons. The total now proposed for Britain is only 340,000 tons—or a relatively small increase on existing strength. The Americans on their side, with 315,000 tons, will be able to carry through their Naval Programme. "Disarmament" will once again lead to increased armaments, while the strategists on each side endeavour to get the best half of the bargain.

BUT the technical aspects of this naval bargaining (it is significant that air armaments, the principal factor of the next war, are completely ignored) are not the most important. The heaviest issues of the Anglo-American discussions will be more slowly revealed. It is reported that MacDonald, in his visit to Washington, will not discuss the naval issue, which will be left to the proposed Five Power Conference to determine. What, then, will he discuss, and what is the purpose of his visit? There are numerous unofficial reports; but it is to be noted that in both the British and the American Press the report is persistent that a leading issue of the conversations will be the question of the Soviet Union. Here we come to the real immediate crux. Britain undoubtedly seeks American co-operation for its campaign against the Soviet Union, and is ready to make concessions for such co-operation. Through all the inner-imperialist antagonisms this issue is dominant. The United States of Europe, American hegemony and British hegemony, all become during the present period, not only forms of inner-imperialist antagonism, but also and above all rival forms of imperialist hegemony in the campaign against the Soviet Union and for the rich prizes hoped to be won therefrom. And it is here that the special rôle of Social Imperialism stands out. For Social Imperialism the fight against the Soviet Union is a crusade. The Labour Government may for the moment resume relations with the Soviet Union; but the character of its handlings already in this question have sufficiently shown the spirit in which such relations will be resumed. It is necessary to be prepared for the event that the Social Imperialism, which has sharpened its teeth at The Hague and tasted its first blood of jingo applause, and which is now seeking at all costs a temporary accommodation with America in order to free its hands elsewhere, will sooner or later find its supreme mission in the war on the Soviet Union. For the significance of Social Imperialism is not only the drive to imperialist war in general; it is above all the drive to imperialist war on the revolution. And this is the special significance in the Washington conversations against which the proletariat needs to be on guard.

R. P. D.

RAILWORKERS AND REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

By STEWART PURKIS

THE fifteen months between August, 1928, and November, 1929, are registering the development of the conditions of revolutionary struggle in the railway industry.

In August, 1928, the railway owners demanded of the railworkers "wage-sacrifices to save the railway industry," which was declared to be "in an alarming condition."

The rail union leaders then urged the workers to accept the wage-cut; the proposal was carried through. The leaders affected to regard the cut as a temporary sacrifice to meet a temporary crisis. When the agreement was accepted the mass of railwaymen awaited with confidence the return to their normal wage-scales at the end of the twelve months: "the year of the 2½ per cent."

Their confidence was stimulated last July by the half-yearly statements of the four railway groups, which showed increases in profits: the L.M.S. and Great Western Companies raised their interim dividends above those of June, 1928; the L.M.S. from 1½ per cent. to 2 per cent.; the Great Western from 1½ per cent. to 2¾ per cent. This position seemed to them to fulfil the conditions suggested by the Press in August, 1928, that when "better times had come for the railways no one would grudge the railwaymen the restoration to their full scale."

Many railworkers are astonished to-day that despite the increased rates of dividend, our demand for the termination of the agreement is being opposed by the owners. The spirit in which our demand is being received is that of the writer of the "City Notes" in *The Times* for June 16, 1929:—

Railway stockholders felt that the railwaymen's recent notice to terminate the voluntary cut of 2½ per cent. in wages made last August is in the nature of a telling blow to a staggering subject

. . . if a voluntary cut of that amount (2½ per cent.) was necessary a year ago, it cannot, in view of the experience of the railways this year, be regarded as less necessary to-day.

An examination of the more significant facts of the railway industry reveals that the economic position of the companies is not better but worse than in 1928. The national and local leaders who declared in August, 1928, that the cut was necessary; who applauded the statements of J. H. Thomas that the settlement was a "lesson to the world . . . the best ever made," have now to admit that it was unnecessary then or again to agree with the railway owners that it is necessary now. They cannot change their policy on the ground that the situation is better to-day *because the situation is worse*. Next month will doubtless dispel their doubts and they will be standing where they stood in August, 1928—supporting the rail bosses' demands for wage cuts!

The Revolutionary Policy

Our contention then was and now is: "Oppose the wage-cutting agreement."

The case for the cut was, and is, the danger of immediate temporary difficulty, but the fact that the companies are able to pay annually in profits over £40,000,000 and, even more important, that they still have over £70,000,000 in reserves, makes ridiculous the talk of temporary crisis.

The insincerity of the union leaders in using such a plea was completely revealed by the fact that when the results of the economies effected in rail-working were employed in July by the companies *not to strengthen railway reserves but to swell shareholders' dividends*, Thomas, Bromley, Cramp and Walkden *uttered no word of protest*. They did not even appeal to the shareholders to "sacrifice" their dividends to save "our" industry.

There was no "temporary crisis"; *the "cut" was a stage in the persistent campaign against the wages of all workers in this period of declining capitalism*. This was demonstrated by the present writer in an article in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* for November, 1928, "Temporary Crisis or Steady Decline of the Railways," which argued the case that "the facts of the railway position are

not those of temporary difficulty but the cumulative facts of steady decline."

The policy to which the facts pointed was not that of a "temporary sacrifice" but that laid down by the National Minority Movement in its Manifesto of August 5, 1928 :—

There is not a single economic feature operating to-day that will not be intensified in twelve months' time, and we refuse to accept any reduction in any of our existing standards. . . . The first essential test of any industry is its capacity to give a full and decent livelihood to those it employs.

If this is not possible under capitalist control then capitalist control must go, and our resistance to the companies' demands is the first big step towards smashing that control.

The facts of the position to-day are not that an easy arrangement can be made between railway owners and railway workers. To take back the wage-cut ; to terminate the agreement and to move against the stagnation and other consequences of railway rationalisation would mean an immediate inroad either on reserves or on profits: such an inroad would end the slight prospect of securing the new capital adequate for railway rationalisation : it would be fatal to the hopes of the railway capitalists.

To go further and struggle for the National Minority Movement railwaymen's programme would be a struggle that could only be won by ending capitalist control. The ever-increasing body of railworkers which supports that programme is quickly realising that the alternatives are complete surrender or revolutionary struggle.

Meanwhile the significant facts of railway economy are those of steady decline.

The Basic Difficulty

It may be argued that the position of railway shares on the market offers a basis for optimism about railways ; the last month or two are said to have "marked a revival." It would be a mistake wholly to judge the position from such evidence, but for what the evidence is worth it is of interest that despite the use of the new powers for railways under the Road Powers Act, despite the 2½ per cent. wage-cut, despite extensive economies, despite the aid to raising new capital by cancellation of the passenger duty, despite the increases in interim dividends, despite the indirect

benefits of "de-rating," despite the rumoured "intentions" of the Government, despite the persistent Press propaganda for the purchase of railway stocks, their position on the market is worse rather than better than a year ago.

The many artificial aids brought in to stimulate the railway industry have not been able to affect the basic evil. Because the future of British railways depends upon the basic British industries, British railways continue to decline. The following figures, given in the Minority Movement's "Another Year of Rationalisation" from the *Board of Trade Journal*, record the basic difficulty affecting British railways :—

INDEX OF PRODUCTION, 1924—100.					Year	Year
Group					1927	1928
Mines and Quarries	..	..	..	..	94.3	89.2
Iron and Steel Manufactures	..	..	..	..	110.0	102.3
Non-ferrous Metals	..	..	..	..	116.9	119.3
Engineering and Shipbuilding	..	..	..	..	115.2	113.3
Textiles	..	..	..	..	101.6	99.9

These figures, in conjunction with the fact that to compare with 1913 production *they must be reduced by roughly 10 per cent.*, show that, far from British heavy industry being able to improve its position in relation to the other world capitalisms, it still has to attain to its pre-war production. The future of British railways rests with that of heavy industry.

Of the state of trade in relation to railways Sir J. Stamp said at the L.M.S. Annual Meeting in March, 1929: "The course of trade in 1928 was, in fact, even worse than appeared probable a year ago, and particularly from March to August the freight traffic receipts were extremely bad. Since August there has been, not an increase, *but a progressive decline in the rate of decrease.*"

Because the main job of the railworker in an industrial country is to transport goods traffic it is clear that "only really active conditions of trade can restore prosperity to the railways"; the external conditions deny the possibility of prosperity to British railways.

Railway Figures

A striking indication of the unhealthy condition of British railways is revealed by many demands from the writers of the

financial columns in the Press that a new type of information shall be given regarding home railways.

These writers complain that only "gross traffics" are published, and in consequence "unfortunate holders are frightened out of their holdings owing to the 'half-truths' contained in the published information."

They now desire this change because the figures which for many years have given the key to railway profits now fail to carry out that function, and it is imperative that the *new factor*, the increasing economies effected at the workers' expense, be brought into the picture. That economies become of such importance to investors marks the decadent economic position created by the decline of capitalism. Railwaymen will be interested to note that in addition to the economies of the 2½ per cent. cut and the many forms of "stagnation" which they are now experiencing an enormous reduction in staff is also being effected, as the following table shows:—

	1921	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
Railworkers employed	736,000	702,000	689,000	683,000	677,000	642,000

This part of the truth of the trend of things under Mondist Rationalisation is of even more interest to the railworker than the "unfortunate holders."

A comparison of the railway receipts for January-August, 1928, with those of 1929 gives a slightly more re-assuring picture for those who wish to be deluded:—

	Passengers		Goods	
	January to August		January to August	
	1929	1928	1929	1928
	£	£	£	£
G.W.	8,812,000	9,054,000	12,143,000	11,539,000
L.M.S. ..	19,826,000	26,678,000	29,119,000	23,790,000
L.N.E. ..	13,525,000	14,003,000	22,595,000	21,437,000
Southern ..	11,637,000	11,889,000	3,817,000	3,743,000
Total ..	53,800,000	55,624,000	67,674,000	65,509,000

The decrease in passenger receipts is disappointing after the "cheap fare" campaign combined with expensive work of avoiding road-competition by acquiring controlling interests in

the companies. The best to be said is "cheap fares have resulted in a smaller decline than if the old arrangements had been continued." The increase in the goods traffic is vastly more important than the decrease in the passenger, but its significance is largely minimised by the fact that it is mainly caused by coal traffic consequent upon the abnormally severe winter and the necessity to replenish stocks "particularly," said Sir R. Wedgwood, "in the export trade"; "de-rating" also helps to make the comparison unreal.

The figures to which we must go for the final test are the figures of tonnage; the two subjoined tables inescapably demonstrate the steady decline of the railways :—

	Year		1928 on 1927 Variations	1928 on 1927 Variations		1928 on 1927 Variations
	1927	1928		Jan.	Feb. March	
	(in 1,000 tons)	(in 1,000 tons)		1928 1929 (in 1,000 tons)		
Goods						
General						
Merchandise	60,254	57,226	- 5 p.c.	15,123	14,345	- 5.1 p.c.
Coke, Coal						
Fuel	195,772	187,334	- 4.3 p.c.	49,808	53,910	+ 8.24 p.c.
Other						
Minerals	65,828	61,569	- 6.5 p.c.	15,168	14,341	- 5.4 p.c.
	321,854	306,129		80,099	83,596	

	General Merchandise Tons	Coal, Coke, Fuel Tons	Other Minerals Tons
1913 ..	67,755,470	225,601,127	71,067,357
1921 ..	50,529,878	128,298,861	39,066,544
1922 ..	52,844,466	200,102,316	48,678,846
1923 ..	58,979,989	222,234,412	62,002,237
1924 ..	60,947,377	209,160,559	65,392,967
1925 ..	59,739,284	193,661,991	62,549,965
1926 ..	53,439,125	114,098,398	48,059,504
1927 ..	60,567,490	199,306,792	65,586,367

These figures are the key to the developing crisis; railwaymen and railway owners are learning the mining lesson that wage cuts cannot create markets; the railworker faces the developing struggle.

The Task of the Labour Leadership

In this situation the owning class turns frantically to every method of saving itself. Rationalisation is its panacea; and the Labour Government its "saviour" which is to apply the rationalisation remedy.

Here and there among the workers faith in the leaders and their ability lingers on; some hope that partly by vulgar "bonhomie," partly by State bribes in aid of railway development, Thomas will do the trick of winning concessions for the railworkers; some look to Walkden and Cramp, despite the Cotton Arbitration Award.

But the realisation steadily grows that all new capital development whether for labour-saving, for road development, or even for an ambitious large-scale electrification scheme *could not be* capitalised unless the burden of the new capital can be paid for out of the workers: and the understanding spreads that the task of the Labour Government is to reorganise capitalist industry for capitalism and that the trade union leaders are to act as the agents of Mondism in carrying through the task. The mantle of Havelock Wilson has fallen upon new shoulders together with a double portion of his spirit.

Cramp's warning to rail workers not to look to the Labour Government to do what they would not have expected done by a Tory Government was hardly necessary: as Palme Dutt wrote in the *Communist Review* for September, "the Labour Government is able to build not so much upon the workers' enthusiasm as upon their uncertainty of the alternative."

That is as true of the trade union leadership as of the Labour Government. The scandalous award by Cramp and Walkden in the cotton dispute has disillusioned vast numbers of railworkers as to the real character of their leadership. They realise that such leaders "cannot be made to fight."

The trade union figures are indicating the swing to the Left *out of the unions*. Politically-backward workers are finding their way back into the Railway Clerks' Association after the exodus in May, 1926 (4,000 increase last year), but the N.U.R.—despite vigorous official recruiting efforts—reports a decrease of over

3,000. Carriage cleaners and platelayers are especially contemptuous towards the organisation.

The figures of the whole trade union movement show a contempt for the unions which makes impossible the organisational task of changing the leadership ; but the struggle yields results which makes the battle well worth the effort.

But for this fight which is ahead—a fight with the new political significance which now marks all industrial struggles—new methods must be employed. The situation demands not only militant industrial action but a new type of industrial organisation under the leadership of a revolutionary political party.

It is also essential that a new type of industrial organisation shall win the confidence of the workers. An important lesson of the strikes at Austin's, at Braintree and at Leatherhead is that in crisis even the workers who have left the unions, disillusioned with their leadership, will, in the struggle, hand over the leadership of their struggles to the old corrupt bodies if the new leadership is not forthcoming.

As the Labour Government builds not upon the enthusiasm of the workers but upon their failure to secure an alternative to support, so too with the trade union leadership.

As soon as possible in every shop, on every depot and siding it is the task of every rail and transport worker to strive to create rank and file shop, siding and depot committees that the workers will not turn to the corrupt trade union leadership, but meet the crisis with a leadership which will lead the struggle for the rail workers' demands and develop the power to carry out the struggle for a revolutionary workers' government.

Labour's "Path to Power"

Many of the railworkers who admit that their leaders have now clearly abandoned the idea of leading industrial struggle ; who go even further and agree that those leaders accept it as their rôle to carry through the reorganisation of the railways under capitalist control despite the wage-cuts that process will entail, bring forward their one remaining defence of the Labour and trade union leadership—they plead that the leaders are helping

the capitalist to reorganise the industry, but that, when that process is completed, by means of Labour State action the results will be appropriated for the workers. They believe that, while the rationalisation process goes on, the workers' representatives are steadily achieving control of capitalist industry. Three simple but significant points thoroughly expose the falsity of this delusion.

The first point is the answer of Mr. Walkden, General Secretary of the Railway Clerks' Association, member of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, before the Royal Commission on Transport, held last January; his answer clearly shows the opinion of the rail union leaders and the General Council as to whether trade union leaders "controlling industry" would act as "workers' representatives." Walkden had argued that the railway unions should nominate three representatives on to a Board which should control Transport, and when asked, "Would they be there as representatives of the trade unions?" replied: "No. They would be nominated by the trade unions, but after appointment they would *be detached from the union*. They would be responsible Railway Commissioners with a knowledge of practical railway operations and the life of the railway workers." To a further question as to the line to be taken by these trade union leaders when appointed as Commissioners, *i.e.*, "Would they give up their tickets as trade unionists?" Walkden replied: "*Certainly. Under the scheme I have suggested to you, a man could not remain a trade unionist and be a Railway Commissioner at one and the same time. He would certainly have to make his choice, just as Mr. Frank Hodges has no longer anything to do with trade union work: he is now an Electricity Commissioner.*"

Here is shown clearly the conception that the "workers' representative" would "sit" not as a representative of the working class to enforce workers' control but to act as an expert adviser on the raw material of the railway industry—railwaymen's labour power.

The second point is the part of the joint work of the Labour Government and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress displayed in the cotton dispute. In a situation in which the textile workers were united and steadfast in struggle

the combination of Labour Government and General Council did their utmost to induce the workers to accept arbitration from an "impartial" tribunal. In such a struggle, against an attack on wages—and such wages!—no class-conscious worker could have argued for "impartiality." A workers' objective would be to use the workers' readiness for struggle to effect a conquest of the industry. The workers' leaders, however, worked instead for impartial arbitration. Whenever these "impartial" arbitrators appeared the body had a character openly and predominantly "pro-capitalist;" the man Swift, who acted as Chairman, is notoriously hostile to the working class. The result of this "impartiality" arranged by the Labour and trade union leaders to stop the workers' resolute struggle was openly and insolently announced in a *Times* leading article as "a *Swift* decision." Here we see the rôle of the Labour Government and trade union leaders: not as striving for "workers' control," but serving the cotton capitalists and the bankers.

The third point is the most striking of all. Taking up its task of Capitalist Reconstruction the Labour Government has appointed a Committee to "consider the advisability of obtaining a report upon the problem of the electrification of the main line railway systems of Great Britain." This Committee is greeted by the Press as an inquiry which affords "prospects of far-reaching developments."

Remembering the importance to the mine workers and the mine owners during their struggles of the approach to the conflicts determined by the reports of the many Committees and Commissions, all concerned with the developing railway crisis turn anxiously to see what approach to the coming crisis will be created by the new Electrification of Railways Committee, by examining its personnel. We find that for this tremendously important task the *Labour Government* has appointed:—

Lord Weir of Eastwood, one of the ablest of the capitalist class; Sir Ralph Wedgwood, of the L.N.E. Railway; Sir William McLintock, competent servant of the Bureaucratic State; Colonel Trench, of the Ministry of Transport, will act as Secretary.

The Labour Government no longer attempts to hoodwink the

workers by putting even a sham representative of the workers' interests on to this important body.

The Committee is important because when it is reported that the electrification of the railways is essential the question of *new railway capital will come right to the fore*. Then it will be made clear that new capital cannot be forthcoming *until railway shareholders obtain the standard dividends permitted under the Railways Act of 1921*. To obtain that extra £10,000,000 profit will become the objective of the coming struggles and in that struggle the Labour Government, the General Council, and the Railway leaders will play the rôle they played in the cotton dispute, the rôle not of winning "workers' control" of the industry, not even of helping the struggle to better rail workers' conditions, but of accepting the experts' conclusions, of aiding the capitalist reorganisation of the industry by achieving the cuts in wages so essential to capitalism now fighting against its own decline.

These three points not only lay bare the futility of the plea that by Parliamentary and administrative means "workers' control of the railway industry" will be won; but they also indicate that rail workers must not only face the industrial struggle, they have also to face the realities of political struggle: the struggle not only against the capitalist employers, but the struggle also against the capitalist State—whether it be served by Baldwin or by MacDonald.

Rail workers have not only the special task of creating a militant industrial leadership and organisation, but also they must play their part in building up a revolutionary political organisation preparing for the essential political struggle—the insurrectionary struggle for the conquest by the working class of State power.

THE MINORITY CONFERENCE AND THE T.U.C.

By ARTHUR HORNER

CONFERENCES and Congresses, under whatever auspices they are held, are intended to examine the experiences of the past period, and to prepare plans on the basis of these experiences for the time ahead.

Within the past month, two highly important industrial gatherings have been convened, one under the auspices of the National Minority Movement on August 24 and 25, at Shore-ditch, and the other under the T.U.C. at Belfast on September 2-7. What was the situation with which they had to deal? In the year which these two conferences were intended to cover, the working class of Great Britain had suffered from a series of attacks upon working conditions which had resulted in the wages of hundreds of thousands being reduced and the addition of large numbers to the already unprecedented army of unemployed workers.

The railway workers lost 2½ per cent., in addition to many indirect cuts imposed upon them by the reorganisation policy of the Companies. Five hundred thousand cotton textile workers were driven into the sacrifice of 6½ per cent. from their previously exceedingly low weekly wages. The miners throughout the whole year were the victims of ruthless attacks upon the wages, customs, and conditions at local collieries. In addition, scores of attacks had been successfully launched upon smaller, though not less important, bodies of workers in various other industries.

All these demands upon the employed workers were accompanied during the whole year by venomous punishment of the destitute unemployed, who were being forced into the search and acceptance of work under worse than Trade Union conditions as the only alternative to stark starvation, thus replacing the previously employed.

The perspectives facing these Conferences were even more frightful than the past had been. The woollen textile workers were already confronted with the threat of a lock-out in order to enforce huge wage cuts. The miners were approaching the end of 1929, when the majority of the District Agreements are due to terminate, and when a great crisis in the industry is bound to develop. The oft-promised seven-hour day had been side-stepped by the Labour Government, notwithstanding that the whole of the Trade Union Movement was pledged to secure its reinstatement.

It was attempted to justify these sacrifices being made by the workers on the ground of the alleged fact that capitalist industry in Britain is incapable of paying adequate wages, or permitting the continuance of favourable working conditions, owing to its parlous state, due largely, it was claimed, to more extensive competition on the world markets. The argument that it is impossible to get more out of the pot of Capitalist resources than is put in has been used to justify more being put in by means of longer hours, harder and more dangerous work, together with lower wages.

The National Minority Movement Conference

This Conference was attended by 710 delegates, all of whom were sent there by trade union branches or from workers' meetings held on the job in mill, mine and factory, or on railways. It was essentially a gathering of the victims of modern capitalist development, every one of whom was keenly conscious of past and present working-class sufferings, and bravely anxious concerning the menace of the future. They recognised the imminence of crisis arising from growing production per unit of labour employed in industry, and the relative contraction of market consumption.

These two contradictory tendencies, the resolutions of the Conference declared, were bound to be aggravated by resort to capitalist rationalisation in every country, which is the modern method of reducing costs in order to permit of lower selling prices in world competition. This trade war, it was claimed, would lead to an actual war of arms, and that soon, for the bitter

struggle now proceeding on the world markets necessitated not only oppression of the workers at home, but, as well, a more ruthless exploitation of the colonial workers, which was only possible, in the face of the resistance of these workers, by resort to war against them, success in which would not only secure cheap labour power but cheap raw materials as well. Thus the delegates explained the merciless attacks upon the workers of India, Egypt, Palestine, &c., making it crystal clear that such adventures, involving the wounding and death of thousands of native workers, are but a part of the general offensive against the world's workers.

In the same objective fashion it was seen that the competition between the great Imperialist Nations was rapidly coming to a head, and that the two leading nations fighting for dominance, Britain and America, were bound before long to resort to arms as the means to bring about victory for the home capitalist through the elimination and crippling of the other by war. The pacifist word-gestures of the Labour Government were weighed and found wanting, for it was recognised that this was the only Government capable of drawing British workers into war, swaying as it does a big influence over wide masses of the people.

The possibilities of war were not examined from the angle of the subjective desires of politicians, but from an analysis of the economic conditions which determine all politics whether they relate to war or other matters. The delegates were unanimous in their opposition to a policy of mere machine breaking. They were against mere negative attitudes towards Rationalisation in so far as it applies to the more scientific treatment of production and distribution of commodities.

They recognised the fallacy of such a position from the example of the five years' plan of Socialist reconstruction in the U.S.S.R. which has resulted in increased production beyond the dreams of the capitalists in any country. The Conference, therefore, declared that more scientific methods in industry, which is fatal under capitalism, because it seriously worsens the workers' conditions of life and work, become at the same time one of the main instruments in the hands of the Workers' State for the realisation of improvements in every phase of life.

The conclusion was drawn, therefore, that the main task facing the Minority Movement in this period was that of overthrowing capitalism by means of actual daily struggles against all its attempts to prolong its power at the expense of the working class. The decision to seek to imitate the example of the Workers and Peasants of the U.S.S.R., as the only means to re-construct industry for the workers' benefit, brought sharply to the minds of the delegates the grave danger of war against the U.S.S.R. as the only means by which world capitalism can overthrow and destroy that State, the existence of which is a proof of the efficacy of revolutionary struggle by the working class and of the possibility of realising a full and free life, in which the workers are sure of getting the full share of the benefits accruing from increased production per shift.

Against the threat of war, whether it appears in the form of colonial repression, inter-Imperialist struggles between the leading capitalist States, or against the only Workers' State, with a combined attack by capitalist powers, the whole Conference pledged itself to fight. It determined to wage unceasing war upon the war makers, preparing now already the plans for turning Imperialist war into insurrection against the home Government.

These objectives being agreed upon, steps were taken to construct organisational machinery for the realisation of them. This organisational preparation was based upon a recognition of the rôle of Reformism in the period of Rationalisation.

Scientific reorganisation has always been in progress ; the significance of Rationalisation is not that it performs this task for capitalism, but that it draws into its operations the whole of the leadership, and the greater part of the Reformist political and industrial apparatus, as instruments for its performance. This involves support of the Labour Government by the Reformist Trade Unions, for that is the only Government which can enable capitalist rationalisation to be carried through with full State aid, whilst silencing the workers' protests. This demands, further, that part of the rationalisation process should be the purging of the Trade Unions by the expulsion and suppression of all resisting elements within them, a process inevitably accompanied

by growing loss of faith amongst the workers expressing itself in wholesale Trade Union desertion.

Thus, the Minority Movement, by its Conference decisions, goes forward to the workers, organised and unorganised alike, calling them into the practice of solidarity in defence of working-class interests. This is a break with the past, and it involves open conflict with many sections of the reformist unions, and practically all of the leaders and officials of the unions. *Pit and Factory Committees* were decided upon as the permanent form of organisation, which should be built up to attend to the needs of the workers, regardless of the union they belong to or whether they are attached to any union at all. All the delegates pledged themselves to return to their homes, and there to set up immediately initiatory groups of comrades who are prepared to go forward with the simple slogan of "Let's get together on the job for struggle against the employer."

For industries such as the textiles, mining and railways, where conflicts with the employers are here now or are rapidly approaching, *Committees of Action* must be set up immediately for the specific purpose of meeting these attacks; later, when the crisis in its present form is past and the present struggles are ended, these broad Committees of Action, born in crisis, will be liquidated to be replaced by permanent Factory Committees.

Several delegates claimed that these Committees were the beginning of new Unions, and therefore should be regarded as such from the start. It was, however, made clear that neither the Factory Committee nor the Committee of Action could ever substitute Trade Unions, and that the necessity to stay in the reformist Trade Unions seeking to secure support from the members of these bodies is greater now than ever before, and it will be the duty of the members of these Committees to take the unorganised workers into the reformist Unions in order to carry on never ceasing and ever more effective struggles against reformist influence and control.

The Conference declared that it had no objection in principle to the setting-up of new Unions, as also it was no matter of principle that it should take members into reformist Unions. It was only concerned to reach the mass of the workers inside and

outside of Unions old or new, and the means to do this were to be found in the direct and independent approach to the workers at the place of work. However, where militant workers, as in Scotland amongst the miners, and in London and elsewhere amongst the clothing workers, have been driven out of the reformist Unions because they resisted participation in the treachery of the leaders, then the Minority Movement must whole-heartedly support such Unions, as, for example, the United Mine Workers' Union of Scotland and the United Clothing Workers' Union.

The following, then, were the main characteristics of the Sixth National Minority Movement Conference :—

- (1) An objective analysis.
- (2) Frank self-criticism.
- (3) Declaration of open war against Reformism in every sphere.
- (4) The direct approach to the workers, for the purpose of developing and leading independent economic struggles, and thorough organisational preparation for the conduct of these conflicts in face of all opposition.

The Conference throughout was revolutionary in objectives, seeing no hope for the workers except by following the political direction of the Communist Party, and organising themselves for immediate struggle in the National Minority Movement, thus fighting the way up to the Revolutionary Workers' Government. Throughout the proceedings the veteran of the movement, Comrade Tom Mann, conveyed an atmosphere of vigour and action in keeping with the new tasks before the Movement.

The Trades Union Congress

In striking contrast to the gathering at Shoreditch was the session of the British Trades Union Congress, composed of 596 delegates (80 per cent. of whom were full-time Union officials), which met at Belfast, suitably enough, to hear Mr. Ben Tillett deliver a Presidential speech which went further to avow the Capitalist and Imperialist rôle of the Trade Unions than has ever happened before. The call to give up all ideas of class struggle, in the interests of British capitalism, and to form a united front with it against its leading competitors, especially the U.S.A., was sent out in the most arrogant fashion.

The speech of Mr. Ben Tillett was not unexpected ; his history, especially during the war, and since, showed him to be

capable of sabre-rattling, in which rôle he was only excelled by his erstwhile friend and colleague, Mr. Horatio Bottomley. The open acceptance of his line by the vast majority of the delegates was, however, more serious, though even at this stage of the proceedings a minority of those present were expressing misgivings. The Presidential speech will live in history as the most definite declaration so far given of Reformism in Britain, and proclamation of its pro-capitalist rôle.

It was to be expected that the darling of British capitalism, the hero of The Hague, should have sent a congratulatory telegram to Mr. Tillett, conveying his full agreement with the policy advocated. The Congress never permitted any criticism willingly, though the courage and activity of the small militant group of comrades present imposed it upon them.

This, the most reactionary Congress of the British Trade Union Movement, did all it was expected to do by Mond and his class, which had a representative from the Imperial Chemical Company present with a special platform ticket to check up the attitude of the Mond emissaries who are rapidly destroying the whole movement.

The Congress confirmed the meetings with the Mond Group and the F.B.I., and declared its anxiety to set up a National Economic Council to further discuss and carry out attempts to stabilise British capitalism at the workers' expense. It abandoned all efforts to reduce the number of competing Trade Unions, and opposed any steps to set up factory organisation. These steps, which would tend in the direction of strengthening working-class power for use against capitalism, were regarded as unnecessary because there is no intention to permit further conflicts to take place if they could be prevented by granting concessions from the workers' wages. This was particularly clear when the Textile arbitration award was discussed after very great pressure from the militant group. Messrs. Cramp and Walkden made the now customary defence that if they had not given 50 per cent. the cotton employers would have insisted that Mr. Justice Swift give them the 100 per cent., which both indicated he was ready to do.

Arbitration of a similar kind was advocated for the miners, railway workers, and wool textile workers, notwithstanding

that they themselves conveyed to the Congress the intimation that the Arbitrator had made up his mind on behalf of his class from the beginning.

The policy of Nationalist Trade Unionism—Britain and its colonies against the world naturally enough—did not permit the farce of a discussion on International Trade Unionism to take place.

In the same consistent fashion, every pretence to defend the unemployed was given up. The realisation that the further development of capitalist rationalisation would increase the number of unemployed workers and that maintenance standards must be reduced so as to force them into the acceptance of work at still lower rates of pay than are now observed, would have made farcical any pretence that the T.U.C. could assist the unemployed. The idea put forward at Swansea for the formation of unemployed sections was also given up and it was decided openly and arrogantly to throw them to the wolves of capitalism.

This treacherous handing over of the apparatus of the Trade Unions to capitalism of course necessitated the bitter attacks which were made upon all the militant movements. Fortunately a few courageous and class-conscious delegates were present, even at Belfast, who were able to develop the counter-offensive, fearlessly abandoning all attempts at defence in order openly to expose this treacherous combination.

The happenings at the Belfast Trades Union Congress have justified the whole attitude of the National Minority Movement and demonstrated the urgent necessity of carrying out its programme of struggle against all enemies of the workers, inside or outside of the Movement. The working class was not defeated at Belfast; only Reformism has suffered that fate. The workers of Britain will go forward under the leadership of the revolutionary forces seeking the means of life. Capitalism will not provide these means, therefore it must and will be overthrown, provided that the class-conscious workers have organised themselves, employed and unemployed, inside the revolutionary Communist Party, and are working to build up the National Minority Movement and the N.U.W.C.M.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN STRUGGLE AND BRITISH IMPERIAL UNITY

By GORE GRAHAM

We must organise as America has organised. We must mobilise our resources on an equal scale.—Mr. Ben Tillett at Belfast.

He hoped that this lunch, where no doubt he would be accused of bolstering up yet another capitalist undertaking—(cries of "Shame," to which Mr. Thomas replied that the only shame was that he could not share in the plunder)—would be productive of good results. The Labour Government was as anxious and as jealous, and would maintain the integrity, improvement, and development, and were as proud of the British Commonwealth of nations as any Government that either preceded it, or that would follow it. The Union Jack was neither the property nor the prerogative of any particular party.—Mr. J. H. Thomas (*The Times*, July 29, 1929).

Britain is not finished as an industrial nation.—Sir Oswald Mosley, Durham (July 29, 1929).

THE contradiction between the growth of productive forces and the contraction of the markets of the world becomes more accentuated every day, and is, as all revolutionary workers are aware, leading inevitably to further imperialist wars. One of the principal antagonisms arising out of this contradiction is the struggle between Great Britain and the United States. Under cover of the hypocritical Anglo-American talks of peace, renunciation of war, reduction of cruiser tonnage, &c., all the basic processes of capitalism making for war between these two imperialist powers steadily unfold themselves. The American giant it is that has come forward, claimed a place in the capitalist sun and got it, and is a menace to all the other powers, but particularly the oldest capitalist country, Great Britain.

Europe's share in the world's trade was 64 per cent. in 1913, but in 1926 it was 48 per cent. and in 1927 50 per cent. And while a fair amount of the decrease in Europe's share is due to the growth of Asia's percentage (which rose from 10 per cent. in

1913 to 14 per cent. in 1923) the great factor is the huge and world-wide expansion of America. This menace of America resulting in Europe's decline has awakened a Europe-consciousness, which at the moment is being given expression by the Briand-Stresemann propaganda of a "United States of Europe." This campaign has blossomed with great vigour since the increase of American tariffs was threatened. Against these tariffs a federated Europe would be in an entirely different and infinitely more advantageous position than are the isolated countries, and there is no value at all in the protestations of the U.S.E. crusaders that the project is not aimed against the U.S.A. It certainly is and arises most assuredly from the growing antagonism between the declining European countries and their powerful rival. Developments in the association for war purposes of the European countries can confidently be expected in the near future, for, as the *Economist* notes, "material and social forces are inevitably leading the nations of Europe into some closer political and economic association." But such developments will not lead to the super-imperialism of a United States of Europe, but instead only help to increase the rivalries which will culminate in the next imperialist world war.

Last year the Economic Organisation of the League of Nations estimated the volume of world trade at 20 per cent. more than the pre-war figure. But the amount of British exports has not yet reached 90 per cent. of the 1913 level. That America is one of the chief assailants of Britain is revealed at once by the fact that in 1913 exports of manufactured goods from the U.S.A. were in value only a little more than half those from Great Britain, whereas last year the American exports of goods which would have been classed as manufactures in British statistics reached the value of £534,000,000 as against £578,000,000 from Great Britain.

In many markets the extraordinary American expansion has caused such severe competition as to have involved a complete reversal of position as between Great Britain and the U.S.A. In South America and the Far East, American exporters have assumed the leadership held before the war by Great Britain. Without studying any other foreign market than China, the

immensity of American depredations into former English preserves will be made fully evident.

In the year before the World War, American exports to China had risen to a value of £6,542,000, Great Britain's total being approximately £19,200,000. *Last year they were valued at £32,700,000 against the British figure of £21,200,000.* When this "American invasion," as it was laughingly called, began, British trade experts described it as "a flash in the pan." Despite the fact that the end of the World War saw America's position consolidated, the figures being, for example, £16,200,000 as against £15,600,000 British exports, the above view still held fashion. And when in 1922 there was a drop in the American figures, British being some £3,000,000 ahead, the British thought their "flash in the pan" theory was vindicated. The last four years, however, in which the American exports to China have consistently exceeded those from Britain, have brought these British "trade experts" a little nearer reality.

