

THE Communist

An Organ of the Third (Communist) International

(PUBLISHED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN)

No. 100

SATURDAY, JULY 1st, 1922.

[Registered at the G.P.O.
as a Newspaper]

TWOPENCE

ALBERT INKPIN RELEASED

SPECIAL INTERVIEW

By FRED H. PEET

ALBERT INKPIN, Secretary of the Communist Party has been released. Due to leave Pentonville early Friday morning, news was received on Thursday afternoon that he would be liberated by 6 o'clock that evening. Only four of us were able to be present to greet him.

His release brings to mind the exciting days around Black Friday, the raid on the Party headquarters, the throwing into prison of scores of our members, and the general persecution of Communists all over the country—Inkpin himself being convicted on charges arising from the publication of the Statutes and Theses adopted by the Second Congress of the Third International.

Albert Inkpin looked pale and wanted shaving. Obviously he was excited but happy; and spoke in the high-pitched, highly-strung tone of a man who had had only himself to commune with for some time.

I told him I had been asked by the Editor to interview him for the COMMUNIST. He agreed; but, in fact was more anxious to question me than I to question him. Said I, "What sort of treatment have you had?" "Well," he replied, "with the exception of the first two days I served the whole of my sentence in the hospital cell and have had no cause for complaint at my treatment within the regulations; but as comrades know whose lot it has been to suffer imprisonment for advocacy of Communism, the regulations are an abomination. The prison system of punishment—the silent system, the hours and hours spent in complete solitude, the uniformity of food and the general treatment of the prisoner as a mere number in my opinion in no way act as deterrents to crime but are only calculated to leave the average victim of the system embittered and without hope. As for myself, to be almost completely cut off in the midst of an active life from all contact with the outside world was the hardest thing to live down. I should like to say, incidentally, how bucked I was on May Day to hear the strains of the Red Flag and Marseillaise being played by the contingent that passed by the prison."

I talked with Inkpin about the exciting times during and immediately following the raid on the Party and his arrest. "What do you feel now about the charges against yourself?" "It is quite obvious that the prosecution was not so much of myself as of the Party. It was due to our activities during the miners' lock-out, and arose immediately out of the deputation headed by the Duke of Northumberland which interviewed the Prime Minister to demand immediate and drastic action against the Communists and to which the Home Secretary and Sir Basil Thompson were summoned. This became clear as the prosecution developed. It became evident that the very existence of the Party and its freedom to carry on its work was involved—hence, although my own inclination when convicted was to serve the time and get back as quickly as possible, I concurred with the view of those responsible comrades who held that the conviction should be contested to the very last point.

"Literally taken, the charge hit our freedom to publish the decisions of the second congress. These one could say rightly were the basis of our existence as a section of the International. I can see now that had

a good fight not been put up by us the Government would have been encouraged to drive the Party completely underground—as is the case with the Party in some countries."

I was asking what were his general impressions after two days' freedom, when he interrupted by an anxious enquiry as to the truth regarding our Comrade Lenin. Rumours had reached him that Lenin was dead. I replied that information conflicted but it was clear that the effects of the bullets of the would-be assassin were causing grave anxiety.



THEY TOIL NOT, NEITHER DO THEY SPIN: Yet Solomon in all his glory was not hoorayed as one of these

"That brings me to your question," he replied. "Of course, I am all anxiety to know what has happened. It is impossible in two days to get a clear idea of what has transpired. I gather, however, that among the principal events you have in mind is the attempt to unite the Internationals in a united working-class front against Capitalist imperialism."

"I must confess to astonishment that the united front (as appears for the moment) should have broken down upon such an issue as the trial of the Social Revolutionaries. That the leaders of the Second International, who have always been so loud in their condemnation of violent methods, should show so much concern for members of a party which I have always understood made political assassination one of the main planks of its programme, is only further evidence of their hypocrisy."

Inkpin expressed his indignation at the silence of these people when Communists and other revolutionary workers have been hanged, shot, and imprisoned for long terms by governments with whom in some cases these leaders have been actually collaborating. "I have just picked up an old copy of the *Herald* where in one column is a tirade of the Second Inter-

national against the Soviet Government for not releasing the Social Revolutionaries and in another a message to the effect that Lenin's life is in jeopardy as a result of the bullets fired into his body by a member of the S.R. Party."

"I am disappointed too," he went on, "at the attitude adopted by the E.C. of the Labour Party on the question of our affiliation. After careful examination of the replies to the Questionnaire presented by the Labour Party Executive, I think the Party has gone as far as it could—consistent with its principles and existence as a separate political force. When I look back to the discussion that took place at the joint meeting between the representatives of the two Executives I feel bound to say I thought the way seemed much easier and that if the questions were replied to—as in fact they have been—in accordance with the views expressed by our representatives on that occasion, the other side would have been equally ready to give practical expression to the general desire for a united working-class front. From the attitude of the Labour Party Executive one can only draw the conclusion that the Labour Party leaders were resolved beforehand never to budge an inch from their determination to keep the Communists out."

"This should only make us determined to redouble our activities inside the trade unions and local Labour Parties. The very struggle to defeat this attempt to isolate the Communist Party will attract larger and larger sections of the workers to our side."

Our comrade then discussed the policy conference and said he was anxious to understand the proposed changes in organisation, adding, that from what he had gathered, they augured well for the future of the Party.

"I should like," he said, "through the columns of the paper, to express appreciation of the efforts made to secure my release and to convey my best thanks to all comrades and friends, too many to write to individually, who have written or telegraphed congratulations on my release."

Questioned whether his opinions had at all changed, our comrade laughed, and asked if I was serious, adding: "To me the cause of the workers—the cause of Communism—is worth every sacrifice it is in my power to make. I only feel more determined than ever to continue the work to which my activities have been devoted for the last eighteen years."

Comrade Inkpin is one more demonstration—added to scores—that prison fails utterly to crush the ardour and determination of a convinced Communist. Rather does it by its injurious insult added to insulting injury reveal the pettiness of the malice of the Bourgeoisie compared with the moral grandeur of the struggling Proletariat. In so doing it prepares and hardens its victims for ever more intense and unflinching devotion to the Revolutionary Struggle.

ALBERT INKPIN

The Central Branch are holding a Social Dance in honour of Comrade Inkpin on Thursday, July 6th, at 7.30 p.m., at 107, Charlotte Street, W.

Tickets, price 1/6, can be obtained from the Secretary, Reception Committee, Central London Branch, c/o 16, King Street, W.C.

JAMES!—and Other Trifles

James! "Jimmy"—by which we mean the Right Honourable James Henry Thomas, P.C., M.P., J.P., D.C.L. (there are some other letters but we have mislaid them)—has been in fine form this week-end. It should be placed on record, first of all, that speaking at Edinburgh on Sunday he had the impudence again to call upon the workers to "produce more."

A copy of this inspiring address should be posted up in every Labour Exchange and placarded at every unemployed meeting—not to show up J. H. T. as a traitor, but merely as a plain silly ass.

* * *

Advising Capital After this we may consider Mr. Thomas' advice to Capital.

Under the titles "LABOUR AND RAILWAY PROSPERITY—WELL KNOWN LEADER'S VIEW—HOLDERS HAVE EVERY GROUND FOR CONFIDENCE," the gent. writes in the *Financial Times*:—"When first asked to write this article I hesitated, thinking it would be read by very few weekly wage earners, but on reflection I realised that those who did read the *Financial Times* were certainly people with more than a passing interest in the efficiency and success of the British railways . . ."

