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# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

*Editor : THOS. BELL*

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## THE EDITORIAL VIEW

**T**HE outstanding events of the month of March are the meetings of the Internationals. The representatives of capitalism met in Geneva. The representatives of the working class met in Moscow. It is a matter of interest and importance to observe the nature of the business of each conference. To this, especially, do we direct the attention of those in the working class movement who entertain the idea that the League of Nations is an institution of value to the workers. The Geneva Conference discussed—what? How the workers shall secure a fuller life through the ending of human exploitation? How the oppressed peoples of Egypt, Palestine, India, of Morocco, Java, and the numerous colonies of the Imperial powers gathered there should be set free from the yoke of Imperial oppression? Not at all. The discussion centred upon one insoluble problem of capitalism—how to secure an equilibrium which they falsely call peace, of the capitalist nations, whilst maintaining every fundamental cause of war and conflagration—unnatural national frontiers, uneconomic divisions of peoples, every element of capitalist competition and imperialist expansion. In short they discussed how to build a bonfire under a barrel of gunpowder and to prevent its explosion by chanting arbitration hymns. Prayers to the God of Fire not to burn have always proved of no avail if people were fools enough to use the materials and do the things which make fire. So in the case of Geneva. In this respect there is not the slightest difference between the promoters of the Protocol and Chamberlain. Both are equally futile to secure the professed aims publicly proclaimed—peace and disarmament. Imperialism and peace are incompatible, and neither the incantations of MacDonald nor the sorrows of Mr. Henderson over the Protocol will alter this fundamental fact of experience.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Geneva Protocol in relation to disarmament and world peace is examined in greater detail in other pages of the current

number of this journal. Here let us take note of the implications of the Protocol and its death by the hand of Chamberlain. The origin of the Protocol is well known, both the part played by MacDonald and Henderson with Herriot, the present spokesman of French imperialism. In an effort to blend their ideal of settling a world war by a round-table conference without infringing upon the interests of Imperialism, they landed themselves into supporting a series of proposals embodied in the Protocol which were jubilantly acclaimed by French Imperialism. This, of course, is not the first time that Labour men have been tripped when playing the role of spokesmen on behalf of capitalism. It is fresh in our minds that a certain delegation went to the Ruhr. They saw, they heard, they returned charmed with the goodwill on all sides and proposed exactly the same plans as the most jingo Frenchmen—the internationalising of the Ruhr. The real British Imperialists would have none of either schemes. They saw that the sentimentalism of the Labour leaders blinded them to the realities of the Imperialist struggle and that what the Labour men wanted might be peace, but what they were getting was the strengthening of the French Imperialist grip in Europe at the expense of British Imperialism. The Labour leaders spouted of arbitration. The Imperialists Chamberlain and Co. saw beyond arbitration and measured relations in terms of power. In this they are certainly more realistic. French Imperialists supported the Protocol for the simple reason that it strengthened her present alliances for the perpetuation of the frontiers of the Versailles Treaty and involved Great Britain in becoming a partner to the strangulation of Germany. It gave the lead in European affairs to French Imperialism.

\* \* \* \* \*

But British Imperialism has other views as to who shall have the hegemony in European affairs. She remembers Napoleon, she remembers Kaiser Wilhelm, she knows that the dominant power in Europe has perforce involved her in combination against it. She cannot permit French Imperialism to take the place of German Imperialism. Hence, knowing full well that nothing she may do will prejudice French Imperialism in favour of Soviet Russia, she boldly knocks the bottom out of the Protocol and pushes Germany to the front of the diplomatic war with a strategic manœuvre for a three, four, five, seven-power pact of "peace" which can be the basis of a bloc against Soviet Russia, (whose existence is not mentioned throughout the whole business) and European support against America. These are not peace

manœuvres, but war manœuvres, and those in the Labour ranks who conceive them otherwise are living in dreamland. Protocol and Pact alike are pieces of the game, and the Labour people who advocate one or the other are equally tools of Imperialism, leading the workers in blinkers down the steeps to war.