Not only, of course, in the development of trade has America grasped for herself huge chunks of capitalist economy, but also in the export of capital has she caused great anxiety in the older imperial powers. It is necessary only to remind the reader of Argentine or Canada to show how and with what real cause the British capitalists are anxious about the financial penetration of the U.S.A. Underneath the struggle at The Hague was the rivalry between London and New York for the title of the money market of the world. America has exchanged a net debtor position in 1914 of about \$2½ billion for a net creditor position in 1928 of over \$16 billion, of which \$7 billion represented the value of official war debts.

And not merely in the foreign markets has the advance of the U.S.A. severely undermined the position of Great Britain, but also within the British capitalists' own empire the same extraordinary advance of U.S.A. accompanying British decline has taken place.

In 1927 British exports to Australia were double the 1913 figure. *But in the same year American exports were nearly four times the 1913 amount.* A similar picture is presented in South Africa. The British percentage of African imports has fallen

since 1913 by 5 per cent., while the American percentage has risen by 6 per cent. In Canada to-day British exports are only 17 per cent. of the total, *while the American figure has risen until now the U.S.A. provides 64 per cent. of the total Canadian import trade!* Even in New Zealand, the dominion which imports more British manufactures in proportion to its population than any other, British decline is apparent. The proportion of imports from Great Britain was 82.4 per cent. in 1913, but had fallen to 73 per cent. in 1925. On the other hand, American exports to New Zealand are to-day 17 per cent. of the total instead of only 9.5 per cent. as before the World War, and every indication points to continued U.S.A. progress. British exports in 1913 to the West African colonies, Kenya Colony and the Uganda Protectorate amounted to £6,750,000. In 1927 they were £16,500,000, and growing rapidly. But here again we have the same story of fierce attacks being made by the capitalists of U.S.A., Japan and Germany. In Kenya in 1927 the proportion of imports from countries under the British flag was only 54 per cent.

Whatever part of the British imperial market one examines the fact of America's great advance at the expense of the British stands out most prominently.

The decline of British capitalism made apparent by the above facts of the general economic situation showers upon our rulers an avalanche of difficulties. To overcome their difficulties they pipe all hands on deck, and to-day a "Labour" Government exists not as an indication of the growth of working-class power and organisation but as an indication of capitalist decline. A Labour Government is one of the last reserves of the capitalist class. The struggle against U.S.A. for the markets of the world, as every other vital need of capitalism, is carried out by His Majesty's Labour Government more thoroughly and more efficiently than any non-Labour Government could carry it out. In the parliamentary recess J. H. Thomas has visited Canada as the "go-getter" of the British exporters in their struggle against the inroads of U.S.A. into the Canadian markets. Since Labour took power a commercial delegation has been sent to South America to put up the same struggle against American expansion, and, cleverly enough, to take the same advantage of

the position created by the new American tariff proposals. The measure of success achieved by this Mission in the signing of the Anglo-Argentine Convention is so much fuel to the rivalry between Britain and U.S.A. Quite unequivocally the struggle is between Britain and U.S.A., as the following figures show : British percentage of Argentine imports in 1913 was 31 per cent. and in 1926 it was 19.3 per cent. ; U.S.A. percentage of Argentine imports in 1913 was 14.7 per cent. and in 1926 24.7 per cent. ! What could be more eloquent ?

By means of what amounts to financial bribery the Mission has secured an engagement from Argentine to purchase £8 million of British goods during the next two years. The Labour Government has also established Colonial development schemes whereby large sums of money are being loaned to Colonial capitalists on the stipulation that they buy British manufactures instead of, for example, American. Further, it is reversing the decision of previous capitalist governments and is re-establishing British business representatives in various parts of the world. Thus Labour assists in the fuller merging of the State machine with capitalist enterprises. Thomas, of course, cannot be the commercial-traveller-in-chief all the year round, for he must "cure" unemployment in other ways when Parliament re-opens. Hence the appointment of the new commercial agents. But in these and in all the other ways by means of which the Labour Government fights to win the lost markets of British capitalism, the enemy to be met with at every corner is the United States ; an enemy which will not always be fought by means of commercial travellers and diplomats.

We shall see, as in the past we have seen, a "continuation of policy," but a change of weapons, and those battleships which the Labour Government to-day excuses the erection of on the ground of providing employment, will be facing, with guns trimmed for action, the much reduced (!) fleet of Hoover.

The Empire as an Economic Unit

In addition to the vigorous attempts at salvaging British capitalism which are being made by means of a "Labour" Government, a much-vaunted solution of the difficulties of British

decline is the establishment of the British empire as an economic unit. In the words of a responsible capitalist writer (F. L. McDougal, *The Times Commercial Supplement*, August 31, 1929) :—

Great Britain has lost, never to regain, the proud position of the "workshop of the world." She is, however, and can remain the metropolitan state of a confederation which embraces no less than a quarter of the whole world.

These fond ideas of imperial self-sufficiency, of the economic unity of an Empire with free-trade inside and a comprehensive tariff wall against goods from outside, are utopian. Undoubtedly the forthcoming Imperial Conference will discuss this question above all others, but there is little prospect of the conference being able to do anything but reveal the fact that the hegemony of Britain has gone. The Dominions are not likely to sacrifice themselves on behalf of the beautiful schemes for the regeneration of the metropolitan state.

Canada and American Tariffs

It is true, however, that just as the pending increases of American tariffs have accelerated the agitation for a "United States of Europe," likewise have they given a great fillip to the development of British imperial ideology. The Tariff Bill is not yet made law, and indeed some amount of opposition to it is being expressed in the U.S.A., which will result no doubt in certain modifications. An insight into the real character of the tariff proposals, however, showing that they will not be kept off the legislature by a few radical speeches, is given by the statement in the Senate Finance Committee's report that some of the increases are to be made:—

in order to encourage production in this country of articles necessary in war time !

In Canada, particularly, the proposed U.S.A. Tariff Bill has had great repercussions. Canadian Conservatives, who for long have described Canada as the milch cow of the United States, are at present touring the country with the hot-headed gospel of full protection and a stronger imperial unity. To them the proposed American tariff is a body-blow aimed at the economic life of Canada.

In the eight months ending last May Canada exported £20,000,000 worth less of farm products and wheat flour than she did in the eight months ending May, 1921—before the U.S.A. first raised its customs tariff against Canada's primary products. (Canadian wheat now pays a duty of 1s. 9d. a bushel in the United States.) And the new American tariffs expected to come into operation in November will, it is estimated, bar another £10,000,000 worth of Canadian products from the United States. Meanwhile, as stated above, United States exports to Canada are advancing by leaps and bounds. A by-product of all of this, of course, is the increased agitation for imperial unity, and it is quite conceivable that the present Liberal Government of Canada will accommodate itself to the demands by increasing the existing preferences to British manufacturers. But the full programme of the imperial unitarians is quite impossible of materialisation. Canada, like every other part of capitalist economy, is a complex of insoluble contradictions. Even if the policy of increasing British preferences secured the approbation of the West or of British Columbia, it would certainly receive no support in Quebec, where the manufacturers are exposed to competition from the Mother (!) country, and have often demanded the abolition of the British preference! To remember the growth of American investment in Canada and all the other forces making for the disintegration of this part of the British empire is to be at once convinced of the impossibility of economic imperial unity and that the only result of the present developments which can be predicted with certainty is the accentuation of the Anglo-American struggle. The capitalist system hoists itself with its own petard; the bourgeoisie engineers its own destruction.

The Rôle of Social Democracy

It is obvious to anyone with eyes to see that the crusade for an imperial economic unit is but a reflection of the developing struggle between Britain and U.S.A.—a struggle leading to war. This fact alone makes it quite natural to find prominently among its supporters men like Lord Melchett. But what is more revealing is a perusal of a copy of *The Times* for September 3. In it, alongside a letter from an ecclesiastical dignitary, in which

the bourgeois world is assured of the efforts the Church is making in behalf of the same imperial propaganda, is the report from another subsidiary organisation of the bourgeoisie, the Trades Union Congress. The chairman's address delivered at the Belfast Congress contains the words :—

We must organise as America has organised. We must mobilise our resources on an equal scale. An island nation cannot do this, but a world commonwealth can. The British empire has a greater home consumption than the U.S.A. It has a larger population, vaster territories, greater natural resources. In the era of peace and strivings for peace, one hears little of economic peace among the nations. Tariff barriers are being raised, not broken down. I hold, therefore, that the trade union movement must follow with the closest attention the proposals which are being made for the organisation of the British commonwealth as an economic unit.

What a capitalist clarion call ! And coming from Tillett, the great recruiter of the last imperial war, how much more does it not breathe of reality than the hypocritical cooing of the MacDonald-Dawes duet ? A few days afterwards a prominent Tory wrote to *The Times* in praise of Tillett and in support of the "socialisation of the empire." How the Communist analyses and predictions concerning the socialisation of the empire are being borne out !

Unmistakably the policy of social democracy, either in the work of Snowden ("who has put Britain back on the map" says the film caption) or of Tillett, the crusader of imperial economic unity, is shepherding the working class nearer to the slaughter of imperialist war. From this the workers can save themselves only by fighting under a revolutionary leadership against the imperialist Labour Government and for a Revolutionary Workers' Government, pledged not to unify and organise the "British commonwealth" for imperialist struggle, but to break up the slave empire and give real independence to the oppressed millions sweating within it.

LABOUR IMPERIALISM IN EGYPT

By J. M. B.

THE growth of the various branches of the Egyptian nationalist movement, and the way in which they reacted to the incursions of British Imperialism during the years from 1914 to 1922 when Egypt was declared a British Protectorate, were very fully and adequately described in an article in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* of May, 1923.¹ It is quite impossible in the space at my disposal to recapitulate the detailed history of those years, but those who want to get the true background for a study of the present Anglo-Egyptian situation would be well advised to look up that article.

The British declaration of 1922 which formally restored Egyptian "independence" reserved to the discretion of the British Government the four most important points of British policy in Egypt—"until such time as it may be possible by free discussion and friendly accommodation on both sides to conclude agreements in regard thereto." These points were as follows :—

- (1) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt.
- (2) The defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect.
- (3) The protection of foreign interests in Egypt and the protection of minorities.
- (4) The Sudan.

Since the issuing of this declaration, the policy of British Imperialism, supported by Labour Imperialists such as Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. H. N. Brailsford, &c., has been directed towards securing a treaty with Egypt which will safeguard imperialist interests on all these points while at the same time giving sufficient satisfaction to the right wing Egyptian nationalists to induce them to co-operate with the British government in keeping the Egyptian masses in subjection. In other words it has been the aim of British policy to create that "friendly and orderly Egypt" which in the words of the

¹ "Egyptian Nationalism and the Class Struggle" by G. A. Hutt.

Milner Report of 1921 would "serve British purposes as well" as a formal Protectorate. Unfortunately, however, for the success of this policy, Lord Allenby and the British Government were still too much afraid of the power of Zaghul Pasha and the Wafd (the Right wing nationalist organisation) to enter at once on a policy of conciliation and it was not considered expedient to allow a Parliament to be elected until a new constitution and election law had been drafted by nominated ministries under the dictatorship of Lord Allenby. Hence it was not until January, 1924, that the first elections, which resulted in an overwhelming majority for the Wafd, were held.

Throughout this period Egyptian capitalism had been growing stronger and consolidating its power, with the result that the class divergencies in the nationalist movement had widened considerably, and the Zaghulist party had become the party of Egyptian capital. By the time Zaghul took office in 1924 the Egyptian struggle against British imperialism had entered on a new phase, marked by a closer concentration of Egyptian capitalist forces and a growing rivalry with British interests. Thus, the British Government was faced with the dilemma that while it could not maintain "a friendly and orderly Egypt" without conciliating the Zaghulist party, it was impossible to satisfy the ever-growing demands of the Egyptian capitalists without relaxing its hold on the Egyptian state machine and thereby weakening the whole system of British imperialism.

The First Labour Government and Egypt

This was the position with which the MacDonald Government was faced in 1924 and, without hesitation, MacDonald adopted the policy of continuity with Tory imperialism. Zaghul Pasha, who had only accepted office in the belief that a British Labour Government would support the movement for Egyptian independence, remarked that the MacDonald policy was not new:—

What was new to Egypt was that the policy was approved by a Labour Government which had always been opposed to imperialist principles. (*The Times*, June 30, 1924.)

Negotiations were entered into between Mr. MacDonald and Zaghul Pasha, but broke down on MacDonald's refusal to give

up the Sudan or to refer the question of the Suez Canal to the League of Nations. The old policy of repression and violence went merrily on, and, after the return to power of the Baldwin Government, a nominated ministry was once more put into office. From this time until July, 1928, the British Government tried alternately policies of conciliation and intimidation, according to whether the Wafd took up a compromising or a firm attitude, but did not succeed in getting any Egyptian Parliament to sign a treaty which would safeguard imperialist interests on the four outstanding points.

The Establishment of Open Dictatorship

Finally in July, 1928, all attempts at conciliation were abandoned. Mohamed Mahmoud, a Liberal with no Egyptian following but subservient to British interests, was made Prime Minister and the Egyptian Parliament was suspended for three years. Within a few weeks, hundreds of newspapers were suppressed, meetings of the Wafd were prohibited, and a complete dictatorship was established, backed up by a campaign of terrorism. This was the situation when the second Labour Government came into office, pledged up to the hilt to the general principles of self-determination for all nations, freedom of speech and of the press, Parliamentary democracy and all the other Liberal principles which have been and are still being so blatantly violated in Egypt.

The Egyptian nationalists might naturally have expected that a Labour Government, even an imperialist Labour Government, would, with the full support of the Liberals, restore Parliamentary institutions in Egypt, allow the Egyptian people to elect its own representatives, and then proceed to discuss outstanding questions with such representatives in the friendly atmosphere engendered by such a policy. But what does Mr. Henderson, the Labour Foreign Secretary, do? It is true that he dismissed Lord Lloyd, the High Commissioner for Egypt, but for what reasons? Not because he intends to reverse the policy of his Tory predecessor in office, but as he carefully explained in the House of Commons (*The Times* report, July 27) because of the divergence of outlook between Lord Lloyd and the Tory ex-Foreign Secretary. Without

taking any steps whatever to get Parliamentary government restored in Egypt the Labour Government enters into negotiations with Mahmoud Pasha, the puppet premier, for an Anglo-Egyptian Settlement.

Continuity of Foreign Policy

Mr. Arthur Henderson, in the debate on Lord Lloyd's dismissal, endorsed the policy carried on in Egypt by successive British Governments since 1914, and announced categorically that "there has been no change." (*The Times* report, July 27.) In the capacity, therefore, of preserver of British imperialist interests this Labour Foreign Secretary discussed with Mahmoud Pasha, the nominee of British imperialist interests in Egypt, proposals for an Anglo-Egyptian settlement which "represent the extreme limit" to which the British Government will go. These proposals are to be presented to the Egyptian people by a man who represents no substantial section of Egyptian opinion, who is regarded with hatred and contempt by every section of the Nationalist movement. There is to be no discussion or modification; the Egyptian Parliament must accept or reject the proposals as they stand, while British capitalism stands by with guns and warships ready in case of non-compliance. Thus does the Labour Government treat an "independent sovereign State"!

What are the provisions of this unalterable treaty? The first clause announces that the military occupation of Egypt by British forces is terminated, but the protection of the Suez Canal, "as an essential means of communication between the different parts of the British Empire," is used as an excuse for keeping troops in Egypt, and it is made clear, by a clause in the accompanying British Note as to the accommodation to be provided for the troops, that this means a mere transfer—all the British forces will be kept in Egypt, but new barracks, &c., will be built for them near the Suez Canal. Clauses 4, 5, and 7 provide for a military alliance between the two countries, which will inevitably have the effect of subordinating Egypt's foreign policy to that of Great Britain, and binding Egypt to ally herself with Britain if war should break out, and to "furnish to his Britannic Majesty on

Egyptian territory all the facilities and assistance in his power, including the use of his ports, aerodromes and means of communication." With regard to the Sudan the *status quo* is to remain, which leaves Britain in effective control of its administration. Further, the continued employment of British financial and judicial advisers is guaranteed, the Egyptian police is to remain for five years under command of British officers and to contain "a certain European element," a British military mission is to be sent to advise Egypt in army matters, Egyptian officers will be trained in Great Britain.

A careful examination of the draft treaty reveals the fact that the Labour Government has not made a single concession even to Zaghlulist opinion. In all essential points the treaty is the same as the one which was rejected by the Wafd and the Egyptian Cabinet in March, 1928. It is perhaps too much to expect members of the Labour Party, whose representatives in Parliament claim that there is no difference between their Egyptian policy and that of their Tory predecessors, to protest against this, but what is the attitude of the Independent Labour Party, whose Chairman professes to be a fearless enemy of imperialism?

The I.L.P. and Egypt

The *New Leader*, of July 19, in an article entitled "Labour and Egypt's Dictator," deplored the "difficult situation" created by the Foreign Office statement "anticipating the conclusion of a treaty with the so-called Egyptian 'Government.'" The article continued:—

For the plain fact is that Mahmoud Pasha represents, not the Egyptian people, but the British authorities in Egypt. Finding himself in a minority in Parliament, he dissolved it and has subsequently ruled as a dictator, safeguarded by the British forces. No one doubts that in dissolving Parliament he was carrying out the wishes of Lord Lloyd, the British Resident.

Under the heading "A Serious Warning" the opinion of the Secretary of the Zaghlulist Party on the proposed treaty is given as follows:—

Any treaty with Mahmoud Pasha, negotiated as it is in an atmosphere of terrorism and dictatorship, is doomed to utter failure. The British Government would commit the same mistake as in 1922,

when Egypt's independence was declared under Martial Law with Zaghlul Pasha in exile! . . . The disillusionment which would follow the signature of an agreement with Mahmoud Pasha by the Labour Government would create an anti-treaty feeling associated with an anti-British feeling; the Egyptian people would feel that they no longer had anything to hope for from any political party in this country. They would regard such an agreement as tantamount to a declaration of war on themselves. What could follow except revolution?

In spite of this solemn warning, an editorial note in the same issue actually advocated as "the best means of rectifying the mistake" that "the treaty should not be signed until it has been endorsed by an Egyptian Parliament freely elected on the basis of adult suffrage." The point as to whether such a treaty, negotiated between such partisans, could possibly give the Egyptians anything but the semblance of independence is not even touched upon. This was followed by the publication in the *New Leader* of August 2, *without any editorial comment or dissent*, of a bare-faced plea for dictatorship, written by a British journalist on some (unspecified) Cairo newspaper.

By August 9, the I.L.P. apologists for the Labour Party policy had travelled further in the same direction. In the editorial notes in the *New Leader* of this date it was stated that the draft treaty corresponded closely with the report of the I.L.P. Empire Policy Committee of 1926 except on the point of the internationalising of the Suez Canal—no notice being taken of the facts (1) that the first point in the 1926 report was: "We should agree to remove our army and air force within a definite period; (2) that the report demanded the summoning of a freely-elected Parliament and a constitutional ministry as a preliminary step to negotiations; and (3) that the British military occupation of the Suez territory is a measure of the very greatest importance from the point of view of British imperialism. Finally approval was given in the following terms:—

But putting everything in the balance, and allowing for all the circumstances of minority government, the Memorandum represents a notable success and one for which Mr. Henderson and his colleagues are to be warmly congratulated.

And this appears in the same issue in which Mr. Maxton, the Chairman of the I.L.P., is reported as follows:—

The Labour Government thus becomes the caretaker of capitalism and continues the policy of British Imperialism. He strongly opposed this Imperialist policy of the British Labour Government, and pledged himself and those associated with him to fight fearlessly against this policy, recognising that such a policy constituted a deadly menace to the oppressed masses of the colonies.

No repudiation of the policy of the official organ of his Party with regard to Egypt has appeared above the signature of Mr. Maxton or any other member of the I.L.P., so it will be clear at last to the Egyptian nationalists that they have no more to hope for from the I.L.P. than from the Labour Party. Whether the British Labour Government will, as prophesied by the Secretary of the Wafd, proceed "to enforce by iron and blood a treaty of so-called friendship and peace" remains to be seen, but the campaign of violence and suppression carried out by the MacDonald Government after the failure of the negotiations with Zaghlul in 1924 holds no pleasant augury for the future.

British Interests in Egypt

Capitalist imperialism is deeply rooted in Egypt and the Sudan and is not prepared to give up one iota of the profits which it is wringing from the Egyptian peasants and workers. It is impossible to obtain figures of the sum total of the British drain on Egyptian production, but certain significant figures can be given. In the first place there is Egypt's debt to Great Britain which still amounts to over £91,000,000, requiring an annual payment of £3,500,000 for interest, in addition to the sinking fund payments which vary from two to four million pounds. The sinking fund is not used to reduce the debt, but to extend railway and other constructional works, thus providing a market for British heavy industry and large profits for contractors, shipping companies and the rest.

The State expenditure on new works was estimated at over £6 million in 1927-8 and nearly £8 million in 1928-9. The Suez Canal is also a very important source of profit for its shareholders. The annual payments of dividend and interest amount to some £7 million; the total capital involved is about £17 million, while the ordinary shares, amounting to £7 million, are now calculated to be worth over £65 million, as dividends range

from 50 to 80 per cent. It is estimated that £200 million of British capital is invested in Egypt and the Sudan, which means, taking into account the high rate of profit, a total amount of drain on Egyptian production by British imperialists of over £20 millions. (*See British Imperialism in Egypt*, L.R.D., 1928.)

This is the economic basis of the Government's policy towards Egypt. A government which remains in power only by the sufferance of the capitalist class dare not attack the roots of capitalism. MacDonald and company realise that to grant real independence to Egypt would be a blow at the very vitals of capitalist imperialism. Therefore, in order to maintain their position, they are obliged to offer only the semblance of independence, hoping that the Egyptian people may yet be tricked or bluffed into accepting the one-sided bargain which they have always rejected with scorn.

REPARATIONS AND THE WORKING CLASS

By DAVID NAYLOR

THE outcome of the Imperialist war of 1914-1918 was the defeat of the Central European Powers, the annexation of their colonial possessions and the placing upon them by the Allied powers of a heavy indemnity. It is the purpose of this article briefly to analyse the effects which the payment of this indemnity has upon the working classes of England, France, and Germany.

Reparations can only be paid in the long run provided the debtor country has an export surplus, *i.e.*, provided the total value of all the goods and services which it exports is greater than the total value of its imports. In no year since the war has Germany had this necessary export surplus, and, as a result, the German capitalists have been forced to borrow from England and America in order to make the reparations payments. Every time Germany raises a new loan abroad, interest has to be paid upon it with the result that, unless this loan is productively used in industry, the borrowing must eventually come to an end since the sums that would have to be paid in interest would finally exceed the reparations payments themselves.

Thus during the last ten years the German capitalists have been falling more and more under the control of Anglo-American finance. This process, whilst enabling the Allied Powers temporarily to draw greater tribute from Germany, was not ultimately to their advantage, partly because it increased the difficulty of transferring reparations payments abroad without disorganising the foreign exchanges and partly because those Powers which had little capacity for lending to Germany (Italy) felt that the receipt by them of reparations was being endangered, whilst they obtained no compensation in the form of interest on loans. Germany, which had been successful in placing the responsibility for the transfer of reparations payments on the Allies under the Dawes Plan, had no incentive to check this borrowing. Hence the sharp exchange of notes on the subject which occurred between the

Agent-General for Reparations and the German Government about a year ago.

The various ways in which Germany could solve this problem of producing an export surplus are, first, to cut down her imports, second, to increase her exports by reducing their cost.

The first method has been attempted but could not proceed far, since, her imports consisting mainly of food and raw materials, it would at once arouse the opposition, not only of the working class, due to an increase in the price of food, but also of the capitalists who would find prices of raw materials rising.

The second method ultimately requires an increase in surplus value, which increase, being handed over in the form of goods to the Allies, constitutes reparations. This increase in surplus value could be achieved in a number of ways: First, by attacking the wages of the workers directly. This has only been partially successful, because, on the one hand, the workers have offered great resistance and, on the other, the Allies have frowned upon big industrial conflicts in Germany since they interfere with the delivery of reparations. Second, by increasing relative surplus value by intensive rationalisation. This, as is well known, has been made possible on a large scale by means of foreign borrowing. The workers have thus been made to shoulder the burden to the extent that the intensity of labour and unemployment have been increased.

Third and last, the Reichsbank could have sought a general reduction in the price level, thus cheapening export goods and increasing the volume of the export trade, by keeping the bank rate high and contracting the outstanding volume of credit. The allies have repeatedly urged this course through their representative at the Reichsbank, but the German capitalists, knowing well the profit reductions which accompany falling prices, have successfully resisted under the leadership of Herr Schacht, the Governor of the Reichsbank. Herr Schacht, rather cleverly, has been, for the last few years, taking part of the proceeds of foreign loans in gold bullion and foreign exchange, with the result that he now has a sufficient gold reserve to keep prices up or even raise them and thus defeat any attempt to extract reparations payments in this way.

All these various ways of creating an export surplus place the burden ultimately upon the working class and it is only due to their resistance combined with the struggle of the German capitalists against their own exploitation by Anglo-American finance, that has prevented the reduction in the standard of living of the German workers being much greater than it usually is.

This was the condition of affairs when the experts met in Paris this year to try to devise some better scheme for the exploitation of Germany. It cannot be doubted from the press reports of the Conference that Herr Schacht used his gold reserves as a bargaining weapon, and threatened to keep prices up unless new and less objectionable plans (to the German capitalist) were agreed upon. This he did with considerable effect, for the total annuity finally agreed upon was 20 per cent. less than under the Dawes Plan. In addition the Allied control of the economic affairs of Germany was removed, having proved, generally speaking, to be ineffective.

The Young Plan, which was adopted at The Hague, makes an attempt to conciliate German capital, by removing the most objectionable parts of the Dawes Plan (control of the Reichsbank, railways, &c.) and by reducing the total amount of the annuity, for co-operating with the Allies in the exploitation of the German working class.

The effect on the working class of those countries which receive reparations payments has also to be mentioned. Since all reparations are paid ultimately in goods this means that those industries of the creditor countries which produce goods which Germany exports and which she would not export (to the same extent) apart from the pressure placed upon her by the Allies, are subject to unusually severe competition. In the case of England, coal, cotton, iron and steel, and shipbuilding are the industries which have been most affected. The resulting depression in these industries, though reparations are only a minor cause, gives a pretext for wage attacks. Thus not only is the German worker exploited in order to pay reparations, but the English worker is made to pay for the resulting economic disorganisation of an already disorganised capitalist system.

There can be no question that the payment of reparations is

directly hostile to the interests of the working class of both countries.

In view of the result of this analysis, it is significant to notice that the Labour Party together with the Social-Democratic parties in France and Germany have done nothing either individually or collectively through the Second International, where the question has always been avoided as much as possible, to remedy this state of affairs. Resolutions and speeches against reparations have in the past been made in profusion, but, as might be expected, nothing concrete has been done.

That Mr. Snowden, a "Socialist," could have the temerity to be party to the Young Plan whilst it is directly contrary to the interests of the international working class was rather to be expected than otherwise. But that, in addition, he was prepared to bargain over the share of the spoil falling to British capitalism, that he was gratified by the support of the capitalist press (Mr. Snowden, *The Times*, September 2: "I would like to make an acknowledgment of our gratitude to the unanimous support of the British Press") and that he could boast of his success in forwarding the interests of British capitalism, must make it clear that his rôle is not that of a supporter of the international working class, but rather of a representative of the interests of British capitalism.

ARBITRATION IN NEW ZEALAND

By F. E. FREEMAN

IN some ways New Zealand, the land boosted by the Imperial Immigration Authorities as the Workers' Paradise of the Pacific, has been the trying-out place for industrial legislation, and experiments which proved successful there have later been applied by British employers.

The militant workers of Great Britain can also learn something from the operation of arbitration in New Zealand and try to prevent the British trade union movement from falling into the morass of apathy and pettifogging legalism such as afflicts the trade union movement of New Zealand.

As a result of the appalling conditions and wages which existed prior to 1895 there arose a wave of strikes in that year. To prevent a re-occurrence of this Parliament passed the Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act. The short title states the purpose, viz., to prevent strikes, lock-outs and sweating.

From this point of view the Act is a failure, there being some 700 strikes from 1900 to 1928, but in other ways arbitration has proved invaluable to the employers and a menace to the workers.

Brought into operation at the beginning of a boom period which lasted with fluctuations until 1921, the Arbitration Court set up by the Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act acted as an instrument by which the rising wages and conditions resulting from the comparative shortage of labour were kept down to a minimum.

The Court consists of a judge, a representative of the employers and a representative of the workers. These are appointed by the Viceregal authority and in the case of the representatives appointment takes place every three years.

Before a "dispute" goes before the Court, however, the respective claims must be submitted to the Conciliation Commissioner, who has legal power to call the representatives of the union and the employers before him and is supposed to attempt

conciliation on as many points in dispute as possible. The outstanding points are then referred to the Court.

By these means the settlement of disputes are far removed from the job. In this process, the militancy of the workers concerned is tested and it is significant that the more militant organisations have received the better awards.

The awards are made legally binding upon the workers and employers. Not confining themselves to wages and conditions, awards make provision for so-called preference to unionists. In reality, this is compulsory unionism by means of which a worker on any job is compelled to join the union within three days of starting work. The trade union job-hunting officials are thus able to provide themselves with paid secretaries' jobs, without doing even elementary trade union propaganda.

The value of this so-called preference to the employing class can be seen in the statement by Professor Murphy at the Industrial (Peace) Conference in 1928 :

To abolish the right of the Court to grant preference to unionists would take from the tribunal a most useful implement of discipline over recalcitrant unions . . .

In any event preference is only granted at the discretion of the Court and can be withdrawn by that body if abused.

Further means of disciplining "recalcitrant unions," *i.e.*, militant unions, exist under the Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act, which provides that any workers going on strike, going slow, or carrying out irritation tactics are punishable by fines, while the union itself is similarly liable.

In 1913, New Zealand workers led by the unions of the key industries, shipping, docks and miners, made an heroic attempt to free themselves from the leg-iron of arbitration. The general strike of that year, directed primarily against arbitration, was betrayed and broken by the weakness of the reactionary leaders. The defeat resulted in the extending of the anti-strike provisions of the Arbitration Act to all trade unions whether registered under the Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act or not. Further sympathetic strikes and the voting of funds in support of strikers is made a punishable offence.

The employing class are nominally subject to the same

penalties, but in spite of the fact that several lock-outs have occurred within the last few years, there has never been a prosecution, while the inflicting of fines for striking is not infrequent.

Until 1913, the policy of the Arbitration Court was to fix wages on the cost-of-living basis. Recently this has been discarded. To-day we find that the Awards are fixed in consideration of the ability of the industry to make profits. This will inevitably mean that the trade union movement of to-day with its present reactionary leaders will be powerless before such an attack.

Split into local craft unions by the Arbitration Court, led by pettifogging industrial lawyers, bound to an Industrial Peace policy, trade union membership is practically unorganised as a result of compulsory unionism: the outlook is black indeed for trade unionism to-day in New Zealand.

When the Conservative Government of 1927 threatened to abolish the Arbitration Court, the Alliance of Labour—national trade union organisation—the local Trades and Labour Councils and Labour Party politicians rose in its defence, denouncing the proposed abolition as class war.

At the Industrial Peace Conference a few months later the whole of the leadership committed themselves to industrial peace.

Although the leaders of the Miners' and Seamen's Unions made formal protests and refused to attend the Conference they failed to carry forward any propaganda against industrial peace for the Conference. The Communist Party of New Zealand was alone in attempting to revive any such agitation.

This, then, is the state of the trade union movement in New Zealand in this period of capitalist decline. First, a comparatively large membership and large number of trade unions, existing only by kind permission of the master-class-State operating through the Arbitration Court. Second, the mass of the workers apathetic and untrained in industrial fighting as a result of the legal settlement of disputes through the arbitration system. Finally, practically the entire leadership committed to a policy of arbitration, industrial peace and co-operation. Nothing is more certain than that in the near future the country once called the "Land without strikes" will be the land of wage reductions, union smashing and lowered conditions.

The World of Labour

INDIA

Calcutta Jute Mills Strike

THE general strike which occurred at the jute mills of Calcutta is the direct result of the attempt on the part of the jute millowners to introduce a sixty-hour week.

In November last the Jute Mills Association at one of their meetings decided to work all the mills that are under their management and members of that Association for sixty hours per week in place of fifty-four without any increase in wages and bonus; this was to be put into operation on July 1.

The jute mills have been in a prosperous condition, their profits in 1918 amounting to Rs. 7.23 crores (£5½ millions) against 6.67 crores (£5 millions) in 1927. (*Indian Textile Journal* for August, 1929.)

To resist this attack the jute workers had been making preparations by collecting funds. Frequent conferences had been held between the leaders (Kankinarrah Labour Union) and the employers prior to the introduction of the new system.

On July 6 the weavers of the Alliance (managing agents: Messrs. Begg, Dunlop & Co.) and Meghna Jute Mills (agents: Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co.) and the spinners of Barrackpore Jute Mills (agents: Messrs. George Henderson & Co.) struck work on the question of increase of bonus and overtime. Between 30,000 and 40,000 were involved.

Immediately the leaders of the Union, L. Hussain and S. Prasad Shah, Vice-President and General Secretary respectively, made vigorous efforts to induce the workers to resume work, and at a meeting of the weavers a resolution was passed to the effect that they would work fifty-four hours a week until the mill authorities paid the extra bonus for the sixty-hour week on the same rate as they were now paid for fifty-four hours. The large majority of the jute workers refrained from working on the Saturday in protest against the introduction of the sixty-hour system and the discontent grew until on July 24, 5,000 weavers of the Alliance, Waverley, Craig and Meghna Mills struck work.

These marched in procession to the Alexandra Mill with the object of organising a sympathetic strike, but the police, who had been drafted in, prevented them. Within a few days the Alexandra workers joined the strike.

The strike spread in a sporadic fashion. Police repression intensified and on July 29 K. Sen, the General Secretary of the Bengal Jute Workers' Union, and a number of workers were arrested and kept in jail for some time.

By August 3, 70,000 were out in the Jagaddal and Kankinarrah area and 5,000 at Barrackpore. Brisk picketing was carried on while Gurkha armed guards paraded the area "guarding" the mills.

Several incidents were reported of police attacks ; at Barrackpore several workers were injured by police charges, the Eastern Frontier Rifles being called in to "maintain order."

Miss Das Gupta, at an informal conference called by the District Magistrate of Barrackpore of the millowners and Labour leaders, stated that she was prepared to call off the strike if the management of the single-shift mills complied with the Union's demands and sanctioned bonuses at the old rates and gave assurance that none of the mills working the double-shift system would adopt the single-shift working and that forty-eight hours' working would be introduced as soon as possible. This was turned down by the owners.

Orders were promulgated by the authorities, directed mainly against rank and file workers, prohibiting meetings and demonstrations, and a number of worker leaders were arrested. The strike situation became more critical and serious criticism was being made of some of the Union leaders and others who are playing the part of "leaders." It was reported that the police had to defend the house of M. L. Hussein, M.L.C., from attacks by the strikers, and Miss Das Gupta was later deprived of her official position as President of the Bengal Jute Workers' Union.

Despite the orders prohibiting demonstrations, the strikers of Jagaddal marched, some 5,000 strong, towards the Gourepore Mill at Naihati with the idea of calling upon them to join the strike. A large band of Kabulis, who carry on the business of money-lending (at an extortionate rate of interest), interfered with the strikers and whipped out their knives and attacked them. A free fight ensued which resulted in the loss of seven lives and a large number being severely injured. The police raided the homes of the mill workers and arrested about 243 in this area a few days later and meetings of every description were prohibited.

By August 10 over 200,000 were on strike and a few days later the paint-shop workers at Gourepore and the Britannia Engineering Works joined in a sympathetic strike.

On August 16, following a series of negotiations between the millowners and the Jute Workers' Union, a settlement was reached after about thirty-eight days' strike situation.

The Committee of the Indian Jute Mills Association agreed to recommend to the Association the following terms of settlement :—

- (1) Proportionate increment should be given on the total earnings of the workers retaining the rate of bonus, and all "Khorakis" should be paid as before when mills worked fifty-four hours in the week ;
- (2) Wages should be paid for the strike and lock-out period ;
- (3) There should be no victimisation or corporal punishment ;
- (4) A board should be appointed to inquire into the workmen's grievances ;
- (5) All cases should be withdrawn excepting murder cases.