"A question has been addressed to me from the point of view of the shareholder, as to what would be the best policy to pursue to ensure the security of the investment combined with the best possible return. My answer at once is that no greater mistake could be made than to assume that the right course would be to join in the general attack on railwaymen's wages. To do so would be absolutely suicidal."

Really, when you come to think of it, a railwayman grown so much out of his class as to be "right honourable" and promoted to the Privy Council of the pinkest capitalist perfection *should* be able to show the bosses a more subtle and winning weapon for subjugating engine-drivers, firemen, carriage window cleaners, ticket punchers

and us chaps who wash the spittle off the floors of Ministerial, Royal, Parliamentary, and Railway Directorate special carriages!

"Only I believe The editorial of the *Financial Times* the same day, dealing with Thomas' article, warns investors not to tinker with the railwaymen's belief "that they are earning decent wages that are not in danger" . . . To disturb that belief would be such a foolish act that we are persuaded no responsible railway officials would be a party to it whatever the incentive from outside."

100, not out Women's Page and other Special Features next week

Believe on! comrade spittle-cleaners, car-washers, wheel tappers, porters, ticket punchers! If you stopped believing—why, their dividends would fall, and you know that would be a crime against society or democracy or whatever they call it by the time this issue of the paper goes to press.

Your money is "No one," says the last paragraph of Thomas' article, "can predict exactly what will be the effect of the grouping of the railways which is now taking place. As a practical railwayman I can claim that important economies can be effected. But here again the measure of this will depend more on the goodwill and co-operation of the men than upon anything else."

"In conclusion I would say that *whatever may be the outlook for shareholders in other concerns, railway shareholders have every ground for confidence.* The best results in the future will be achieved by that true spirit of co-operation, and if any evidence of this fact were needed, a glance at the railway share-market shows that investors are themselves not unmindful of the great earning possibilities of British Railways., a

confidence I have no hesitation in wholeheartedly endorsing."

* * *

The Basic Rates Why Jimmy has suddenly pulled the plug again and let out such a flood of sane statesmanly utterances is more than we can tell. It may possibly be connected with the storm that is said to be coming at Unity House, over the basic rate. This agreement has been taken advantage of to make considerable reductions of wages. The G.E.R. in particular being the worst offender. The N.U.R. men, in fact, are not only losing their jobs but being cut if they are able to hang on. A little later in the day, they are meeting the fate to which the miners were flung on Black Friday—with this difference, that their leaders haven't the spunk to make any fight.

J. H. T. of course, is quite happy and advises "more co-operation with the employers," etc., but Consimore T. Cramp, has come out against his colleague on this question of the basic rate. He has announced in a small voice, that he is going to take off his coat and begin. (You heard him say something like that before and nothing happened: Don't be so crude.) Now, in the past, even before Black Friday, we have had enough of these pantaloon fights between Jimmy and Consimore—Consimore with a red-painted poker and Jimmy with a string of imitation sausages. If this is another do of the same kind, we shall keep our one and threepence in our pockets. On the other hand, if Cramp is serious (and time alone can show that) railmen *must* support him: for sooner or later they must fight and every month their position gets worse.

* * *

Dinner The financial magnates of the U.S.A. are not above learning from this country.

"In such quarters (i.e., those frequented by railway bosses) hopes are being expressed that President Harding will invite leaders of organised labour to dinner and try to get them to consent to a reduction in wages."—*Financial Times*, 7-6-22.

MAKE 'EM USEFUL

Unemployed Problem Solved at Last

SOMETHING must be done and soon to end the present costly and dangerous policy of drift. There is an urgent need of facing the stern facts freed from silly sentimentalism. Already we have secured our purpose, a lowered standard of life for the workers, by the use of unemployment and now is the time to end it. Of course, a few will always be necessary to keep the labour-market healthy, but the bankruptcy of the Guardians is the sign that we have gone beyond that convenient point.

Sir Henry Wilson was optimistic about another war and the very Christian Bishop of Exeter—whose gaiter buttons sparkle with intelligence and brotherly love—has come forward with the slogan, "Bear Bairs for Barbarism" in preparation for the same event. Let me say as a practical man that I have no objection to hurrahing on—from a safe distance—our unemployed into cannon-fodder; besides there would be contracts! However, we should never fight until we are sure of winning and the War is inopportune just now. We are neither ready ourselves, nor sure of our Allies. Japan has been cleverly separated from us by America. France is suspicious and jealous for her revenge, and oil does not still the troubled waters. Would even our Colonies be wholeheartedly with us?

Again I question whether the unemployed are to be trusted again. The process is not an ideal one for the breeding of patriots, and those agitators put such false ideas into their heads at such periods. I don't like to think what might happen.

Then again there is their physical unfitness which also spoils the "colonisation" remedy proposed by some of my friends. Some of our unemployed are not really worth the passage money let alone the cost of converting them into agriculturists. Our friends out there have enough unemployed of their own; some of ours would object to

going and, if immigrants are needed, we cannot surely strain the loyalty of the colonists by dumping on them the dregs left by us at home when fresh supplies of cheaper, if coloured, labour-power are more easily available.

My friend Captain Barker of Ealing has been commendably engaged in fixing a much cheaper menu for the "out-of-works" but he does not go far enough. Why bother with "remaindered" fish? What is the matter with grass? Our roadsides could be pegged out as if for goats and thus kept tidy. Lawnmowers could be saved and exported and Mond could truly say that no one was starving.

But this all presumes that the unemployed are to be kept alive. Seeing that by virtue of the long maintenance given they are now the property of the State, we can decide upon their death as a possible alternative. I advocate no wholesale, indiscriminate massacre. They lived, then why not die for profit's sake? The following uses are put forward as suggestions of what can be done.

1. *Military.* If rifles are to be used in the next war, the advantages of a moving target give at once a use to the more active section; the dodging of the workless would provide excellent practice for the sharpshooters. Callow youths could get accustomed to their trade by bayonet charges on real men instead of lifeless sacks. Then the aeroplane bombers might also become hardened and learn much by throwing a few bombs each day on a crowd of these unwanted people. While in the same way poison gas could be really tested; we could see exactly what our foes can expect.

2. *Scientific and Artistic.* How many experiments have failed because they were made on dead people? Here the unemployed will again be useful; they will become martyrs of science although many of them will not appreciate the elevation. We can

trust our chemists also to transform useless bodies into saleable dyes and chemicals. Truly great is the power of science.

The Grand Guignol has not been very enterprising or it would long ago have tried to buy a dozen or so unemployed. They could have been cut up on the stage and the pieces handed round as souvenirs. What an ideal mental jolt for the jaded ones of Society!

Then there are the film possibilities: a realistic Juggernaut, a huge holocaust, or minor scenes like a burning house and a sinking ship. A D. W. Griffith for a suitable sum could be given full scope. There are doubtless some man-eaters in the Zoo who would appreciate a return to their old diet and extra charges could be made. Thus again a saving and an increase of revenue. Why not use some of the unemployed instead of the plundering fox or the birds in front of the battues on the coming 12th?

3. *Civil.* That idea of "baby broth" is worth revival. If it was decided to keep the babes for future wars as the Bishop proposed, then adults could be served up under that label; the aforesaid chemicals would do the trick. Think how having human hearts to chew would lessen imports and turn the rates of exchange in our favour. If this proposal is not accepted, at least the unemployed must feed on each other. W. S. Gilbert has already told of a crew that "wittled free" with each other. It could be decided by lot or ballot. Nothing more democratic can be imagined. Thus the dog would not only eat its own tail but itself as well.