\* \* \* \* \*

Contrast the Geneva conference with the Moscow conference. Here from two to three hundred delegates from the workers' Communist parties all over the world met to discuss—what? How to square the contradictions of capitalism, that capitalism might not perish? Not at all. They met to take stock of the position of capitalism, its strength, its weakness, its strategy, its hold upon the workers. They met to study the position of the working class and its potential allies, to measure its strength and its weakness, and what must immediately be done to develop its power, eradicate its weaknesses and grapple with its enemy, the capitalist class of the whole world. In a forthcoming issue we shall deal fully with the proceedings of this conference. At the moment we content ourselves with directing attention to the contrast which the two conferences present to the world. The MacDonalds, the Hendersons, the Clynes spend their time, the time of the Labour movement, in trying to solve the problems of the enemies of the working class. The Communist International on the contrary, concentrates the whole of its attention on the workers' supreme task of ending capitalism which is the only way to a real enduring peace.

\* \* \* \* \*

The pre-occupation of the present leaders of the Labour Party with the interests of the capitalist class is nothing new. Of that we are well aware. It has, in fact, become habitual. Witness the amazing discussion on the Army estimates and the pleas of Labour men inside and outside of Parliament for subsidies to British firms to help them meet foreign competition. In the discussion on the Army estimates, Mr. Walsh and Mr. Thomas dealt with the outcry against the Railway and Transport Army Reserve. They complained that there had been too much noise about the whole business. They were not opposed to the Army Reserve suggested and their complaint was that the government had been stupid in its methods of recruiting. Had they approached the unions direct, the business could have been arranged without friction. All they wanted was to be assured

that the *special* purpose of the reserve was not to break strikes. With that assurance all would have been well. Yet both leaders know full well that when the reserve is drafted into the regular service in times of crisis, they are governed by the same regulations as the regular army, and have to do everything they are told. The criticism of the government was a sham criticism, and their appeal for a little, just a little, little bit of "tact and sweet reasonableness on all sides" to get over difficulties can be described as nothing else than a barefaced appeal for the government to co-operate with the trade union leaders and leaders of the Labour Party to swindle the workers into developing the military forces of capitalism to smash the workers the moment they become sufficiently dangerous to threaten the power of the ruling class.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then step to the forefront of the picture our comrades of the "left." We would not accuse Maxton and his colleagues of intentionally leading the workers up queer streets into the camp of Messrs. Thomas and Clynes. But that is the meaning of their new proposals for the subsidising of British firms in order to assist them in competition against foreign competitors. This proposal they make in the name of "Socialism limited" in order to relieve unemployment. It has not an ounce of Socialism in it. To suggest that when the capitalist State comes to the aid of a particular capitalist that this is a little bit of Socialism, is sheer rubbish. No measure can be deemed a Socialist measure that does not transfer at least some degree of power from the capitalist class to the working class, for "Socialism unlimited" means if it means anything at all that all power is in the hands of the working class. To mistake the collective capitalist assistance to individuals as "limited Socialism" is to play right into the hands of the capitalists in their efforts to prevent the workers coming to power. This is what Comrades Maxton, Stephen, Lansbury and Messrs. Wheatley and Brownlie have done with their advocacy of State aid to derelict industry.

Mr. Wheatley, for example, endeavouring to give it its most socialistic colour, said: "If the nation were to be saved, it could only be on the basis of a national organisation of trade." Exactly, but in whose hands shall the "national organisation" be? The capitalists' or the workers'? Let our Socialist friends answer these questions and the reality of their work for Socialism will be made more clear to the workers. Meanwhile, we venture to say that it is not the role of a trade union leader or any Labour

leader to spend their time as commercial travellers and cadgers for State aid on behalf of derelict capitalism. It is their job as well as ours to expose the rottenness of capitalism, its futilities, its stupidities for which the working class has to pay in blood, hunger and misery. It is not their job nor ours to be sneering at the "dole," but to demand and fight with all the means at our disposal for the national ownership and organisation of industry which alone can be effectively accomplished by the working class. That is the real Socialist method.

\* \* \* \* \*

In this fight we are not anxious to be mere lookers-on, and we are confident that a number of the comrades we have named are not anxious to fall into "booby traps" or be stalking-horses for Messrs. Thomas, MacDonald, Clynes, as saviours of capitalism. As a matter of fact, it is more than probable that the proposals we have criticised formed one of the efforts to distinguish themselves from these gentlemen. They are not alone in this effort. Throughout the country in large numbers of Labour Parties, thousands of workers are trying to break from the policy of "continuity" of capitalism. The large initial sales of the *Lansbury Weekly* and the *Sunday Worker*, are clear indications of that. It is time, high time, if the working class forces in the Labour Party are going to break from Liberal politics now dominating the Labour Party that they get together and give national form to their efforts and provide the alternative leadership and programme. Many local Labour organisations are with us in our opposition to the Dawes Report, the Versailles Treaty, etc., against the expulsion of Communists, in favour of the Labour Party being a federation of working class organisations, hammering out together the best ways and means of achieving the goal the Labour Party has before it, viz., the social ownership of the means of life. It is time indeed that those who want the workers in the Labour Party to pursue a working class policy, got together and gave coherence, form and direction to the forces ready to support them. We are ready. What of the "Left"?