With the calling off of the strike a new development took place in several jute mills in the Hooghly and Budge Budge district. These were unaffected during the jute mill strike, but now demanded the same terms as offered to the strikers and by August 22 about 45,000 were immediately affected in the new strike.

BOOK REVIEWS

SOVIET RUSSIA'S FIGHT FOR PEACE

The Soviet Union and Peace: the most important of the documents issued by the Government of the U.S.S.R. concerning peace and disarmament from 1917 to 1929. With an introduction by Henri Barbusse. (Martin Lawrence, 7s. 6d.)

CHICHERIN has said that "the principal aim of the international policy of the Soviet Union is the preservation of Peace." The sentiment is one that bourgeois politicians of all tendencies apply to the foreign policy of their own States: but while this is merely part of a conventional hypocrisy, and a screen for war preparations, the words in the mouth of Chicherin are a sober statement of both historical and actual fact. There precisely lies their truly startling originality and their revolutionary significance.

It is peculiarly appropriate that this collection of documents should make its appearance at the present time. For the fundamental contradiction between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union—where the building of Socialism is proceeding by leaps and bounds with the Five Years Plan and the "collectivisation" of agriculture—is driving remorselessly to war. Without ceasing the bourgeoisie and their last reserve, the Social-Democratic and Labour Parties of all countries, are preparing for war on the Workers' Republic: the diehard attitude of the MacDonal Government in regard to Anglo-Soviet relations is but one incident in a whole process. Therefore the present volume provides an invaluable arsenal of unimpeachable facts by whose aid the consistently peaceful role of the Soviet Union can be made plain and the equally consistent war provocations of the imperialists exposed; it deserves the widest possible circulation.

Soviet Russia's ceaseless struggle for peace began literally on the morrow of the victorious proletarian revolution. It was on November 8, 1917, that the All-Russian Congress of Soviets unanimously adopted the famous Decree of Peace, the second in historic order of the main political acts of the first permanent revolutionary workers' government in world history. That decree proposed "to all warring peoples and their Governments to begin immediately negotiations for a just and democratic peace . . . an immediate peace without annexations and without indemnities." The decree further added a particular appeal to the class-conscious workers of England, France, and Germany, recalling their past services to Socialism (the "great example" of Chartism was specially mentioned), and anticipating their "resolute and energetic activity" in "the cause of peace and, together with this, the cause of the liberation of the labouring and exploited."

That call for unity, in the struggle for peace, from the working class of Russia to the working class of the capitalist world has remained throughout the natural *leit-motiv* of the foreign policy of the Workers' Republic.

The Allied imperialist governments turned a deaf ear to the appeal of the victorious Russian workers. Though the Soviet Government delayed the conclusion of an armistice and the opening of peace negotiations with

German imperialism in order to give the Allies time to consider their attitude, still no reply was vouchsafed. A final appeal, issued after a month of peace negotiations, was also ignored: and so the Workers' Republic had to tread the path of Brest-Litovsk to the bitter end. It was the Allied Governments, declared the appeal of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in August 1, 1918, that had "thrown Russia under the heel of German imperialism." Within a few months the Allied intervention and blockade, and counter-revolutionary war financed and directed by foreign imperialism, were in full swing.

During 1918 and 1919 the Soviet Government repeatedly proposed peace to the Allied Governments and as repeatedly appealed to the workers in Allied countries to intervene and stop the "crusade against the Russian workers' revolution." In order to secure peace the Soviet Government was prepared to go to Prinkipo or to sign the Bullitt Treaty: the latter instrument, the result of negotiations with the special emissary of President Wilson, represented the maximum of concession, involving as it did the partition of Russia between the Soviet Government and the various "White" Governments which were simply the outposts and tools of Allied imperialism, and of British imperialism first and foremost.

But the intervention and the civil war only ceased with the decisive military victories of the Red Army and the growth of a mass movement of solidarity with Soviet Russia among the workers of all countries.

Since then nearly a decade has passed: Russia's struggle for peace has assumed the specific form of a struggle for disarmament. At the Genoa conference in 1922 the main line was laid down: the initial declaration, made by Chicherin on behalf of the Soviet delegation, asserted that

All efforts directed at the restoration of world economy will be in vain so long as the threat of new wars hangs like the sword of Damocles over Europe or over the world. . . . The Soviet delegation intends to propose general reduction of armaments and to support all proposals aimed at lightening the burden of militarism.

To that declaration Barthou, for the French delegation, replied with a categorical "No." At Lausanne in 1923, and in the historic fight of Litvinov in the Preparatory Disarmament Commission of the League of Nations at Geneva in 1927-28, the answer of the imperialist Powers remained that categorical "No"—whether the Soviet Union proposed general, complete and immediate disarmament, or partial reduction of armaments only.

Still the Soviet Government has persisted with its campaign for disarmament, the real acid test of the hypocritical pacifist phrasemongering that finds its characteristic expression in the policy of MacDonald. For this reason the Soviet Government signed the Kellogg Pact, while emphasising

the lack in the Pact of obligations for disarmament, the only real element that can guarantee peace, the inadequacy and indefiniteness of the formulation of the prohibition of war itself and the existence of a series of reservations aimed at removing in advance even those obligations with regard to peace that do exist in the Pact.

At the same time the Soviet Union secured, with much difficulty, the

adherence of Poland and the other Border States to a Protocol for the immediate operation of the Kellogg Pact as between the signatories. These efforts, together with the conclusion of a series of treaties of neutrality and mutual non-aggression, throw into the clearest possible light the truly peaceful role of the U.S.S.R.—and *per contra*, illuminate the imperialist drive for war.

G. A. H.

THE IMPRESSIONS OF A SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

Portrait of the Labour Party. By Egon Wertheimer. (Putnam, 5s.)

THIS book claims to give a portrait of the British Labour Party, and the author is evidently more than satisfied with his picture of the party, its policy and leaders.

Dr. Wertheimer, as a good Social Democrat, obviously wishes that the German Social Democratic Party was as politically successful and, shall we say, as highly respectable as its British counterpart. He clearly means his portrait to be a flattering one, but it is in truth a deadly likeness of respectability, snobbishness and servile compromise.

Throughout the book, page after page, there is an irritating repetition of the words "Socialism" and "Socialist," applied alike to policy and leaders so obviously unsocialistic that one wonders if these terms have any meaning at all.

Amidst a clear account of the history of the British Labour Party, its policy and problems, there are innumerable word sketches of the chief figures on its platform.

There is Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, vain, condescending and hypersensitive, surrounded by "men and women who hope to see their loyalty solidly rewarded with Ministerial posts in the next Cabinet." In another part Mr. MacDonald is quoted as saying:—

I came to politics through science—chiefly through biology and geology—rather than through philosophy. Spencer I had read and also a good deal of Hegel, but I do not pretend to have studied philosophy as I did science.

Perhaps this claim of the Labour Party leader exposes his vanity more than any words written by Dr. Wertheimer could have done.

Mr. Philip Snowden, intellectually superior, is "condemned to walk in MacDonald's shadow."

"Jimmy" Thomas, the "former engine-cleaner," now the "powerful link of Empire," swallowing his aitches at swell dinners, is depicted with fatal accuracy, and it is interesting to note that the author here fails to use the word "Socialist." Evidently where "Jimmy" was concerned it was too big an effort.

Whilst poor Thomas is chronicled as a vulgar upstart in a dress suit, Dr. Wertheimer falls into a deep admiration of the aristocratic Mosleys. The preface is largely devoted to a long description of a Labour Party demonstration held in 1924, at which Sir Oswald Mosley (a "Douglas Fairbanks"), after flirting with the Liberal Party, made his first bow to the

British workers, and his wife an "elegant lady in furs" spoke a few "sympathetic" words to the evident delight of the time-serving Labour officials present. Lady Cynthia seems to have captivated the German Social Democrat for later he boldly asserts that "She is undoubtedly the most eloquent and debonair figure in the Socialist (!) world, whether here or abroad."

So the figures come and pass in review. Uncle Arthur, J. R. Clynes, Sidney Webb, whose hand is to be seen in every line of the 1918 programme and all the rest of which lack of space prevents mention. It is, however, worthy of note that Dr. Wertheimer seems to lament a suspicion shown by British trade unionism towards rationalisation, but he makes honourable exceptions "of men like Citrine and Bevin."

In his chapter entitled "Aims and Objects" full consideration is given to the Birmingham Programme, and a comparison is made between it and the 1918 Programme, *Labour and the New Social Order*. In places he is mildly critical. For instance, he notes that "it is amazing how many times it falls back on the expedient of a Royal Commission," that the claim for political rights for the men serving in the Army, Navy and Air Forces "has been quietly dropped," and that the abolition of the House of Lords has "disappeared entirely as a point from the programme." In this he notes "a weakening and change of attitude." It is clear, however, that he approves of the class collaboration policy and has no place for the class struggle against capitalism. To show how things have advanced he states that:—

To-day all traces of social distinction between Socialist (!) and other M.P.'s have completely disappeared.

The position, policy and future of the I.L.P. is dealt with at length, and its failure from either right or left points of view is demonstrated. It is a party now "overrun by ex-Liberals, young-men-just-down-from-Oxford, guiltless of any Socialist tradition, ideologists and typical monomaniacs full of their own pet projects." It is noted that in spite of a strong majority amongst Labour members in Parliament that the "I.L.P. membership was always subservient to Labour Party allegiance." The author pours scorn on its policy and leadership with their "wild-cat schemes," Ponsonby's "bellicose anti-militarism," Mosley's "financial-political devices," Brailsford's *Socialism in our Time*. These are described as "improvised and hasty projects," and the whole hotch-potch as "rickety skeletons riddled by criticism," and the Party is scornfully said "to rocket aimlessly in space."

Yet these and other strictures seem to be uttered rather in sorrow than in anger. The criticism is not directed from a healthy class-war and Socialist standpoint, but from the standpoint of an admirer of the Labour Party machine, desiring no disturbing element in a purely intra-capitalist political contest. The ill-judged conduct of the I.L.P. is considered "a real danger to the practical work of the Labour Party."

Closely allied to the ruthless attack upon the I.L.P. is the description of the Cook-Maxton campaign of 1928. The manifesto then issued is amply dealt with and the incidents following in the rather comic campaign are neatly sketched. Cook is dealt with faithfully as "intellectually far below the level of the average miners' agent," and his Noncomformist evangelical

preaching habits noted. He was "a faulty instrument to which fate gave a momentary historic significance that he might the more readily be forgotten." The weakness of the long wait between the publication of the manifesto and any real action is emphasised, and the fact that "neither Cook nor Maxton were subjected to disciplinary measures" shows how their value as working-class leaders was correctly estimated by the Labour Party chiefs who "contented themselves for the most part with contemptuous silence."

The end of this vacillatory effort came at the Birmingham Conference where Maxton "proved unequal to the occasion" and the campaign ended in abject failure and surrender, the Conference not even wasting its time by voting on the Maxton alternatives.

The Portrait of the Labour Party stands as a vivid picture of the Party and its leadership and, though unintentional, a warning to those who desire to carry on the class struggle to a victorious end.

R. D.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Report on Progress in Manchuria, 1907-1928.* (The South Manchurian Railway Company, Dairen, March, 1929, 238 pp.)
- Fundamental Problems of Marxism.* By G. Plekhanov. Edited by D. Ryazanov. (Martin Lawrence, 145 pp., 5s.)
- Travels and Reflections.* By the Rt. Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P. With ten full-page illustrations. (George Allen & Unwin, 223 pp., 10s.)
- An Outline of Political Economy.* A Textbook of Marxist Economics, together with its application to the economic conditions of the Soviet Union. By I. Lapidus and K. Ostrovityanov. (Martin Lawrence, 545 pp., 12s. 6d.)
- Programme of the Young Communist International.* (Y.C.L., 83 pp., 1s.)
- The Industrial Development of Birmingham and the Black Country, 1860-1927.* By G. C. Allen. With an Introduction by J. F. Rees. Eleven illustrations and two maps. (George Allen & Unwin, 479 pp., 25s.)
- French Liberal Thought in the Eighteenth Century.* A Study of Political Ideas from Bayle to Condorcet. By Kingsley Martin. (Ernest Benn, Ltd., 312 pp., 16s.)

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 11

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Number 11

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*A Workers' Daily—The Press—Capitalism and the Press
—Bourgeois Policy—Millionaire "Popular" Press—Power
of Press—Workers' Press—Capitalist-Reformist Press
—"Daily Herald" and Workers—Killing
Consciousness—Weakness of Workers' Press
—Angellite Delusions—Technical Pro-
blems—Political Consciousness—
—Campaign for Daily.*

THE announcement that a serious campaign has now at last been begun to establish a revolutionary workers' daily in England is welcome news, and none too soon. The achievement of this project, not merely as the issue of an organ of expression, but as the linking up of the militant working-class forces throughout the country in a daily and continuous fight, will mean the most important step forward yet in the realisation of the new stage of struggle. The question has long been an urgent one, and increasingly so throughout the past seven years, ever since the *Daily Herald* finally and fully passed into official control and became finally and fully cut off from the working class. Every event of the past seven years has increasingly demonstrated the need. But if the question has long been an urgent one, to-day it has taken on a new and special significance in relation to the present stage and problems of the workers' struggle. To-day it has become the *key task* of the militant working class, the specific task and line of advance for the present moment, not merely the most important technical and practical task, but (in all its implications) the governing *political task*, the signal of the new period, the answer to the new conditions of struggle, the mobilisation and union of the militant forces of the working class in face of the bureaucracy, of Mondism, and of the Labour Government, *the key by which, in union with the new forms of struggle, we shall unlock the prison house which the capitalist and labour gaoles have endeavoured to build about the working class.* No excuse is needed for concentrating attention this month on to this paramount issue, which contains in itself the heart of the political situation for the revolutionary working class,

and to which the primary attention of every militant worker needs to be directed.

WHAT is the function of the Press? In general, the function of the Press is a *social organising function*. The rôle of the capitalist Press is to organise, mould and control the consciousness of all the strata of the population for the purposes of capitalism. The rôle of the working-class Press is to organise and lead the consciousness of the exploited masses for the realisation of Socialism. The method of the capitalist Press is, consequently, only on rare occasions of crisis, emergency, war, when the active co-operation of the masses has to be secured for ugly capitalist purposes, directly to agitate and lead, run campaigns, pogroms, &c. ; for the greater part of the time its task is to kill consciousness, to stupefy and paralyse by manufactured "sensations," to suppress news and all real issues, not only by direct suppression and distortion, but still more by deluging them in an ocean of loudly noised trivialities, gossip, chatter and "stunts," which are presented as "news," so that the subject population may not only not be aware of the thick screen behind which their rulers rule them, but even be hypnotised into the illusion that they are in possession of the news, let into the innermost secrets of the statesmen, enjoying a "free press" and the materials for judging the political situation. As against this, the task of the working-class Press has to be to awaken consciousness by presenting the real news in place of artificial "stunts," to expose the lies and crimes of the existing regime, to present the true forces of the situation, to arouse the confidence of the exploited in themselves, and at every point to lead and guide the fight.

THE development of the large-scale Press is a relatively recent phenomenon, going hand in hand with the development of large-scale capitalism, and in particular of its culminating phase of imperialism and the task of corruption of wide strata of the masses. From the seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century the circulation of the existing newspapers was only a matter of a few thousands ; they were small, exclusive journals of views and news for the use of the bourgeoisie, with few

advertisements ; the early policy of the bourgeoisie in relation to the Press was to prevent its dissemination by the stamp taxes, instituted in 1711 and maintained till 1855, which made the cost prohibitive to all but the rich by adding as much as fourpence tax (in the revolutionary period after 1815) to the price of every copy. It was the revolutionary Chartist agitation which broke and defeated this repression, by its wholesale issue of illegal journals without stamp, and facing of hundreds of prosecutions and imprisonments. The Chartist Press was the highest level yet reached of the British working-class Press ; it was the first popular Press ; O'Connor's *Northern Star* reached a circulation of 60,000 at a time when the circulation of *The Times* stood at 20,000. Chartist agitation won the first beginning of the democratic right of the "freedom of the Press" (no sooner won than turned into a mockery by capitalist monopoly) ; the stamp tax was reduced to one penny in 1836 and finally abolished in 1855. From this point bourgeois policy in relation to the Press entered into a new phase.

FROM the second half of the nineteenth century bourgeois policy in relation to the Press was directed, no longer to the prevention of a popular Press by suppression, which had failed, but to the more subtle "democratic" method of occupying the field itself and launching a flood of journals for widespread circulation, with enormous resources behind them. With the late 'fifties came the first penny dailies. Technical advance was at once stimulated by and helped forward the development. The manufacture of paper from woodpulp in the 'fifties, the coming of the rotary in the 'sixties and the linotype in the 'nineties facilitated large-scale circulation, and at the same time increased the volume of capital required for the launching of a journal. With the 'eighties the full flood of imperialist corruption began to flow. *Tit-bits* in the 'eighties, the *Daily Mail* in the 'nineties, and the tabloid illustrated dailies in the early twentieth century mark successive stages of advance in the bourgeois technique of creating a "popular" Press. At the same time the method of meeting the enormous costs by direct subsidies through the mechanism of advertisement revenue was increasingly elaborated. In the middle nineteenth century, advertisements were still inconspicuous, sub-

ordinate insertions. To-day they occupy 50 to 55 per cent. of the space in the most widely circulated journals ; and it has been estimated by the *Economist* that two-thirds of the costs of a typical modern penny daily, running into millions of pounds a year, are paid for, not by the readers, but by the advertisers—*i.e.*, by the big capitalist trusts.

THIS so-called “ popular ” Press of the bourgeoisie is thus obviously not a popular Press at all, but a millionaire propaganda Press issued for the corruption and misleading of the masses, directly subsidised by the big trusts, and foisted into mass circulation only by the power of wealth, which is able to monopolise for itself all the best machinery, facilities of distribution, news collection, and writing talent. To call this Press “ freely chosen ” by the masses is obvious humbug. It is precisely as “ freely chosen ” as the masses “ choose ” to live in airless tenements, eat adulterated food and wear shoddy clothes. This Press is part of the normal social surroundings into which the ordinary worker is born ; and he can only learn to question it in proportion as he becomes awakened and class-conscious ; in proportion, that is, not only as experience reveals it to him as his enemy (*e.g.*, in a strike), but as he learns to think over the meaning of that experience, to realise that he is at war with his whole social conditions, and that he needs a Press which will express that war, and not the enemy’s propaganda. In consequence, the working-class press is always struggling against the stream, in difficulty even to reach the workers ; while the capitalist Press can boast of its millions of circulation and claim to represent the true outlook of the masses (a lie—the General Strike showed it ; so even have elections).

IT is here that lies the enormous power of the capitalist Press, not in any supposed representative character of spiritual closeness to the masses (it is spiritually close only to Fleet Street and petit-bourgeois suburbanism—observe that its typical national figure, its “ John Citizen,” its average man, is always the little worried taxpayer in his bowler hat going to the City, *i.e.*, an infinitesimal fraction of the nation, while the worker, or 80 per

cent. of the nation, only appears occasionally as a strange, alien animal, alternatively docile and unruly) ; its power lies, not in any such living mass-contact, but in the simple power of possession, in being there, in constituting the normal, available daily instrument of news and entertainment, so that the majority of the population will never even have heard of any alternative. So, by the power of possession, that is, by the power of wealth and the capitalist dictatorship, it goes in its tens of millions daily into every household, the constant companion, the spiritual representative of capitalism in the workers' midst. The capitalist Press is the modern representative of the Church and the priesthood, the principal social organising, hypnotising, deceiving instrument of capitalism. New technical instruments, the wireless and cinema, are developing and show the potentialities of far higher social organising power in the future, potentialities which will only be fully realised when they are freed to realise their natural social, communist function. But to-day the power of the Press is still the principal organising instrument of capitalism.

A GAINST this capitalist Press the workers need to build up their own Press. This is clear to every thinking worker. But here we come up at once against an obstacle in the reformist Labour Press, which professes to represent an alternative to the capitalist Press, and calls for the support of the workers on this basis, and yet is in reality identical with it. *The reformist Labour Press is a specialised section of the capitalist Press, in the same way as Social Democracy is a specialised party of the capitalist parties.* Its rôle is precisely to draw in those workers who are beginning to awaken to the lies of the capitalist Press, and shepherd them back to the support of capitalism. This is the present-day rôle of the *Daily Herald*. Under cover of a few socialistic phrases (very few—its main treatment of all issues is that of petit-bourgeois democracy) it supports and defends every policy and institution of capitalism—class-conciliation, industrial peace, against strikes, confidence in the State as above classes, support of rationalisation, imperialism, &c. This rôle is particularly clear at the present moment, when it is the organ of the Labour Government. As the organ of the Labour Government, it is

inevitably the defender and apologist of the Foreign Office, of the Colonial Office, of the Ministry of Labour, of the secret police, of the sending of troops and warships to Palestine, of the suppression of the Indian workers. At the same time it calls on the workers to support it as an organ of opposition to capitalism. In this way the *Daily Herald* is the principal obstacle to a real workers' Press, since it helps to conceal from many awakening workers the realisation that they have no Press.

THE *Daily Herald* is not only an organ of the capitalist Press in its political policy, in its editorials and treatment of political news. It is also an organ of the capitalist Press in its whole character as a newspaper, which is based on servile imitation of the standard capitalist organs. Have the capitalist organs their "City column"? Then the *Daily Herald* must have its City column, and announce under the heading "Foreign Loans Coming Along—Bonds Well Worth Going For" the 7½ per cent. £1,000,000 Hungarian loan to bolster up the White dictatorship in Hungary (issue of January 5, 1926). Have the other organs their "fashion" articles? Then the *Daily Herald* must have its similar ones, and announce:—

WHAT IS YOUR COLOUR?

The spring dress shows will soon be held at the big dressmakers, and after that we shall be hearing what colours are to be fashionable this year.

Twenty years or so ago only a comparatively small number of women were affected by this momentous news, but better pay and conditions have made it a matter of interest to the working woman. (February 19, 1929.)

Observe the "better pay and conditions," the myth sedulously instilled by the whole capitalist Press, in the face of notorious facts and statistical evidence. The prosperity of the workers under the beneficent Labour Party and General Council regime has grown so great that the question "what colours are to be fashionable this year" has now become a "momentous" question for "the working woman"—*e.g.*, for miners' wives. (It is unfortunate that their own "Gadfly" has to base his comments on the other organs of the capitalist Press, since he could find his richest material in every column of the *Daily Herald*.)

IT would be easy to construct the ideal *Daily Herald* working man from the columns of the *Daily Herald*. He is a solidly placed working man. He has his little house and garden. He has his little motor car. He has his investments, and keeps a keen eye open for profitable possibilities in Indian tea plantations or a White Terror loan. He takes his annual holidays in France or Switzerland. He has his occasional family troubles owing to the predilection of his daughters for night clubs. He considers that the interest should be paid regularly on the National Debt, and applauds Mr. Snowden's efforts on behalf of the British taxpayer at The Hague. Only one thing really raises his anger—and that is any news of the doings of the Communists, in whom he recognises the would-be destroyers and upsetters of his prosperous, ordered existence. For this type of "working man" (did not MacDonald tell his Stock Exchange audience once that they, too, were workers?) the *Daily Herald* can continue to cater; our Workers' Daily will not appeal to him.

NO less than in its sideshows, the *Daily Herald* reveals its character in its main news. With the proclaimed objective of producing a newspaper "just as good as any other newspaper," it follows the well-worn line, and faithfully fulfils the capitalist purpose of burying the news that matters in a deluge of loudly voiced nothingness, whose only purpose is to deaden the consciousness of its readers. Any front page of practically any copy will illustrate this burying of living issues for the benefit of the Fleet Street conception of "news." Thus the October 19 issue provides the following front page headings, column by column: (1 and 2) "'Tremendous Sense of Security.' 'But Weather too Good for Real Test,' says Lord Thomson" (the flight of R101); (3) "'Danger of Secrecy.' Coroner's Criticism of Inquest Law"; (4) "£1,600 Paid for a Dog"; (5) "Gift to Bride in Court"; (6) "Rich Man's Alleged Bribery." If we turn to critical periods of the working-class struggle, this complete separation is still more significant. Take, for example, December, 1926, the turning point, when the miners were being driven back in defeat, when the whole existing movement had shown its helplessness and failure, when every force was needing to

be turned to the problems of the future. We find in the issue of December 28, column by column : (1 and 2) "Death in Wake of American Cyclone" ; (3) "Joy Bells and Dirges" ; (4 and 5) "Smiling Oarswomen" (photo) ; (4) "Tunney's Near Shave" ; (5) "Message from Mars?" ; (6) "Revolt Against Jazz." December 29 : (1) "£15 Minimum for Chat" ; (2) "Betty Balfour's Crisis" ; (3) "Hare Wrapped in Shawl" ; (2 and 3) "For the Junior Championship" (billiards, photo) ; (4) "Shot in Secret in Madrid" ; (5) "Prisoner to See Dying Mother" ; (6) "Man's Dream of Bombs." And to keep this going, workers were being asked to make heavy sacrifices. The final sale to one of the capitalist trusts was the correct and inevitable outcome.

THE British working class has no Press, save for one or two weeklies and monthlies. In the main and decisive field of daily journalism it has no Press. Weeklies and monthlies can comment after the event, can give general leads in principle, can analyse and draw lessons. But the task of daily leadership and participation in the struggle can only be accomplished by a daily Press. And here the British workers are without a weapon. How much this means will only be fully understood when a real fighting daily has been established, and all will wonder how they could have carried on without it. The contrast between the gigantic struggles of the past years and this voicelessness is a startling one. The daily millions of the capitalist Press go out, without a voice to break the chorus and give the workers' lead. To compete with the capitalist Press on an equality within the conditions of capitalism is obviously not in question. But to have no organ that links up the militant workers, that by its difference from the other papers, by its truth, and by its closeness to the workers, gradually begins to win a place for itself in the working class, and to win a confidence and a following in the strong industrial centres—this is a serious and desperate weakness. Its results show themselves in the largely scattered and isolated character of the militant fight, in the degree of weakness and disintegration before the Mondist offensive, in the difficulty of uniting the local struggles in a wider common movement, in the difficulty to concentrate the fight against the Labour Government, &c. The

questions here are wider than that of a daily ; but the daily is bound up with them all. The unification of the militant workers requires above all two things : a strong revolutionary party possessing the confidence of the militant workers, and a daily as the continuous line of contact.

WHAT is the reason of this special weakness in Britain ? It is true that in the conditions of capitalist dictatorship the working-class Press can never attain more than a limited strength ; it cannot attain its full strength until the proletarian dictatorship. The simple Angellite notion that the basis of the capitalist Press lies in the fault of the foolish workers who buy it, and that the little " daily act of discipline " of buying the workers' Press instead would raze its power to the ground, is the usual childish nonsense of the abstract bourgeois democrat who sees only the myth of free citizens freely choosing, and not the social and economic realities of capitalism. The basis of the capitalist Press is a very solid basis of material monopoly in respect of machinery, transport and distribution facilities, news services and the whole fabric of capitalist social organisation. Ninety-nine workers in a hundred will never hear of our daily until it has made its name in big struggles (when it will be suppressed, and have to begin again under a new name); it will be difficult to procure save by the persistent and enthusiastic, while the capitalist Press is thrust in hordes under the nose of every worker ; and to the worker who is not politically awakened, or his interest aroused by some existing struggle, it will appear a poor and mean thing compared with the opulent magnificence offered by the capitalist for his penny. Not on this basis will lie our strength ; our daily will not be able to count on the easy line of mass circulation of the capitalist Press ; its life will represent a continuous struggle of the workers for it to exist at all ; but just in this struggle will lie its strength and political power.

NEVERTHELESS, it is the case that we are faced with special conditions of weakness in the position of the workers' Press in Britain, relative to other countries, and it is important to discern correctly the causes. The capitalist Press

is more powerful in Britain and America than elsewhere ; while in every other leading country, including America, and in many small countries, the workers are able to maintain, not only a daily, but a chain of dailies. Here the " powerful " Labour Party and trade unions, with their millions of members and large finance, and with the nominal position of government, have had to confess their inability to keep going a single daily. What are the conditions that have given rise to this position ? Two main lines of cause may be discerned. In the first place, the capitalist Press monopoly is more highly concentrated in Britain than anywhere else in the world. An ever diminishing handful of London dailies, on a basis of enormous finance, possess a practical monopoly throughout the country ; this monopoly extends in effect to every process from the supply of paper to the control of distribution ; extremely high costs are maintained and enforced by familiar trust methods to prevent the possibility of independent competition. This situation means that we shall have extremely difficult technical problems to face at every point of production and distribution. It is not the place here to deal with the special problems of the daily which we shall be having occasion to discuss elsewhere in the near future (see the December *Communist Review*). But we shall certainly have to approach many of these problems with new and revolutionary methods. The failure of the *Daily Herald*, after the trade unions have vainly sunk hundreds of thousands of pounds in it, is sufficient evidence of the basic incorrectness of attempting to compete with the capitalist Press on its own lines and by imitating it. We have not got the money ; and it would not save us if we had ; for we have got to strike out and find a different basis, if we are to be a workers' paper.

THE second cause lies in the measure of political weakness of the British working-class movement. The political consciousness and development is behind the general scale of the movement and stage of class struggle reached. The British working-class movement has revealed a powerful movement of elementary struggle and gigantic strikes ; but the political consciousness has been weak. Even the General Strike was seen by many workers, and even by many militants, as a tremendous

economic struggle ; it was primarily the bourgeoisie who brought out its political significance. Just as the characteristic line of the movement in the past has gone to trade unionism rather than to economic struggles, so the characteristic line of the revolutionary workers has gone most easily to economic strike agitation rather than to revolutionary politics embracing the economic struggles. But it is precisely the political consciousness that is necessary for a workers' Press. And it is this political consciousness which the establishment of the daily will help to develop.

THIS political weakness has also been accompanied by a certain political confusion in the past period, which has led to hesitation on the daily. The long past militant tradition of the original *Daily Herald*, when it was originally begun and maintained in the face of the imprecations of the official movement and the official daily, has remained as a memory, long after it had cut off all connections with the militant working class. Up to a comparatively recent time many revolutionaries were still conducting propaganda on behalf of the *Daily Herald* and advocating its support. Just as the line of revolutionary propaganda in the Labour Party was misunderstood as involving a kind of "loyalty" to the Labour Party as a working-class institution, despite its incorrect leadership, the same process took place with regard to the *Daily Herald*. This political confusion and lack of revolutionary self-confidence inevitably hampered any serious advance on the question of the daily, although the question had long been broached.

NOW, however, the political situation is cleared, and the path is open. We are entered into a stage in which the whole possibility of advance depends on the realisation of independent revolutionary leadership. We are having, as it were, to build anew from the foundations, and on a stronger basis ; the capitalist-reformist machine has closed old avenues ; we are striking out new ones. A new wave of struggles is developing ; these struggles can only go forward under direct revolutionary leadership. Out of the existing confusion will emerge, we are confident, a new and stronger revolutionary mass movement, firmly based in the

factories, and with the political guidance of the workers' revolutionary party, the Communist Party. These are the conditions in which we launch our daily. The daily will be our strongest weapon for the realisation of these tasks. It will be the common rallying ground for all the militant forces all over the country. It will be at once the agitator and the organiser for a wider mass movement. It will knit together the scattered groupings, and concentrate the fight against Rationalisation and Mondism, against the Labour Government, against imperialism and war, and for the revolutionary aims of the workers' struggle. Politically, and in organisation, the daily will be the expression of the new stage of fight.

WE are under no illusions as to the character of the task. The difficulties are tremendous, and every expert will prophesy failure. The difficulties can only be overcome by the co-operation of thousands of workers, by the revolutionary determination, hard work and self-sacrifice of every one concerned. We cannot compete with the capitalist Press in finance ; but we can draw on reserves of enthusiasm and energy that they do not know. We cannot compete with the capitalist Press in costly news services ; but through our worker-correspondents we can give the pulse of the mass-movement which is to them a closed book. We cannot compete with the capitalist Press in magnificent production and the last word of printing and illustration ; but on our dirty rag we can print the truths they dare not print. We shall have to face a hundred failures, boycotts, breakdowns and disappointments ; but if we are determined to keep it going, it can be done. The main task now is the campaign for the daily, the work of preparation and propaganda for the daily, the raising of finance and arousing of interest, the winning of support in the working-class organisations and in the factories, the first steps to the building up of the mass movement which we shall need to organise around the daily.

R. P. D.

THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN IN SOVIET ECONOMY

By MAURICE DOBB

WHY is it that the Five-Year Plan of economic development at present fills so prominent a rôle on the Russian stage? To-day in Russia all roads lead to the Five-Year Plan. No discussion, no speech, almost no conversation lasts for five minutes without its mention. No description of present-day Russia is complete which does not take it as the central theme.

The Five-Year Plan is significant for a double reason. In the first place, the next five years in Russia will be the intense and crucial ones for the industrialisation of Russia—her transformation from a backward agrarian country into a mature industrial country of Western efficiency and technique. Into these five years will be crowded the essence of the industrial revolution which transformed England and France and Germany in the nineteenth century—more than this, because in Russia to-day more modern revolutionary elements, such as electricity and the tractor, are added as well. Secondly, because it is in the fact of centralised economic planning of the economic system that a socialist system has its most significant contrast and its most important technical advantage over a capitalist system: however the latter may seek to organise itself, to master its own anarchy by monopolistic combination or by elements of State capitalism, its very character presupposes the predominance in all major economic movements of an anarchic *laissez-faire*.

If it were not for this important economic advantage, there would be small chance for socialism being built in Russia alone, isolated as she is in a capitalist world. Despite the most heroic mass enthusiasm, the objective factors would be against her—her poverty of capital and of expert personnel, the difficulty of trade relations with the West, the danger of war. She would be continually on the horns of the dilemma of sacrificing socialist advance in the interests of technical progress or sacrificing technical progress in the interests of socialist advance. But in the hitherto unfathomed economies of organising economic life on a planned

basis lies a vast fund for building up socialism in face of obstacles which, to capitalist eyes, would seem insurmountable. In the possibilities of rationalisation which it opens it has a fund of economies from which internal resources can be found to carry through the work of industrialisation ; and as industrialisation itself proceeds and augments the productive powers of Soviet economy it provides the basis for yet further conquests by socialist planning, for the raising of the standard of life of the masses and for further possibilities of technical advance.

Before the war 85 per cent. of Russia's population was rural. There were only some two million wage-earners in factory industry, while domestic handicraft industry in small workshops and in villages accounted for a third of the total production of industrial commodities and employed twice as many persons as did factory industry. Russian agriculture was exceedingly primitive, some three-quarters of the cultivated area being worked as small peasant holdings on the old uneconomic scattered strip, or "open-field," system, subject to periodic redivision, without modern rotation of crops and without modern machine-instruments of harvesting and tillage. In all Russia before the war there were probably not more than 500 tractors and these were nearly all on the landlords' estates. Her transport system was in a primitive stage of development. Road transport was virtually non-existent, save for peasant sledges and carts on roads which were frequently impassable during the melting of the snows or heavy rains. She possessed one kilometre of railroad for every 100 square kilometres of area, as against twelve in Britain and Germany, and only five kilometres of railroad per 10,000 inhabitants, or less than any country in Europe except Serbia. She was primarily an importer of manufactured goods and an exporter of agricultural and mineral produce (less than 10 per cent. of her exports were finished manufactures and over a half were foodstuffs) ; and her industry relied extensively on foreign capital and on foreign technical personnel.

It is to transform this vast semi-Asiatic country to a fully-developed industrial economy, based on large-scale industry, electrification and the mechanised farm, that the Five-Year Plan aims. And it aims to do so in as rapid a time as possible and on a socialist basis. It not only affords one of the most rapid transforma-

tions in the technical basis of economy that history has witnessed ; it is also the first time in history that such a transformation has been effected by consciously planned and controlled direction, not by the methods of *laissez-faire*.