I anticipate sentimental objections against these sensible suggestions; people will still postpone the facing of the realities. It is far better and more humane to kill outright than by inches, by "cat and mouse" payments, and by making futile promises to inefficients. The demoralising dole must be stopped and the above ideas put into action immediately.

WANTED for filing, Nos. 1, 2 and 25 of the "COMMUNIST."—Address, A. Macmanus, 16, King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.

The Peasants' Revolt, 1381

By ALEXANDER JOHN—Part II.

THE same evening a King's Council, after long discussions, decided that the King should meet the insurgents at Mile End. The aim was obvious: to lead the insurgents out of the town. The insurgents did not all leave the town. A number of them stormed the Tower and beheaded Sudbury and Hales, and two or three other hated persons.

The Murder Plot

Meanwhile the King and his suite were meeting the insurgents. Wat Tyler, the spokesman, demanded—

- (1) That there should be no more villeinage in the country;
- (2) That all deeds and actions of the insurgents be pardoned;
- (3) That everybody could buy and sell freely on all market places.

The King promises everything and returns to London. Not to the Tower, however, but to the Wardrobe—probably for the reason that there he and his Court will be in closer contact with the wealthy citizens. The insurgents also returned. Sir Charles cannot understand why the insurgents did not return home after "all their demands were granted."

The simple truth is that *no charters were issued this day, the 14th of June*, all the preserved and recorded charters are dated on the 15th June and were issued only on this day. Practically all the peasants remained in London, because as yet they had got nothing but promises.

Several houses were destroyed this day and some more men beheaded, amongst them Richard Lyons, already mentioned, and Richard Imworth, the marshal of the Marshalsea prison.

Meanwhile the King's Council was busy. A contemporary chronicler narrates the following:—

"But the King hardly bearing these things and the citizens fearing that the town will be plundered, have consulted Robert Knollis, a soldier, how they could eject them. And at Saturday [the 15th] proclamation has been made in the four parts of London, that the Duke of Lancaster is coming against the King and his men with 20,000 Scots and therefore his subjects should gather at Smythfield where also the King will come. The insurgents hurried to Smythfield and the Mayor of London has ordered the citizens to arm and to follow Robert Knollis."

The chronicler then goes on to narrate how Wat Tyler was called to meet the King alone; how he was provoked and murdered by William Walworth, the Mayor—his men not knowing what is happening to their leader. (They think he is being knighted). To their inquiries about their leader they are told simply that they should go to the fields of Saint John (Clerkenwell Fields). There they are surrounded by the splendidly armed citizens.

The Letter Book of London (quoted in H. T. Riley's *Memorials of London and London Life*), written almost simultaneously with the event, makes the very remarkable statement that the men followed the King in a warlike and threatening manner and were eventually hemmed in and surrounded by the citizens' guards.

The events of the 15th June were the results of a well prepared plot carried out in secrecy. In the open the reactionaries could never have defeated the revolutionaries, but they were past masters in murder and guile, against which the prophetic John Ball has warned his good friends in vain.

The plot was to murder the leader, Wat Tyler, without the knowledge of his men and then to lead the insurgents into an ambush. The insurgents were led to Clerkenwell Fields, not by chance, but because the ambush was ready for them, and the great presence of mind of the young King is a mere fantastic tale recorded by loyal and flattering chroniclers that all the insurgents, however, went to Clerkenwell Fields. Some of them, amongst them John Ball—suspected the guile and left London; leaving the leaderless and credulous masses to run hopelessly into disaster.

The Re-action in London and in the Neighbouring Counties

The moment the insurgents' army, humiliated, left London without a battle, the situation changed entirely.

The revolution was not yet over. In many counties it was only starting, but the ruling classes were now given an opportunity to re-organise. While London was at the mercy of the revolu-

tionary army, and the news of their success was setting aflame one county after another, there was every possibility that the revolution would succeed. By now the hope of victory had nearly gone, but the determination of the revolutionaries kept the fight going yet for a considerable time.

In London, Walworth and Knollis were given dictatorial powers, and a number of prisoners were executed without any trial. Then commissions were sent to the adjacent counties, accompanied by military forces. They were resisted in every county; but only the Essex men are able to give battle. These were, however, beaten after a desperate fight near Billericay. Many of the prisoners taken were murdered by the King's troops.

After this "pacification" of Essex, the King went to Hertfordshire to continue the work of revenge. The revolution was very peaceful in this county, but in spite of this fact 15 men are hanged in St. Albans (after the juries were threatened with death if they do not indict and sentence the accused).

As an illustration of the horrors of reaction following the peasant revolution, we must record here the action of the authorities with regard to the revolutionaries executed in St. Albans. After having been hanged in chains their bodies were left on the gibbets. Their friends and comrades could not bear to see the bodies of their beloved leaders rotting. One night they removed and buried the corpses. But the good King issued an imperative order, and the men were compelled to replace (with their own hands) the bodies, which—according to the monk of St. Albans—"liquid with corruption, creeping with worms, rotten, and foul, spread a most unbearable stench."

The solidarity of the population, the splendid behaviour of the leaders, and amongst these especially of William Grindcobbe, is one of the most elevating episodes of the revolution.

John Ball was brought to St. Albans and there hanged and quartered. The man, who was preaching revolution and Communism to the masses for about 20 years and for this suffered repeated imprisonment, died in a way worthy to his great revolutionary life.

The executioners were also busy in Middlesex, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex, notwithstanding the fact that the movement in these counties was mostly local and bloodless.

The Revolution in East Anglia

The revolutionary activity was nowhere so intense as in Norfolk and Suffolk. This is the more remarkable, because it started here later than in South England, and only became general after the death of Wat Tyler. Norfolk and Suffolk were the most advanced part of 14th century England, and their economic structure the most ripe for the revolution. This is the reason why the revolution became so general and why a considerable number of individuals from the ruling class joined its ranks.

The chief attack was directed against the manorial grievances, this struggle going side by side with that of the townsfolk for economic freedom and political rights. In Suffolk the revolt was rather anarchical. The most prominent figure in the Suffolk rising was not the man who could enforce revolutionary discipline. Practically no organised resistance was made to the first attempt of the Royal authorities to restore the old order.

Quite different was the case in Norfolk; a very capable leader, Geoffrey Lister, a dyer, directing the insurgent forces. The activities of the insurgents were directed chiefly—as in Kent and Essex—against the lawyers and brutal landlords. The burning of charters and other muniments and the destroying of manor houses was very frequent. Lister, like Wat Tyler, possessed great energy, and could enforce the strictest discipline. Uniting and organising the insurgents he carried out a series of disciplined actions, being successful over a large area—including Norwich and Yarmouth. When Bishop Henry Spenser approached with a large military force he gathered his troops for the decisive combat near North Walsham. Henry Spenser, an energetic and brutal soldier, had already quelled the risings at Peterborough and Ramsey (Huntingdonshire)—a detachment of John Wraw's forces—and at Cambridge—where the fight was against the excessive privileges of the University. After a hard battle at North Walsham Lister was defeated, and with several other prisoners was beheaded and quartered.

The Other Counties

While the rising was general in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Kent and Essex, it was partial

only in the other parts of the country. We have records of a rising in the neighbourhood of Bridgewater (Somersetshire) and several references to riots in Wiltshire.

In the Midlands local risings are recorded in Bedford, Northampton, and Leicestershire. The same is the case with Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.

The prolonged strife between various contending groups leads to a very interesting outbreak in this revolutionary summer of 1381 in the important mediaeval towns: Beverley, Scarborough, and York. These outbreaks, as well as other local outbursts all over the country—even a town as far in the north as Newcastle on the Tyne does not remain unaffected—show the great influence of the chief revolutionary movement, that of the exploited masses, upon all discontented elements of the country.