\* \* \* \* \*

Lord Curzon is dead. And a damned good job, too! He was a bitter enemy of the working class and its every aspiration when alive. The memory of him does not bring to our minds "his charming ways, his sympathetic soul behind an aristocratic mask, his love of art," etc., etc. On the contrary, we congratulate the workers on having lost an enemy who did not beat about the

bush. His hatred of the first Workers' Republic is a measure of his hatred for the workers everywhere. At the moment of his death comes also the reverberation of the masses of the East on the move, striking at everything with which Curzon was associated in the East. It is good to know that these movements, the rebuff of the Swarajists to British Imperialism in India, the reelection of Zaghlul Pasha in Egypt, the strike of the Arabs in Palestine are the sure indications that Curzonism is on the way to follow Curzon. That he will rest in peace, we have not the least doubt. We work in the hope that the workers of this country and the peoples of the East whom Curzon helped to hold in bondage, will quickly send the politics for which he lived to as deep and permanent a sleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is with totally different feelings that we do homage to the passing of Sun Yat Sen. Sun Yat Sen was the leader of the Kuomintang Party which took upon itself the task of liberating China, degraded into a semi-colonial country, from the grip of world Imperialism. We regret deeply that he should be cut off just as the Chinese workers and peasants are awakening, and his life's work was beginning to bear the desired results. The growth of capitalism in China is being accompanied by a rapid, wide and vast movement of workers and peasants. A Communist Party is growing from strength to strength. Trade unions are flourishing, and the forces of workers and peasants have been galvanised to life and activity by the Russian revolution, the greatest revolution of history. The very existence of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, with liberation of oppressed peoples on its banners, is an inspiration which is stirring the peoples of Asia to the very depths of their being. Sun Yat Sen saw with Lenin the mighty role which the national liberation movements would fulfil in the fight against Imperialism. Seeing, he was not afraid, but drew the light of Soviet Russia upon the masses of China. He has gone to his rest conscious that the movement he led—the cause of national liberation from Imperialism and capitalist exploitation, is fast on the way to victory. We join in sorrow with our Chinese comrades in the loss of their leader. But we rejoice that his cause is sure of victory.

\* \* \* \* \*

We observe in the last number of the *Socialist Review*, a number of James Connolly's letters to Keir Hardie. There is nothing in the letters to deserve so many pages of a magazine, be-

ing simply letters with regard to election troubles and meetings. Perhaps it is that the I.L.P. is anxious to show that Connolly was associated with it in the early days. If so, we would remind the I.L.P. that there is a much more effective way of identifying one's self with another, and that is to compare deeds. This month brings with it the ninth anniversary of Easter week, 1916, when Connolly led his small army of workers to the forefront of a national revolt against British Imperialism. True, the revolt was crushed, Connolly was shot with the acquiescence of the Labour member of the British Cabinet. But Connolly demonstrated that he understood the role of a Socialist towards a national struggle against Imperialism, and was prepared to face the consequences. He demonstrated the role of the working class in relation to this liberation war too, and led them to the head of the national liberation movement arms in hand, conscious that the working class is the only social force capable of guaranteeing the real liberty of a nation. In short, his deeds placed him in the line of those who formed the Communist International. We have not heard of a revolution in the ranks of the I.L.P. or that it has sent in an application for membership of the Communist International. Until then its attempt to associate Connolly with itself is tame and worthless. We greet the Irish workers who cherish the memory of Easter week and James Connolly, and affirm that until the Irish workers have created a party of their own, based upon the principles for which he stood, and developing the policy he applied, the liberation of the Irish working class and peasantry from the domination of British capitalism is a dream unrealisable.

J.M.