As a basis for this industrialisation the Five-Year Plan provides for a total capital investment over the ensuing five years (of which the past twelve months constitute the first) of 64 milliard roubles,¹ as against 26 milliard roubles in the preceding five years. This would increase the basic capital of the country by over a half, doubling that of industry, increasing that of railway transport by a half and that of agriculture by a third.² As a result of this, industrial production by the end of 1933 is estimated to reach three times the pre-war level, agricultural production to be one and a-half times the pre-war level, and the output of the whole national economy to be double the 1928 figure.

In the sphere of electrification, forty-two new central power stations (most of them serving several provinces) are planned so as to increase the output of electrical horse-power from 5,000 million to 22,000 million kilowatt hours per annum. At the same time the steady tendency will continue towards an increase in the specific weight of socialist elements in the economic system. 92 per cent. of industrial output is planned to be socialised in 1932-33 as against 80 per cent. in 1927-28 ; 15 per cent. of agriculture, against 2 per cent. ; and 91 per cent. of trade against 75 per cent. The national income *per head* is planned to increase 56 per cent., real wages increasing 70 per cent. and peasant income by 67 per cent. In her production of coal the Soviet Union at present comes fifth in order after U.S.A., Britain, Germany and France ; France producing some 52 million tons per annum and Russia 35 million. By 1933 it is anticipated that Russia will outstrip France and rise to the fourth place. Similarly, the Russian chemical output by 1933 is expected approximately to equal the 1927 German output.

¹At the par of exchange, 10 roubles=£1. In terms of the purchasing power of the rouble over commodities inside Russia, 15 roubles are about equal to £1.

²The actual figures given by the Five-Year Plan are higher than this. To avoid any charge of exaggeration through possible under-estimation of the depreciation of existing capital, I have purposely taken a more conservative estimate, so that these percentages I have given are lower than those of Gosplan and are distinctly on the cautious side.

The highly developed capitalism of U.S.A., with its high organic composition of capital—the “power behind the elbow” of which American writers boast—has on an average 4.3 horse-power in industry to every worker. The Soviet Union has a very much lower composition of capital—less than 1 horse-power per worker. By 1933 it is planned that this figure shall be increased to 2 horse-power per worker, or to nearly half the level of U.S.A.

Such a rate of industrialisation seems inconceivable to the capitalist world (save by some exceptional means of development afforded by a large influx of foreign capital such as fed the rationalisation boom in Germany in 1925-28). So inconceivable does it appear, that the Five-Year Plan can only seem wildly utopian, a crude propagandist device, an appropriate butt for ridicule. In an article on rationalisation in Britain I recently argued⁸ that the possibilities of securing great economies by rationalisation, except by means of a preliminary investment of considerable sums of capital, were small. In a less fully industrialised country than Britain, of course, the possibility of such economies would be greater. On the other hand, Soviet Russia is more poorly placed than capitalist countries for procuring the necessary capital to reorganise her industry, because she cannot secure foreign capital without making impossible concessions, and she naturally does not employ the methods of exploitation on which a capitalist State would reply. And from a survey of such narrow objective factors as this, the possibility of the extraordinary rate of industrialisation envisaged in the Five-Year Plan would reasonably seem utopian. One cannot make bricks without straw, with all the enthusiasm in the world.

What makes the essential difference between Soviet economy and the capitalist world is that the organisation of the economic system on a *planned* basis and under the control of the workers themselves opens up vast possibilities of reorganisation and of rationalisation-economies which are non-existent under capitalist *laissez-faire*. To take minor instances : rationalisation in capitalist countries is everywhere hampered by *rentier* claims (save where these are wiped out by inflation) and the obstruction of vested interests, by the difficulties of securing common action and agree-

⁸The LABOUR MONTHLY, July, 1928.

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ment among a host of separate businesses, by competitive jealousies and traditional conservatism, by the obstruction of the working class.

To take a major instance : the possibility of effecting rapid progress without periodic crises, or at least of enormously shortening the duration and effects of such crises, is an immense advantage which a planned socialist system can have over a capitalist system. True, capitalism endeavours to secure for itself some of these advantages by intenser centralisation of capital and by measures of State capitalism—the rôle of social democracy and of the present Labour Government. But the extent to which it can do this is strictly limited, and at any rate only gives place to intenser contradiction on an international scale and to a tighter fastening of the fetters on the working class. Hence socialist rationalisation opens up a vista of special possibilities unknown hitherto ; and the prospect of these is what enables Russia to-day confidently to plan her industrialisation process at the extraordinarily rapid pace outlined in the Five-Year Plan.

What precisely is the quantitative significance of these special economies of socialist rationalisation one cannot tell until they have been tried. It remains an unknown factor in socialist economy. The Right Wing critics of the official policy in Russia of the last year tended to rate these possibilities low. Like the bourgeois sceptics, they thought the estimates of the Gosplan utopian, and the rate of industrialisation which was being planned too dangerously high. The particular ground of their criticism was the backward condition of agricultural development, which over the last two years, with its deficient grain for export and even for the towns and its deficient raw material supplies, was handicapping the growth of industry. Agriculture was reaching the limit of its development on the basis of small-scale individualist peasant agriculture. The alternative lay between a bold development of large-scale mechanised collective agriculture and the encouragement of the semi-capitalist large farmer (or *kulak*). The Right Wing (such as Bukharin, Frumkin, Tomskey, Serra), distrusting the possibilities of the former, were inclined to the latter as the solution of what they considered to be an impending *impasse*.

But the results of the current year seem to be showing the fears

of these sceptics to be groundless. The agricultural situation still remains stringent, involving the need for rationing of numerous foodstuffs to keep the demand within the bounds of the available supply. Meat, for instance, is at the moment scarce in the towns, owing to a wholesale killing off of young cattle last year by the peasants because of fodder shortage, aggravated by the extended summer which placed a strain on refrigeration accommodation. At the same time import possibilities remain restricted owing to the absence of grain export, and as a result there remain strained features in the valuta and the credit situation. But despite the rigorous policy of "struggle against the *kulak*" the sown area this year exceeds that of last year, and the August State grain collections were nearly three times greater than in August last year. The development of the State and collective farms have surpassed expectations. Mr. Walter Duranty, Moscow correspondent of the *New York Times*, writes of the "initial success of the campaign for collective farming—the first real attempt since the revolution to 'socialise' agriculture."

"Whereas two years ago," he goes on, "only 2 per cent. of the land under cultivation was socialised, the proportion last spring reached one-tenth for the whole Union, and is expected to reach 15 per cent. by the end of October . . . While it is too early to say that socialism has conquered the Russian village, it has at least profoundly affected village life and has been launched with a flying start."⁴

In industry, not only was the original Five-Year Plan revised in an upward direction a year ago, but actual achievements seem indeed to be exceeding the estimates of the revised Five-Year Plan. For the first ten months of this, the first year of the Five-Year Plan, industrial production has increased by 24 per cent. over the same period of last year, against an estimated increase of 21.4 per cent. As a result the growth of production for the coming year, 1929-30, is being estimated (in excess of the revised Five-Year Plan) at the amazing figure of over 25 per cent. Similarly, the original Plan provided for 7,000 collective farms to be formed in R.S.F.S.R. in 1928-29, and for 40 per cent. of the marketed grain by 1933 to be provided by State and collective farms. Already in the first eight months of the economic year, 11,000 collective under-

⁴ *British-Russian Trade Gazette*, September, 1929.

takings had been started, and it is now expected that by 1933 60 to 70 per cent. of the marketed grain will come from socialised enterprises. And there is now talk of " *carrying out the Five-Year Plan in four years!* "

The reason for this quite surprising progress presumably lies in what *Economicheskaja Jizn* calls " the great reserves of socialist economy "—the specific economies to be obtained by socialist rationalisation and a planned system.⁵ Two examples of this consist in the seven-hour day coupled with an extended shift system and the five-day week, under which every worker has one holiday in every six days, while the factories work uninterruptedly in relays—important " capital-saving economies " which enable machinery and plant to be used more intensively, while at the same time a larger number of workers are drawn into employment.

But apart from its great historical interest, the Five-Year Plan at the moment has a special importance to our movement. It can show that our opposition to capitalist rationalisation is not something negative, as is often charged, and has nothing to do with sentimental or reactionary anarchism. Here in Russia we have an instance of constructive socialist rationalisation which should be supported by the workers the world over—an instance of rationalisation under the only conditions in which it can completely flourish and be permanently constructive. And by contrasting socialist rationalisation in practice with capitalist rationalisation one can the better throw into sharp relief the evils of capitalist rationalisation which it is our historical duty to oppose. The fundamental difference is that rationalisation in Russian industry is taking place *after* power has been transferred to the workers and the power of the bourgeoisie broken. Hence every success of rationalisation, every stage of growth in the composition of capital and of labour productivity, strengthens and hastens the march to socialism. On the other hand, the successes of rationalisation in Britain serve to strengthen capitalism and bourgeois domination and to postpone the rule of the workers and the coming of socialism.

In the second place, in a workers' society every sacrifice that the workers are asked to make in the present—and considerable sacrifices of present enjoyments have, of course, to be made if

⁵ *Econ. Jizn*, August 18, 1929.

factories and power stations and railways are to be built in Russia at their present rate—will have its full compensation in a higher standard of life to the workers themselves, either of this or the next generation. The fruits of rationalisation will accrue to the workers themselves who have sweated and tightened their belts to make it possible. In a capitalist society the effect will be to swell the surplus-value which accrues to the capitalist class : the workers will sweat and tighten their belts, but others will eat the fruits.

In the third place, socialist rationalisation can take place with the minimum of extra sweat or tightening of belts by the workers. This it can do primarily because it is carried out by plan and planned under the control of the workers. For instance, capitalist rationalisation is almost certain to lead to crises and to unemployment, and hence throw the burden of change on to the workers. In Russia such crises can be avoided by economic planning, and the changes can be so regulated as to counteract any effects of new methods and new machinery in displacing workers. In fact, in Russia rationalisation proceeds simultaneously with increased wages, shorter hours and an increased shift system which extends the number of workers employed.

Finally, capitalist rationalisation to-day is almost everywhere inseparable from monopolisation, which tends towards a raising of prices and of the level of profit in the monopolised lines of production, and so increases the exploitation of the workers and sections of the middle class. In Russia, on the other hand, rationalisation proceeds along with a planned reduction of prices, keeping profits down to a low level and enabling the maximum possible expansion of output and sales to take place without the periodic check of crises of over-production. To support socialist rationalisation in Russia and at the same time oppose capitalist rationalisation in Britain is to be like a doctor who, in recommending an effective cure to a patient, tries to take from the patient the various quack remedies he is using, but which in general are harmful, and at any rate, so long as he retains faith in them, are preventing him from courageously resorting to the alternative and effective cure. If he confined himself to ridiculing the quack potions, the doctor's case would be less convincing—if he could not point to the other and contrasts the scientific with the quack.

NEW TIMES—NEW TACTICS

By JOHN A. MAHON

THE Sixth National Conference of the Minority Movement in August declared clearly for a policy entirely new so far as the revolutionary trade union movement in this country was concerned. Of necessity the formulation of this policy was on general lines. The time which was available for discussion, and the experience at the disposal of those who had been partially operating this policy, were neither of them sufficient to enable the Conference to proceed to work out in a concrete manner the method in which the policy should be applied. This task therefore falls to the national sections of the Minority Movement operating in particular industries. These sections will be confronted with the work of so applying the new policy that they generate a broad mass movement mobilising large numbers of workers for action on immediate demands, at the same time developing the struggle for these immediate demands into the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist state and the establishment of a Revolutionary Workers' Government.

The tendency which exists to regard the new line as already completely worked out and formulated shows a serious danger of entirely misunderstanding the politics of this line. To be content with having formulated decisions that the revolutionary movement sets itself out as independent in leadership from the trade union and labour bureaucracy is to miss entirely the essential point that this independence will only be effective in so far as it brings into action broad masses of the workers. The general formulation of the policy, therefore, so far from being the end, is merely the beginning of the new line of revolutionary struggle.

It is intended in this article first of all to show this from the position in the railway industry, an industry of decisive strategical importance, an industry whose workers must be won for the revolutionary movement if the struggle for power is to be successful in Great Britain.

There are some 650,000 railway workers. Those organised

are divided between three important unions—N.U.R., A.S.L.E. and F., and Railway Clerks' Association, containing 80 per cent. of the organised railway workers, the remainder being divided between some fifty craft unions.

The Railwaymen's Minority Movement held its first National Annual Conference in January, 1929, in a period when the new line was not yet being operated despite the International decisions of the Fourth Congress of the R.I.L.U. A survey of the resolutions passed at this conference, and their comparison with the material which will be presented to the Conference in November of this year, will give a concrete example of how entirely changed the every-day work of each section of the movement must be if the Sixth Conference decisions are to be applied and not allowed merely to remain on paper.

The composition of the Conference in January was primarily of delegates from trade union branches, and secondarily of delegates from the Minority Movement groups operating inside branches in the unions. Five resolutions were considered, on Rationalisation and Mondism, Wages Policy, Organisation, Road Transport, and the Railwaymen's Minority Movement. The resolution on rationalisation devoted its main attention to dealing with the progress of the establishment of monopoly control of the railway system, indicating the progress being made in this direction, the preliminary effects of the groupings of the railway companies, the speeding-up campaign, the wage policy of the companies, the co-operation of the trade union leaders in this policy, and it concluded by indicating the main points around which the railwaymen could be called to struggle against the further development of the companies' policy.

The Wages Policy resolution, after analysing the position of railwaymen's wages, concluded by putting forward a programme embodying the demands: for Hours, a maximum 42-hour week for all grades; guaranteed day and week; abolition of the spread-over; abolition of systematic overtime; for Wages: immediate termination of the 2½ per cent. agreement; £3 10s. od. national adult minimum wage for all grades, *pro rata* increase for juniors, no reduction in any grade at present receiving more than this amount; abolition of New Entrants Clause; merging of war bonus into

minimum ; equal pay for both sexes doing equal work ; for Holidays : minimum of twelve consecutive working days' holiday per annum, with full pay and minimum of three free passes per annum on all railways to all grades, including shopmen.

The Organisation resolution had as its main point the development of one industrial union for railwaymen. It went on to advocate the participation of militant workers in the negotiating machinery in order more effectively to expose it, and concluded by a formal reference to the establishment of shop, depot, and station committees.

Road Transport was dealt with in a separate resolution, and the remedies held out to the railwaymen for protection against the menace of the development of unorganised road transport work were primarily to force the union leaders to stop their policy of class collaboration, and concentrate on a joint campaign for 100 per cent. trade unionism on the basis of the fight for a programme of demands, the main points of which were the seven-hour day and £3 10s. od. minimum wage.

The resolution on the Railway Minority Movement was purely formal and organisational, appealing for members, declaring that the national conference should be held annually, and that organised groups should be set up in the trade union branches and depots.

It will be seen that these resolutions embodied in concrete form the old outlook of the Minority Movement—that of an organisation of individuals working inside the official trade union apparatus, pressing for a forward programme in advance of that officially adopted by the unions.

The second conference to be held in London on November 2 and 3 will be composed, as to the great majority, of delegates elected direct from the depots. The material which will be dealt with shows that the National Committee has an entirely different approach to and valuation of the tasks in front of it. At the time of writing three draft resolutions are ready :—

The economic situation and policy of the railway companies :

Wages policy for railwaymen :

A long statement on the full policy and programme for a militant movement of railway workers.

The first resolution states that the basic economic problem of

railway capitalism is to maintain its dividends in the face of the decline in railway traffic, a decline consequent upon the general decline in British capitalist industry on the one hand and the rapid development of road transport on the other. The objective of the rationalisation policy is, therefore, to secure the maintenance of the "standard" dividend of fifty million pounds per annum, and to this objective the various measures adopted are all directed. The project for monopoly has now extended from that of uniting all the railway companies into four groups, which, to all intents and purposes, are under one direction, to include in this the inter-town road transport of the country, thus establishing one enormous traffic trust completely dominating all the services and able to shift traffic from one method to the other in accordance with its dividend policy. The attitude towards labour is that of a steady process of reducing the wages bill. This is effected not only by the introduction of up-to-date machinery and technical equipment of all kinds, but by the rapid intensification of labour, thus leading to the dismissal of large numbers of workers. The wages policy is being developed in order more effectively to secure these results. The agreement for securing a lower rate for new entrants to the adult grades enables the companies to displace the older men by younger men, not only physically more fit, but coming in at a lower rate of pay. The younger men introduced to these grades are also deprived of the possibilities of improving their position by the fact that the increased redundancy and re-arrangements made under the grouping combine to make promotion for large numbers an absolute impossibility. In this way, while avoiding sweeping national cuts in wages, the companies are effectively reducing the wage standards of the majority of the railwaymen. The negotiating machinery established under the 1921 Act is now clearly to be seen as a machine to prevent the workers taking measures of resistance to the continual reductions.

The whole of this policy is conducted in continuous collaboration with the capitalist state, trade union leaders, and Labour Party, each of which performs its functions in a general scheme of division of labour. The Electrification Commission appointed by the Labour Government indicates that the first steps are being taken towards a national scheme of electrification, a technical revolution

which would result in enormously reducing the number of men employed on the railways.

The resolution concludes by noting that the results of this policy have been partially successful in so far as, in spite of the decline in traffic and reduced fares, the average level of profits for 1927-28 has been £45 millions. This means, however, that in order to reach the £50 million level regarded as the standard, a still greater intensification and speeding up will be necessary. The 2½ per cent. cut is seen clearly in the light of this analysis to be of secondary importance to the reduction of the numbers employed.

Proceeding on the basis of this analysis, the resolution on Policy, in addition to putting forward an immediate programme of demands as the basis for the development of a militant movement among the railway workers, notes the present conditions of the workers, the development of the rationalisation policy of the trade unions, and goes on to declare that the fundamental cause of the evils affecting the railwaymen as part of the whole working class is the capitalist system. This system must, therefore, be overthrown and replaced by a system of socialism before the conditions of the railway workers or any other section can be adequately safeguarded. The resolution refers to the experience of the General Strike in making clear that the collaboration in industry policy of the T.U.C. has been adopted because of the political allegiance of the T.U. leaders being given not to socialism but to capitalism. It goes on to analyse the functions of the Labour Government, pointing out that the fact that the capitalists have been compelled by the movement of the workers towards the left to allow a Labour Government to occupy the directing posts in the State machinery, so far from meaning that the State will not be used to repress the workers, means that it will be used with more violence and complete ruthlessness in an attempt to check revolt in a situation which is already dangerous for the very existence of capitalism. The railwaymen's struggle is, therefore, pointed out to be a part of the working-class struggle, not for the capture of the capitalist parliament through the ballot box, but for the seizure of power and for the establishment of a Revolutionary Workers' Government on the basis of the workers' organisations.

The Programme next proceeds to deal with the relations of

the struggle for immediate demands to the general political struggle. It declares that in order to mobilise and develop the class feeling among the railway workers, it is necessary to take up every local wages or conditions grievance in the place where it arises—that is at the depots, stations, sidings, &c.—and to build up on the basis of these local struggles a national movement with a better programme of demands. The whole of these immediate struggles are visualised as a means of developing the class consciousness of the railwaymen and the necessary new leadership. The trade union branches under pressure of militant elements are no longer regarded as the leading organs of struggle; it is clearly recognised that the only organs which are fulfilling this function are representative Depot Committees elected by mass meetings of railwaymen in the various depots. These committees will consist of the most determined and trustworthy elements, irrespective of union membership or non-membership. The controversy as to whether One Union for Railwaymen or One Union for all Transport Workers should be advocated is thus shown to completely miss the point as far as the present needs of the railwaymen are concerned and to arise from the fundamental incorrectness of the old line.

The Railwaymen's Minority Movement will, therefore, consist of groups of individual railwaymen supporting this policy, organised primarily for activity in their respective depots, of affiliated depot committees which are prepared to adopt the programme, and finally of affiliated trade union branches. The R.M.M. is visualised as being a national entity establishing its connections with the revolutionary trade union movement of other countries through the National Minority Movement and the Red International of Labour Unions, and having as part of its duties the rousing of the railwaymen to participate in such demonstrations of international solidarity as May 1, August 1 and November 7.

It will be seen that the comparison between the material dealt with by these two conferences shows what a great advance has been made in the conception of revolutionary trade union work which has been placed before the railwaymen. It will be the task of the Conference to subject this material to the closest scrutiny in order finally to formulate it in a manner which will enable the rapid building up and rallying of a mass movement of railway workers.

That the railway situation is objectively ripe for such a movement is beyond doubt. The conditions under which the companies have agreed to give back the 2½ per cent. in May, 1930, indicate clearly that the whole drive for reduction in staff will continue in an intensified form. In 1928-29, the reduction in staff was 35,011; as many in one year as in the preceding four years. This shows that the full results of the grouping are only now beginning to be gathered.

That the railwaymen's resistance will take the form of local strikes is inevitable. The decisive factor for the fate of such strikes will be that of their leadership. If the leadership remains in the hands of local trade union reformist officials, pushed into action by mass pressure, then they will be lost or compromised, limited to the defensive and prevented from developing into a national forward movement. Only a revolutionary leadership realising the class nature of the struggle and prepared to take the offensive will be able to win strikes. Most valuable experience as to the rôle of the local reformist officials in the present period is provided by recent events on the London passenger transport services, in particular by the now famous Barking 'bus strike.

Here was a case where, on the background of general irritation with the continuous speeding-up, the establishment of a clock by the L.G.O.C. in the middle of a main road in a spot deemed by the men to involve danger to the conductors using it, resulted in a branch decision to instruct all members to refuse to use it. For standing by this decision in defiance of officials of the L.G.O.C. and the Transport and General Workers' Union two men were suspended by the L.G.O.C., that is, were victimised. The men struck for their unconditional reinstatement, with pay, and secured it after three days' stoppage, the unconditional reinstatement from the L.G.O.C. and the pay from the T.G.W.U. On the strike issues this was an undoubted victory, of the utmost importance in raising the morale of the whole fleet and showing that the lessons of the Cricklewood and Romford defeats had sunk deep.

Why were Bevin and the L.G.O.C. forced to give way? Because of the certainty of the dispute spreading, very largely due to the mobilisation of the militants all over the fleet by the Minority Movement bulletins.

Nevertheless, the Barking Strike Committee, composed of the T.G.W.U. branch officials and committeemen, had conceded the company the point of principle involved in so far that it failed to demand the removal of the clock. The fact that the clock got smashed during the dispute may be regarded as a happy accident, but it tended to obscure the primary failure of the Strike Committee, which thus limited the whole strike to the defensive. Its subsequent action of repudiating the assistance of the Minority Movement and thus lining up with Bevin showed the rapid growth of its defeatist germ, which blossomed into full flower after the dispute in its disgraceful promise to Bevin to co-operate with him in building up the 'Bus Section of the T.G.W.U. Here was the "return to Bevinism" policy of a superficially anti-Bevin Strike Committee clearly displayed, a warning to militant workers everywhere. The reformist local official who will fight up to a point under mass pressure is more dangerous to the workers than the openly pro-employer national official precisely because he will betray the fight at the very moment when the crisis arrives.

The speeding-up process drives the workers to resistance, to elementary strike action. The workers see the national trade union officials, the full time man, as their enemies, but their whole instincts, experience and tradition drive them to the local trade union organisation to lead them in the struggle. The local reformist official is driven by the pressure, leads the strike, and repeating on a small scale the rôle of the General Council in 1926, goes over to the enemy at the critical moment because in essence he is of the same political allegiance as the national officials.

The workers, sensing the coming struggle, will go into the arms of the trade union, because they know nowhere else to go for organisation and leadership, *unless the revolutionary movement gets to them first*. The experience of Austins, Leatherhead, and the Lancashire cotton lock-out all underline and stress the necessity for the Minority Movement to get in *before* the fight starts, with its policy and leadership. Defeated strikes will provide us with valuable lessons, but successful strikes will be more valuable than reams of paper and hours of speeches in raising the morale of the workers and inspiring them with confidence in the revolutionary leadership.

CROSS ROADS

By W. N. EWER

THIS month will—barring some quite unforeseeable accident—see the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. That should be a little disconcerting to some of the prophets : only political prophets, like racing tipsters, are seldom disconcerted, but cheerfully get on with the job again, without troubling to ask why they were wrong.

Such a moment is an obvious one for a stock-taking and an endeavour to estimate the realities of the present and the possibilities of the future. Nor is it merely the coming exchange of Ambassadors that makes the moment suitable. It is not only because of that that Anglo-Russian relations have come, or are coming, to one of those comparatively rare points at which policy, and the events which spring from policy, can be directed.

The Anglo-Russian hostility of the past eleven years is a compound. It is made up, firstly, of the natural opposition between an imperialist, capitalist country and a revolutionary, socialist country : and, secondly, of the century-old rivalries and mutual fears of England and Russia as Asiatic Powers. And of these two the second is gradually becoming more important than the first as the years of actual revolution recede into history. Prejudices indeed die hard. Queen Victoria refused to allow the Prince of Wales to go officially to the Paris Exhibition of 1889 because she regarded the centenary of the fall of the Bastille as a revolutionary demonstration ! But time tells. Were there no other factor at work the fierce hatreds of ten years ago would die down and cease to influence immediate policy. America and Germany are no less capitalist countries than England. But Russo-German and (despite the absence of diplomatic contact) Russo-American relations are vastly better than Russo-British relations. Economic intercourse, in the absence of acute economic competition or of acute cause of diplomatic conflict, are having their inevitable effect. But in the case of England, though there is evident community of economic interest and notable absence of economic competition,

improvement is yet to seek. The reason is to be found in Asia. The Anglo-Russian problem of to-day, as of last century, is an Asiatic one.

It was just at the end of the eighteenth century that the two countries became conscious of each other in Asia and that the Eastern question sprang into being. The Ochakov crisis of 1791 was the first of a long series. As the two frontiers, of Russia in Northern, and of England in Southern Asia, neared each other, each became apprehensive of the other. It was fear of a Russian advance that first sent British troops to Kabul : fear of a British advance that first sent Russian troops to Khiva. Palmerston already thought the day near when "Cossack and Sepoy would meet in the valley of the Oxus." Each move by either side brought anxiety in the other capital, and a counter move. "We are suffering from Mervousness" said a wit when the Russian occupation of Merv brought the usual diplomatic crisis. "Mervousness" was indeed endemic. The immediate theatre of conflict shifted. At one moment it would be the Straits, at another Penjdeh, at another Port Arthur. But the conflict remained. There were spasmodic attempts at settlement. The Prince of Wales, when Nicolas came to the throne, tried to negotiate an entente. Salisbury, a few years later, declaring that "surely Asia is big enough for us both," tried to negotiate an agreement on Asiatic spheres of interest, ranging from the Euphrates to the Hoang-ho. But mutual distrust was always too strong. "They are insincere and their language is ambiguous" wrote Salisbury angrily. The Russian view of the British was pretty similar.

It was only when defeat by the Japanese diverted Russian attention again to Europe and threw her into antagonism with the Central Powers, just at the time when Anglo-German relations were becoming tense, that an entente became possible. And even then the attitude of Downing Street was significant. The British "Entente" policy was dictated as much by the idea of buying off Russian antagonism in Asia in return for support in the Balkans as by the idea of securing Russian assistance in the event of war with Germany. The partnership was throughout an uneasy one. A fortnight before the outbreak of war in 1914, Buchanan was reporting that "Sazonov is always reproaching me with the

inveterate suspicion with which Russia is regarded in India and in certain circles in England." The Foreign Office was haunted by the fear that if it failed to back up Russia in the Balkans, St. Petersburg would break the Entente and resume an active forward policy in Asia.

Even during the war itself the rivalry persisted. The Gallipoli expedition had one eye on Petrograd : the advance into Mesopotamia was in part a precaution against a possibly too great Russian success in Armenia. Then came the collapse and the Revolution. England at once took advantage of the opportunity. The last year of the war and the first years of peace saw a steady British drive into Asia. Persia was occupied and very nearly converted into a protectorate. Dunsterville's force occupied Baku. British emissaries and even British troops worked their way well into Turkestan. The conquest of Middle Asia seemed assured. Soviet Russia, struggling for existence on a dozen fronts, appeared helpless to resist. Victory in the century-old struggle was in England's grasp.

But the great offensive, so hopefully begun, failed. England was not indeed exhausted, but it was morally and financially fatigued, incapable of the new effort required. And there was trouble behind the front, especially in India, where, for the moment, the Khilafat agitation had united Moslem Khilafatists with Hindu Swarajists in a common and dangerous opposition. The offensive died away. Baku was evacuated. Persia was evacuated. Even Iraq at one moment was in the balance. Chanak marked the end of the forward phase. From that moment onward Great Britain has been on the defensive in Asia, concerned to keep rather than to extend, to guard the existing frontiers and to resist the growing pressure of internal nationalist movements. There have been, indeed, offensives—diplomatic and, on the tiniest scale, military. But they have been "defensive-offensives," their aim to remove or forestall a danger rather than to register an advance.

In the post-Chanak phase the initiative changes, the active rôle is played, not by British Imperialism, which has to content itself with remaining on the defensive, but by the big revolutionary impulse emanating from Moscow. The old fear of Russian arms is replaced by a new fear of "Russian propaganda." And,

since no distinction is made between the Soviet Government and the Communist International—the Kuznetsky Most and the Mokhavaya being indistinguishably “Moscow” when seen from Delhi—Anglo-India (in the good old sense of that word) re-develops its old mentality of a generation ago. France, it used to be said, in the years between 1871 and 1914, was “hypnotised by the Vosges.” Anglo-India to-day is again hypnotised by the Pamirs.

It is rather important that we should get this Anglo-Indian mentality clear. They are not particularly afraid of Communist propaganda inside India. They regard it as a nuisance, but not as a danger, for it operates mainly among the Hindu masses. And Anglo-India just does not believe in the possibility of a Hindu revolution. “They haven’t guts enough. If they had they would have kicked us out long ago” is the prevailing estimate. They think they have taken the measure of the Hindu: the longer headed of them believe they can settle with him: the die-hards think they can intimidate him. Neither is afraid of him.

It is the Moslem who haunts the dreams of Anglo-India—the Moslem of the North-West, who still feels and thinks like an invader and a conqueror, whose sympathies and loyalties run not to his fellow Indians, but back across the border into Afghanistan and Middle Asia, and away westward to Turkey. It was the hold which Amanullah was establishing on the imagination of the Indian Moslems, coupled with his friendship with Russia, that made him, in the eyes of Anglo-India, a danger to the British Raj.

They believe that Communist activity in India is only an incident in a revived Russian policy of “Drang nach Indien,” in which the chief rôle is to be played by the Moslems of the border lands and of Central Asia. The enemy, as always, is beyond the passes: the threat comes from the lands that sent Muhammad of Ghazni and Jenghiz Khan and Baber into the land of the Five Rivers and south to Imperial Delhi. They are nervous for their frontiers, and so they work by every military and diplomatic means to prepare for the conflict they anticipate.

The Chinese revolution accentuated Anglo-Indian fears and added to them Anglo-Chinese fears. It had been alarming when,

thirty years ago, Tsarist Russia came to Port Arthur. Suddenly they found Soviet Russia, in the person of Borodin and his lieutenants, not at Port Arthur, but at Canton and in the Yang-tse valley. Anglo-China was directly threatened. Anglo-India found itself, for the first time, looking apprehensively at its north-eastern as well as its north-western frontier. The Shanghai expedition—the biggest military operation since the war—gives a measure of the anxiety.

From this rebirth of the old fear of Russia in Asia as an advancing menace to British domination in Southern Asia—and above all in India—came, quite naturally, a rebirth of the old policy. War preparations on the frontiers. Diplomatic activities directed to isolating Russia and to supporting everywhere elements antagonistic to Russia. Chatham declared that he would conquer America in Germany. The British Government set itself to the task of defending India in Poland—and in a dozen other countries.

These war preparations—military and diplomatic—produced the natural reaction in Moscow. The days of "intervention," of the drive into Central Asia, of the support of Pilsudski's Ukrainian adventure, were too near to be forgotten. Great Britain was plainly again preparing war, was already waging diplomatic war. Moscow also was alarmed. Moscow in its turn took precautions, which Delhi-London saw as new evidence that its own fears were justified, and which it proceeded to counter by new preparations of its own.

So, through recent years, the situation has grown worse, the mutual suspicion more intense, the danger of war greater. The rupture of relations in 1927 was at bottom only the reflection of the rapidly growing antagonism—and a further aggravation of it. Antagonism feeds on itself and increases as it feeds.

And yet—and it is this which conditions the present situation and gives it a new and peculiar character of its own—at the same time the real attention of both countries (if one may conveniently use the word for the British Empire) has been directed more and more to internal affairs.

The British Government, having abandoned, at any rate for the present, the idea of expansion, is pre-occupied with the tremendous and difficult task of trying to re-adapt its relations to its own subject peoples. In Egypt, in Iraq, in India, it is trying to

arrange compromises which will at the same time preserve its own supremacy and appease the nationalist movements. It wants, of all things, peace for the carrying through of that task. And at the same time, though fear has not vanished, acute alarm has given place to a somewhat milder anxiety. The later developments in China, the fall of Amanullah, have—from the point of view of Delhi and Downing Street—sensibly eased the situation.

Simultaneously Russia has become, more than at any time since the Revolution, introverted. All policy is dominated by the great problems of the Five-Years' Plan. With the dying away of the big revolutionary wave there has come a diversion of interest from the foreign to the domestic field ; the carrying through of the Plan is everything. External affairs are of importance only in so far as they affect the Plan. Russia's need, too, is for peace while the Plan is carried through. The foreign policy of the Soviet Government, always pacific, is to-day doubly and trebly pacific : its overwhelming purpose to guard against the danger of a war which, whatever its issue, would wreck the Plan.

Neither country wishes—neither can afford to wish—for war. Each is forced by the conditions of the internal problems which it is facing to wish for peace. And yet, at the same time, each side distrusts and suspects the other : each side prepares for the eventuality which it fears : each side struggles with the other for advantage of position should that eventuality come.

Anglo-Russian antagonism to-day springs from no economic rivalry—for there is none : from no conflict of territorial ambitions—for they do not exist : nor from the fundamental differences of their social systems—for these exist equally between Russia and other capitalist states. It springs from mutual fear. Each country is on the defensive against the other. Each fears attack, under varying forms, by the other. Each feels of the other that, as Salisbury said thirty years ago, " they are insincere and their language is ambiguous." There can be no more dangerous situation.

Yet at the same time there is, at this moment more than at any time for ten years past, possibility of averting the danger. Occasions for conflict are less than they have ever been : preoccupation with domestic affairs greater. The question has become one not

of settling disputes (unless old disputes are quarrelsome magnified far beyond their due proportions) but of allaying fears. If each side will and can convince the other that it has no aggressive intent, that activities which on the surface may seem menacing are at bottom defensive : if each has imagination enough to see into the mind of the other, to see that mind as it is, not as preconception or prejudice requires it to be—then it should be possible, though not easy, to establish really friendly relations, such as have not existed between the two countries since Duckworth sailed through the Dardanelles and Zizianov crossed the Caucasus.

The thing is difficult. But it is not impossible. Litvinov was right when he told the delegates of the Anglo-Russian Committee that there are no *insuperable* difficulties in the way. And it is the prime job of the two diplomacies to overcome the superable difficulties that there are.

Just for a moment we are at cross roads. To stand still is impossible. One way leads to peace, the other, almost inevitably, to war. The next few months will decide which one we shall have taken—and such a road once taken is well-nigh impossible to retrace.

THE BRIGHTON LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

By REG. GROVES

THE Annual Conference of the Labour Party assembled this year, according to the Press, "in high spirits." It was a "victory" conference and in harmony with its decisions was the setting. An adoring capitalist Press, an admiring Mayor of Brighton and a docile conference.

The President, in his opening speech, "sounded the note of victory." He referred in glowing terms to Mr. MacDonald's "mission of peace," to Mr. Snowden's "great success at the Hague." He scorned the suggestion that Labour was losing sight of its objective and ended by declaring that :—

Our object, in brief, is to establish justice among the nations and to save the people of the world from the horror of another war. . . . The Labour Government is acting in the spirit of Socialism. Socialist education is being conducted by the Party throughout the length and breadth of the land, the trade union movement is better led and directed to-day than ever before. The Conference to-day meets in high spirits ; the party and the Government are doing well. Success is not spoiling us. . . . Let it be understood by everybody that the purpose of the Labour Party is as much as ever to secure the conquest of our country for the people of our country, the conquest of the world for the workers of the world. . . . We aim at a new society—the Socialist Commonwealth.