These troubles do not end in the summer of 1381. The powerful waves of the peasant revolution are followed by a number of subsequent smaller waves. Plots, riots, risings, follow each other in various parts of the country, especially in Norfolk, Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, Yorkshire and Cheshire.

The Result of the Revolution

The peasant revolution marks a turning point in the economic and social development of Great Britain. It was preceded by a material evolution and an ever-increasing human activity which prepared the basis of the revolution. It was followed by still greater human efforts to accomplish what the revolution failed to attain. But the great motive power which cleared the way for a new direction of progress was the revolution of 1381.

The peasants were not wholly victors. They did not attain what they desired: a free peasant state under the nominal rule of the King governed in the interest of the peasant class. But they did succeed in destroying (though not completely) the feudal system; and they thus prepared the way for the class-rule of the bourgeoisie.

With a stubborn and obstinate fighting spirit which could not be broken by any reactionary persecution—a spirit due to the memory of the great times of 1381—they continued to weaken the privileges and power of the feudal landlords. Owing to the weakened strength of these the peasants enjoyed for a century much better conditions than ever before. But if the feudal obligations were gone, new obligations and burdens were imposed upon them. The real victors were the bourgeoisie (in that period the mercantile class) who characteristically stole all that had been won by the effort and blood of the revolutionary peasantry.

This fact, however, does not diminish the historical importance of the peasant revolution. Had the peasants have been victorious, English history and present-day Britain would be greatly different from what it is. If there had been no revolution, the same would be the case.

Apart from this we may learn from these revolutionaries of 1381—as indeed we may from every revolution in the history of mankind—that only the centralised revolutionary dictatorship of the revolting class can secure the victory.

WHAT THE "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

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A Weekly Organ of the Third (Communist) International

Official Organ of the Communist Party of Great Britain

16 King Street, Covent Garden

London, W.C.2

Telephone - Gerrard 877

The Editor welcomes contributions from any member of the Party, or from sympathisers, on any industrial or other subject of interest to the Party. The return of these cannot be guaranteed unless they are accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. They should be sent to 16, King Street, London, W.C. 2. They cannot be paid for at the present.

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Terms for quantities: 1/4 for 13, post paid, sale or return; monthly account. All communications to:—Circulation Manager, "The Communist," 16, King Street, W.C. 2.

THE MOSCOW TRIALS

ONCE again the Workers' and Peasants' Republic of Soviet Russia is being assailed—this time with new weapons and on a new front. Armed attack having failed; peaceful penetration appearing likely to fail also; plot after plot against the Soviet Government having been unmasked and defeated by the steadfastness and fidelity of the workers of Russia; a campaign on different lines has been opened.

The trial of the mis-called Socialist Revolutionaries in Moscow is being used to raise dissension in the ranks of British workers, hitherto so splendidly unanimous in their support of the Soviet regime.

The name itself is totally misleading. These men are neither Socialist nor revolutionary. Nor do they belong to the workers. They belong in the main to the aristocratic and propertied classes, and in Tsarist days sought to advance their particular theories by means of individual assassination and private terror. They repudiated mass organisation of the workers as advocated both by Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, and have neither sympathy with nor understanding of working-class ideas, however honest they may be in their opinions otherwise.

Now, as always, they seek to attain their peculiar ends by means of the dagger, the bomb and the revolver. So, in the early days of the Revolution, Volodarsky and Uritsky, two of the most brilliant Bolshevik leaders, were murdered by their agents. At a later period, another agent fired poisoned bullets into Lenin, from the effects of which he still suffers. Sabotage, espionage, and wrecking, are favourite weapons in addition.

Always, the prisoners now on trial, and their associates have been used as confederates and catpaws by the White reactionary forces. Koltchak, Denikin, Wrangel, Petlura, and Pilsudsky, have had no more faithful helpers. Every attack on Soviet Russia from outside has relied upon their secret conspiracies for assistance.

The workers of Russia have no more inveterate enemies, for their whole aim is not working-class emancipation, but the achievement of a mere "palace" revolution, that shall replace the Soviet leaders by themselves; just as previously they conspired to supplant a reactionary Tsar by a more pliant puppet of their own.

Some of these men, caught red-handed in criminal acts, are now undergoing fair and open trial in Moscow. The leaders of the Second International are warmly championing these strange allies.

It is alleged that the representatives of the Third International at the Berlin Conference gave a pledge to grant certain concessions to the accused; a pledge which has since been broken.

It is not true. The Second International at the Conference insisted on these concessions as the price of securing "a united working-class front." Then, having obtained them, they cynically repudiated their own conditions. Automatically, and by the action of the Second International leaders themselves, the agreement lapsed.

Whatever pledge was made was not broken in Moscow but in London.

In view of the silence of the leaders of the Second International when capitalist governments are imprisoning or executing Communists and striking workers, is it too much to suggest that their solicitude is due to having discovered a new weapon with which to attack the Communists and the Third International.

Forty-seven self-convicted conspirators and assassins against the Soviet Workers' Republic are on trial, and the whole world rings with denunciation, not of the criminals, but of the judges.

Many thousands of South African strikers are imprisoned by order of a capitalist government and 850 of them are to be tried for High Treason. Smuts openly expresses his intention of supplanting the ordinary law by the old Roman Dutch law whereby he can hang as many as he pleases at his leisure; and the Second International, with Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald as its secretary, has never a word of protest to utter.

The Workers' Government, painfully struggling to victory through a host of perils, must be pilloried; the Capitalist Government within the bounds of the British Empire, condoned by silence. Why?

Fellow Workers! Do not be misled! The attacks upon Soviet Russia have taken many forms in their time. Be sure before you condemn that *all* the facts are at your disposal.

Be wary, lest in your very eagerness to strengthen Soviet Russia, you be drawn into a campaign against her that will make the hearts of every capitalist government in the world rejoice.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Communist Party of Great Britain.

The Corpse of Henry Wilson

POLITICAL Assassination is, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, political folly. It inflicts the minimum of material damage and confers the maximum of moral advantage upon the cause and class against whom it is directed. It is, in its very desperation, a confession of weakness and despair.

The Imperialist Press is busy using the corpse of Henry Wilson as a battering-ram wherewith to shatter all that is left of hope for an Irish Workers' Republic; official Imperialism has used his corpse as the centre of a pageant into which military might and the Royal Family were interwoven in equal parts.

Worst of all the leaders of the British Labour Party, fresh from sharing strawberries and cream with the accomplices in the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg—and with their pockets stuffed with indignant perorations in defence of the would-be murderers of Lenin and Trotsky—use the coffin of Henry Wilson as a rostrum from which to deliver a daily bulletin on the state of their soul.

If we could have prevented the killing it would not have happened. But being done, we say flatly that the people who invented the Black-and-Tans, who, after torture, murdered, legally and in cold blood young Kevin Barry—who rejoiced, as the *Daily Mail* did, when Liebknecht and Luxemburg were foully slain—who shrieked with joy (as they all shrieked) at every fresh report of the murder of Lenin—these are the last people on earth who should pretend to moral indignation at the end of Henry Wilson.

We say in cold blood—"To hell with humbug!"

OURSELVES AND THE LABOUR PARTY

A Reply to the Labour Party Executive

14th June, 1922.