# The Protocol, Arbitration and Disarmament

**A** WRETCHED fate seems to dog the footsteps of the Labour Party politicians in their efforts to be statesmen. From the moment they framed a policy of "gradualism" and adopted the "ostensible war aims of the Allies" as the policy to be pursued to reach Socialism, bad luck seems to have befallen them. When President Wilson bellowed his fourteen points across the world, they hailed his programme as a heaven-sent message. It was regarded as a means of salvation and redemption for pursuing the practice of force on behalf of British Imperialism. When the Versailles Treaty was signed they denounced it as a war treaty, but seized upon the Covenant of the League of Nations, founded upon the Versailles Treaty, as the new hope. They accepted it as a fact, and made the fact a virtue, although it was obviously an Allied fraud, based upon a fraud from birth. It failed from the beginning. The provisions were wide enough for another world war to run right through and leave it intact with its rules unbroken. No power regards it seriously as a preventative of anything they want to do, but only a convenient vehicle for dirty work which they could not tackle promptly. The Poles ignored it over its Lithuanian invasion, Mussolini put his fingers to his nose at it concerning Corfu, while the British told it to go to its Biblical destiny when Egypt was mentioned.

When they became actual statesmen they went one better and accepted the Versailles Treaty as the basis of action. With this as a foundation and the Covenant as a platform, they proceeded to make an "atmosphere," when suddenly it appeared as if their luck had turned. The American and British bankers had organised a plan for the imposition of their will on Germany, well baited with reparations plums for the Allies, and profits for the German industrialists. Mr. MacDonald took what he called "the greatest step towards peace" since 1918, because of the agreement secured between the Governments. Suddenly the world saw clearly that he had been had. Another bubble burst, and to everybody with eyes to see perceived the truth of the old adage, "Money talks," and had created the real "atmosphere."

Undeterred by rebuffs, having not yet struck a single blow at capitalism on behalf of the workers, they took up the cause of "peace" on the basis of the Versailles Treaty and the amending of the covenant—the gospel of the Protocol. Now, even this bubble is pricked. They have not yet passed beyond a state of mourning for this evaporated affair but undoubtedly they will find some way of using the old themes as an echo of some capitalist plan or the other. The theme we know from their slogans—"Outlawing war," "Peace by arbitration," "Gradual disarmament." No doubt the Imperialist Coolidge will call up our chorus boys of capitalist diplomacy to sing these anthems again at an early date. It is, therefore, high time the workers took stock of these slogans as a means to grasping their futility, understanding the falseness of the hopes raised, and the grim reality of war preparation actually developing under the cover of the sentimental blether of peace, where peace is impossible.

### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

What is this League? It is a combination of some fifty capitalist governments, most of them small governments under the domination of either Britain or France. Outside it are the great powers, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, Germany, and America. Its functions are limited to what the governments voluntarily refer to it, and its obligations are sheltered by reservations which leave the governments to do as they individually think fit. It does not begin to work on the basis of disarmament, of changing the social system which produces the problems, but accepts the *status quo*, the Versailles Treaty and what other treaties are existing between governments. Admission of the countries outside the League depend upon the unanimous consent of existing members, and acceptance of conditions governing the operation of "sanctions." The latter are the means to enforce decisions. Even in this case the powers can determine their own contribution of force. Hence we have the following pretty kettle of fish. The armed capitalist powers in the League invite another power like Germany, who comparatively speaking is disarmed, to join, and permit at the bidding of the League the forces obeying the dictates of the League to pass through the country. Each government can determine the degree of its help to the prosecution of a decision of the League, thus making a tool of a weak power like Germany, whilst the other powers are given a free hand to join in or otherwise on any issue which may be raised.

The League of Nations is, therefore, a loose aggregation of

capitalist governments doing nothing to interfere with capitalism; a body dominated by Britain and France, appealing for volunteers for arbitration with no means of enforcing its decisions without the consent of Britain and France, who are under no obligation to act together. If they did act together it would prove to all the world it was an instrument of the old alliance. If they don't act together, they can enforce nothing.

The League is in this absurd position. It proposes arbitration to eliminate the use of force as an instrument of settlement, and is totally incapable of acting as arbiter, because it lacks the force to enforce its award. The inequality of the powers constituting the League makes it impossible to create an "impartial" collective power, and leaves the League dependent on the dominant military powers amongst its membership for the advancement of its decisions, making all talk of equality in the League sheer moonshine. If France and Britain agree, against whom is the decision to be recorded and enforced—either Germany, Russia or America. If not these, whom? For the smaller powers within the League are already subject to one or other of the great powers—Britain or France. If the two latter are disagreed, then the League is helpless, its main supports torn asunder with nothing that could make them arbitrate or enforce an arbitration award.