This speech was featured in the *Daily Herald* with the headlines :
"Our Aims a Socialist Commonwealth."

The Labour Government "Does Well"

In India, thirty-three working-class leaders, British and Indian, are on trial. This trial is only part of the imperialist offensive against the Indian and British working class. Since the Labour Government took office, the reign of terror, existing in India under the Baldwin Government, has been intensified. The attack on hours and wages has extended, public meetings prohibited, newspapers suppressed. Further arrests have taken place, strikers

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have been assaulted and imprisoned. One political prisoner has died in a brave protest against the vile prison conditions.

“ Our Party and the Labour Government are doing well . . . the purpose of our Party is to secure the conquest of the world for the workers of the world.”

500,000 cotton workers, after years of low wages and short time—years of semi-starvation for thousands—have received a reduction of 1s. 3d. in the pound. The Trade Union leadership, the cotton bosses and the Labour Government combined to reduce their wages and through the triumph of the arbitration board set up by the Labour Government the cotton workers have been driven one step further towards the abyss of misery now being endured by the miners. The sacred cause of “ Peace in Industry ” has been vindicated; the profit-mongers have been temporarily satisfied; the Cabinet Ministers continue to receive the munificent salaries that capitalism pays to its faithful servants. *“ The purpose of our Party is to secure the conquest of our country for the people of our country.”*

In Palestine, the Labour Government has continued and intensified the traditional policy of British imperialism. It has fostered religious differences in order to split the Jewish and Arab workers ; it has suppressed all militant working-class bodies. It has armed the Jewish Fascists and has wiped out whole Arab villages with its Air Force. It has greeted the rising provoked by its own policy with bombs, troops and warships. It is now engaged in trying, convicting and shooting scores of Arabs daily. *“ Our object, in brief, is to establish justice among the nations and to save the people of the world from the horrors of another war.”*

The Trade Union leaders are openly working with the Labour Government, are everywhere assisting the bosses to drive down the standards of the workers. In the name of Rationalisation, wages are being reduced, hours increased, production being speeded up and labour displaced. Strike after strike is being broken by the shameless treachery of the Union leaders. The “ Socialists ” of years ago, the “ militants ” of 1925, no longer pretend resistance to the bosses’ demands, no longer conceal their association with the employers. They are openly doing the work of their masters and driving the British workers down into unemployment, starvation and world war. *“ Socialist propaganda is being conducted throughout*

the length and breadth of the land. The Trade Unions are better led and directed than ever before."

What is the meaning of this seeming contradiction? How is it possible for Morrison to exalt the Labour Government's actions in this way? A few years ago it would have been said that this marks the isolation of the Labour leadership from the class struggle. To-day it shows how close to the class struggle is the Labour Party; *only on the side of the ruling class*. To-day there is no longer any contradiction between the policy and the actions of the Labour Party. The Labour Government *is* "doing well." The suppression of the Indian and Arab peoples, the wage-cuts, the continuing of the brutal policy of Baldwin towards the unemployed, the attempts to impose the conditions of the bondholders on the Russian workers—these are in no way a contradiction of their policy. *The logical fulfilment of the policy of the Labour Party is unfolding itself before the eyes of the working class.*

The "Minister for Employment"

While the Labour Government is fulfilling its promises to the bourgeoisie, the emptiness of its promises to the workers are now being revealed. Thomas's return from Canada and his much awaited declaration of the results achieved are an example of this. It was once a commonplace on Labour platforms that the fundamental cause of unemployment was private ownership of the means of production. During the election this was noticeable by its absence. The Labour Party promised to give work and relief to the unemployed without the struggle to abolish capitalist control of industry. The failure of the Government to check the brutalities of the Labour Exchanges, their failure to alter the conditions surrounding the payment of benefit or to improve in any way the general lot of the unemployed have already caused profound uneasiness in the movement, as was even revealed at the Conference. Equally the high hopes raised and fostered about the achievements of J. H. Thomas were dashed to the ground.

J. H. Thomas stated, after speaking at length on nothing in particular :—

I am not juggling. I do not say that a million people will be found work in the next two years. *I do not know how I can do that. I do*

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not believe this Government or any other Government can do it. You cannot deal with an evil of centuries, accentuated by a hundred and one different circumstances, in such a short time. You can only make a contribution to its solution. (Evening Standard, October 1.)

Here, clearly stated, is the position. There is nothing new in this declaration. The newest Socialist recruit could have explained that no government of capitalism, no government with the capitalist class in control of industry, can solve a problem that arises directly from the control of industry by the bosses. It is "an evil of centuries." Neither "this Government nor any other Government" can solve it. Precisely, Mr. Thomas. The only hope for the millions of unemployed is class organisation. To the extent that they are organised and led by the revolutionary workers will they force concessions from the bosses and their Labour Government. To the extent that they are linked up with the whole of their class in the struggle for the overthrow of the ruling class they will be making their "contribution," and a permanent one, to the ending of the misery of unemployment. No wonder the delegates at the conference were disappointed !

" Socialism " and the Bankers

The recent rise in the Bank Rate was greeted by a storm of fury by the "Lefts" in the Labour Party—especially by the I.L.P. Tillett denounced it as a plot against the Labour Government ; Brailsford described it in the terms "City Challenges Labour" and said, "All hope is gone of a speedy reduction in the rising tide of unemployment." E. F. Wise said at the conference that "the rise in the Bank Rate was a disaster, especially to the Labour Government." Labour's Chancellor of the Exchequer replied with a direct defence of the rise in the Bank Rate. He stated that :—

In no quarter where opinion is informed has there been any suggestion that in the circumstances any other course was possible . . . it was admitted *that given the system we have*, then the directors of the Bank of England had no other course.

The Committee of Inquiry set up had nothing to do with the Bank Rate and implied "no reflection whatever upon British banking and financial institutions."

Thus are the critics of banking and bankers answered not only

by a defence of this particular action of Finance-Capital, but by a plain declaration that as long as the present system continued such things were inevitable and that there could be no question of the Treasury or the Labour Government interfering with the sacred rights of capitalism in the slightest degree.

The only possible answer to this was an answer in the terms of the class struggle and so the I.L.P. withdrew its resolution which drew attention to the "disastrous effect of the raising of the Bank Rate on trade and employment." The critics were routed. The "Socialist" Chancellor had vindicated that beneficent group who control the banks and on whom "no reflection" must be cast.

Labour and India

The reply of Drummond Shiels, Under-Secretary for India, to the attempts of the I.L.P. to refer back that section of the Executive's report dealing with India is particularly illuminating. He said, in connection with the Meerut trial :—

The prisoners in the Meerut case were arrested in March, before the Labour Government came into office, *but the Government accepted full responsibility for their present position.* These men were not in prison because they were trade union leaders; they were not charged with being agitators or Communists, but with having engaged in a conspiracy to change the Government of India by armed force. The Communist Party were making strenuous efforts to capture the Trade Union Movement in India. The Government of India was anxious to encourage genuine trade unionism and that trade unionism should escape from the present troublesome and dangerous conditions. They were in favour of the utmost freedom of speech in India consistent with the preservation of public order . . . they took that attitude on the broad principles applicable to every civilised community, but they also took it in the interests of the uninformed humble people of India. (*The Times*, October 2.)

No declaration could be more open and unashamed. Even accepting the plea that these workers were not imprisoned for their trade union activities (and the facts point very clearly otherwise), no worker would argue that this justifies to him their imprisonment. In Britain the Labour leadership proudly points to the franchise as the "peaceful way to Socialism." *In India even the pretence of democracy does not exist.* The Government of India shoots and batons strikers, imprisons strike leaders, suppresses newspapers and prohibits public meetings. The Indian workers must accept

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this terrorism with folded arms and must leave their emancipation to their gentle, kind-hearted rulers ! The Government, we are assured, "is anxious to encourage genuine trade unionism." What is meant by genuine trade unionism ? Did not the Tory Government pass the T.U. Act in order to encourage "sane," "genuine" trade unionism ? Is not "genuine" trade unionism now being used to break the strikes of the British workers ?

The Government of India has shown only too clearly what it means by the encouragement of genuine trade unionism in its support of the reformist textile union, led from outside, with its 5,000 members, and its imprisonment of the leaders of the Girni Kamgar Union with over 70,000 members. It has shown what it means by "genuine" trade unionism by its arming and protecting of blacklegs, its brutal treatment of strikers and by the imprisonment of thirty-three workers who are building up unions of struggle as against the company unions of the British and Indian Labour leaders.

The Government, we learn, is in favour of the "utmost freedom of speech consistent with the preservation of public order." So was the Russian Tsarist Government ; so is every Government. What is meant, as experience has shown British workers, that any attack on *property right* is considered inconsistent with the preservation of public order. Propaganda in favour of industrial peace or acceptance of wage cuts, servile petitioning for Dominion status, such things are not suppressed—only meetings of the workers demanding bread, demanding freedom of meeting and organisation, demanding the ending of British rule and its attendant horrors, are smashed up and prohibited as not being "consistent with the preservation of public order," as not being in the interests of the "uninformed, humble people of India." Strike breaking, ten hours a day for less than a shilling, an infantile death rate of over 800 in the 1,000, victimisation, shooting and imprisonment for strikers, these are in the interests of the humble workers of India, Mr. Shiels. No worker, knowing the issues, could read this speech without a feeling of disgust and fury.

The "Opposition"

This conference was marked out from previous conferences

most clearly by the complete absence of militant workers sharply attacking the policy of MacDonaldism. For the first time since the war the task of rallying the rank and file against the platform fell completely to the I.L.P. In what way was the opposition conducted?

In the first place the circumstances at this conference were entirely different to those at any previous conference. The conference was faced with the fact of a Labour Government and the opposition with the fact that to maintain their rôle they must attack not merely policies and programmes *but must condemn the actions of the Labour Government*. This they did to a point. The numerous rank-and-file delegates, dissatisfied with the Labour Government, in many cases indignant, looked for leadership against the platform. The I.L.P. fulfilled its normal function—the safety valve for the dissatisfied elements—and harnessed these delegates behind their attack. What exactly did the opposition achieve? Did they change the Labour Government's policy towards India? Did they make any change at all in the programme of the Labour Party? The answer is clearly no. What was achieved by the opposition? Firstly, it is clear that they diverted any dissatisfaction into their own channels—that is behind the leadership of the I.L.P. Secondly, they are now the recognised Left opposition inside the Labour movement.

But yet one point remains that will stamp the I.L.P., for the militant workers, not as the working-class opposition to MacDonaldism but as MacDonald's chief allies. The I.L.P. condemned, as it was forced to in order to maintain its position, the policy of the Labour Government on various issues. *But the I.L.P. remains behind the Labour Government; its M.P.'s support it in the House; its propagandists and newspapers call on the workers to vote Labour, and because of this its policy and action stand condemned in the eyes of the workers.*

It might condemn the action of the Labour Government in cutting the wages of the cotton operatives, but did the I.L.P. call on the cotton workers to resist the arbitration award? It might condemn the Labour Government for its actions in India, but beyond words of protest (uttered with apologies), what does it do to strengthen and assist the revolutionary section of the Indian

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Labour movement ? It is on these concrete questions that the real rôle of the I.L.P. can be gauged.

In the face of the new constitution ; a constitution which brings the Labour Party more completely into line with the Social Democratic Parties on the Continent ; a constitution which tightens the discipline of the Party ; which gives the Executive still more power to deal with real critics and the rank and file less ; in the face of this and the fact that the present actions of the Government are a natural logical outcome of their policy, the I.L.P. continues to urge that it is still possible to alter the policy of Labour ; that the place of militants is inside, accepting *the discipline and policy of the Labour Party*. The meaning of this should be clear to all workers, and in the fight against the Labour Government, as the enemy of the working class, the revolutionary section of the workers must bring its sharpest weapons of attack to bear on the so-called " Left Wing " inside the Labour Party.

Fight the Labour Government

That it was possible for this " victory " conference to meet in " high spirits," at a time when the working class is facing heavy attacks and is entering a period of mighty class conflicts, reveals only too clearly where the Labour Party and the Labour Government stand to-day. With the struggle now taking place in the coal-fields ; the isolated fights in the textile areas ; the approaching woollen crisis and the developing attack on the railways, together with the development of the Rationalisation offensive in all industries, the working class must strengthen its forces, prepare its army and build its leadership. The rôle of the Labour Government has already been revealed. It is the Government of Rationalisation, of wage cuts and war. In these circumstances the central point of the coming battles will be the Labour Government ; the greatest obstacle to the successful struggle of the workers will be the Labour Government ; the most bitter and ruthless enemy of the workers will be the Labour Government.

In the face of this it is necessary that the forces of the revolutionary workers must be mobilised against the Labour Government and its servant the Independent Labour Party.

THE MINING SITUATION

By GARFIELD WILLIAMS

THE termination of the District Agreements at the end of the year serves to centre attention once more on the condition of the Mining industry ; further, they present the problem in a still more insoluble plight, for, instead of the industry overcoming its obstacles, these have increased basically and leave the British mining industry in its former position as the central problem confronting declining British capitalism. This is the situation that gives tremendous significance to the termination of the District Agreements in South Wales, Scotland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire and Forest of Dean.

The defeat of the miners in 1926 by the coalowners, Baldwin Government, Labour Party and Trade Union leaders led to the imposition of these District Agreements ; these were in themselves the prelude to a whole series of attacks on the miners, and served as the medium for the most bitter attacks by the coalowners throughout the past three years. The Plender and Dodd Awards and the application "for reduction" via Taylor in South Wales were efforts synonymous with a whole gamut of attacks on local price lists and customs affecting every bit and every miner. This is the outline of the conditions of the miners for the three years from 1926 to 1929 ; it is also the direct cause of the growing militancy among the miners.

The Economic Condition of the Industry

The period following 1926 has been utilised by the coalowners in an effort to "reorganise" the industry, and the first stage of rationalisation has been initiated. The attacks upon the miners, flowing through the process of amalgamations, selling or marketing schemes and technical improvements, have resulted in worsened wage and working conditions and a tremendous intensification of exploitation, but have left the industry still confronted with the task of winning markets, and the "price-cutting war" unabated.

Compared with a production for 1913 of 287,000,000 tons the following figures indicate the extent of the decline of the industry :—

1925	..	..	..	243,000,000 tons
1927	..	..	..	251,000,000 tons
1928	..	..	..	238,000,000 tons

These figures stand out when it is remembered that the estimated producing capacity of the industry is approximately 300 to 325 million tons per annum.

Taking these figures in comparison with the development of world production, it is clear that the decline of the British mining industry is fundamental, and that it continues with increasing intensity :—

<i>World Production (Thousand Metric Tons)</i>			<i>British Share of World Production</i>				
1913	1,214,367	1913	..	..	24 per cent.
1923	1,204,019	1923	..	..	23 per cent.
1927	1,276,837	1927	..	..	20 per cent.

Thus, while world coal production is increasing, Britain's share is decreasing rapidly, and the internal position of the industry points to a continuation of the relative and absolute decline of British coal capitalism. The crisis is fundamental.

The Struggle for Markets

Year	Output	Cost per ton	Export bunkers (millions)	Price per ton	Home use (millions)
1925	.. 243	16s. 4d.	71.5	19s. 10d.	169.6
1927	.. 251	14s. 7d.	71.9	17s. 10d.	179.9
1928	.. 238	12s. 10d.	71.6	15s. 7d.	164.1

These figures show that the output is still declining ; export of coal shows no increase, while home use of coal shows no improvement. It should be noted that the high use of "home" coal for 1927 is abnormal and is accounted for by the exhaustion of stocks during the long-drawn-out 1926 lock-out. On the other hand, the mad competition for markets resulted in the heavy fall in price per ton, itself a reflection of the attacks on the miners' price lists and customs. The difference between cost per ton for 1927 and 1928 clearly reflects the nature and extent of local reductions. *Nevertheless, despite the attacks upon the miners, the critical position of the industry is accentuated, and its decline intensified.*

Mining Wages, &c.

	£ (millions)	Number employed (thousands)	Shifts worked (millions)	Proceeds
1924 : Qrtly. Av.	38.8	1,095	71.1	
1927 : Qrtly. Av.	29.5	963	58.5	
1928 : 1st Qtr...	27.4	921	58.2	
2nd Qtr.	24.3	891	55.5	
3rd Qtr...	23.5	859	50.7	
4th Qtr...	25.0	851	54.2	
1929 : 1st Qtr. . .	26.6	880	57.7	14s. od.
2nd Qtr.	25.5	897	55.4	13s. 10d.

The proceeds in the first and second quarters of 1929 were 14s. and 13s. 10d., respectively, and the costs 2s. 3d. and 2s. 6d. This table again indicates the nature of the attack on the workers' wages, and right up to the end of June this process is seen where the 897,000 miners receive no more in wages in the aggregate than the 851,000 during the fourth quarter of 1928. Further, a comparison of the shifts worked points to a continuation of the "short week," which continues to approximate 4.5 days per week. On this basis the average wages received by the miners (9s. 2.69d. for the first quarter of 1929) does not exceed £2 per week, *i.e.*, no more than 30 per cent. above the 1914 rates, and more than 30 per cent. below the existing official cost of living index !

Rationalisation and Increased Exploitation of the Miners

The direct attack upon the miners' wages has been accompanied by the introduction of "speeding-up" leading to the most intense exploitation in the pits. This is seen in the increased output per man, per shift, in the following table :—

Period	Wages	Output per man per shift
1st Quarter, 1926	10s. 5d.	18.46
Average, 1927	10s. 6d.	20.66
2nd Quarter, 1927	10s. 3d.	20.47
3rd Quarter, 1927	9s. 9d.	20.47
4th Quarter, 1927	9s. 7d.	20.82
1st Quarter, 1928	9s. 5d.	21.24
2nd Quarter, 1928	9s. 3d.	20.98
3rd Quarter, 1928	9s. 3d.	21.13
4th Quarter, 1928	9s. 2d.	21.80
1st Quarter, 1929	9s. 2d.	22.13
2nd Quarter, 1929	9s. 2d.	22.45

Thus, in general, the miners have borne the whole of the burden of the declining industry. Their conditions (wages and hours) have been worsened and, in addition, the first effects of the rationalisation drive has resulted in a more intensive exploitation of the miners, making conditions in the pits unbearable. It is upon this basis that the struggles in the minefields are to be correctly analysed. Nine Mile Point, Dawdon, and the present struggle at Binley all bear testimony to the attacks of the coalowners *and taken with the increasing number of local conflicts* (the recent six "disputes" in Scotland, the crop of economic conflicts in South Wales and every other minefield) *point to a growing resistance on the part of the miners to the rationalisation drives of the capitalist class*, and already contain the elements for the transformation of the struggle from the defensive to the offensive against capitalism. It is, therefore, possible, on the basis of the above, to enumerate the following conclusions as characterising the present position which must serve as a basis for an approach to the problem immediately confronting the miners :—

- (1) The British mining industry is confronted with an accentuation of its decline, both internally and on the world market.
- (2) The rationalisation efforts of the coalowners have served to increase this accentuation instead of improving the position.
- (3) The miners have been made to pay the price for these efforts of "reorganisation," and are breaking through the fetters of Mondism and industrial peace and thereby directly undermining the rationalisation proposals.
- (4) Inasmuch as the problem of the mining industry is inextricably bound up with the whole problem of declining British capitalism, action on the part of the miners to improve their conditions completely shatters the last vestiges of capitalist rationalisation and opens up the whole problem of class power.
- (5) Arising from these conclusions, the miners are confronted with the problem of deliberately "sorting out" the forces that stand for further rationalisation measures (which can only be applied with further attacks on the workers) in order to achieve the improvements which action alone can secure.

The forces upon which the miners are concentrating attention at the present time are : The Labour Government, the Miners' Federation, the coalowners, the Communist Party and the Miners' Minority Movement.

The coalowners have not caused any confusion among miners ; it is certain that the miners have sufficient experience (that has not escaped the youngest miner) to anticipate nothing from the coalowners other than through struggle ; 1921, 1926 and the continuous onslaught on every pit have forced the miners to recognise the coalowners as their most bitter class enemies. The impudent "suggestion" of Instone, a prominent and, what is more, a *typical* coal-boss, that—

There is a way to earn more wages, which would be welcomed and encouraged, *and that is by more work* [harder.—G. W.]—not less—

is the daily experience of the miner, which has left him with no illusions as to the nature of the enemy he has to deal with. The position concerning the remainder is far more confused, and it is through this that coalowners hope to exploit the position. The existence of the capitalist Labour Government is the weapon of the coalowners in that the hopes of the miners are centred there.

The Labour Government and the Miners

The Labour Party and its leaders in the Labour Government have played with the miners. Pledged to a policy of capitalist rationalisation they will not "honour" the pledges made to the miners prior to the general election. But this Government, despite its pledges, is equally responsible with the coalowners and the Baldwin Government for reducing the wages and increasing the hours of the miners in 1926. They have played with the miners' "votes" and loyalty to such an extent that the present developing situation is forcing the most complete exposure of MacDonal and Co. What has already happened? Cook, and the leaders of the M.F.G.B., obtained the support of the miners, *and of the working class*, on the basis of a "written pledge" from MacDonal to the effect that the first charge of the Labour Government would be the "introduction of legislation in the first session" for the removal of the Eight-Hour Day from the Statute Book and the introduction of the Seven-Hour Day together with wage and other

improvements. Far from "honouring" this "pledge" (which was exposed at the time by the LABOUR MONTHLY and other militant organs of the working-class movement) the Labour Government has relegated it, together with its other promises, to the archives of history, and has taken out a pledge to capitalism, which it is honouring, of rationalising its industry. It is, in fact, openly flouting the miners with preparations for assisting the coal-owners in their further attacks. This is the significance of the new "pledge" made by the capitalist Labour Government through the mouth of Turner, its Secretary for Mines, that "the mining dispute should be settled before the end of the year in the same way as the cotton dispute." Here is the attitude of the Labour Government to the miners, the policy and attitude of utilising the capitalist State apparatus in the spirit and letter of social fascism for *dictating under the cloak of "arbitration" the capitalists' terms to the workers in the industry.*

It would be an obvious error to see in this attitude of the Labour Government merely something that has developed overnight. The policy of "arbitration," or the selling of the workers to capitalism in advance, is in keeping with the attitude of the Labour Party bureaucracy during and since the 1926 struggle. Then, the main difference between the Baldwin Government and MacDonald was one of *degree*, MacDonald seeing in Baldwin's treatment of the General Strike and Lock-out only a "lack of determination." The past three months of Labour Government go to prove that MacDonald will, with the advantage of possessing the faith and loyalty of the workers, administer capitalism for the capitalist class with greater determination and efficiency than the capitalists could do themselves. But this will only be possible so long as the faith of the workers is centred in the Labour Government. This is fast being smashed and in the present situation the miners of necessity will play a leading part in this, because the Seven-hour Day and wage increases must be won in the teeth of prepared opposition of the Labour Government.

The Miners' Federation and the Miners

The Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and its District Federations, stand compromised equally with the Labour Govern-

ment, and, instead of leading the miners into action for the improvements that are long overdue, will resist and fight against action on the part of the miners.

Beginning with the end of the 1926 Lock-out, the M.F.G.B. endeavoured to put off the miners with the slogan of "Wait for a Labour Government." It was the leaders of the M.F.G.B., and Cook in particular, who deliberately led the miners behind the "pledge" of the Seven-Hour Day to the Social-Fascist Labour Government. It was with a complete turn to Mondism and industrial peace that the miners were bullied into the attitude of "no embarrassment of the Labour Government." Without going into the other details that have attended this process, it is sufficient to state that the entire transformation of the M.F.G.B. into a part of the State apparatus has found even the Miners' Federation being valued accordingly by the Labour Government. The "admittance of the coalowners into the parlour by the Labour Government, and the keeping of the Federation leaders on the doormat" in the recent "discussions" has caused Cook a deal of chagrin. This is the explanation of his "criticisms" of the Labour Government. Mr. Cook and the leaders of the M.F.G.B. are only to be called when necessary to capitalism. The handing over of the Miners' Federation to capitalism coincides with the preparations for further rationalisation measures, and the main cry of the M.F.G.B. bureaucracy is for permission to assist in the application of these measures.

They (the Government) must take the Federation into their confidence more, give it its rightful place in any legislative proposals. . . . We want to help our colleagues in the Government. (A. J. Cook, at Chesterton, October 13, 1929.)

These measures in the voice of Cook (and they are indistinguishable from those of Hodges and the Coalowners) at Geneva include—

the establishment of a system of organised marketing—in the absence of which, long before another ten years had passed (during which period the M.F.G.B. and capitalist Labour Government will strain every nerve to rationalise the mining industry.—G.W.), it was highly probable that the British coal industry would be thoroughly reorganised, and in a position, in the absence of international agreement, to deluge the markets of the Continent with cheap coal. (Cook at Geneva: *Daily Herald*, October 7, 1929.)

The same prospect is foreseen by Hodges in his speech at the Coal Trade Luncheon Club the same day :—

A hopeful sign is the real effort of the industry to reorganise itself on its commercial as well as its economic side. . . . The consequences must be faced. If an increase in price is necessary it must be faced. *If a drastic cutting down is necessary by closing down uneconomic pits, by reducing unnecessary personnel . . . that must be done. We cannot be squeamish.*

Hodges is speaking of the National Coal Marketing Scheme, and is echoed by Cook, the M.F.G.B., and Labour Government, for, according to Cook :—

The National Coal Marketing Scheme is an epoch-making advance towards the goal which the mineworkers have long set themselves.

Thus have the bureaucrats of the M.F.G.B., the Labour Government of capitalist rationalisation, and the coalowners formed a united front behind the banner of "capitalist reorganisation of industry" for the conduct of the most bitter and vicious attacks upon the miners and working class. The immediate period ahead will serve to bring these facts out into yet bolder relief. In the meantime the miners must do something : they cannot stand "where they are." The prospect is of either succumbing to the onslaught of the combined forces of capitalism *or of struggling for the achievement of the immediate demands of the Seven-Hour Day and wage increases.*

The former is the easy course of "waiting" for the Labour Government to "more clearly" show its hand—as if it has not done so sufficiently already !

The latter is the course of *action* and *independent struggle* against the coal owners, capitalist Labour Government and Trade Union bureaucracy.

For the course of action, the first essential is the immediate building of rank-and-file Committees of Action in every pit to unite all the workers, the 40 odd per cent. organised in the M.F.G.B. and the 60 per cent. unorganised workers outside the Union through sheer disgust with the treachery of the Union leaders, for struggle, not only with the termination of the District Agreements, but from now onward, taking advantage of every local and partial struggle for their extension on the basis of the elementary demands that are of vital importance to the miners and for determined struggle against the combined forces of Trade Union and Social Fascism and declining capitalism.

WHAT ABOUT THE CIVIL SERVICE?

By EX-CIVIL SERVANT

IT has been well said that the security of capitalist society rests as much upon belief as upon bayonets. Acting upon this maxim the British ruling class has carefully fostered the illusion that the public is served by an impartial civil service. The average man, content to believe that civil servants are an expensive necessity, has accepted the illusion. The class-conscious worker cannot, however, afford to adopt a similar position for the most cursory examination will reveal that the civil service is an important part of the machinery of capitalism and an effective barrier against the progress of the revolutionary working class in its struggle for power.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald with that *naïveté* that lends charm to so many of his public utterances has declared that he intends to use the civil service—use it ostensibly in the campaign to obtain Socialism. In the days of the advent of a Labour Government it is useful to examine the civil service and to show that the statement made by the leader of the Labour Party could only have been made by one blind to the class structure of society and hostile to the emergence of the working class as a distinct entity determined to conquer power.

Like the insect, the civil service is divided into three parts: administrative, executive and clerical. The grades are recruited from different ranks in society. The examination for the administrative grade is specially designed to attract young people from the universities, while the executive and clerical grades are open to the boys and girls from the secondary schools. The products of the elementary schools stand little chance of direct entry.

The analogy of the insect is not inappropriate and it is the administrative grade that is the head of the organism. The executive grade gives effect to its decisions and the clerical class performs the routine work. There exist on paper many excellent schemes for promotion from one grade to another, but in reality the capitalist state takes care that the class character of each is

clearly maintained. It will be seen that the personnel of the administrative grade is drawn from the ranks of the upper classes. It is this section that advises Ministers and moulds legislation. In their hands rests the control of the legislative machine. It has always been in their grasp. Hitherto no conflict in interest has existed between those who represented Ministries in Parliament and those who served in them. They both served capitalism. It is not suggested that the members of the present Government are to be distinguished by any strong desire to abolish the capitalist system, all that it is sought to do is to point out if they were determined to do so, men of their kidney drugged by illusions about an impartial civil service would be impotent. The Labour minister of the common or garden variety is in as disadvantageous a position in his department as a slum child on the playing fields of Eton.

The service is supposed to be impartial politically and to carry out the policy of whatever Government may be in power. It is true that the civil servant is forbidden to take part in politics, but while the effect of this prohibition is to prevent the lower paid employee of the State from giving expression to his class affinity with the worker in industry it does not prevent the administrative civil servant from influencing policy in accordance with the needs of his class. An effective illustration of this is contained in the imperialist tone of the Foreign Office documents dealing with British foreign policy before the war. A minor indication of the same thing leaps to the mind of the writer. It was a jocular notice displayed in a room in a department likely to be concerned with trade with the U.S.S.R. It read: "The—Lodge of Bolsheviks will meet to-night. The comrades will wear trousers." Heaven help the Minister that proposed to use this section of the service to implement a policy favourable to Russia.

In every department of State those advising on public policy are advising in the interests of capitalism. The Foreign Office is convinced that the U.S.S.R. is untouchable and that Egypt is and must remain an Edom over which Britain has cast her shoe. The India Office persecutes agitators and crushes the Swaraj Movement and the Colonial Office maintains the subjection of millions of coloured peoples. In the home sphere the influence

of the servants of the ruling class permanently installed in the centres of government is no less potent. The War Office issues strike-breaking circulars, the Ministry of Health produces an Audit Bill designed to control the activities of class-conscious guardians, and in the day of a Labour Government the Home Office spies upon the workers' organisations and endeavours to prosecute their agitators. Against the weight of official opinion the most virile Labour minister struggles like a fly in jam. In a little while he ceases to be a danger to the steel framework of the capitalist State and becomes part of it. The pacifist turned Air Minister praises the force that bombs native villages.

The hostile attitude of the Foreign Office towards Soviet Russia is known throughout the world. Indeed, it is true to say that just as Sir Eyre Crowe and his underlings shaped British foreign policy into an anti-German mould before the war, which was the logical outcome of their efforts, so to-day the Foreign Office is using every effort to exercise an anti-Soviet influence both at home and abroad. Probably none of the high officials at the Foreign Office is conversant with the theories of Bolshevism, certainly none of them has any sympathy with the final aims of the Workers' Government of the U.S.S.R. Sufficient for these stiff-necked one-idea men that the workers somewhere in Eastern Europe have got out of hand and have dethroned the best people. A government set up by a revolutionary working class is a government to be destroyed lest one day the toilers of Britain should be encouraged by its example to challenge the supremacy of the ruling class from which the counsellors and secretaries of the diplomatic service are sprung.

The reformist Labour Movement harbours many illusions about the civil service. It conceives the higher officials to be experts and supermen. It credits them with an impossible impartiality. Nobody denies that much efficient administrative work is done by the civil service, more particularly in the collection of revenue and in those departments that are somewhat sterile from the point of view of class interests. In such offices, too, there is more promotion from the ranks than in the departments of State. Talent more easily finds its way to the top. It is in the key positions of the State service that there are to be found in

control men who are recruited from the public schools and universities, a type suspicious of intellectual ability and un-businesslike in its methods. It is the experts of the Treasury who restore the gold standard and then defend themselves against the onslaughts of economists with jejune and ineffective arguments. It is the experts of the Home Office that produce childish and futile White Papers regarding Arcos raids. It is the experts of the Indian Civil Service that provide the world with "penny dreadful" accounts of Bolshevism in the East. It is in these experts that Labour has faith.

Obviously an institution such as the British civil service can have no place in a workers' state. It is essentially part and parcel of capitalism. A nucleus of real ability and a will to take an active part in the class struggle does, however, exist in the ranks of the executive and clerical grades. These people struggle daily against the oppression of the higher grades and in their official life they perceive that the better posts in the service are usually awarded to those who are at one in outlook with the powers that be. In their everyday life they suffer from the effects of low wage conditions forced upon them by the controlling caste. The defence of these low wages by the administrative officials by reference to the standard of wages in industry serves to convince the minor civil servant of his identity with the workers generally.

The genuine working-class movements might well give attention to the civil service. They would be well advised to tear aside the veil that shades the servants of capitalism, permanently installed in the seats of power, from public criticism and thus show the workers that a powerful anti-Socialist force lies hidden in the civil service, a force that is not disturbed by popular votes or greatly affected by the dictates of conventionally minded governments. It is time that the working class opened fire directly on this standing army of capitalism.

The World of Labour

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U.S.A.

Textile Workers' Strike and the Gastonia Trial ¹

THE trial of the sixteen textile workers from Gastonia, North Carolina, for the murder of John Aderholt, Local Chief of Police, has caused a stir and aroused class feeling in a manner comparable to the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Hundreds of thousands of signatures to petitions of protest have been obtained, and demonstrations have taken place not only in the U.S.A. but in many European countries, while in the Argentine a general strike was called in Rosario, which completely paralysed the port for several days.

On August 26 the trial opened at Charlotte, a town some twenty miles away from Gastonia, and the first six days were spent in swearing in a jury. Both defence and prosecution had the right to veto a certain number of "veniremen" on the grounds of prejudice, and nearly every candidate was objected to by one side or the other; the workers were all favourable to the textile leaders and the middle class mostly thought they ought to be hanged, whether they were guilty or not. The local Press had been carrying on a campaign of misrepresentation and incitement, of which this, quoted by the *New York Nation* from the *Charlotte Press*, is a fair sample:—

The leaders of the N.T.W.U. are Communists and are a menace to all that we hold most sacred. They believe in violence, arson, murder. . . . They are undermining all morality, all religion. But nevertheless they must be given a fair trial, although everyone knows that they deserve to be shot at sunrise.

Finally the defence vetoes were exhausted, and the judge cheerfully accepted as jurors men who admitted that they were prejudiced against the defendants, while rejecting anyone who confessed to reading the *Daily Worker* or *Gastonia Defender*. In spite of this it was rumoured that the jury was becoming too favourable to the prisoners, after hearing some of the evidence, and on September 9 Judge Barnhill declared a "mistrial" on the grounds that one of the jurors had become "emotionally insane" under the strain.

The next few weeks were a reign of terror in the district. On September 10 300 gunmen of the Manville Jenckes Co. attacked the W.I.R. tent colony

¹ Cf. LABOUR MONTHLY, September, 1929.

and kidnapped three of the union leaders, and this was followed up by the arrest of eight others, the murder of Ella Wiggins, an organiser of the union, who was ambushed and shot, and by further kidnappings, beatings and shootings.

Martial law was threatened, but the State Governor, realising that things had gone too far, called a conference with the millowners, at which plans were discussed for a more legal and systematic attack on the militant textile workers' union, including the setting up of a general company union for the whole of the southern textile workers.

The prosecution decided to beat a strategic retreat, and when the trial was resumed on September 30 the State announced the dismissal of the charges of first degree murder against nine of the defendants, and against the other seven for assault. Nine of the defendants were discharged, but seven of them, including Fred E. Beal, were charged with second degree murder, or manslaughter. This time a packed jury was obtained, who frankly said in advance that they believed in the prisoners' guilt, and a verdict of guilty was obtained, with sentences up to seventeen and twenty years. An appeal has been lodged, and the case is by no means at an end.

One consequence of the Gastonia struggle has been the "voluntary" reduction of hours by the owners, from 60 to 55, without reduction of wages.

Another town in North Carolina has recently become a storm centre. At Marion, a strike for better conditions was settled by the reformist U.T.W. without consultation of the rank-and-file, who resented both the terms and the manner of settlement. On October 2 some of them decided to walk out, and the sheriff promptly called in troops and launched an attack with tear gas bombs, in which five of the strikers were killed and about twenty more wounded.