Dear Mr. Henderson,

Your letter of the 1st of June was considered by my sub-Executive at its meeting held last Friday, who desire me to say that they are very sorry and surprised that the Executive Committee of the Labour Party have decided so definitely that the answers to the questionnaire are not such as to warrant the recommendation of the reversal of the decisions of September 8th, 1920, and confirmed by the Brighton Conference, that the Communist Party is not eligible for affiliation to the Labour Party.

We on our part took the view that the negotiations were proceeding in a manner which led us to assume, it appears wrongly, that the matter would not end on the basis of four specific answers to four specific questions. We feel very strongly that due regard should have been paid to the broad bases of agreement between the two bodies and that these questions rather crystalised points of disagreement which at any rate could have been discussed until final agreement was reached.

The Communist Party is a working class party, and we have given evidence on more than one occasion of our anxiety to work with the organised workers in every field of activity, aiming at the common goal of working class emancipation. At

all times we have been ready to give all and every support to all sections of the workers in their struggles for better conditions and against the encroachments of the employers, evidence of which is to be found in the fact that many of our members have been thrown into prison for fearless advocacy of the workers' cause. However disturbing our views and opinions may have been, we are, after all, part of the working class movement.

It may be true, as is argued, that in the past we have opposed the Labour Party, for instance at bye-elections, but we would remind you that consultation and approach upon such matters was denied us through the door of affiliation being closed against us, and such opposition has been forced upon our organisation by this very attempt to exclude us. Indeed, this criticism can be levelled at some of the organisations at present affiliated to the Labour Party. We have yet to learn that, for example, the Fabian Society has been excluded, or even questioned, regarding the opposition of members of the Fabian Society to official candidates of the Labour Party at the recent March elections for the L.C.C.

We should have been glad to have some indication from you as to the particular parts of the replies which, in the opinion of your Executive,

were not such as to warrant the recommendation by your Executive that our affiliation be accepted. In seeking affiliation to the Labour Party we have endeavoured to emphasise that the Communist Party asks no more than to be afforded the same scope as other organisations for the advocacy of its opinions in the conferences of Labour.

We wish you to know that we certainly did expect the Executive of the Labour Party, before definitely coming to their decision, would point out to us wherein our answers were insufficient. It was for this reason that a request was made for Mr. Macmanus to be in attendance at the Edinburgh Conference, and that up to the time of the Conference my sub-Executive Committee would be ready to answer any points which in the opinion of your Executive required to be amplified.

We respectfully press for a reconsideration of the matter, feeling sure you will agree that the questions specify and have strict reference to points of *disagreement*, and that the broad general lines of *agreement*, which we have taken for granted, have been minimised if not entirely overlooked by your Executive Committee. We submit that this point in itself warrants continuance of the negotiations.

Yours faithfully,

F. H. PEET, Acting Sec.

THE A.B.C. OF COMMUNISM

By C. T. PENDRY

The A.B.C. of Communism. By N. Buharin and E. Preobrazhensky. (Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul.) (Published by Communist Party of Great Britain.) Price, 3s. net.

THIS is no book—it's a Library! And what a Library! Here is mental food for those who are not yet Communists but wish to understand what this Communism is all about.

For those who have already come over to the Communist side but yet need a friend to guide them through the social maze of to-day—here is that friend and guide.

This book is not only for beginners as at first blush its title would suggest, but even the "hard shell" Marxians and Communists will find in it valuable material presented in a way that should give them "points" for putting "the case."

To the "hard shell" Marxians who swear by "bell, book and candlestick" to the absolute wording and phrasing of Marx, arguing that he cannot be simplified without distortion, I would commend this book as the best example of how to present the subject in language and form that is understandable to the uninitiated.

To those who speak and write "above the heads of the crowd" let them have it by their side for reference; for here is simplicity, clarity and directness of statement; particularly is this true with regard to Chapter one, which deals with the "Capitalistic Social Order."

Part one is devoted to the Theoretical presentation of the case for Communism which includes an analysis of Capitalist Society, explaining its birth, growth, and decay.

Part two deals with the practical application of Theory to Society.

The Scope of the Book

There have been many pamphlets and booklets published by the movement dealing with such subjects as "The Capitalist Class," "The Working Class," "The Class Struggle," "Wage Labour and Capital," "What is Capital," "Value Price and Profit," "The Communist Manifesto," "Historical Materialism," "Commodity Production," "The Concentration of Capital," "The Contradictions of Capitalist Production," "Anarchy in Production," "Competition and Crises," "The Great Contradiction," etc. This book embraces them all and puts the subject matter in a simpler way than ever before and what is most desirable in a clear, concise way.

This was the avowed object of the joint authors, as they state in their Foreword:—

"The A.B.C. of Communism should, in our opinion, be an elementary text book of Communist knowledge. Daily experience of propagandists and agitators has convinced us of the urgent need for such a text book. There is an unceasing influx of new adherents. The dearth of teachers is great, and we have not even a sufficiency of text books for such institutions as the party schools. Obviously, the older Marxist literature, such as "The Erfurt Program," is largely inapplicable to present needs. Answers to new problems are extremely difficult to find. All that the student requires is scattered in various newspapers, books and pamphlets.

"We have determined to fill this gap. We regard our A.B.C. as an elementary course which is to be followed in the party schools; but we have also endeavoured to write it in such a manner that it can be used for independent study by every worker or peasant who desires to acquaint himself with the party program."

It is one thing to make an avowal, it is another thing to put it into effect. There have been many attempts to simplify Marx—all have failed. The authors have kept their promise in every particular and much of the matter is the same as that dealt with by Marx.

Just one quotation to prove that their style is simple, direct and therefore concise:—

"What is a program? Every party pursues definite aims, whether it be a party of landowners or capitalists on the one hand, or a party of workers or peasants on the other. Every party must have definite aims, for otherwise it is not a party. If it be a party representing the interests of landowners, it will pursue the aims of landowners; it will endeavour to tighten the grasp of the owners upon the soil; to hold the

peasants in bondage; to secure a high price for the produce of the landowners' estates; to hire labour cheaply; to rackrent the farms. If it be a party of capitalists and factory owners, it will likewise have its own aims: to procure cheap labour; to keep the workers well in hand; to find customers to whom the wares can be sold at the highest possible price; to obtain even larger profits, for this purpose to compel the workers to toil harder—but, above all, so to arrange matters that the workers will have no tendency to allow their thoughts to turn towards ideas of a new social order; let the workers think that there always have been masters and always will be masters. Such are the aims of the factory owners.

"It is self-evident that the workers and peasants will have utterly different aims from these, seeing that their interests are utterly different from those of the capitalists and landowners."

Although this book was written in 1919 and therefore will require to be supplemented in some particulars (particularly with regard to the programme of the Communist Party as stated here) yet, here are to be found many signs of what is now known as the "new economic policy." The reason of this is not far to seek—the authors are realists.

Its Realism

The proof of this is to be found on page 22:—

"When the Mensheviks find fault with us on the ground that we have 'repudiated' our old program, and that in so doing we have repudiated the teachings of Marx, we reply that the essence of Marx' teaching is to construct programs, not out of the inner consciousness, but out of life itself. If life has undergone great changes the program cannot be left as it was. In winter we have to wear thick overcoats. In the heat of summer only a madman wears a thick overcoat. It is just the same in politics. Marx himself taught us that we should always study the existing conditions of life and act accordingly."

For the "Pleb" and non-pleb, there is good material in the chapter on Education as the following shows: "The bourgeoisie used the school for the enslavement of all who live by labour. The proletariat will use the school to enfranchise them, to sweep away the last traces of spiritual slavery from the consciousness of the workers."