### **THE PROTOCOL.**

It is this anomalous position that the Protocol supporters try to overcome, and fail. It proposes that arbitration shall be obligatory. That the test of who is aggressor shall be determined by the preparedness of the government to submit to arbitration. That "sanctions" shall be employed against those declared as aggressors or violating the award. To carry out the "sanctions" each government must declare in each case what it is prepared to contribute in this direction, and in all cases the unanimous decision of the Council must be secured for action to be taken by the League. So if the British Government disagreed it could not only refuse to bring in its fleet, but make the League in-operative and its decisions a farce.

Especially is this obvious with the present relations of powers and the very limited number of questions that can be submitted to arbitration. But it is argued that this position would be altered were the United States, Germany and Russia to come into the League, and be parties to the Protocol. This is entirely chimerical as a moment's consideration will show.

The basis of the scheme is—every state has its armed forces, its frontiers, its interests, which are left inviolate. No two states

are alike in strength. Their interests are contradictory. Their frontiers temporary. Who, for example, would proclaim that Balkanised Europe can maintain its existing frontiers or that any one of the new states created by the Versailles Treaty will submit to change by arbitration, say, for example, Poland, *re* its Russian and German frontiers and the corridor. Not only is there no likelihood of this, but suppose for a moment that it did. Who would be the "impartial" arbitrators, when there is such vast inequality in the strength of the governments who make up or would make up the League of Nations if all the governments were in? So long as any of the great powers are not opposed by a greater power, how can the decision be other than what is approved by the great powers, each of which retain the right to maintain what they have got and the uncontrolled right to dispose of their own forces? Without the League had power to impose its will as expressed in arbitration, how can the League be the decisive power? If it is to create a superior power from what shall this power be created? Can we conceive of the great Powers voluntarily contributing to the creation of a supreme power to subordinate their own power which they consider inviolate? But without means to enforce awards, the awards have no value when great powers can make them inoperative.

It is the refusal to face these realities of world capitalism that make the sermons of the Reverend Ramsay MacDonald so nonsensical when stripped of their Bethelite draperies. It is the refusal to face these realities which makes Mr. Henderson's tub-thumping of arbitration so pathetic. They face up to stupendously organised military powers with the plea for arbitration, concentrating on a form of procedure instead of the power and interests lying behind all procedure, powers and interests which fight against all interference. This is where Chamberlain had the advantage over Henderson and MacDonald, and tore their case to shreds. Against realities they set idealism and forms of procedure and in the process became the tools of one Imperial power against another without being able to do anything for the workers beyond deluge them with pacifism and leave the pathway open for the imperialist power to proceed with its schemes for a bloc against the Workers' Republic of Russia.

Let us see. At the present moment, Russia is not in the League of Nations, is not likely to be. Its provisions do not fit its requirements. Its composition is in diametric opposition to the systems perpetuated by every state within the League. There is not a representative on the League who does not wish to see

a bourgeois counter revolution deposing the Soviet Government. There is not one who does not realise that the very existence of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics offering to make the final object of the League—complete disarmament—its first step if the other governments will do likewise, is a standing challenge to the hypocrisy which the League embodies. Capitalist governments are not such fools that they do not know their existence depends upon military power. Imagine for a moment the British Empire without its armed forces! Unthinkable!

Outside Russia, France dominates Europe. It desires to maintain the Versailles Treaty frontiers sacrosanct, to maintain the *status quo* in Europe with Germany reduced to her knees, with the cordon sanitaire stretched between Russia and Germany and most of the smaller states under her thumb. Obviously under these circumstances French imperialism could subscribe to any procedure and any ideals which increased the difficulties of every country wishing to alter the present situation. In fact, it would thereby secure all the "moral" values of the scheme to perpetuate her power, especially when all the vexed questions such as the alteration of Polish frontiers, etc., would not come within its scope. This is exactly what would be the situation were the Protocol superimposed upon the present apparatus of the League without considering for a moment the vexed question of the role of the British navy in the application of "sanctions."

To think that British Imperialism could subscribe to such a position is to reveal an incredible lack of understanding of the problems of British Imperialism. The dominant power in Europe has always been regarded as a danger to Britain. She combined against Napoleon when France previously controlled Europe. She combined with France and Russia when German Imperialism was the dominant power. Has the transfer of the military hosts and power of the Kaiser to French Imperialism made it more virtuous and pacifist than its predecessors or its interests more in accord with the interests of British Imperialism? Not at all. Debts, reparations, frontiers, aeroplane predominance, submarine development, the transfer of economic resources and power from Germany to France and her satellites, the bridging of the English channel make the British Imperialists a thousand times more conscious of the significance of the role of French Imperialism in Europe, much as she is conscious of the greater power facing her across the Atlantic. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that British and American capitalism, scared with the effects of

economic disintegration in Europe and Germany in particular, had already decided that it were better to restore to life German capitalism than face a proletarian revolution in Germany.