Convention of the Trade Union Unity League

THE Convention of the T.U.U.L., which was also the Fourth National Convention of the Trade Union Educational League, was held in Cleveland, Ohio, from August 31 to September 2, and proved the most successful left wing congress convened in the United States.

There were 690 delegates (as compared with 297 in 1928) about half of whom came from the new industrial unions, including 181 miners, while the rest represented shop committees, Left Wing groups in the old unions, &c. The union delegates represented approximately 50,000 members, and the delegates from the unorganised industries came from factories employing roughly 600,000, and were drawn largely from the basic industries of the United States. There were 159 youth delegates, 72 women and 64 negroes.

The size and enthusiasm of the gathering were considered an indication of the radicalisation of the masses and an endorsement of the policy of the R.I.L.U. of building up revolutionary industrial unions in unorganised and partially organised industries.

The great feature of the Convention was the setting up of a new trade union centre, affiliated to the R.I.L.U. as its American section, which will replace the loosely knit organisation of the T.U.F.L. and will act as the co-ordinating body, not only for the new unions but also for the left wing groups in the old unions. According to the draft programme and constitution adopted

at the Conference, the T.U.U.L. is now made up of the national industrial unions (miners, textiles, needle trades, &c.) already formed, and others to be elected, also of national and local industrial leagues, working in the old unions where militant minorities exist, and among the 30,000,000 unorganised workers, for the most part unskilled and neglected by the reformist unions.

The constitution includes a national committee of about fifty, and an executive board of fifteen, and the easy recall of all officials by the membership is secured. William Z. Foster was elected general secretary, and W. F. Dunn editor of *Labour Unity*, the official organ.

The programme of action is based upon the class struggle, the fight against capitalist rationalisation and imperialist war. Its chief aim is the organisation of the unorganised, and it stresses the importance of the fight for the seven-hour day, and against wage reductions and unemployment. The first action of the Convention was to elect a workers' jury to attend the Gastonia trial, and to render its verdict to the working class.

The National Convention was followed by a series of special and industrial conferences, which were held in different centres, and dealt with various subjects, e.g., negro work, organisation of the South, work among the Latin-American workers, and with the problems of particular industries, with a view to building up revolutionary unions in all the main industries.

FRANCE

The Red Trade Union Congress

THE Fifth Congress of the Unitary General Confederation of Trade Unions was held in Paris from September 15 to 22 at the Federation headquarters, the Home Office having refused permission to use municipal premises, which was allowed as a matter of course in the case of the reformist Congress held at the same time.

The greater part of the discussion arose out of the report of the executive committee, presented by Comrade Gitton, who brought forward three main theses :—

- (1) The decadence of capitalism in spite of its attempts to stabilise itself by means of rationalisation.
- (2) The radicalisation of the masses as evinced by the miners' strike in the Loire, the dockers' strike at Bordeaux, and by the participation of the unorganised workers in all industrial movements.
- (3) The fact that all industrial struggles in this period inevitably take on a political character.

He also dealt with the decision of the executive to invite unorganised workers to send delegates to the Congress, saying that it would be a mistake to make use of the unorganised during strikes, and then tell them to keep their distance until they were wanted again, for this would not only isolate the unions from the unorganised masses, but would also end in trade union sectarianism. He exposed the attitude of the reformist minority in the C.G.T.U. towards August 1, and accused the leaders of the Transport Workers' Section of sabotaging the strike. He ended by declaring that the Communists rightly took the leading role in the revolutionary unions because they had earned it by their work in the unions.

The minority groups, which formed the opposition, included Monatte and Chaubelland of the Trade Union League, and others like Boville, Chaussin and Schumacher who had only just left the Communist Party.

The outstanding points of criticism raised by the opposition were :—

- (1) They denied the immediate danger of war.
- (2) They declared that capitalist stabilisation was a fact, and that it would last for another forty years.
- (3) They complained of the domination of the C.G.T.U. which they described as being under party orders from the C.P. and R.I.L.U.
- (4) They denied the radicalisation of the masses, who were deluded and indifferent.
- (5) They objected to the presence of the representatives of the unorganised : “ If the unorganised are revolutionary, then we had better leave our unions and become unorganised in order to be revolutionary.”
- (6) In place of the united front from below advocated by the E.C. report, they proposed overtures to the reformist leaders, *e.g.*, in the matter of social insurance.

On all these points the voting went against them by large majorities, and in the case of the resolution dealing with relations between the C.P. and the C.G.T.U. a clause was added making it clear that no subordination of the trade union movement to the Communist Party was involved.

Passing from the discussion of the report to the daily demands of the workers the Congress considered detailed reports, which set forth a programme of demands, and the best methods of obtaining them. Attention centred largely on the fight against rationalisation, and on the recruitment of the unorganised workers, who number 90 per cent. of the French proletariat.

The Reformist Trade Union Congress

THE twentieth Congress of the reformist national trade union centre (C.G.T.) was held in Paris on September 17 to 20. There were 2,207 delegates, and 80 departmental unions and 36 large unions represented.

The secretary, L. Jouhaux, who celebrated the twentieth year of holding office, made a long speech on presenting his report, in which he appealed for a new mentality, more logic, a flexible faith, and announced that the E.C. intended to reorganise thoroughly its methods and machinery in the direction of centralisation. He ended with a peroration on peace : “ I believe in peace : it is enough for the workers to will peace, and then there will be peace in the world. We are going, slowly but surely, upwards towards light and reason.”

There was some opposition to the official reformist policy, and a few speakers advocated a return to direct action and a greater independence. The Socialist organ *Populaire* admitted “ a melancholy tone in the atmosphere. . . . The workers’ movement is by no means satisfied.”

Reports were submitted on “ Social Insurance,” “ The Working Class and the Problem of Production,” “ The Public Education System,”

“Paid Holidays,” “The Civil Service,” “Social Legislation,” and “International Problems.”

After much discussion a compromise was reached between the Teachers' Federation and the Civil Servants' Federation, by which the teachers retain their formal affiliation through the Civil Service while actually their organisation is almost completely independent, and connected directly with the C.G.T.

A resolution was carried demanding the application of social insurance to all workers, and the draft scheme of the C.G.T. was approved.

Class co-operation was accepted as the ideal, and increasing harmony between the trade union movement and the State as a means of building up economic democracy. Strikes were deprecated as out of date, and capitalist rationalisation was accepted as inevitable. The League of Nations, the anti-War Pact and the I.L.O. were all regarded as factors in the fight for disarmament, and it appeared that it was the “Russian Government which alone desires war,” while the revolutionary campaign against the war danger was decried as unnecessary and provocative.

BOOK REVIEW

THROUGH IMPERIALISTIC EYES¹

The Indian Year Book, 1929. By *The Times of India*, Bombay. (1005 pp., price 12s.)

FOR those who wish a very good outline of what the British overlords of India think of that vast continent, and for those who wish a purely British imperialist view of Indian history, problems, the national movement, &c., this is a very good volume to read. At times it appears to be compiled for tourists only, at others it seems to have been written as a sort of social register of British officialdom in India, and at all times it seems to have been destined for the more or less feeble-minded.

All that is of a semi-scientific nature in the volume, such as an account of languages, of land revenue system, &c., seems to have been lifted from the census reports. The historical sketch is the stereotyped British viewpoint, with the "black hole of Calcutta" thrown in and all reference to the more horrible and more recent black holes (*e.g.*, the Moplah black hole) for which the British are responsible, being gracefully avoided. In this sketch we read that the Prince of Wales was joyously greeted in India when he went there in 1922 to try and marshal Indian boot-lickers behind the English; the truth is that when he arrived in Bombay the troops had to guard him, and soldiers shot down protesting crowds. When he travelled through the states of native Princes, he was of course treated as a toy God—that is why the Princes are permitted to rule; but when he went through other Indian cities he proudly cantered through streets as deserted as cities of the dead, even the cats having been locked in the houses.

It is of interest that Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet are included in this *Yearbook of India*, and it would be of interest for Chinese to read the account of the Younghusband expedition to Tibet which, we are informed, existed under a Chinese "constitutional fiction." It is typical of British historical methods that the indemnity imposed on Tibet is mentioned, but that nothing is said of the Tibetans killed for their unmitigated audacity in opposing the invasion of their country. It is similar to the Nanking and other "incidents" in China, for which the British demand compensation, while they hypocritically ignore the victims of the Nanking Road massacre of 1925.

Just how the British see values may be shown by the space given various subjects in this yearbook. For instance, horse racing in India is assigned twenty pages and here you read the elevating lists of horse owners, the names of the horses, distance and time. Then, on page 24, comes the heading "Social and Economic Conditions." Just a little over one page is given to this subject. It is a shame they did not have any more horse races to fill up this space. Opium, about which the Indian nationalists wage a desperate struggle because the British opium policy is ruining the lives of countless Indians, is assigned one and a-half pages, and we read that the policy of the government has not

¹ We take this notice from the *China Weekly Review*, Shanghai (August 31, 1929), as a typical outside view of British rule.

been to suppress the "indulgence of the almost universal desire of human beings for a stimulant or narcotic," and they add, especially of those whose occupations involve exposure or hard physical labour. They fail to add that opium pills are given to miserable coolies after they have reached the end of their physical strength in brute labour; and they fail to mention that the white civilised owners of the tea plantation of Assam give opium as a part of the daily wage of the plantation serfs—and that these people would not remain serfs but for the opium that drugs them. They also fail to mention that Englishmen are guarded against indulging in the "universal desire for a stimulant or narcotic." This policy of drugging a people to make them slavish and to render the gentle art of pocket-picking on an international scale a highly profitable one is indulged in by other powerful nations also, as China has learned to its cost.

As horse racing is given twenty pages in this yearbook, boxing is given six and a-half pages; child welfare is given just one and a-half pages, although this topic begins with the statement that "among the most pressing problems of India is that presented by the appalling infant mortality"; scientific surveys are treated liberally with four pages, famine is given four, local government three, and forests five and a-half. The gun salutes accorded the various English overlords, and the debauched Indian princes which they maintain, as well as the list of names of boot-lickers and rascals upon which imperialist honours have been conferred, take up thirty-two pages of the volume. The last 200 pages have been devoted to a "Who's Who" in which such honoured names as Gandhi are given a few lines, along with all the British nincompoops and degenerate Maharajas in the country. Tagore is called "Sir," although he returned this title to the rulers of India after the Amritsar massacre in 1919, when 500 of his countrymen were massacred and 1,500 wounded in one garden in the north. It is of interest that the Amritsar massacre is tactfully avoided, and that, instead, much space is given to the awfulness of "violent movements" and "murderous outbreaks" of the Indians.

Hypocrisy cannot go further than in this volume. This is not a yearbook of India. It is a yearbook of the prostituted mentality of the British rulers of India.

M. R.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The Reign of Law. A Short and Simple Introduction to the Work of the Permanent Court of International Justice. By Kathleen E. Innes, B.A. (The Hogarth Press, 42 pp., 1s. 6d.)

American Policy Towards Russia Since 1917. By Frederick Lewis Schuman, Ph.D. (Martin Lawrence, 399 pp., 10s.)

Labor and Automobiles. By Robert W. Dunn. (Modern Books, Ltd., 224 pp., 6s.)

Labor and Silk. By Grace Hutchins. (Modern Books, Ltd., 128 pp., 5s.)

Labor Protection in Soviet Russia. By Dr. G. M. Price. (Modern Books, Ltd., 128 pp., 5s.)

Lies and Hate in Education. Mark Starr. (Hogarth Press, 197 pp., 5s.)

The Coming of Lucifer. A Dream of "Progress." By X. (The Boswell Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd., 93 pp., 2s. 6d.)

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THE
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"Cross Roads"—A Criticism

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Economic Perspective — Labour Government's Failure — Capitalist Criticism — Thomas versus Five-Year Plan — Rationalisation Discussion — Capitalist Decline — A Break? — Reformist Whitewash — Isolated "Facts" — Dialectical Method — Dynamic Forces — World Situation — Obstacles to State Credits — Resistance to Rationalisation — Financial Policy — Reformist Collapse — Bank Rate Controversy — Snowden's "Strength" — Social Fascism.

WITH the closing of 1929, and the main outlines of the Labour Government's programme now fully shown, it will be of value to return to the question of the economic situation and perspective in Britain, and examine it in relation to the Labour Government. The correct understanding of this situation is at the basis of our tactical line. At present there is talk in reformist circles of a break in the decline of British capitalism, of the recovery of pre-war levels, of signs of an upward movement in production and trade. Under cover of this talk it is attempted to screen the real dominant factors of the economic situation. For the most important fact of the present economic situation is not the particular, very slight movements of the monthly totals of production and trade, which in general only repeat and reinforce the picture of the past eight years. The most important fact of the present economic situation is *the conspicuous failure of the Labour Government even to attempt or make a show of any large-scale programme of industrial reconstruction and development or serious constructive measures to counter unemployment.* This failure will stand out historically as a very big fact and salient stage in the decline of British capitalism. It is a failure of decisive importance for the whole character of the present period ; for it is a failure of *revolutionary* significance. On the one hand, it compels the whole character of the rôle of the Labour Government in relation to the situation and to the working class, and marks out for it the rôle, no longer of the old type of reformism, but the new type whose essential, developed character is described as social fascism ; on the other hand, it shows that *the forces of decline in British capitalism, so far from growing weaker, are growing stronger.*

WHAT is the position ? The Labour Government came to power very largely on the basis of its criticism of the economic policy of the Baldwin Government, and of the loudly denounced failure of that Government to solve the unemployment crisis. Before the election, the Baldwin Government's policy of "economic defeatism," as it was called (actually, of ruthless class-war to re-establish British capitalist efficiency by the only possible means, at the expense of the workers) was the subject of universal attack. The Labour and Liberal Parties vied with one another in their programmes of large-scale reconstruction. The Liberal Party offered to "conquer unemployment" in one year by schemes involving loans of two hundred million pounds. The Labour Party offered "comprehensive and far-reaching" schemes of "national development." To-day the Labour and Liberal Parties have their majority ; and a Labour Government is in office with Liberal support. But the grandiose schemes have vanished into thin air. In all essentials, *the Baldwin line continues*, the line of slow and painful rationalisation, of maintenance of the gold standard at all costs as the primary factor, of renewed attacks upon the workers. The Government scapegoat, Thomas, has had to make the most of a few scraped-up fragments, which are not even successful as window-dressing. The main line remains the line of the attack on the workers, with the practical assistance of the Government, as in textiles. What is the reason of this failure ? *The reason for this failure goes beyond the question of the Labour Government, and goes to the heart of the whole present position of British capitalism and the reality of the decline.*

WHAT is the reason of this failure ? The criticism, it is to be noted, does not come in the main from socialistic or Labour supporters ; these are for the most part satisfied to leave untouched the basic question of industry, and concentrate their cry on small increases in immediate social benefits. The main criticism comes from the bourgeoisie, and this not simply from professional partisan elements, such as are merely concerned to score a point and turn the tables on the old easy criticism of Baldwin, but from serious bourgeois expression. It is a responsible bourgeois organ such as the *Economist* which, after

having previously built up cautious hopes on the return of a Liberal-Labour majority and the possibility of economic reconstruction, now expresses its disappointment that—

no substantial degree of success can be expected—for the sufficient reason that there are no thoroughgoing plans and no evidence of any constructive policy.

The schemes themselves no more than touch the fringe of the problem.—(*Economist*, November 9, 1929.)

Again it is the *Economist* which finds the coal reorganisation proposals “inadequate” and a complete failure to redeem the pledge “to reorganise the industry from top to bottom”; or it is Sir William Beveridge who complains to *The Times* that the proposals are calculated to “stereotype as far as possible the existing structure of the industry and the existing distribution and production.” Thus we have the curious spectacle of the bourgeoisie complaining to a Labour Government that it is failing to reorganise industry, and accusing a Labour Government of seeking to conserve the existing obsolete industrial structure.

WHAT, then, is the reason of this failure? It is not a question of lack of a majority. The Labour-Liberal majority has full parliamentary power; and the partners of the Labour Government in this majority, the Liberal Party, are officially chiding the Labour Government for its lack of any ambitious plans of reconstruction, *i.e.*, are fully pledged to the support of any larger plans. It is not a question of any lack of plans, so far as plans on paper go; the voluminous propaganda literature of the Labour Party is full of plans of every shape and size; their pigeon-holes are stuffed with the infinite expert schemes of the Fabian mandarins. It is not a question of any lack of wish, if they could only see an easy way forward; the parliamentary members of the Labour Party, and not least the Government Ministers, would be only too thankful if they could have something more plausible to present to their constituents. It means, then, that there are overwhelmingly stronger forces in the whole situation of British capitalism which paralyse their action and prevent advance. *The contrast between Thomas's pitiful and ambiguous forty-two millions, in the second wealthiest capitalist country in the world, employing a few*

thousands for a medley of minor and unrelated oddments, and the gigantic purposeful offensive in every field of the Five-Years' Plan in the Soviet Republic—this contrast is more than a contrast between the two lines of policy before the working class, the parliamentary line of the Second International, and the revolutionary line of communism; it is a contrast between the impotence of dying capitalism and the advancing, creative power of revolutionary socialism.

TEN months ago we had occasion to analyse the British economic situation and perspective in relation to the prospect of a Liberal-Labour majority at the election and the question of an attempted campaign of state-aided rationalisation, and also in relation to the analysis of such a perspective held out by Comrade Varga in this journal and the discussion therefrom arising last year. At that time it was necessary, at the same time as disagreeing with the actual analysis of Comrade Varga, to insist on the danger of the merely negative treatment with which it tended to be received and, in particular, of the "automatic negative" view of the decline as a single unbroken line of descent or stagnation in production and trade, instead of seeing it as a dynamic process of increasing contradictions and weakening through a variety of forms; and on this basis to insist on the "theoretical possibility" of the perspective held out by Comrade Varga, and that the correct treatment lay, not in blank denial, but in bringing out the new contradictions inherent in any such attempted line of development. Ten months' experience have now largely reinforced, and made it possible to present far more concretely, this line of treatment, which was at the time widely misunderstood as a revision of the conception of decline, instead of as its reaffirmation and clearing against distortions.

THE correct understanding of the conception of the capitalist decline in Britain is so important, and the falsity of the current reformist distortions of that conception, whether in order to "disprove" it or even as supporting it, are so dangerous, that it may be worth while to repeat the essential definitions of the incorrect and correct conceptions, as given in those Notes. First, the incorrect conception:

The decline of capitalism comes to be loosely identified with the existing industrial depression, and even to appear as no more than a high-sounding synonym for it. Its demonstration comes to turn on the manifold detailed figures of trade and production below pre-war, which are already trundled out in abundance by the bourgeois economists. Wherein lies the special danger of this vulgarisation? It lies in this: that the decline becomes misconceived as an automatic unbroken line of descent or stagnation in production and trade, and the suggestion of facts or possibilities at variance with this appears to endanger the whole conception of the decline.

Second, the correct conception :—

Putting the conception in its most abstract form, we might say that the essence of the decline of capitalism consists in this: that the contradictions of capitalism have become stronger than its possibilities of further development, so that, whereas in the classic period of capitalism the contradictions and consequent crises are a driving force to its further development, in the declining period the contradictions are a driving force to its destruction, because the only further development possible is along the path of the Socialist revolution.

The practical conclusion from this is that, in relation to new phenomena, possibilities or variations within the process, we should not simply present a negative assumption, demonstration of obstacles or improbability, &c., but on the contrary, on the basis of these, should seek for the new points of contradiction involved in them :—

What is important is to widen the horizon of our outlook, to avoid mechanical views of the situation as developing along a single line in which the future merely repeats the past, and to strengthen the revolutionary understanding of the present period and our tasks by concentrating on the successive ever new points of sharpening contradictions, which provide the conditions of revolutionary advance.

LET us now turn, with this analysis in view, to the present situation. In the first place, it is clear that the dangers of the "automatic negative" view have been strongly reinforced by recent discussion. Just those who had fallen into this type of outlook, and particularly the reformists who had criticised the communist conception as if it were based on this outlook, have now fallen into the complementary error, and find in recent figures of a rise in production or exports a "break" in the decline. This is the old error turned inside out. Because the Board of Trade index figure of production shows a slight increase for 1929 as

against 1928 (actually, the rate of increase over the years 1924-28 was already very much faster ; the increase, instead of being a startling new phenomenon, has for the moment begun to slow down) ; or because the export figures of 1929 show a slight increase on 1928, and those in turn on 1927, it is felt that the process of the decline has been at any rate temporarily interrupted, or begun to move the other way, or even that the whole conception of the decline has been disproved. *Thus these sages hang dependent month by month on each new figure of the Board of Trade as proof or disproof of the decline, much as if a doctor were to take each hourly fluctuation upwards and downwards of a dying patient's pulse and temperature as proof or disproof that he is sick or recovering.*

THIS reaches a comic level in the reformist Press, where all attempt at any basic judgment of the situation and its tendencies disappears into an empirical medley of current figures and facts. Thus in an article on the economic situation in last month's *Socialist Review* we are bidden at the outset to dispense with "views and information which have been promulgated of recent years and have already become out-of-date." Having thus freed our minds of "prejudices," and basing ourselves on the most recent statistical information, we proceed to receive a remarkable picture of "the present economic position of Great Britain." We learn, among other things, that "this country is now far more prosperous than it was in 1913" ; that "British goods are being sold abroad at a competitive price well below world level" ; that "the coal industry is one of the most profitable industries in the country" ; that "employment has risen considerably" ; that output "rose to pre-war level by early in 1924" and "soon afterwards output per head rose to pre-war level. This is very remarkable when we remember that working hours were reduced on the average by well over 10 per cent. during that period" ; that "from 1924 to the current quarter of this year there has been a rise in total output of 13 per cent" ; that "since 1924 the real wages of the workers have risen by 6 per cent" ; and that "up to now production and employment have been rising in a very gratifying way ; production has at last caught up its 1920 boom figure, and now seems to be higher than it has ever been before."

We are not surprised further to be warned against talk of "capitalist rationalisation," which expression is "a noxious weed" to be removed "from the well-ordered garden of information which I am attempting to lay out"; and to learn that "all this talk about under-consumption and 'ever-increasing contradictions of capitalism,' on which so much pseudo-Socialism is based, is arrant rubbish." As a serious "Survey of the Present Economic Position of Great Britain," this painstaking compilation of current capitalist propaganda material would be a curious production even in a capitalist economic journal which was actually concerned with the real problems of the situation; for it to appear at the present juncture in a nominally working class and "socialist" journal is more than curious, and a notable indication of the present level of Labour reformism (in the "left wing" I.L.P.).

WHAT is important here and in similar treatments is not merely the degree of rightness and wrongness in the particular "facts" which are presented so cheerfully at face value without further analysis (the measure of "output," the figures of which here given differ completely from other authoritative estimates; the meaning of "real wages," which are constantly calculated in capitalist sources on a basis of full-time wage rates, instead of on the basis of the actual earning of the total working class population, employed, unemployed and short-time; the limited value of any conception of "real wages" which does not take into consideration the very differing processes undergone by different sections of the working class, &c.). What is important is the *method*: *i.e.*, the completely undialectical piling up of isolated unanalysed "facts" in order to reach a total picture of the situation; in place of the dialectical analysis of the facts in their relationships as part of a total moving situation, in order to lay bare the real driving forces and tendencies.

ONE or two illustrations may help to make this clear. For example, a statistical table may show a rise in production and exports over a certain period of months. Thus the London and Cambridge Economic Service finds that total output in Britain, on the basis of 1913 as 100, reached 96 in the first quarter

of 1928, 98 in the first quarter of 1929, and 100 or pre-war level in the second quarter of 1929. Again, British exports for the first three quarters of 1929 reached a total of £543 millions, against £535 millions for the same period of 1928, or an increase of £8 millions. Does not this disprove the talk of capitalist decline, and prove a rising tendency of British capitalism, both in production and in the markets of the world? Not so fast. Production may rise, very slowly, in Britain, as a result simply of technical development; but if at the same time production has gone ahead very much faster in every other leading country, it is obvious that the net position of Britain has gone backward. Again, production cannot be considered out of relation to productive power. If at the end of sixteen years a larger population, with very much higher technical means of production, can only attain the same output, it is obvious that what has actually taken place is a decline. In this way, an actually rising volume of production can be accompanied by increasing stagnation, mass unemployment and visible economic decline. Again, British exports may show a rise both in values and in volume; but if in the same period the exports of the other leading industrial countries have gone ahead very much faster, then it is obvious that the real position of Britain in the world market has weakened. If, further, exports of manufactured goods have actually decreased within this rise; or if the rise is not sufficient to prevent a still rising visible adverse balance of trade, then it is obvious that the conclusions to be drawn are still further affected. (See the November *Circular* of the Labour Research Department for a discussion of some of these figures; the treatment is not very definite in its conclusions, but it is at any rate a contrast in scientific carefulness of method to the jumble of the *Socialist Review*.)

IT is not necessary to spend time further on these simple questions of elementary scientific method, which make meaningless such generalisations as about the country being "now far more prosperous than it was in 1913" or attempts to prove or disprove the decline or find breaks in the decline on the strength of a few statistical tables of production and trade. More important than these elementary requirements of correctly analysing

and placing the particular facts in relation to the total situation, is the necessity—the primary necessity which distinguishes the dialectical method from the rule-of-thumb empiricism of the “vulgar” economists of the bourgeois post-classical school—of correctly judging the *dynamic* forces of the situation. What are the driving forces of the situation? What is the *direction* of the main forces of the situation? What is the direction of the forces of the world situation, and what is the direction of movement of the British situation in relation to the world situation? It is necessary to see the line of development of capitalism as a whole, to see the place of the present stage in that line of development, to see the particular character of the present stage in Britain, to see the inter-relation of the forces of the class-struggle, of inter-imperialist rivalry, of the colonial revolutionary struggles, of Imperialism and the Soviet Union, &c., and only on this basis to reach correctly the British perspective. The alternative method, which begins with a table of twelve months production or the last five years production in Britain, leads nowhere.

IT is here, as a part of these dynamic factors, that arises the importance of the question of industrial reconstruction and rationalisation, and the rôle of the Labour Government in particular, in Britain. It is clear that, if a very far-reaching process of industrial reconstruction in equipment, technique and organisation has taken place in other leading capitalist countries, and especially the United States, Germany and France, and if a similar process meets with special obstacles in Britain, and is in consequence much more slowly, painfully and incompletely carried out; and if, parallel to this, we note a shifting to the disadvantage of Britain in its relative position in world production and the world market; than it is clear that we are here face to face, not with some temporary phenomenon, but with an essential expression of the process of decline, the effects of which are likely to increase rather than diminish in significance. This is the context within which the question of the economic rôle of the Labour Government becomes of special importance in the development of the capitalist decline in Britain.

IN the previous analysis of the question of state-aided rationalisation in Britain, it was necessary to insist that the theoretical possibility of such a process, even on a considerable scale and with force to drive a way past many of the obstacles, should not be denied, in order that its consequences and the contradictions inherent in it could be freely considered, and that we should not, through a view of its improbability, base our calculations on the assumption of a single line of development. The experience since then has shown with very striking force that, while the whole line of policy is increasingly in the direction of a measure of state-aided rationalisation, as in the coal reorganisation proposals, the contradictions are proving very strong and intractable, and preventing more than an extremely incomplete measure of realisation. The possibility of a very much greater measure of state-aided rationalisation than at present, and the use of state credit for the purpose, should still not be excluded ; but it appears that it will need a stronger government than the present Labour Government to carry it out. A "war" type of government under Lloyd George, representing important industrialist forces, and carrying with it considerable sections of the petit-bourgeoisie and workers in a "forward" policy, might still conceivably make the experiment ; but this is not yet in view, and could only follow on a very extensive shifting of forces. For the present, the Labour Government, faced with the actual dilemmas, has manifestly developed cold feet, and has preferred the path of safety and decay to the path of risk and possible catastrophe. The forces of decline in Britain are showing their strength.

THE general obstacles in Britain to effective rationalisation on the same scale as elsewhere are sufficiently familiar. They are strikingly illustrated in a recent diatribe of the President of the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations against the whole conception, in an angry letter to *The Times* which had prescribed the usual panacea as an alternative or accompaniment to wage-reductions.

The practical industrialists in the Lancashire cotton industry would be glad to be relieved of any further unhelpful interference from uninformed observers—whether as leader-writers, academic economists, business men in our sheltered and privileged industries,

or as financial experts, who, no matter how distinguished in their own sphere of activities, are unable to explore the whole range of our cotton problem. *More especially are we sated with the banging of the big drum of rationalisation.* Rationalisation rolls as glibly off the tongues of many advisers as nationalisation, and frequently it is as little attached to sound constructive thought. On the same page of *The Times*, column 6, appears providentially for my purpose an account of a vast nationalisation experiment. *Already in our experience of rationalisation in Lancashire we might apply the same captions as apply in this Queensland instance—namely, "A Utopia in Ruins—The Lancashire Failure—Waste of Millions."* That briefly summarises our experience with the cartel—a rationalisation experiment—which we were compelled to abandon two years ago.—(F. Holroyd, President of the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations, *The Times*, July 18, 1929.)

THE special character of the problem of capitalist rationalisation and reconstruction in Britain is above all based on the fact that, whereas in other leading European countries which have carried through a large measure of reconstruction, notably Germany and France, this has been based on a semi-revolutionary repudiation of previous liabilities (the inflation period in Germany, devalorisation to one-fifth in France), in Britain the burden of liabilities has been increased, and any new development has to carry them. In consequence it has not been profitable for new capital to enter into and re-equip and reconstruct the old industries; the line of advance has been ever-renewed attacks on the workers, and only on the basis of this has reorganisation slowly begun. It was obvious that, to accelerate the process, the State would have to intervene. This was the basic theme of the Lloyd George programme (though the concentration on roads and transport rather than industry weakened its effectiveness), as of many similar previously, *e.g.*, the Webb suggestion years ago, at the beginning of the depression, of a £200,000,000 National Development Loan. All such suggestions, however, have come into conflict with the demands of financial policy, *i.e.*, the necessity from the standpoint of the world financial interests of British capitalism to re-establish the pound at its pre-war value in relation to the dollar. For the purpose of this policy, it was necessary, not to extend credit, but to restrict it. Reconstruction has had to wait. To dramatise this as a battle between industrialists and City financiers is not fully

correct ; the actual interests are too closely interwoven in the dominant sections of British finance-capital, nor can the interests be ultimately treated apart. But immediate home industrial interests have had to be sacrificed temporarily to wider purposes, and the balance to be righted by heavy attacks on the workers.

FACED with this situation, the reformist plans have been shipwrecked, and the Labour Government has found itself helpless to do other than follow in the path of Baldwin. Between the demands of Treasury policy on the one side, and the promises of unemployment schemes and social benefits on the other, the Labour Government finds itself driven from pillar to post, and under criticism on all sides. It so happened that at the very outset of the Labour Government the international financial situation made necessary a temporary rise in the Bank Rate ; the Government delayed its execution as long as possible ; their delay made no difference to the outcome save slightly to worsen the position. The issue of the recent long-term loan at 5 per cent. has already caused headshakings as an indication of a weakening of British credit ; and it is suggested that the effect of even the few millions credits of Thomas's schemes or the increased benefits is already reflected here. At the same time the adverse balance of trade to date (ten months) is £16 millions higher than in 1928. "While the City as a whole," declares *The Times* (November 20, 1929), "has not been displeased by the achievements of the Government so far, it remains frankly apprehensive of their policy in matters of finance. The Government has yet to prove itself in the world of finance." The Labour Government is being kept on a tight rein by its capitalist masters.

THE mingled indignation, rage, helplessness and ultimate docility of the reformist propagandists, when faced with the issue of the Bank Rate, has been an instructive picture in the posturing impotence of reformism, when faced with the practical issues of the capitalist machine which they wish to administer. "Mr. Montagu Norman puts Brake on Wheels of Trade" was the first announcement of the *Daily Herald* of the change which was carried out with the full support of the Labour

Government. This was the first traditional reformist picture of the Governor of the Bank of England as the mysterious villain, chortling with malicious glee as he puts a new spoke into the wheels of British industry. A few days later this had to be corrected. "It is only fair to Mr. Montagu Norman and the other controllers of the Bank of England," explained the *Daily Herald* a week later, "to point out that, given the prevailing policy, there was little choice but to raise the Bank Rate." Then came the Brighton Labour Party Conference. The I.L.P. had loudly proclaimed their determination to fight the policy of the Treasury and the Bank of England. But Snowden only required to give them an elementary exposition of the commonplaces of capitalism for their opposition to collapse. *The Times* correctly estimated the value of a Labour Government to capitalism in commenting on the debate that it provided "an opportunity for making the principles of sound national finance acceptable to an assembly that would probably have been critical, if not suspicious, of a similar explanation had it been given by an economist outside the party or by the Governor of the Bank of England himself." The *Daily Herald* journalist, compelled for five minutes to consider the ordinary workings of capitalism, could only declare that "his words irresistibly conjured up a nightmare of a world in the grip of an inexorable fate—of a great financial system with laws of its own, against which man's feebleness was matched in vain." The transition from utopian nonsense and subjective dreams to headlong despair and impotence, when faced with objective facts, is a short one; both are the complementary facets of the reformist outlook. But the dominant leadership of reformism, the leadership of the Labour Party, have long passed this stage (which belongs to the kindergarten of the Labour Party, the I.L.P.); they have long shed their illusions and assumed with full consciousness the responsibility of capitalist administration against the workers.

DRIVEN back on the basic fields of industry, finance and the unemployment crisis, the reformists seek to find their outlet in the cry for immediate social benefits. The frontal attack on industry is gone; the cry for nationalisation and socialism has long disappeared from view; even the state capitalism

of "Labour and the Nation" has passed into the background. The cry is for a little charity from the rich man's purse. If Snowden was strong at The Hague, argued the *Forward*, and even won Chauvinist popularity, this strength and popularity will be useful to us, when he comes to be taxing the rich for the benefit of the poor next April. But even here there is a blank wall. The "strength" of Snowden is revealed as a strength to resist the demands of Labour M.P.'s, eager for concessions to parade before their constituents. In his speech at the Cutlers' Feast at Sheffield in October, Snowden assured his audience that he would make no increases of taxation against the rich if he could help it; and if he should be driven to it, it would be from "sheer necessity," and not for any aims of social policy. Increases of benefit, save on the tiniest scale, cannot be afforded. The needs of capitalism must come first.

THE Labour Government has a different path which it must follow. Just as the Baldwin Government, it can only carry through reorganisation of industry at the workers' expense. Just as the Baldwin Government, it has to drive through wage-cuts with direct government assistance. The experience of the cotton award has been the powerful demonstration of this process; and it will not be the last. Here can be seen the inevitable transition from social reformism to social fascism, from the old vacillation, to betray the workers, to the new firmness on behalf of capitalism. And to those who doubt the applicability of the term of "social fascism" to the present Labour Government, after their record already in the colonies, in imperialist foreign policy and to the workers at home, we would recommend the consideration of the approving words of the Hungarian White dictator, Admiral Horthy, who declared in a recent speech:—

If from the ranks of our working class there could arise a Hungarian MacDonald, a Henderson or a Snowden, men of culture, knowledge, wide outlook and stable character, men at one with the nation in all our national interests and national sorrows, men filled with patriotic sentiment and determination, like these leaders of the English working class, then *one need have no qualms in letting such men take an active part in the government.*

R. P. D.

THE CHARTIST MOVEMENT

By KARL MARX

[*The following article by Karl Marx, of particular interest on account of its description of the political parties of the time, was contributed to the "New York Tribune" of August 25, 1852. The original text was specially copied for the LABOUR MONTHLY; as far as we are aware it has not been published in this country before.*]

WHILE the Tories, the Whigs, the Peelites—in fact, all the parties we have hitherto commented upon—belong more or less to the past, the Free Traders (the men of the Manchester School, the Parliamentary and financial reformers) *are the official representatives of modern English society*, the representatives of that England which rules the market of the world. They represent the party of the self-conscious bourgeoisie, of industrial capital striving to make available its social power as a political power as well, and to eradicate the last arrogant remnants of feudal society. This party is led on by the most active and most energetic portion of the English bourgeoisie—the *manufacturers*.