This book also bears the impress of its translators and great credit is due to them for their splendid work in putting the matter into readable English. That they have had that part of the title A.B.C. ever before their minds is fully proved. Unfortunately

there are just two ugly, unwieldy words used (exceptions which prove the rule) "organisatory," page 165; "solidarise," page 166.

The book is nicely bound, paper covers, and beautifully printed, with a good, round, clear type, on lovely white paper. No one will get eye-strain through reading it and one could wish that every book was printed in like manner. It is well divided up into short chapters and each chapter is again split up into sections. The Table of Contents contains both chapters and sections with the sub-headings.

There is a page and a-half of Bibliography and two pages and a-half of Glossary, with an Index of thirteen and a-half pages. The whole is complete in 422 pages.

One question has been continually crossing my mind since I first handled the book. How has the Communist Party published it for such a wonderfully low price?

A VALUABLE REPRINT

Labour Defended against the claims of Capital. By Thomas Hodgskin (1825). With an introduction by G. D. H. Cole. Labour Publishing Co. 1/6.

THE re-discovery of Hodgskin, Bray, and Thompson, the three economists of early English industrial capitalism who laid the foundations of Socialism, is comparatively recent.

Foxwell's introduction to the Austrian Menger's book on the *Right to the Whole Produce of Labour* was the first study of them, and, as was natural, he exaggerated their importance. Marx had read Hodgskin and makes several references to him, but from Foxwell we should be led to think that Marx's whole work was only a pillaging of Hodgskin and his fellows. Ever since Foxwell wrote there has been a school of anti-Marxists who have tried to prove this. It is interesting, therefore, to be able to read what is presumably the best and most important work of Marx's most important forerunner.

The "defence of Labour" here put forward, after many apologies for making such a defence, amounts briefly to this: Capital consists of two sections—(1) Circulating capital, which is food, clothing, material, and so on. This, he points out, has its sole origin in Labour. (2) Fixed capital—the tools of production. Again, this has its sole origin in Labour. The Capitalist merely adds to the cost of the finished article his profit. He has no other function. Hodgskin makes no attempt to analyse this surplus value, or determine its ratio. "How much more labour a LABOURER must give to have a loaf than that loaf costs it is impossible for me to say."

This, together with casual remarks of interest on various subjects, including working class education, is the matter of the pamphlet. It would have been, before the war, a quite creditable Socialist booklet: for 1825 it is positively astonishing.

But to think that it can seriously be claimed that *Capital* was pillaged from it!

R.W.P.

The Life of an Ocean Slave

By G. GARRATT

I am the Seaman,
Whom crimps and whores often fleece,
The last resource for unscrupulous police.
My money is the hardest earned,
Yet when I'm broke I'm always spurned.
When I have it, I let things rip;
It's spent and then I seek a ship.
Ceaseless walking day and night,
Hungry, dirty, I look a fright;
Then again into the boarding house—
My bosom friend—the crawling louse—
I may be only there one day
But still the fee is one month's pay.
A few old clothes, a bar of soap,
And then you'll find me handling rope
Or sweating in the depths of Hell,
Where firemen so often fell
Through overwork and little food.
Groaning, slaving, almost nude,
Never sick until you're dead,
Your burial ground, the ocean bed.
No compassion shown you there,
Someone else must do your share,
It's choose the log or a watery grave.
Some take the latter, not fit to slave,
Tired bodies, strength gone, they crave
A rest, and finish beneath the wave;
While those that stagger through the test
Seek the fo'castle for their rest,
Where rats and bugs abound in scores,
And wind and wave smash down the doors,
Making you victims to all ills,
That materialise from cold and chills;

And you listen for a ringing bell
That's calling you again to Hell.
Married, you think about your wife
And wonder, does she know the life
That you must live to find her bread,
And often curse the day you wed,
Realising this system's rotten
One class revel in wealth ill-gotten
While you sweat on. They call you brave
To gull your mind, your foolish slave—
A foreign port, a glass of rum,
You miss your ship, left on the bum
To beg for food and then to roam
And stow away to get back home.
The police search never seems to fail
You're caught and then it's three months' jail.
Reading the papers, a shock you get,
Shipowners and union officials met
At a dinner, and the food they ate
Was Union funds, your comrades' sweat.
It's driven home to you, alas,
The traitors present in your class—
The lousiest renegade by far
Lives on your back, you poor Jack Tar.
I sit me down and often think
Of things that drive my mates to drink,
But sing not of the ocean waves
Nor Britons never shall be slaves.
The latter is only used to dope
Fireman, steward, handler of rope.
When they wake up it will be grand,
Some day they must understand
Why I'm a BOLSHIE seaman.

A CALL TO THE Miners of Great Britain

OF all the resolutions on the agenda of your National Conference the one of outstanding importance is that which calls on you to affiliate to the Red International of Labour Unions. Upon your decision on this resolution largely depends *your future* and the future of the working class movement of Britain.

Capitalist and Imperialist rivalry is spreading ruin throughout the world. The capitalists are fighting and scrambling for profit everywhere, whilst the miners and their class are suffering terribly from unemployment and semi-starvation. There is no remedy to this state of affairs apart from the united action of the workers of the world. That is why the resolution is so important. *It is the call for real organised activity on an international scale.*

None have suffered from the lack of international solidarity more than you miners. Time and again you have fought and fought alone. That is why in recent years you have lost all that you had gained. You have been without International action—although you were a part of an international organisation which professed to help you.

The International Federation of Trades Unions, better known as the Amsterdam International, has failed you in your time of great need.

Consider your position for a moment. By 1921 the export coal trade of this country was facing collapse because of the operation of the Versailles Peace Treaty, which cut into the French coal market. France had been Britain's greatest market for coal, and when this Treaty forced the Germans to supply 2,000,000 tons of coal per month it delivered a deadly blow at the British coal trade. Instead of the capitalists of this country fighting to smash such a Treaty they determined to use it to smash you. Supported by the Government which signed the Treaty they delivered a blow from which you have not yet recovered.

You remember what happened. Black Friday is writ large and deep in your history. You remember how all the other unions left you to struggle alone. Even those which were receiving at the same time heavy blows from the Versailles Treaty and the refusal of the Government to make peace with Russia, failed to make common cause with you.

All of them were controlled by the Amsterdam International and it gave no lead.

Instead, 1,500,000 tons of coal were landed into this country during the lock-out. The treachery of Black Friday was thus assisted by the utter failure of the Amsterdam International.

REMEMBER WHO HELPED YOU

None came to your help except the Communists and the supporters of the Red International of Labour Unions. None tried to widen the fighting front but these. For their efforts three score and more were sent to gaol—only to receive the abuse of the leaders who had betrayed you.

The consequences you know only too well.

Upon your bodies and in the misery and hunger of your wives and children the penalty of defeat is deeply written.

Remember when you think of that defeat and all it means to you and yours, that you of the rank and file were beaten, not because you did not fight well, but because of the shameful incapacity of the Amsterdam International to which you belong.

Nor have the consequences of that defeat ended with your present sufferings. The coal dug up through your misery is now swamping Northern France, throwing French miners on to the streets, leading to attacks on the eight-hour day and to the further cutting of wages. In Belgium it is the same. In Spain "the employers have notified their men of the decision stating that it is impossible to compete with foreign trade unless wages are reduced, the only alternative being to close the mines and factories...and the cost of living continues to increase." In America a tremendous strike movement embracing 600,000 miners is proceeding against reductions in wages, and the mine owners of this country are quoting to supply coal to America as long as the strike lasts.