What they demand is the complete and undisguised ascendancy of the bourgeoisie, the open, official subjection of society at large under the laws of modern bourgeois production, and under the rule of those men who are the directors of that production. By Free Trade they mean the unfettered movement of capital, freed from all political, national and religious shackles. The soil is to be a marketable commodity, and the exploitation of the soil is to be carried on according to the common commercial laws. There are to be manufactures of food as well as manufactures of twist and cottons, but no longer any lords of the land.

There are, in short, not to be tolerated any political or social restrictions, regulations or monopolies, unless they proceed from "the eternal laws of political economy," that is, from the conditions under which capital produces and distributes. The struggle of this party against the old English institutions, products of a

superannuated, an evanescent stage of social development, is resumed in the watchword : *Produce as cheap as you can, and do away with all the faux frais of production* (with all superfluous, unnecessary expenses in production). And this watchword is addressed not only to the private individual, but to the *nation at large* principally.

Royalty, with its "barbarous splendours," its court, its Civil List and its flunkys—what else does it belong to but to the *faux frais* of production ? The nation can produce and exchange without royalty ; away with the crown. The sinecures of the nobility, the House of Lords ? *faux frais* of production. The large standing army ? *faux frais* of production. The Colonies ? *faux frais* of production. The State church, with its riches, the spoils of plunder or of mendicity ? *faux frais* of production. Let parsons compete freely with each other, and everyone pay them according to his own wants. The whole circumstantial routine of English law, with its Court of Chancery ? *faux frais* of production. National wars ? *faux frais* of production. England can exploit foreign nations more cheaply while at peace with them.

You see, to these champions of the British bourgeoisie, to the men of the Manchester School, every institution of old England appears in the light of a piece of machinery as costly as it is useless, and which fulfils no other purpose but to prevent the nation from producing the greatest possible quantity at the least possible expense and to exchange its products in freedom. Necessarily their last word is the *bourgeois republic*, in which free competition rules supreme in all spheres of life ; in which there remains altogether that *minimum* only of government which is indispensable for the administration, internally and externally, of the common class-interest and business of the bourgeoisie, and where this *minimum* of government is as soberly, as economically, organised as possible. Such a party in other countries would be called *democratic*. But it is necessarily revolutionary, and the complete annihilation of Old England as an aristocratic country is the end which it follows up with more or less consciousness. Its nearest object, however, is the attainment of a Parliamentary reform which should transfer to its hands the legislative power necessary for such a revolution.

But the British bourgeois are not excitable Frenchmen. When

they intend to carry a Parliamentary reform they will not make a Revolution of February. On the contrary. Having obtained, in 1846, a grand victory over the landed aristocracy by the repeal of the Corn Laws, they were satisfied with following up the material advantages of this victory, while they neglected to draw the necessary political and economical conclusions from it, and thus enabled the Whigs to reinstate themselves into their hereditary monopoly of government.

During all the time from 1846 to 1852, they exposed themselves to ridicule by their battle-cry—broad principles and practical (read *small*) measures. And why all this? Because in every violent movement they are obliged to appeal to the *working class*. And if the aristocracy is their vanishing opponent, the working class is their arising enemy. They prefer to compromise with their vanishing opponent rather than to strengthen the arising enemy, to whom the future belongs, by concessions of more than apparent importance. Therefore, they strive to avoid every forcible collision with the aristocracy; but historical necessity and the Tories press them onwards. They cannot avoid fulfilling their mission, battering to pieces Old England, the England of the past, and the very moment when they will have conquered exclusive political dominion, when political dominion and economical supremacy will be united in the same hands, when, therefore, the struggle against capital will no longer be distinct from the struggle against the existing government—from that very moment will date the *social revolution of England*.

We now come to the *Chartists*, the politically active portion of the British *working class*. The six points of the Charter which they contend for contain nothing but the demand of *universal suffrage* and of the conditions without which universal suffrage would be illusory for the working class: such as the ballot, payment of members, annual general elections. But universal suffrage is the equivalent for political power for the working class of England, where the proletariat form the large majority of the population, where, in a long, though underground civil war, it has gained a clear consciousness of its position as a class, and where even the rural districts know no longer any peasants, but landlords, industrial capitalists (farmers) and hired labourers. The carrying

of universal suffrage in England would, therefore, be a far more socialistic measure than anything which has been honoured with that name on the Continent.

Its inevitable result here, is *the political supremacy of the working class.*

I shall report, on another occasion, on the revival and reorganisation of the Chartist Party. For the present I have only to treat of the recent election.

To be a voter for the British Parliament, a man must occupy, in the Boroughs, a house rated at £10 to the poor's rate, and, in the counties he must be a freeholder to the annual amount of 40 shillings or a leaseholder to the amount of £50. From this statement alone it follows that the Chartists could take, officially, but little part in the electoral battle just concluded. In order to explain the actual part they took in it, I must recall to mind a peculiarity of the British electoral system : Nomination day and Declaration day ! Show of hands and Poll !

When the candidates have made their appearance on the day of election, and have publicly harangued the people, they are elected, in the first instance, by the show of hands, and every hand has the right to be raised, the hand of the non-electoral as well as that of the elector. For whomsoever the majority of the hands are raised, that person is declared by the returning officer to be (provisionally) elected by show of hands. But now the medal shows its reverse.

The election by show of hands was a mere ceremony, an act of formal politeness toward the "sovereign people," and the politeness ceases as soon as privilege is menaced. For if the show of hands does not return the candidates of the privileged electors, these candidates demand a poll ; only the privileged electors can take part in the poll, and whosoever has there the majority of votes is declared duly elected. The first election, by show of hands, is a show satisfaction allowed, for a moment, to public opinion, in order to convince it, the next moment, the more strikingly of its impotency.

It might appear that this election by show of hands, this dangerous formality, had been invented in order to ridicule universal suffrage, and to enjoy some little aristocratic fun at the expense of the "rabble" (expression of Major Beresford, Secretary

of War). But this would be a delusion, and the old usage, common originally to all Teutonic nations, could drag itself traditionally down to the nineteenth century, because it gave to the British class-Parliament, cheaply and without danger, an appearance of popularity.

The ruling classes drew from this usage the satisfaction that the mass of the people took part, with more or less passion, in their sectional interests as its national interests. And it was only since the bourgeoisie took an independent station at the side of the two official parties, the Whigs and the Tories, that the working masses stood up, on the nomination days in their own name. But in no former year has the contrast of show of hands and poll, of Nomination day and Declaration day, been so serious, so well-defined by opposed principles, so threatening, so general, upon the whole surface of the country as in this last election of 1852.

And what a contrast ! It was sufficient to be named by show of hands in order to be beaten at the poll. It was sufficient to have had the majority at a poll, in order to be saluted, by the people, with rotten apples and brick-bats.

The duly elected members of Parliament, before all, had a great deal to do, in order to keep their own parliamentary bodily-selves in safety. On one side the majority of the people, on the other the twelfth-part of the whole population, and the fifth-part of the sum total of the male adult inhabitants of the country. On one side enthusiasm, on the other side bribery. On one side parties disowning their own distinctive signs, Liberals pleading the conservatism, Conservatives proclaiming the liberalism of their views ; on the other, the people, proclaiming their presence and pleading their own cause. On one side a worn-out engine which, turning incessantly in its vicious circle, is never able to move a single step forward, and the impotent process of friction by which all the official parties gradually grind each other into dust ; on the other, the advancing mass of the nation, threatening to blow up the vicious circle and to destroy the official engine.

I shall not follow up, over all the surface of the country, this contrast between nomination and poll, of the threatening electoral demonstration of the working class, and the timid electioneering manœuvres of the ruling classes. I take one borough from the mass,

where the contrast is concentrated in a focus : the Halifax Election. Here the opposing candidates were : Edwards (Tory), Sir Charles Wood (late Whig Chancellor of the Exchequer, brother-in-law to Earl Grey), Frank Crossley (Manchester man), and finally Ernest Jones, the most talented, consistent and energetic representative of Chartism.

Halifax being a manufacturing town, the Tory had little chance. The Manchester man, Crossley, was leagued with the Whigs. The serious struggle, then, lay only between Wood and Jones, between the Whig and the Chartist.

Sir Charles Wood made a speech about half-an-hour, perfectly inaudible at the commencement, and during its latter half, to the disapprobation of the immense multitude. His speech, as reported by the reporter, who sat close to him, was merely a recapitulation of the Free Trade measures passed, and an attack on Lord Derby's government, and a laudation of "*the unexampled prosperity of the country and the people*"! ("Hear, hear.") He did not propound one single new measure of reform, and but faintly, in very few words, hinted at Lord John Russell's bill for the franchise.

I give a more extensive abstract of Ernest Jones's speech, as you will not find it in any of the great London ruling-class papers.

Ernest Jones, who was received with immense enthusiasm, then spoke as follows :—

"Electors and non-electors, you have met upon a great and solemn festival. To-day the Constitution recognises universal suffrage in theory that it may, perhaps, deny it in practice on the morrow. To-day the representatives of two systems stand before you, and you have to decide beneath which you shall be ruled for seven years. Seven years—a little life ! I summon you to pause upon the threshold of those seven years ; to-day they shall pass slowly and calmly in review before you ; to-day decide, you 20,000 men ! that perhaps five hundred may undo your will to-morrow. ("Hear, hear.")

"I say the representatives of two systems stand before you. Whig, Tory and moneymongers are on my left, it is true, but they are all as one. The moneymonger says, buy cheap and sell dear. The Tory says, buy dear, sell dearer. Both are the same for labour.

But the former system is in the ascendant, and pauperism rankles at its root. That system is based on foreign competition. Now, I assert, that under the buy cheap and sell dear principle, brought to bear on foreign competition, the ruin of the working and small trading classes must go on. Why? Labour is the creator of all wealth. A man must work before a grain is grown, or a yard is woven. But there is no self-employment for the working man in this country. Labour is a hired commodity—labour is a thing in the market that is bought and sold; consequently, as labour creates all wealth, labour is the first thing bought—‘Buy cheap, buy cheap!’ Labour is bought in the cheapest market. But now comes the next: ‘Sell dear, sell dear!’ Sell what? *Labour’s produce*. To whom?—to the foreigner—aye! and to the *labourer himself*—for labour, not being self-employed, the labourer is not the partaker of the first-fruits of his toil.

“‘Buy cheap, sell dear.’ How do you like it? ‘Buy cheap, sell dear.’ Buy the working man’s labour cheaply and sell back to that very working man the produce of his own labour dear! The principle of inherent loss is in the bargain. The employer buys the labour cheap—he sells, and on the sale he must make a profit; he sells to the working man himself—and thus every bargain between employer and the employed is a deliberate cheat on the part of the employer. Thus labour has to sink through eternal loss, that capital may rise through lasting fraud.

“But the system stops not here. *This is brought to bear on foreign competition—which means, we must ruin the trade of other countries, as we have ruined the labour of our own.* How does it work? The high-taxed country has to undersell the low-taxed. Competition abroad is constantly increasing—consequently cheapness must increase constantly also. Therefore, wages in England must keep constantly falling. And how do they effect the fall? By *surplus labour*. And how do they obtain the surplus labour? By monopoly of the land which drives more hands than are wanted into the factory. By monopoly of machinery which drives those hands into the street—by woman labour which drives the man from the shuttle—by child labour which drives the women from the loom. Then planting their foot upon that living base of surplus they press its aching heart beneath their heel and cry—‘Starvation.

Who will work ? A half-loaf is better than no bread at all '—and the writhing mass grasps greedily at their terms. (Loud cries of "Hear, hear.")

"Such is the system for the working man. But, electors ! how does it operate on you ? How does it affect home trade, the shopkeeper, poor's rate and taxation ? For every increase of competition abroad, there must be an increase of cheapness at home. Every increase of cheapness in labour is based on increase of labour surplus, and this surplus is obtained by an increase of machinery. I repeat, how does this operate on you ? The Manchester Liberal on my left establishes a new patent and throws three hundred men as a surplus in the streets. Shopkeepers ! Three hundred customers less. Ratepayers ! Three hundred paupers more ! (Loud cheers.)

"But, mark me. The evil stops not there. These three hundred men operate first to bring down the wages of those who remain at work in their own trade. The employer says : 'Now I reduce your wages.' The men demur. Then he adds : 'Do you see these three hundred men who have just walked out—you may change places if you like, they are sighing to come in on any terms, for they are starving.' The men feel it, and are crushed. Oh ! you Manchester Liberal ! Pharisee of politics ! Those men are listening—have I got you now ?

"But the evil stops not yet. Those men, driven from their own trade, seek employment in others when they swell the surplus and bring wages down. The low-paid trades of to-day were the high-paid once—and the high-paid of to-day will be the low-paid soon. Thus the purchasing power of the working classes is diminished every day, and with it dies home trade. Mark it, shopkeepers, your customers grow poorer and your profits less, while your paupers grow more numerous and your poor's rates and your taxes rise. Your receipts are smaller, your expenditure is more large. You get less and pay more. How do you like the system ? On you the rich manufacturer and landlord throws the weight of poor's rate and taxation. Men of the middle class ! You are the tax-paying machine of the rich. They create the poverty that creates their riches, and they make you pay for the poverty they have created. The landlord escapes it by privilege, the manu-

facturer by repaying himself out of the wages of his men, and that reacts on you. How do you like the system ?

“Well, that is the system upheld by the gentlemen on my left. What then do I propose ? I have shown the wrong. That is something. But I do more. I stand here to show the right, and prove it so.” (Loud cheers.)

Ernest Jones then went on to expose his own views on political and economical reform, and continued as follows :—

“Electors and non-electors ! I have now brought before you some of the social and political measures, the immediate adoption of which I advocate now, as I did in 1847. But, because I tried to extend *YOUR* liberties, *MINE* were curtailed. (‘Hear, hear.’) Because I tried to rear the temple of freedom for you all, I was thrown into the cell of a felon’s jail ; and there, on my left, sits one of my chief jailers. (Loud and continued groans, directed towards the left.) Because I tried to give voice to truth, I was condemned to silence. For two years and one week he cast me into a prison in solitary confinement on the silent system, without pen, ink or paper, but oakum picking as a substitute. Ah ! (turning to Sir Charles Wood), it was your turn for two years and one week ; it is mine this day. I summon the angel of retribution from the heart of every Englishman here present. (An immense burst of applause.) Hark ! You feel the fanning of his wings in the breath of this vast multitude. (Renewed cheering, long continued.) You may say this is not a public question. But it is. (‘Hear, hear.’) It is a public question, for the man who cannot feel for the wife of the prisoner, will not feel for the wife of the working man. He who will not feel for the children of the captive, will not feel for the children of the labour-slave. (‘Hear, hear,’ and cheers.) His past life proves it, his promise of to-day does not contradict it. Who voted for Irish coercion, the gagging bill and tampering with the Irish Press ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted fifteen times against Hume’s motion for the franchise ; Locke King’s on the counties ; Ewart’s for short Parliaments ; and Berkeley’s for the ballot ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted against the release of Frost, Williams and Jones ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted against reducing the Duke of Cambridge’s salary of £12,000, against all

reductions in the army and navy ; against the repeal of the window-tax, and forty-eight times against every other reduction of taxation, his own salary included ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted against the repeal of the paper duty, the advertisement duty, and the taxes on knowledge ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted for the batches of new bishops, vicar rare, the Maynooth grant, against its reduction and against absolving dissenters from paying Church rates ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted against all inquiry into the adulteration of food ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted against lowering the duty on sugar, and repealing the tax on malt ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Who voted against shortening the nightwork of bakers, against inquiry into the condition of frame-work knitters, against medical inspectors of workhouses, against preventing little children from working before six in the morning, against parish relief for pregnant women of the poor and against the Ten Hours Bill ? The Whig—there he sits ; turn him out ! Turn him out in the name of humanity and of God ! Men of Halifax ! Men of England ! The two systems are before you. Now judge and choose ! ”

It is impossible to describe the enthusiasm kindled by this speech, and especially at the close ; the voice of the vast multitude, held in breathless suspense during each paragraph, came at each pause like the thunder of a returning wave, in execration of the representative of Whiggery and class-rule. Altogether it was a scene that will long be unforgotten. On the show of hands being taken, very few and those chiefly of the hired or intimidated, were held up for Sir C. Wood ; but almost everyone present raised both hands for Ernest Jones, amidst cheering and enthusiasm it would be impossible to describe.

The Mayor declared Mr. Ernest Jones and Mr. Henry Edwards to be elected by show of hands. Sir. C. Wood and Mr. Crossley then demanded a poll.

What Jones had predicted took place ; he was nominated by 20,000 votes ; but the Whig (Sir Charles Wood) and the Manchester man (Crossley) were elected by 500 votes.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

By WAL HANNINGTON

WE have now entered the ninth winter of continuous unemployment and the problem again occupies the centre of the political stage. To allay the increased restlessness and agitation of the unemployed which usually marks the approach of winter, extensive publicity is again being given to national and local "schemes for providing employment." During the period of the Baldwin Government, the National Labour Party and the T.U.C. General Council set themselves out to create the impression that the only hope for the unemployed lay in the return of a Labour Government. They tried to smash every militant move of the unemployed on the plea that such struggles and agitations would be in vain ; that in the ballot box alone lay the means of salvation!

Masses of the unemployed took no heed of such cowardly and treacherous pleadings, as was proved repeatedly by the agitations of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and particularly the great hunger marches, but it is also true that a considerable proportion of the unemployed were deceived by this propaganda, and lost faith in their own organised power.

The General Election came with the problem of unemployment as the main issue. In the last few days of the Tory Government, the Labour Party arraigned the Tories in the House of Commons on their failure to tackle the problem, and Mr. J. R. Clynes accused Sir A. Steel-Maitland, the Tory Minister of Labour, of persecuting the unemployed with mass disqualification from benefits under the "not genuinely seeking work" clause. The shot was actually a boomerang, for Sir A. Steel-Maitland was able to point out that the "not genuinely seeking work" clause was the work of the 1924 Labour Government, and that the records in his Ministry showed that the percentage of disqualification of claims was actually higher under the 1924 Labour Government than it had been under the Tory Government.

The Labour Party were somewhat alarmed at this exposure just prior to the General Election, and tried to cover it up by a mean half-truth, to the effect that the "not genuinely seeking work" clause was in the Unemployment Insurance Act prior to 1924, but what they did not point out was, that prior to 1924 the "not genuinely seeking work" clause only applied to claimants on what was known as "extended benefit" and that a person on "standard benefit" could not be disqualified under this condition unless he refused a definite offer of suitable employment by the Labour Exchange. The 1924 Labour Government made the condition applicable to every claimant and thereby commenced the mass disqualifications under the "not genuinely seeking work" clause.

In spite of this the Labour Party candidates in the General Election spent considerable time in denouncing the Tory Government on its failure to grapple with the problem of unemployment, and on its brutal administration of the unemployment insurance scheme. They certainly did succeed in creating a wide impression that a Labour Government would at least be capable of considerably reducing the number of unemployed, that the administrative injustices of the Insurance Scheme would be removed and the conditions of the unemployed substantially improved. Many unemployed have been learning bitter lessons by experience since then.

Now let us take a general review of the unemployment problem and the issues that have arisen around it during the past six months.

The first step taken by Ramsay MacDonald to assure the ruling class that the treatment of the unemployed was just as safe in the hands of a Labour Government as it had been with the Tories, was the appointment of Margaret Bondfield—of Blanesburgh fame—as the Minister of Labour, and the rabid patriot, Empire builder and esteemed and treasured friend of the employers, J. H. Thomas, as "Minister for Employment" with an extra "dole" allowance of £3,000 a year.

From the moment that J. H. Thomas took up this post the Labour Party commenced an intense propaganda, designed to create the impression that the Labour Government without delay was effectively tackling the problem and reducing the number of workless. The official figures, however, show that month by month the number of unemployed has increased under the Labour

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Government, and on November 18, 1929, the registered unemployed stood at 1,273,500, as against 1,127,895 on June 24, 1929. Whilst it may be true that a large proportion of this increase is due to the closing down of what is termed "seasonal trade," we must not overlook the fact that Rationalisation effects are a contributory factor. With the aid and direction of the Labour Government, Rationalisation will be accelerated and the problem of unemployment will most likely become much more acute than it has ever been before in this country.

When we are considering the extent of unemployment in Britain to-day, we must keep in mind the fact that the figures of the registered unemployed issued by the Ministry of Labour constitute only a section of the total army of unemployed. There are, in fact, three main armies of unemployed: (1) Those registered at Labour Exchanges; (2) Those receiving Poor Law Relief; (3) Those who are neither receiving Labour Exchange benefit nor Poor Law Relief.

The first army as we have seen stands at 1,273,500. The second army is shown up in the figures issued by the Ministry of Health. This section of unemployed is to-day almost entirely separate from those receiving Labour Exchange benefit. Only in a relatively small number of cases is it possible to find persons in receipt of Labour Exchange benefit receiving supplementary assistance in the form of Poor Law Relief.

The figures concerning Poor Law Relief are not so frequently issued as those in respect of the registered unemployed, but here are the latest returns issued by the Ministry of Health in Whitehall, which covers England and Wales, and the Scottish Board of Health which covers Scotland. The returns for England and Wales are for August, 1929, and for Scotland June, 1929. It is most probable that the figures are even higher to-day.

Out-Door Relief

England and Wales.—824,200 made up of 189,400 men, 634,800 women and children. (These figures do not include 10,900 persons receiving medical Poor Law Relief in their homes.)

Scotland.—175,710 (we have no figures available at the moment giving the composition of this total). Total for England, Wales and Scotland receiving outdoor relief 999,910.

Indoor Relief

(This refers to persons in the workhouses and we have no figures available in this respect for Scotland.)

England and Wales.—211,300 (not including lunatics and casuals).

The total recipients of Poor Law Relief (indoor and outdoor) in England and Wales alone is therefore 1,035,500. If we add those receiving outdoor relief in Scotland we have a total of 1,211,210.

It is true that all these persons are not receiving relief due directly to unemployment, but the Ministry of Health estimates approximately 420,000 (including dependents) in England and Wales alone as the unemployed class of Poor Law recipients. I think we should find on careful investigation that the number is even higher, and that many of those classified as recipients "due to other causes" could be proved to be recipients due to unemployment.

I believe that on a low estimate we could say that the total recipients of Poor Law Relief in England, Scotland and Wales, apart from dependents, number a quarter of a million due to unemployment.

Now concerning the third army—those not receiving Insurance Benefit or Poor Law Relief. Here it is difficult to give any definite figures because there is no Government department that attempts to record them. But we know that this third army is very large to-day, because of the persistent tightening-up policy that has been operated during the past two years at Labour Exchanges and Boards of Guardians, resulting in hundreds of thousands being denied benefit and relief.

Since the operation of the Blanesburgh Unemployment Act in April, 1928, the disqualification of benefit claims by local Insurance officers on the grounds of "not genuinely seeking work" alone amounts to a monthly average of 22,000. The total disqualification on all grounds by Insurance officers averages 50,000 monthly during the last eighteen months. How many of these have been able to get back on benefit again or secure employment we do not know.

In respect to the administration of Poor Law Relief the same process of wholesale disqualification has been going on. It is now the rule for Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils in Scotland

to refuse relief to all able-bodied single persons, and under pressure from the Ministry of Health it is becoming more and more the practice also to refuse relief to able-bodied married men. For instance, in the Rhondda Valley and surrounding districts covered by the Pontypridd Board of Guardians (Labour majority), no able-bodied men, married or single, are granted outdoor relief. Only the women and children are relieved. These men cannot even get indoor relief, because the workhouses are already full. The number of casuals alone, wandering from town to town and seeking shelter in the casual wards, stands at approximately 8,000, but there are many more who avoid the casual wards.

The estimated wage-earning population of Great Britain is about 18 millions. Out of this total only 12 millions are covered by the Unemployment Insurance Scheme. Many thousands become unemployed who therefore have no necessity to register at Labour Exchanges, and who struggle through periods of unemployment without seeking Poor Law Relief. We must also reckon with a large number of unemployed youths between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, who are not yet covered by the Insurance Scheme, and who would not be receiving Poor Law Relief. The number of persons over sixty-five years of age who ceased to be registered as insured persons since the operation of the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act stood at 323,000 men and 24,000 women. The number who were registered as unemployed at the time when this Act commenced was approximately 30,000.

I find it extremely difficult to estimate the extent of the third army of unemployed, but I feel safe in declaring that it is in the neighbourhood of half a million.

On these estimates, therefore, we get a total of two million persons, apart from dependents, directly unemployed in Great Britain to-day.

Now let us turn to the administration of the Unemployment Insurance Scheme under the Labour Government.

The persecution of the unemployed at Labour Exchanges has been greater under the Labour Government than it was even under the Tory Government for the corresponding period as the following figures concerning disqualification of claims for benefit show.

Let us take the totals for the four months of June, July, August

and September, 1929, under the Labour Government, and compare them with the corresponding period of last year under the Tories. We will go through each stage of the administrative machinery.

LOCAL INSURANCE OFFICERS

Total disqualification of claims

<i>Tory Government</i>	<i>Labour Government</i>
For the four months ending September 10, 1928 : 171,873.	For the four months ending September 9, 1929 : 255,993.
<i>Increase : 84,120</i>	

Out of these totals the "not genuinely seeking work" disqualifications were 58,185 under the Tories, 79,526 under the Labour Government. An increase of 21,341.

COURTS OF REFEREES

Appeals disallowed

<i>Tory Government</i>	<i>Labour Government</i>
For the four months ending September 10, 1928 : 45,376	For the four months ending September 9, 1929 : 62,142
<i>Increase : 17,036</i>	

In respect of these figures we must point out that the Tory Government did not commence issuing separate figures until October, 1928, concerning disallowances by Courts of Referees on what are known as "78-day review cases." Therefore we have given the total disallowances by the Courts of Referees under the two Governments. Included in the disallowances under the Labour Government are 19,447 classified as 78-day review cases. All of these cases were disqualified on the grounds of "not genuinely seeking work" except 74. The comparison of treatment of 78-day review cases over the whole period from the commencement of these reviews in September, 1928, shows that the percentage of review cases disallowed has been 4.25 per cent. under the Tories, and 5.76 per cent. under the Labour Government.

UMPIRE APPEALS

<i>Tory Government</i>	<i>Labour Government</i>
For the four months ending September 10, 1928	For the four months ending September 9, 1929
Total allowances .. 696	Total allowances .. 871
Total disallowances .. 1,204	Total disallowances .. 1,925
Percentages of disallowances 63.3	Percentage of disallowances 68.1

Now let us turn to the most recent situation, concerning Boards of Assessors. These local Boards of Assessors were only appointed by Margaret Bondfield after a great outcry from all parts of the country led by the N.U.W.M. against her vicious administration. In answer to the demand for the abolition of the "N.G.S.W." clause she replied by saying that she intended to remedy the position by instituting local Boards of Assessors that would hear appeals on "N.G.S.W." disqualifications and the Transitional conditions instead of going direct to Courts of Referees. The Boards of Assessors commenced operations on September 10, 1929, and the following are the latest figures obtainable covering the first four weeks ending October 7, 1929 :—

BOARDS OF ASSESSORS

Total cases considered	26,360
Recommended for Disallowance	11,301
Recommended for Allowance	14,865
Assessors disagree	194

We have proof from all parts of the country showing that in practically all cases the decision of the Board of Assessors is upheld if an appeal is made to the Court of Referees. The Courts of Referees are working on the principle that if a case is disallowed by a Board of Assessors who are supposed to be more acquainted with the local conditions, then there is no case for appeal. We see, then, that the Assessors are merely clearing houses for the Courts of Referees.

For the month ending October 7, the disallowances by Courts of Referees was 17,315 as against 14,862 for the previous month. So it is clear that the persecution has not been reduced since the Assessors commenced, but has actually increased.

Task Work

Now let us turn to another field of persecution which comes under the Ministry of Health. Under the Labour Government and the direct instructions of Mr. Arthur Greenwood, Minister of Health, the pernicious system of task and test work has been extended. This is a system whereby the recipient of out-door relief is compelled to work on local schemes of employment run by the Board of Guardians in return for the amount of relief granted, frequently merely a food ticket. The principal objections to such

methods of employment must be obvious to the reader and need no emphasising here. Such work is actually increasing in all parts of the country under the Labour Government on the instructions of the Minister of Health, and Boards of Guardians that are desirous of abolishing this form of work are being threatened and bullied into continuing by the Minister.

Let us take a few cases out of many that can be quoted.

In August the Greenwich Board of Guardians passed a resolution to abolish task work ; they forwarded a copy to the Minister of Health and he promptly informed them that they must rescind that resolution and continue the task work.

The Romford Board of Guardians received a letter in September from the Labour Minister of Health complaining of the number of able-bodied men in receipt of Poor Law Relief in Romford, and asking for a full report with particulars of the arrangements the Guardians have for imposing a work test as a condition for the receipt of relief.

The Dewsbury Guardians received instructions from the Minister of Health insisting that task work must be imposed and that no departure from that regulation would be permitted. It further laid down that the Ministry could not approve the practice of the hours of work being proportionate to the amount of relief granted as was proposed by the Dewsbury Board of Guardians. The letter insisted that the recipients of relief must be kept in full employment irrespective of the amount of relief paid.

In the discussion that took place at the Guardians' meeting it was pointed out that already in Dewsbury men were working on this task work thirty-two hours for 10s.

On November 5, the Gateshead Board of Guardians discussed a letter received from the Minister of Health in which he insisted that task work must be started, and declaring that he considered it desirable that an adequate labour test should be required as a condition of the grant of out-door relief to able-bodied men, and that he would withhold approval of such relief unless it was made clear to him that at least discrimination had been used, and that there were special circumstances to justify such exceptional treatment.

The Sheffield Board of Guardians received a letter from the

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Minister demanding a reduction in the scales of relief on the grounds that they were paying a higher scale than the benefit scale at Labour Exchanges.

Relief Debts

During the 1926 Miners' Lockout big debts by the receipt of Poor Law Relief were incurred by the miners and their families. Since then the local Boards of Guardians have been endeavouring to recover these amounts by weekly payments from the wages of the miners. The wages are so low, however, that the guardians have found extreme difficulty in getting repayments on these debts, in spite of a number of police prosecutions that have been made in an effort to recover these amounts.

The result is that many Boards of Guardians are desirous of liquidating the remaining debts and making no further effort to force repayment. They seemed to have the impression that this line would be permitted under a Labour Government, but what do we find?

The Swansea Board of Guardians applied to the Ministry of Health for permission to cancel their relief debt of £210,000; Ministry refused to permit any cancellation whatever.

The Whitehaven Guardians passed a resolution to liquidate their debt of £51,000 and immediately the Labour Minister of Health heard of this, he threatened to surcharge the Guardians and compelled them to rescind their resolution. The Board argued that it was impossible for the miners to repay these debts out of their present low wages, but such arguments on behalf of the workers did not have the slightest effect upon the Labour Government.

The Mansfield Guardians asked permission to cancel out the debt of £110,000 and were threatened with a surcharge if they dared to do so. These are a few examples from many that can be quoted from all parts of the country. We see an arrogant Shylock attitude being displayed also in respect to money borrowed by Boards of Guardians from the Ministry of Health in 1926 to enable the Guardians to meet the demands for relief.

The Pontefract Board of Guardians are owing the Ministry of Health £16,000 which they borrowed for relief during the 1926 lockout. The total borrowed was £180,000, and the sum of £164,000 had already been paid back. In respect to the remaining

£16,000 they sent a deputation to the Minister of Health during the second week in October to ask for an extension of time for the repayment of this, which was due to be cleared off by March, 1930. Arthur Greenwood refused point-blank their request for any extension of time and the Chairman of the Deputation, in reporting back to the Boards of Guardians, declared : " The Minister of Health, Arthur Greenwood, was as inaccessible as, and no more sympathetic than, his predecessor, Mr. Neville Chamberlain."

Conclusion

I have given sufficient evidence to show the character of this Labour Government in relation to the unemployed. There are many other important matters concerning unemployment that I should have liked to deal with, but space prevents me doing so on this occasion. The question of the new Unemployment Insurance Act must be the subject for a special article later.

By the agitation and work of the N.U.W.M. and by bitter experience the masses of the unemployed are having the Labour Government revealed to them in its true capitalist rôle. The recent district agitations and demonstrations of the N.U.W.M. are indicating the rising discontent and disillusionment of the unemployed, and when the storm breaks the Labour Government will be shaken to its foundations by the great army of hungry workless.

THE ROLE AND LEADERSHIP OF THE INDIAN WORKING CLASS

By CLEMENS DUTT

THE events of the past year in India leave no ground for uncertainty as to the advance of the revolutionary tide there. They fully confirm the estimate of a year ago that a new period of advance was opening out, the distinctive character of which consisted in the leading rôle played by the Indian proletariat. Since then a good deal has happened. The strike wave has continued and developed, assuming an increasing political importance. British imperialism, acting through the Labour Government, has adopted the most ferocious measures of repression directed primarily against the mass movement. The nationalist movement has passed through a rapid process of evolution and differentiation, exposing the make-believe and treachery of the Indian bourgeoisie including even the so-called "extremist" leaders, and greatly accelerating the anti-imperialist and revolutionary understanding of the Indian masses.

It would, however, be erroneous to suggest that the Indian proletariat has already established in fact its leadership of the revolutionary forces. The noteworthy feature of the present situation is that events have clearly demonstrated that without such leadership the struggle against imperialism and exploitation cannot be carried on, but that the Indian working class is not yet sufficiently strongly organised and class conscious for it to assume fully its historic rôle of leadership in the Indian revolution. The peasant masses and the revolutionary rank and file of the organised nationalist movement are moving towards participation in mass struggle, but unless the Indian working class can establish not only political ascendancy over them, but also clear organisational forms through which that ascendancy can be expressed, the danger of

surrender to the influence of the Indian bourgeoisie will always be present. This is the fundamental problem of the present period.

The Advance of the Proletariat

The continued attacks against the workers, the process of introducing rationalisation in Indian industry going forward mainly at their expense, and the developed methods of persecution and terrorism set in operation by the employers and the Government, have contributed very largely to the consolidation and education of the Indian working class. In the strike movement a great advance over 1928 is observable in the more militant and resolute attitude of the strikers, the great intensity of class feeling among them, the extension of the organisation of workers' committees and factory councils, the vastly heightened political significance of the strike struggles and the general spreading of an understanding of the class struggle.

The struggle of the Bombay textile workers is typical of the advance that has taken place. The opposition they have had to encounter is incomparably greater than last year. First came the attempt in February to drown their struggle in the blood bath of the communal riots. Then came the arrest of all the chief leaders in the Meerut case. There followed at once the Fawcett textile report in favour of the employers which immediately stimulated the process that had already begun of victimisation and further attacks on wages and conditions. In spite of all this, the general strike called in April met with a unanimous response from the workers. The strike was met with the use of armed police and troops, the curfew order, prohibition of meetings, extensive importation of blacklegs and the passing of the Intimidation Act to prevent picketing. The reformist union appeared in the full rôle of a blackleg union and attempts were also made to sabotage the strike by the setting up of a so-called "blue" union by the employers directly and by the formation of a "green" Mohammedan union on a religious basis. The Bombay nationalists also came out in direct opposition to the strike and the Bombay Congress organisation voted money and means for open propaganda against the strike. Yet in the face of all this the strike went on; the workers departed for their village homes in large numbers and their places were

gradually filled by new men. Finally, in the middle of September, the Girni Kamgar union was compelled to call off the strike without making conditions.

Only a few of the factors in the campaign against the textile workers have been mentioned above. The Girni Kamgar Union, the mass union of the textile workers with its Red Flag badge, aroused such rage and fury among the capitalists and British imperialists not so much on account of the strike, but because it gave a lesson to the whole Indian working class by practical experience of the meaning of class consciousness and militant struggle. The campaign against the "communist menace" has been a key-note of imperialist propaganda during the year. The report of the Riots Inquiry Committee set up to investigate the causes of the February communal riots and the report of the Textile Strike Inquiry Committee (consisting of three capitalist lawyers), appointed by the Government in July under the new Trade Disputes Act, are both made to serve as a means of attacking communism and the Girni Kamgar Union.

The Riots Committee examined eighty witnesses. According to the Press reports of the evidence, very few of them said that communist propaganda had anything to do with the riots and a number of prominent Indian public men emphatically denied that there was any connection. Nevertheless, the European Association made a strong statement declaring that the riots had their origin in the teaching of communist doctrines by labour leaders, that the Girni Kamgar union was a communist union responsible for the rapid progress of communism in Bombay and that special measures should be taken against it. It is noticeable that the Report of the Committee does not print any of the written statements or oral evidence but gives their verdict exactly on the lines of what was said by the European Association. Their first and primary recommendation is: "(1) *Government should take drastic action against the activities of the communists in Bombay.*" The following quotations are interesting evidence of the nature of the report.

It is admitted before us by the Treasurer of the Union that some of the leaders of the Union are communists, but a distinction is sought to be drawn between the policy of the individual leaders and that of the Union. This is a distinction without a difference. . . . The very fact that the Union is known as the Red Flag Union, and

that its symbols are a hammer and sickle, shows that it is a communist organisation.

We are of opinion that, in addition to action under the Intimidation Act, strict action should be taken when necessary against communist agitators under the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure. We are also of opinion that it should be considered whether section 22 of the Trade Union Act should not be amended so as to exclude communists from the management of any registered trade union.

The Attack on the Girni Kamgar Union

The Report of the Court of Inquiry into the 1929 textile strike carries the attack against the Girni Kamgar Union a good deal further. This report does not deal with general allegations of "communism" but concerns itself directly with the actual structure, administration and policy of the union. One of the biggest problems with which British imperialism is confronted in dealing with the growing revolutionary wave in India is that of preventing trade union organisation from entering the path of militant class struggle. The growth of the Girni Kamgar Union, which is being taken as a model by other left-wing unions in India, has been sufficient to prove to the imperialists that it is necessary for them to take drastic action in order to mutilate and mould Indian trade union organisation into an exact copy of the reformist type developed in Britain by long years of imperialist corruption.

The first object of attack is what the Inquiry Report calls the "aggressive propaganda" of the Girni Kamgar Union. It declares :—

The Girni Kamgar Union has been described in the leaflets as the Red Flag Union, and its avowed object appears to be the destruction of capitalism.

The report quotes extracts from the leaflets and from the mill workers' paper *Kranti* (Revolution) to illustrate this. Thus, the *Kranti* declares :—

The Bombay workmen unfurled the Red Flag in order to fight the owners and establish their union, and since then the owners are thinking how to kill this union. The owners were afraid that the mill committees of the Union were following the steps of the "factory soviets" in Russia, and that, as in Russia, this "Soviet" here will one day kick out the owners and establish the Labour Raj, and, therefore, in order to settle it finally they have declared war on the Red Flag.—(*Kranti*, May 19, 1929.)

But how will the agitation be stopped by arresting the leaders ? Or how is the movement to be killed by declaring it to be illegal ? Because the fight of the Red Flag is not dependent on the leaders, but will continue as long as capitalism is in existence. It will continue as long as the owners make money by looting workmen and until the unjust existence of capitalism is . . . But the agitation which has been started by the workmen suffering under repression of capitalism and imperialism, not only of India but of the whole world, cannot be stopped by one or many Governments. In the world the Red Flag has never submitted before any Government.—
(*Kranti*, June 16, 1929.)

The gap in the second quotation was left so in the Report ; apparently the statement was too dangerous to reprint. The main object of attack in the report, however, is not the character of its propoganda, but its factory basis of organisation. The rules say that the Mill Committees are to be purely advisory. Accordingly, the Report says :—

There is hardly anything to quarrel with in the rules of the Union as framed. These rules make out the Union to have a sane constitution.

But even before the General Strike, the Mill Committees began to deal with local grievances on their own account and even to call local strikes. That this was freely tolerated is described as “an act on the part of the G. K. Union which clearly disclosed a revolutionary tendency.”

The whole of the Report is devoted to the attack on the Girni Kamgar Union. The aim of this attack is to prevent the development of trade union organisations which will not work in harmony with capitalism. In this connection it is interesting to note the interchange of remarks between Mr. Ranadive, one of the officials of the G. K. Union, and Mr. Mody, the Chairman of the Bombay Millowners' Association. Mr. Mody complained that the G. K. Union was not following “recognised trade union principles.”

Mr. Ranadive : What are recognised methods ?

Mr. Mody : In the case of a dispute to try and bring about a settlement by negotiations and not to provoke strike after strike.

Mr. Ranadive : Do other trade unions follow these recognised methods ?

Mr. Mody: I should think so.

Mr. Ranadive: Is it not true that you were out for a fight to a finish in regard to the present strike ?

Mr. Mody: I have already stated that the moment we found

ourselves confronted with a Union which was bent upon the destruction of capitalism and organised industries we recognised that we had to fight it some day.

The whole of this experience in Bombay, together with similar experiences elsewhere and the gigantic object lesson of the Meerut trial, provides a political education for the Indian working class which is extremely rapidly raising their whole struggle to a higher plane and the effect of which reaches out to vast numbers beyond those actually participating at the moment in the strike movement. The political significance of strike action has been so underlined, and the Meerut trial has done so much to popularise the slogans of militant mass struggle, that a widespread consciousness of the international importance of the workers' movement has developed out of the very efforts of the imperialists to stifle its growth. The cries of "Down with British imperialism," "Long live the Indian revolution" and even the call for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and a Soviet India have not only spread everywhere among the workers and replaced the old shouts for Mahatma Gandhi and the National Congress, but have become common also on the lips of political demonstrators not belonging to the working class. Thus, it may be noticed that these proletarian slogans were brought forward in the manifesto of Bhagat Singh and Dutt, the two nationalists who were convicted of throwing a bomb in the Legislative Assembly, and they have been repeated by some of the accused nationalists on trial in the Lahore Conspiracy case and have been widely taken up by nationalist youth sections and mass demonstrations in support of Indian political prisoners. All this testifies to the marked growth of the leadership and influence of the revolutionary proletariat over the revolutionary sections of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry.

At the present time not only are the bitter conflicts of the Tata tinplate workers and of the oil strikers in Bengal as well as various minor textile and other strikes still being waged, but it is possible that a further big strike on the railways may soon break out. Various sections of the organised railwaymen are calling for a general strike on the railways, a proposal which was only rejected at the All India Railwaymen's Federation earlier in the year by a small majority. The following recent note in the Indian Press on

the large mass meetings of railwaymen being held in Cawnpore is typical of what is happening in most parts :—

Processions with red flags passed through the railway colony singing various songs, the common theme being "Victory for Labour" and "Workers of the world unite."

The Policy of the Whitley Commission

In the face of these developments, the policy of British imperialism is two-fold. In the first place, it uses every legal and arbitrary weapon to crush and destroy militant working class organisation and especially the incipient growth of a communist party. In the second place, alongside of the weapon of terror, it seeks to promote and encourage such forms of Indian labour organisation as will docilely fit in with the general scheme of imperialist exploitation. This, of course, is the outstanding object of the Whitley Royal Commission on Labour now touring India.

The Whitley Commission is the direct counterpart to the Meerut trial. The function of the one is to destroy, that of the other to build up. The spokesman of the Labour Government at the Labour Party Conference expressed his concern for "genuine trade unionism" in India, a phrase which has the same meaning as "sane trade unionism" employed in the Textile Inquiry report quoted above, and which takes us back to the "sane trade unionism" of Mr. Osborne of the Osborne judgment, whose principles are now being enforced through the medium of those who once opposed him. "Sane" trade unions are those which serve as useful adjuncts to the working of capitalism and it is the concern of British imperialism, as it is that of Indian capitalism, to see that Indian labour organisation is guided into the channel of class collaboration and kept away from militant class struggle. The membership of the Whitley Commission is eloquent of its function. Mr. Whitley has the same task as he had in England in 1917. He has to turn the attention of Indian workers away from militancy while at the same time securing acquiescence in wage attacks and speeding up. Of the twelve members of the Commission, only two are connected with Indian trade unionism, but one of them is the reactionary General Secretary of the Indian Trade Union Congress. Nevertheless, the fight for boycott of the

Commission is a very keen one and the division between the right and left wing in the Trade Union Congress which meets in Nagpur early in December will centre round this issue.

The issue is, however, not a simple one between militants and reformists because of the national issue involved. Many nominal leaders of Indian trade union organisations are bourgeois nationalists who have entered the movement in order to ensure that the masses remain under bourgeois leadership. For them, boycott of the Whitley Commission is only a political manoeuvre subsidiary to the main object of preventing attack on Indian capitalists. Thus, for instance, the United Provinces Provincial Trade Union Conference last September decided to boycott the Whitley Commission but the following quotation from Mr. Das Tandon, one of the prominent speakers, shows the kind of statement that was made at the same time :—

To lead a campaign of class war against your countrymen merely because they are capitalists or owners of land would be a suicidal policy and would help the foreign Government which we desire to replace by our own. Look at England itself! Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Party are in power. Do they regard the labourers of other countries as their brethren whose interests they have to safeguard in preference to the interests of the capitalists of their own country? The answer is an obvious negative.

However apposite the comment on the Labour Party, the open fear of the Indian working class is a motive force which is driving the speaker and his allies into the arms of the British imperialists. This retreat before the working class is the governing factor in the nationalist movement and has been doubly emphasised by the events following the Irwin proclamation.

The Reaction on the Indian National Congress

What is the position with regard to the bourgeois leadership of the Indian National Congress? The advance of the proletariat during the past year has had its reaction in the corresponding retreat of the bourgeois nationalists. Already at the Calcutta session last December, the main feature was the actual surrender of the demand for independence, the secondary and complementary feature being the face-saving unreal ultimatum and threat of mass action a year ahead.

During the year this dual policy has been accentuated. Nothing was done to strengthen the anti-imperialist struggle. At the same time, in spite of the increasing anti-working class attitude of the chief leaders, the revolutionary phraseology about a coming "life and death struggle" and the expectation of action rallied a certain mass support to the Congress. After a recruiting campaign, the membership of the Congress was returned at about 450,000 at the end of September, at least four times the figure of a year ago. It may be noted in passing that even this figure falls short by about 140,000 from the quota arrived at, although the latter was taken as only one in four hundred of the population of the provinces of British India. To fulfil such a quota it is only necessary to recruit one or two persons from each village. These would in all probability be well-to-do peasants or landlords or petty bourgeois elements, and therefore even such a figure does not greatly affect the social composition of the Congress.

The hypocrisy and impotence of Indian bourgeois nationalism is not due to lack of reason for conflict with British imperialism. In fact, the many points for discord between them have been accentuated recently because the latter, instead of giving the Indian bourgeoisie facilities for progress and development, is actually driving them out of positions (as in the case of the iron and steel industry) which they formerly held.

If, then, in spite of serious grounds for conflict, the Indian bourgeoisie are reduced to practical subservience to imperialism, the reason is to be found in their abject fear in the face of the advancing Indian workers and peasants. This is forcibly brought out in the definite co-operation of the nationalists in the campaign of repression as far as it strikes at the working-class movement, as seen, for instance, in their support of the Trade Disputes Act and the failure to organise a campaign on behalf of the Meerut prisoners.

Yet Gandhi retreated to make way for the "left" nationalist Jawaharlal Nehru as President of the coming National Congress. This was only a move in the game and was intended more as a gesture to reassure the rank and file, who were becoming restive, than as a means to intimidate the British Government. Gandhi had openly declared the impossibility of fighting and as usual

in such cases he puts the blame on the masses. He openly said that he was "sceptical about the forthcoming fight." He declared that it was a "gross misrepresentation to say that the masses are impatient to be led to civil disobedience but that I am hanging back. I can only lead people who are prepared. . . . I see no such signs on the horizon."

Accordingly, Jawaharlal Nehru was put forward as the best chance of maintaining the ascendancy of the Congress over the masses. The Labour Government replied with the Irwin declaration with its vague promise of "Dominion Status" at the end of a long vista of time, a gesture as empty and insincere as the threat that it was supposed to meet. The whole thing was a piece of play acting which involved the tacit or secret collaboration of the two parties. The Labour Government only gave a very shadowy pretence of yielding to the paper sword of the National Congress. The Indian Nationalists only pretended that the gesture could be regarded as a hopeful move towards the satisfaction of their demands. But the underlying reality was that the Indian reformists, including their left spokesman, made a deal with the British bourgeoisie, acting through its Labour agents, for joint collaboration against a possible mass revolt.

Why then the outburst of criticism from the Tory and Liberal politicians? Essentially, there were two reasons. Firstly, to assist the Labour Government in making a show with their gesture by giving it the appearance of going above the authority of the Simon Commission. Secondly, to make it perfectly clear to the Labour agents of imperialism that they were only agents and that under no pressure may they depart one iota from the path prescribed by imperialism.

The resulting position is of especial interest as immediately affecting the future of the Indian National Congress and the rôle and leadership of the Indian proletariat. The document accepting the gesture of imperialism is signed by all the chief liberals and the main leaders of the Congress, including the young Nehru, the pillar of the left wing. After expressing the appreciation and hope resulting from the Viceroy's message, it sets down the following conditions :—

- (1) A policy of general conciliation should be definitely adopted to induce a calmer atmosphere.
- (2) Political prisoners should be granted a general amnesty.
- (3) The representation of progressive political organisations should be effectively secured, and that the Indian National Congress, as the largest among them, should have a predominant representation.

We understand that the Conference is to meet not to discuss when Dominion Status is to be established, but to frame a scheme of Dominion Status for India.

Naturally, British imperialism is not likely to accept these conditions. That has already been made clear and some of the signatories are said to have withdrawn their support. Such vacillations are to be expected but do not alter the significance in any way of having once signed such a document. The essential result is a terrific exposure of the Congress as a whole, left as well as right, sons as well as fathers, revealing the inherent impossibility of the Congress as an organ of the Indian bourgeoisie ever being capable of functioning as the leader of a mass struggle against British imperialism.

It is in decisive moments like this that the real alignment and rôle of such apparently intermediate sections as the I.L.P. in Britain and the "left" nationalists in India is plainly exposed. Just as the leaders of the I.L.P. line up with the Labour Government on this issue, where they had pretended to criticise them, so do the Independence Leaguers make a common front with the rest of the bourgeoisie in India. The effect will be evident to all at the coming Lahore Congress, where the question of action against British imperialism, except perhaps in the most limited and unreal form, will once again be shelved.

The Future of the Anti-Imperialist Struggle

The Congress movement has passed a turning point. It can confidently be predicted that the mass following of the Congress will once again fall away. This last betrayal denotes the end of the rôle of the Indian National Congress even as the pretended leader of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Following the lead of the National Congress are many elements who had pinned their hopes on a victory of the left bourgeois nationalists in the Congress as signifying the opening of a radical struggle against imperialism. The last events must open their eyes

to the impossibility of any uncompromising struggle under bourgeois leadership whether left or right. The way forward now is to be found only in a frank recognition that the Indian proletariat is the sole possible leader in the struggle for national, as well as for social, emancipation. The rank and file of the Congress must co-operate with the Indian working class in building up new forms of organisation for the national struggle in which bourgeois leadership will be eliminated.

How far can the working class be certain to secure its class leadership in such new forms of organisation? Clearly it can do so only in proportion as these new forms are dominated by mass organisations of the working class and in proportion as the political party of the working class, the Communist Party, is organised and developed. Such a bloc comprising petty bourgeois and peasant as well as working class elements may be constituted by a mass organisation of the League against Imperialism. As long as it remains a mass body in which working-class leadership is organised and expressed and is constituted as a joint body with limited aims for action during a certain limited period, it will have an important function to fulfil in the struggle.

The time is ripe for the working class in India to take the full leadership of the national struggle. It can only do so if it is itself led by a militant class-conscious organisation. That is the factor which is holding back the development of the mass national struggle for the overthrow of imperialism. In spite of repression and persecution, in spite of the joint onslaughts of British imperialism and Indian capitalism, the working class in India is going forward towards the accomplishment of its historic tasks. A period has opened in which one year witnesses a development outstripping that of a past decade, and it is precisely now that all the revolutionary classes look expectantly for the leadership of the Communist Party, which in international alliance with the militant workers of the world will guarantee the success of the Indian revolution.

HOOVER AND MACDONALD

By SCOTT NEARING

AFTER the conclusion of their secret conversations in Washington, Hoover and MacDonald issued a joint statement which nimbly evaded any direct references to the subjects discussed. "Our conversations," they said, "have been largely confined to the mutual relations of the two countries in the light of the situation created by the signing of the peace pact. Therefore, in a new and reinforced sense the two governments declare that not only is war between them unthinkable, but that distrusts and suspicions arising from doubts and fears which may have been justifiable before the peace pact must now cease to influence national policy."

The statement that war between the two countries is "unthinkable" was picked up by the capitalist Press which let loose a barrage of "pacifist" propaganda. That was evidently what Hoover and MacDonald wanted. Yet the significance of the joint statement lay not in its expression of the pacifist intentions of the world's two foremost imperialist powers, but in its implied admission that the Hoover-MacDonald conversations had solved none of the Anglo-American conflicts. Their statement declared that, on the assumption "that war between us is banished," the British and American governments have agreed that "old historical problems" are possible of solution and are to be the subjects of future conversations. In other words, these problems—they were not specified—remain unsolved. Furthermore the joint statement indicated that agreement had not even been reached on the question of naval limitation. The statement says :—

The exchange of views on naval reduction has brought the two nations so close to agreement that the obstacles in previous conferences arising out of Anglo-American disagreements seem now substantially removed.

Nevertheless, this aspect of the statement was overlooked by the Press. Newspapers, ranging from ultra-conservative organs like the *Washington Post*, to the social-democratic *New Leader*

hailed MacDonald as a harbinger of peace. This united front, engaged in spreading pacifist illusions, held together until the last days of MacDonald's visit.

When MacDonald stepped from the deck of the "Berengaria," he was greeted by an official reception committee, which included Morris Hillquit, national chairman of the Socialist Party ; Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate for President ; J. P. Morgan, Owen D. Young and other leading bankers and industrialists. A naval and military escort welcomed the messenger of peace. Throughout his stay MacDonald was fêted by the big bourgeoisie. One of his evenings was "crowned with the pleasure" of addressing a dinner attended by leading financiers and industrialists, presided over by Elihu Root. Another evening was spent at the house of Thomas W. Lamont, of J. P. Morgan and Company.

After several days of unfulfilled hope that MacDonald and Hoover would clarify their joint declaration, the Press began openly to express disappointment at the emptiness and ambiguity of the joint statement. The conservative Republican papers, which had joined the chorus of welcome, then resumed their attacks.

Why did MacDonald come to the United States ? What was in the mind of Hoover and his millionaire advisers when he spent long hours with the British Prime Minister in the seclusion of his Blue Mountain camp ?

Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that the directors of United States foreign policy were trying, indirectly, to give a validity to the Kellogg Pact which it has never possessed. Certainly the Kellogg Pact was mentioned sufficiently to justify the assumption that it was one of the major issues discussed.

"Distrusts and suspicions arising from doubts and fears which may have been justified before the peace pact must now cease to influence national policy," MacDonald and Hoover declare in their joint statement of October 9. Further in the same statement : "In view of the security afforded by the Kellogg Pact, we have been able to end, we trust forever, competitive building between ourselves with the risk of war and the waste of public money involved." Two days later MacDonald described the Kellogg Pact as "one of the foundation events upon which great structures of constitutions and institutions can be built."

Why should American statesmen wish to amplify the Kellogg Pact? Why, indeed, unless they hope, by means of it to build up a world machine, dominated by the United States, that can successfully make head against the League of Nations.

The United States has never joined the League. Britain and France easily control its policy. The League stands as a persistent obstacle to the world ambitions of the United States imperialists. How shall they meet this obstacle? By building an effective rival organisation in the form of a world Monroe Doctrine, of which the Kellogg Pact is the entering wedge.

The issue is far from clear. The British representatives insisted that the Five Power conference to be held in London, January, 1930, is preliminary and tentative—apparently, a mere preparation for later action by the League of Nations. Arthur Henderson emphasised this point in the last paragraph of his call to the conference:—

I should like to emphasise that His Majesty's Government have discovered no inclination in any quarter to set up new machinery for dealing with the naval disarmament question. On the contrary, it is hoped by this means a text can be elaborated which will facilitate the task of the League of Nations Preparatory Commission and of the subsequent general disarmament conference.

France and Italy in accepting the British invitation have stressed this statement of Henderson's. The United States acceptance, however, ignores this point. Meanwhile official Washington and the inspired American Press continues to stress the Kellogg Pact. Rumour has it that Secretary Stimson is seeking some formulæ that will enable him to secure Senate action in this general direction.

A second possibility suggests itself. Since the Anglo-French naval agreement of 1928 was published, United States diplomacy had evidently been aimed at splitting this menacing alliance. Does this mean an Anglo-American alliance? MacDonald, speaking in New York, October 11, said "No!" most emphatically. "Two nations," said he, "cannot make the peace of the world." Still, the French Press has treated the MacDonald visit as a bid for a possible alliance and the French Government is turning for consolation to Italy. The issue has become a part of the international political situation.

There is still another explanation for the MacDonald conversations. Hoover is stalling. He and his advisers realise full well the terrible economic stranglehold which the United States ruling class has on the British ruling class. They need only wait. Each year the American grip tightens. Year by year the British position will become less tenable.

One thing is certain : economic war between Britain and the United States goes steadily on. The British Committee on Industry and Trade proclaimed in its *Survey of Overseas Markets* : "The United States is a formidable competitor in practically all classes of goods which are produced in the United Kingdom." Add to this statement the growing power of the United States as an investing nation, the increasing emphasis of the United States on an effective merchant marine, the keen competition between British and American interests for oil, rubber and the like, and there emerges a picture of two mighty capitalist empires contending for the economic supremacy of the world.

Is Anglo-American rivalry dead? No. MacDonald's visit did not give it more than a thin coating of transparent varnish. Despite fine words, like Wilson in the Paris Peace Conference, he was defeated before he set foot on the decks of the "Berengaria," defeated by the sweep of competitive economic forces which Hoover seems to understand more clearly than MacDonald. After all, Hoover is a confirmed outspoken representative of the most aggressive United States imperialism. It is MacDonald who cloaked British imperialism in the delusive language of pacifist Utopias.

" CROSS ROADS "—A CRITICISM

By THE EDITOR OF THE "LABOUR
MONTHLY"

AN article on Anglo-Soviet relations appeared in the last issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY under the title "Cross-Roads" by W. N. Ewer, who has been from the foundation of the LABOUR MONTHLY one of its most constant and valued contributors, as well as its helper in every way and joint-founder. This fact makes it the more necessary to criticise the above article, which is wholly out of accord with the line of the LABOUR MONTHLY and of the international working class. The conditions of publication at the time made it impossible to add any critical comment to the article when it was published last month ; we are therefore taking the first opportunity to come to it now.

The general character of the article is to treat Anglo-Soviet relations, *i.e.*, the relations of British Imperialism and the State of the proletarian dictatorship, as a continuation, through new forms, but with close analogies, of the relations of British Imperialism and Tsarist Russian Imperialism. "Anglo-Russian hostility of the past eleven years" is declared to be "a compound"; one factor is declared to be "the natural opposition between an imperialist capitalist country and a revolutionary socialist country"; the second is "*the century-old rivalries and mutual fears of England and Russia as Asiatic Powers.*" "Of these two," it is further declared, "*the second is gradually becoming more important than the first, as the years of actual revolution recede into history.*" This is the perspective of the world situation presented by the writer. The remainder of the article proceeds to analyse Anglo-Soviet relations in terms of a continuous development of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia, which is traced in a line from the eighteenth century to the present day ; British anti-Soviet policy is declared to be "quite naturally, a rebirth of the old policy" ; the campaign against the Soviet Union is defined as "the task of defending India in Poland—and a dozen other countries."

This treatment is the common treatment of bourgeois expression, from *The Times* to the *Daily Herald*, and especially of Liberal-Labour bourgeois expression, which invariably endeavours to conceal class issues, to seek to balance Western Imperialism by "Red Imperialism," &c. The flagrant error here is the same as that of "Outpost" recently in the *Sunday Worker*, when he compared the problem of the Soviet Republic over the Chinese Eastern Railway as identical with that of British Imperialism at Hankow in 1927. Such a treatment is only possible on the basis of a complete blindness to class issues, of an abstract balancing of Revolution and Counter-Revolution as two parallel forces to be regarded with majestic impartiality from the standpoint of a classless liberalism, of a complete inability to analyse a situation in class terms and from the standpoint of the interests of the proletariat, *i.e.*, of a complete repudiation of socialism and Marxism.

Comrade Ewer defends his thesis that the antagonism of Britain and the Soviet Union is essentially an antagonism of rival "Asiatic Powers," rather than an antagonism of Imperialism and the Revolution, on the grounds that "America and Germany are no less capitalist countries than England," yet relations here are "vastly better"; the intensity of Anglo-Soviet antagonism is due to the special question of Asia; "the Anglo-Russian problem of to-day, as of the last century, is an Asiatic one." The sophistry of this line of argument is glaring. Just as in the most superficial liberal treatment, the issue of capitalism and socialism is seen, not on a world scale as the battle of Imperialism and the World Revolution, dominating every issue in world politics, but as a dilettante issue of two alternative social systems in England and Russia, which ought to be able to live peaceably alongside one another. The question in Asia is seen as an external one; it is actually presented as disproof of the fact that the issue is an issue of "capitalism"; *i.e.*, "*capitalism*" is completely divorced from *imperialism*; and the gigantic struggle in Asia, instead of being seen in terms of the mass colonial revolutionary struggles against imperialism for independence as an integral part of the world revolution, and therefore making Asia a central meeting-ground and battleground of World Imperialism and the Revolution, is caricatured as a question of rival ambitions and fears of "England" and

“Russia” in Asia, just as between the Foreign Office and Tsarism in the nineteenth century. Such a travesty of history is to be expected in the columns of the Press of imperialism ; it has no place in a serious revolutionary working-class journal.

Having thus divorced the issue in Asia from the issue of imperialism and the revolution, Comrade Ewer proceeds to find that the antagonism of imperialism and the revolution is growing milder. “The years of actual revolution recede into the background.” England and Russia are intent on internal politics and peaceful reconstruction. The British Government is presented, not as fighting to crush the national revolutionary movements of the masses with armed and judicial terrorism, and strategically seeking the alliance of the national bourgeoisie and big landowners to assist in this suppression, but as peaceably and amicably seeking to “appease the nationalist movements” by “compromises” (witness Palestine and Meerut). The Soviet situation is presented in conventional bourgeois-national terms: “Russia has become, more than at any time since the revolution, introverted. . . . With the dying away of the big revolutionary wave there has come a diversion of interest from the foreign to the domestic field.” Nothing stands in the way of lasting peace between Britain and Russia but “mutual fears.” “Neither country wishes—neither can afford to wish—for war.”

The perspective of the world situation which the writer here holds out to hope is thus a perspective of increasing world stabilisation, of the dying away of the world revolution, of the harmonising of antagonisms. It is unnecessary to state that this perspective is in complete contradiction to the revolutionary Marxist analysis of the present period as a period of intensifying contradictions, of the increase of the war danger, and of the beginnings of a new revolutionary wave (of which new revolutionary wave the titanic socialist offensive of the Five Years’ Plan is an integral part, no less than the rising colonial revolutionary struggles in Asia and Africa or the gathering economic-political mass struggles in Europe).

What are the practical consequences of this treatment ?

The first is that *the rôle of British Imperialism is falsely presented*, its ruthless crushing of the national revolutionary movements covered over under the picture of seeking to “appease the nationalist

movements," its drive to war denied, its campaign against the Soviet Union presented as simply due to "fear" and "defensive" in character, so that the whole treatment becomes an apologetic of the most predatory and brutal imperialism as pacific and "on the defensive."

The second is that *the rôle of the British Labour Government is falsely presented*, not as the instrument of imperialist oppression and of the imperialist drive to war, but as pacific and holding out the prospect of a pacific perspective.

The third is that *the rôle of the colonial revolutionary struggles for freedom is falsely presented* in the conventional bourgeois form as a phase of Russian activity in Asia, utilising "the big revolutionary impulse emanating from Moscow," and making the Anglo-Russian problem of to-day "basically the same as that of the last century."

The fourth is that *the danger of war, instead of being underlined, is minimised* ("neither country wishes for war"); and the resumption of Anglo-Soviet relations is presented, not as a phase in the development of imperialist antagonism to the Soviet Union (the underlying hostility is in fact sufficiently obvious from the whole character of the long-drawn negotiations, and from every speech of MacDonald and Henderson), but as a pacific move, opening out the possibility of a new era of peace. This is not a service to peaceful Anglo-Soviet relations, but the reverse. Just when warning to the workers is most needed, when the true rôle of the Labour Government in all the negotiations as the catspaw of imperialism, of the City creditors and the counter-revolutionaries, needs to be most sharply exposed, their professions are instead presented at face value as an earnest of peace, and the vigilance of the workers is weakened, thus helping the warmongers.

The net effect of the article is thus to encourage and propagate the pacific illusions which the Labour Government is seeking to spread, to encourage and propagate hope and confidence in the Labour Government, to soften the opposition of the working class to imperialism, and to weaken the preparations of the working class against war.

Accordingly, we consider it necessary to place on record our categorical repudiation of the article as in glaring contradiction to the line of the LABOUR MONTHLY and of the revolutionary working class.

THE EDITOR OF THE "LABOUR MONTHLY."

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U.S.A.

American Federation of Labour Convention

THE Forty-ninth Annual Convention of the A.F. of L. was held at Toronto from October 7-26. There were 384 delegates present, and an increase in membership of 37,000 was officially claimed. After the announcement in the summer of three-quarters of a million rise this is somewhat of an anti-climax, especially when last year's slogan "Double the Membership" is remembered, and the fact that the numbers are still below the 3-million mark, as compared with 5 millions in 1920.

The tone of the Congress was rather subdued and timid compared with last year; the leaders were on the defensive, and their attitude has been claimed by the progressive *Labor Life* as hopeful and an advance on recent years. It quotes, in support of its view, the more friendly attitude towards old age pensioners, President Green's retort to the Commander of the American Legion (who was, however, allowed to address the Congress in favour of conscription in anticipation of the next war) that "it is rather contradictory for us to make preparations for war, when all are seeking the ways of peace," and, finally, Green's conciliatory reply to the British fraternal delegates' report of "storming the citadel of capitalism" by the British Labour Party that—

if the time should come when the great congress of Labour believed that the best interests of working men and women would be served by the development of a Labour Party, we should not hesitate to face the issue.

But the traditional "non-partisan" attitude was reaffirmed, although it was shown to be hampering and ridiculous in the burning question of putting an end to the system of "Injunctions" and the fight against the re-election of the notorious Judge Sullivan and other injunction-loving judges, both Republican and Democratic.

An interesting episode was the appearance of Sir Henry Thornton, President of the Canadian National Railways, who brought forward a Mondist scheme, embodying a "new partner relation" in industry in which the right to organise is conceded and exercised by both parties, with suitable negotiating machinery. The Convention ordered the printing of the speech and discussion as a pamphlet for distribution among trade unionists, and the *Federation News* of the Chicago F. of L. describes the scheme as "indicating a long step in the direction of civilising and christianising industry and making

things better not alone for the men who worked in the industry but for the owners as well." This industrial peace move no doubt harmonises with Green's re-statement of the purpose of the Federation as "human (not class) betterment," and the search for the best immediately obtainable—not the millennium.

The Convention was also addressed by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald on the subject of his "holy mission" of peace on earth—President Green's description—but the effect was somewhat marred by the report of the Metal Trades Department, which boasted of its part in putting through the Fifteen-Cruiser Bill, and their claim that "seldom in our experience has a legislative programme of the Trade Union Movement been so successful in the face of powerful and nation-wide opposition."

The Conference was both offended and hurt by a very frank and scathing attack launched on the eve of the Convention by the Scripps Howard group of papers, which is usually friendly to Labour. Headed "Where is the A.F. of L.?" the article goes on to describe it as "a somewhat pathetic organisation," which has shown itself unable to protect labour against unemployment, and which has no hold on such basic industries as steel, motor cars, rubber and oil, in which labour has neither organisation nor collective bargaining, while in coal and textiles it is losing what hold it had from lack of constructive programme.

The truth is that the A.F. of L. is failing miserably in its stewardship—every year its weakness is more apparent. The Southern textile situation is a vivid example of that failure. For thirty years the A.F. of L. has ignored this field. The job has been left to the Communists. While the hungry Southern mill hands are facing the organised employers and hostile authorities . . . the sleek A.F. of L. officials sit twiddling their thumbs at mahogany desks at Washington or making patriotic speeches. . . . The A.F. of L. is accurately described as the aristocracy of Labour. All aristocracies are subject to dry rot.

FINLAND

Trade Union Federation and the Social Democrats

EVER since the last annual meeting of the Finnish Trade Union Federation in June, 1929, the Social Democrats have been making strenuous efforts to undermine its revolutionary character and to disintegrate it.

Their first step was to hold a special Social Democratic Trade Union Conference, to which the Social Democratic Press gave full publicity, although it was a small and unrepresentative gathering.

This Conference decided, in its own words, "to break off relations with the Trade Union Federation, in which the Communists have usurped the whole power for themselves, to stop contributions, to persuade the other unions to leave the Federation, and, where necessary, to establish new Social Democratic trade unions." It also elected a committee to act as a link between the breakaway unions, and in addition instructed it "to maintain the connections with the Amsterdam International."

This action has been taken in spite of numerous concessions made to the moderate elements within the Federation, including executive repre-

sentation far beyond their numbers or their influence. At the June Congress the Social Democrats were offered not only several seats on the E.C., but also the post of President, but they rejected the offer when they found that they would not be able to overrule the wishes of the vast majority of the 90,000 workers affiliated to the national centre.

At the October meeting of the General Council of the T.U.F. it was decided that the time for concessions was past, and a stronger line was taken than had been thought advisable in June. The proposal to refer the "Unity Question" to a Special Congress was turned down, and a further resolution required all affiliated unions to expel members of the "Social-Democratic Delegation." A vote of censure was passed on the General Secretary for criticising the intervention of Russia in the affairs of the Finnish T.U. movement, and the decision that the T.U.F. should be represented at I.L.O. Conferences was altered to one resolving to abstain from sending delegates to Geneva.

This line is in harmony with the trend of events in Finland, where a revolutionary spirit is increasingly in evidence. This is exemplified in the recent metal strike which lasted ten months, and the transport strike which ran for a year before the Social Democratic Government assisted the employers to wind them up by forcing mediation upon the workers. It was to be seen in the Red Day demonstrations, which were reminiscent of the revolutionary days of 1918. More recently still it has shown itself in the general strike called by the T.U.F. in support of the hunger strike of political prisoners, over 100 of whom had been in prison since 1919. The prisoners were forced to abandon their protest against ill-treatment and bad conditions, but demonstrations were held all over the country on their behalf which should force the Government to take action before very long.

ITALY

Conference of the Trade Union Confederation

THE Italian Confederazione Generale di Lavoro, which was held in October last, was of great interest and importance, both in itself, in view of the difficulties under which it laboured, being an illegal body, and also because of the decisions arrived at by the Conference.

In addition to the E.C., there were twenty-six delegates from Italy and eleven representatives of emigrant Italian workers, as well as fraternal delegates from the R.I.L.U., the French C.G.T.U. and the Italian C.P. The very fact of the holding of the Conference gave the lie to the assertions of Fascists and Social Democrats that the C.G.L. no longer exists in Italy, and its deliberations showed that it was very alive to the needs of the workers.

The Conference agenda included the following main items:—

- (1) The situation in Italy and the tasks of the Confederation. It was shown that Fascism had not succeeded in solving the economic crisis, which is becoming more and more acute, that a political crisis is also developing, and that these two factors are leading to the disintegration of Fascism and the revival of the Labour Movement.

- (2) The international relations of the Federation. It was decided to sever all relations with the Amsterdam Trade Union International, which had relinquished its opposition to Fascism, and to carry on a campaign to convince the Italian masses of the necessity of affiliating with the R.I.L.U. so that the Federation should be organisationally connected with the proletariat of other lands.
- (3) Work in the Fascist Trade Unions. This was declared to be absolutely necessary since thousands of workers have been forced into these unions who are really in sympathy with the aims of the Federation. The work is admittedly difficult, but resistance to it must be overcome.
- (4) Work among the emigrants was also agreed to be of vital importance, and plans were put forward for initiating a vigorous campaign.

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