SOLIDARITY OR DEATH

Immediately the miners in these countries are defeated and the full effect of their defeat is made operative, it will still further depress the coal industry of this country. More pits will close. Conditions will become still worse. Unemployment will become greater than ever. This is economic war aggravated by the Versailles Treaty, the war on Russia, and the refusal of the capitalist governments to make peace and trade with the Workers' Republic. It is a war against which the Amsterdam International has offered no united resistance or

shown any signs that it is prepared to consider ways and means of united struggle.

It is a war against which only a fighting Workers International can prevail.

WORDS? OR ACTION?

The Red International of Labour Unions does not ask you merely to accept its judgment of the Amsterdam International.

Test that "International" by what it has done in support of those things in which it professes to believe.

Has it fought against reductions in wages, against the lengthening of the working week? It has not. For action it offers fine phrases. Everywhere it has failed to defend the everyday interests of the workers—as miserably as it failed to support you in the lock-out of 1921. It practises the "industrial truce." It is the voice of the capitalists expressing itself through Labour's organisations.

Miners, Comrades of the Working class, that kind of International cannot help you. It can only bring you further defeats. You need an international leadership which hates your enemies, fights your enemies, and will rally the workers of the world to practise international solidarity.

Such a leadership and such organisation you will find in the Red International of Labour Unions. It strives for international resistance against wages reductions, against the lengthening of the working day, for real united international struggle against the capitalists to secure their complete defeat.

Join the Red International of Labour Unions and let your decision ring throughout the world. It will give new life to the union movement of this country and inspire the workers of other lands in their fight against the ruthless offensive of capitalism.

Without organised international solidarity you can win nothing. With it, you and your class can win everything. Smash the Versailles Treaty, compel the Governments to make peace and trade with Russia, control the conditions of your life and labour and conquer capitalism.

DOWN WITH THE DISORGANISED AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL!

JOIN THE MINERS FEDERATION OF GREAT BRITAIN TO THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOUR UNIONS!

International Scabbing

By C. ASHLEIGH

[The news of pitched battles in the mining districts of the state of Illinois added to the never-ending reports of bloody conflict between miners and mineguards in West Virginia, not only give point to our contention that under capitalism class conflict ripens and intensifies into class war, but also in view of the stand taken by the South Wales Miners, bring home to the British worker the fact that national divisions and antagonisms are perpetuated by the Boss Class in order to involve the worker in a common ruin.

The very same capitalist class that in each country hounds men to gaol for international sentiments is itself internationally united to plunder the workers.

Our Comrade Ashleigh newly released from an American gaol sends us this stirring call to real solidarity.]

SINCE April 1st, nearly 700,000 American coal miners have been on strike. This is the first general strike in the history of the American coal industry. The American coal industry is divided into two branches: the bituminous (soft coal) and anthracite (hard coal) mining. These two branches have always been governed by separate contracts between the union and the operators. On March 31st, for the first time, the contracts of both branches expired on the same date. And the entire organised working force of both branches struck the next day, and have remained on strike ever since.

The master class of the United States is at present waging a bitter war against the trade unions. They are seeking to lower wages, lengthen hours, and to smash whatever measures of industrial control the workers have gained through years of unremitting struggle. The attack of the coal operators upon

the wages and working conditions of the coal miners is but the forerunner of a general onslaught upon the whole body of American organised labour.

But the miners' union is standing firm. The miners have their backs to the wall, and are fighting gallantly. Despite hunger and evictions, despite arrests and intimidation by police and the authorities, they are unyielding.

Even in the unorganised coal fields of America the workers are rallying to the strike banner. Thousands of miners, in districts where previously the union could gain no entry, have downed tools and have joined the United Mine Workers of America.

The membership of the United Mine Workers of America comprises some of the foremost militants of the American labour movement. Members of this union have for years waged an aggressive battle against the master class. They have rallied, in large numbers, to the support of famine-stricken Russia. Many of them are workers with a keen and advanced political and international viewpoint.

What, then, must they think of us here in Great Britain?

The American Labour press carried a news item, a couple of weeks ago, that two thousand tons of British coal had just arrived in American ports. This week, the London dailies report that a thousand tons of Welsh coal have just been received in the States.

These are the first exports of British coal to the United States for many years. The only reason why it is being sent is because of the strike.

If American industry can be kept going, if the great steel mills of America can remain open, the coal miners can be beaten. They can be driven back to work with a 40 per cent cut in wages, and with their union broken.

The only way by which American coal-burning industry can be kept going is BY IMPORTED COAL.

The coal reserves of the bosses will soon be depleted, and they will then have to accede to the demands of the miners, IF—their stores of coal are not replenished from abroad.

If we send coal to America we are helping to break the strike of the United Mine Workers.

What is the difference between that and scabbing?

There is no difference. It is *international scabbing*.

The British miner can't prevent it; he doesn't know the destination of the coal which he digs.

But the docker *can* prevent it. He can refuse to load coal on to ships sailing for United States ports.

And the sailors and firemen *can* prevent it. They can refuse to man ships which carry coal to America.

They can refuse to participate in international scabbing. They can refuse to help the American capitalists to smash American labour unionism. They can refuse to aid the American coal operators to reduce the miners of America to a starvation wage basis.

Is Solidarity a word only, or is it a living fact? Is it an empty catch-word to which we pay pious lip service, or is it a virile and resolute expression of the will of the workers? That is the question which awaits immediate solution by British dockers and marine workers.

Over in America the miners are fighting a heroic and determined battle. They are of the working class; and the working class is international. Their fight is our fight.

Let us prove to our American fellow workers that the British workers understand solidarity. Let us show it by deeds!

While the American miners are on strike—**NOT AN OUNCE OF COAL FOR AMERICA!**

FAMINE FUND.

GRAND GARDEN PARTY

MANOR HOUSE, HIGH STREET, WANSTEAD,

SUNDAY, JULY 2ND, FROM 2 P.M.

Programmes 2/6. Children under 14, 1/3.
(These prices include Tea, admission to Sports, Dancing, etc.).

Sports. Games. Dancing. Concerts.

When the Workers Awoke!

HERE was great excitement. Everywhere the workers were encouraged and thrilled by the news. Feeling ran through the country at this telling of the gathering of the Fourth Estate—the working-class—as it must have done in revolutionary France at the gathering of the Third Estate.

Workmen met each other in the street, with hopeful looks and words of good cheer. In the Workmen's Clubs, groups of toil-stained proletarians gathered together, and discussed in enthusiastic tones the great events ahead. In the trade union branches, co-operative guilds, local Labour Parties, branches of Communist and Socialist organisations, a new spirit was abroad.

Indoor meeting places were being cleaned and refurbished, old banners were being unrolled, new banners were being made, gorgeous with colour and replete with the slogans of a class resolved to conquer. Music bands were being formed.

Night after night crowds gathered round platforms and flags at the street corners, at Communist meetings and Trades Council meetings and working-class meetings, held under the auspices of every other section of the movement, where speeches were listened to, ringing with hope and defiance and full of challenge, songs were sung, and cheers given for "the day."

* * *

Ever since the war the movement had suffered defeat after defeat. Wages, which war conditions had enabled the workers to raise a little, were decreased and decreased until they were below subsistence level.

Trade union after trade union had been plunged into conflict with the employers, and exhausted of their finances, and been buffeted and beaten and demoralised. Black Friday, which had witnessed the collapse of the Triple Alliance of Miners, Railwaymen, and Transport Workers, had been followed by a succession of Black Fridays which had witnessed the collapse of all the other important industrial organisations. Then the capitalist Parliament had taken a hand in curtailing the trading facilities of the workers' co-operative organisations and in passing a statute which prevented financial assistance being given to the workers' political organisations.

Industrial depression was rife. Millions were unemployed. The entire working-class was living in a condition of gloomy misery, sick at heart, hopeless and despairing. The membership of the trade unions was rapidly falling away, and all that the trade union leaders seemed to be able to do was to wring their hands and recount the story of disaster Everywhere, in every way, the situation appeared to be as bad as bad could be.

* * *

Then suddenly—all at once, as it were—a new influence seemed to seize upon the dull and soporific atmosphere of Eccleston Square at the headquarters of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party! A full realisation of the condition of affairs and the responsibilities and duties of their position seemed to come to the leaders and the members of both the industrial and political executives. Two or three sharp, business-like joint meetings were held. Campaigns were conceived. Plans were formulated. Then the executives of the co-operative organisations were invited to participate in the work and to aid in the campaigns.

Calls, appeals and circulars were sent to every trade union branch, trades council, co-operative society and guild, Communist Party and I.L.P. branch in the country. Every organised element in the working-class movement, industrial, political, and co-operative, was included in the universal rallying—even the workmen's clubs.

The tone of these calls, appeals and circulars was quite different from the usual official communications. It was clear, incisive, humanly warm, and encouraging.

All the statements, after briefly outlining the state of affairs, told of the power of the movement and what might be done if all its forces were united. The trades councils were apprised of their potentialities and encouraged to secure the active interest of every individual member and to organise the unemployed. The local Labour Parties

and co-operative organisations were urged to join forces with the trades councils. So with the other working-class organisations. In every locality Workers' Councils were thus called into being out of the existing organisations to present a local united front, and to appoint representatives to the Parliament of Labour.

* * *

You see, it was this way. The active rank and file had forced the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive Committees of the Labour Party to do the right thing A real Parliament of Labour was going to be gathered together—an assembling of the Fourth Estate.

Representatives were to be appointed from every section of the movement, industrial, political, co-operative, to attend this Parliament.

A bold aggressive policy was being formulated for the movement to pursue, and complete solidarity had been achieved.

The capitalist Parliament, it was stated, did not function as a properly representative institution—the Parliament of Labour would be infinitely more representative of the people.

The present system of owning and controlling the country led to universal anarchy and chaos in industry, empty factories, unused resources, and the starvation of the masses; and the Parliament of Labour was going, backed by the massed forces of the proletariat behind the local Workers' Councils, to assume control of the country and all its resources.

Before this step was taken, however, the ranks of the workers had got to be rendered invulnerable.

The Parliament of Labour would appoint co-operative commissions to go into the question of the distribution of food supplies, joint commissions to go into the questions of transport and productive industry. There would be commissions to ratify and strengthen the power of the Workers' Councils in the localities, commissions to go into the whole question of trade union structure, the maintenance of trade union membership, etc. The unemployed question would be exhaustively examined. The relations of the working-class movement to the machinery of the capitalist State, especially in regard to actions of working-class representatives in the capitalist Parliament would be entirely reviewed. And from this Parliament of Labour would be elected a General Council of the Working-class—of bold, audacious leaders, possessed of clean records in the movement of energetic work and willing sacrifice. The business of this Council would be to carry out the wishes of the Parliament of Labour in the matter of concentrating the entire working-class movement into one, well-knit, effective, mutually supporting, fighting organisation; to rally and marshal the workers for the final conflict with the capitalist class, and to use the full force of the movement to give effect to the reports of the commissions.

The Parliament of Labour would assemble in London, and simultaneously with its gathering huge mass demonstrations of the workers would be held in every town and village in the kingdom, in which would be displayed the banners of the Parliament of Labour.

Everywhere there would be rejoicings and celebrations.

The Parliament of Labour itself would hold its sittings while the entire proletariat of London made holiday. Each evening, in the metropolis, there would be monster demonstrations. . . . The united movement would present a united front. In the hour of its defeat it would develop surprising strength. The workers, themselves, would be surprised at the power of their own movement. The faint-hearts would take courage. The unorganised masses would rally. Victory over capitalism would be a dead sure thing. . . .

* * *

These things would be if the working-class movement awoke. But. . . .

Give the leaders the tip, comrades. All they require is a little imagination and just a pinch of pluck.

ADVERTISEMENT RATES

PROPAGANDA ADVERTISEMENTS. (C.P. branches and kindred organisations):—Displayed, 5s. per inch, single column or pro rata. Classified (run on) 6d. per line (6 words) or part thereof.

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All communications to Advertisement Department, "The Communist," 16, King Street, W.C.2.

MEETINGS

Communist Party Branches

ABERGWYNFI, Cymmer, Cwmavon and Garw Valley sympathisers are asked to communicate with W. T. Williams, 8, Hill Street, Nantyllyllon, nr. Bridgend. Send a card now!

BOW. Branch meetings every Wednesday, 8 p.m., 141, Bow Road. New members cordially welcomed.

CROYDON. Saturday, Woodside, 8 p.m. Sunday, Katherine Street (outside Town Hall), 8 p.m. Prominent speakers.

KENNINGTON. Meetings every Sunday evening outside Kennington Theatre, Kennington Park, 8 p.m. July 2nd: J. T. Murphy.

POPLAR Branch meets every Wednesday 7.30, Railway Hall, St. Leonards Road. Propaganda meetings Sunday evening, 7.30, Dock Gates.

WHO? By R. Hill

IN the workhouse on the hill-top an old man bends stiffly to his task, muttering vague words to himself; and when visitors are introduced to him—much as one is introduced to the fat boy or the bearded lady—they smile and look perplexed; for the only articulate sounds they can catch are, "Aye, we won the war."

Old Jack Haynes had three sons. All his life he had boasted of them and would proudly tell his neighbours how fine it was to have good sons—"Insurance for the winter of life," he would say. And when war came he was glad and sorry that they went.

When the first heart-sickening telegram arrived—even letters were rare and never before had he received such a message—he bowed his head and prayed—and thanked God he still had two staffs left to lean upon.

But another telegram came, and yet another—and God died.

Nobody wants an old man, but even old men must have food, and conscience fails as hunger intensifies. The fruit on the open stall became more and more enticing. The gnarled and feeble hand put timidly forward and a gleam of triumph lighted in the old man's eye. But the star of Jack Haynes had long sunk and the unkindly hand of the law rested on his shoulder ere the stolen sweets could reach his toothless jaws.

The magistrate had never known hunger, had never stolen food, so in his impartial judgment the old criminal was deemed to deserve a month's imprisonment.

When release came, the old man, in the last extremity of despair, entered the workhouse on the hill-top where daily he bends stiffly to his task, muttering vague words to himself; and when visitors are introduced to him they smile and wonder—for the only words they hear are, "Aye, we won the war."

Sometimes comes one who does not smile but wonders. . . .

SURREY HOLIDAY CAMP, Newdigate, Surrey. Beautiful scenery; good food; 35s. week, 5s. 6d. day. Full August 5th to 18th.

SURREY, viewing Leith Hill.—Board Residence, Quaint cottage, pretty garden, lovely walks; good cycling centre.—Bottle, Rudgwick, Horsham.

SOUTHEND.—Apartments, with or without board.—Housden, 70, Ramuz Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea.

"THE REAL ENEMY" Five minute Socialist Essays. By Dan Griffiths. Original! Unconventional! Unique! Price 1s. 3d.—International Bookshops, Ltd., 10, Johnson's Court, E.C.4.

NEW PAMPHLET. "Economics of the Irish Question." By W. McLaine. 2d. 16, King Street, W.C.2.