But at a price. They want a return for money sunk in the Dawes Plan and are conscious that revival to pay, means also the growth of a determination to break existing limitations of frontiers.

No wonder, therefore, that the British government punctured the Protocol, and pushed Germany forward with proposals which checked the jubilation of French Imperialism. The proposals seized upon the virtuous regard for arbitration, security, etc., but in effect the proposals meant that British Imperialism had side-stepped French Imperialism, not simply with a view to lining up as an enemy of France, but with a view to a pact of a limited nature that could form the basis of a wider policy. The limitations inclusion indicated, a four-power to seven-power pact, are as eloquent as the exclusion.

Against whom is the pact directed, if not Soviet Russia? Russia stands first in the line, for what problems of frontiers and interests can be touched East of the Rhine, which do not involve Russia? Indeed a perusal of the Continental press will reveal this, although little is said in this country as to the implications of the Pact prepared by Chamberlain. From the most reactionary anti-Bolshevik down to the German Social-Democrats (the MacDonalds and Hendersons of Europe), the Pact is regarded and welcomed as diplomatic strategy aiming at producing a wide European basis for attack on Soviet Russia. Is it this to which MacDonald and Henderson subscribe? They will declare no. But the only difference between the Pact and the Protocol in this respect lies in the role of Britain and France.

In the Pact Britain comes to the fore. In the Protocol France takes the lead. Such is the fate of utopian politics of arbitration, "outlawing war," when Labour politicians play the role of capitalist statesmen.

### **DISARMAMENT.**

The same futility dogs their footsteps in relation to disarmament. The power of the capitalist class rests upon military force in every country. Instead of attacking the power of the capitalists at its foundations by marshalling the fullest possible power of the only class that can defeat the capitalists—that is the working class—they accept the present relations of power of

the capitalists in each country and place the problem of disarmament as one to be reached after agreement among the capitalist governments on forms of procedure which exclude the fundamental questions of imperialism and disarmament. Is it conceivable that any capitalist government knowing full well that its existence depends upon its power to impose its will in any direction is likely to agree to dispose of its power in response to humane appeals? Each would reply that they would do so if there was a guarantee that their positions would not be jeopardised thereby. Put the question to any government controlling colonial possessions. What is the guarantee they ask for? It is that the millions of colonial slaves will be content to remain slaves in utter degradation. The position is absurd. The slaves cannot and will not be content to remain so. What then can be the answer of any imperialist power in a world of cut-throat competition, themselves based upon the power to grab all they can get? Only the scoffing note of contempt for utopias.

The futility of approaching the problem of disarmament in this inverted way is already proven to the point of demonstration. The Hendersons, the MacDonalds, the pacifists hailed the Washington Conference as a great step to disarmament. They are looking with open mouths to such another as a further step. But what are the realities of Washington and after?

It dramatically scrapped large battleships as a demonstration of the capitalist world's will to disarm. It agreed to prohibit the use of poison gas. It left untouched the development of smaller craft. It set before the world an increased programme of submarine building, and left the armies and aircraft untouched. What then since the Conference? Britain has spent in 1922, £169,700 on poison gas experiments, in 1923, £150,300, in 1924, with a Labour Government, £165,620. The U.S.A., the initiators of the Conference, have spent on the same deadly business, £198,926 in 1922, £138,528 in 1923, £157,046 in 1924. "All over the world," says Mr. Bridgeman, "352 ships of war are being built—an increase of 50 per cent. more than last year." There is not one of the great powers but is racing each other in the development of aircraft to which there can be no limits. Racing each other in the development of submarines and the building of naval bases. Singapore is not isolated. Australia is tackling Port Darwin. The American Congress is asked to provide money on a very large scale (estimate £70,000,000) (1) for building eight light cruisers of 10,000 tons class; (2) for building and perfecting naval bases on both coasts; and (3) for increasing the range

of the guns in a number of the fleet battleships, and for converting the boilers from coal burners to oil burners. In spite of the fact that Germany and Austria are powerless against the Allies, the latter are spending £100,000,000 per year more on war preparations than before the war. The traffic in small arms is enormous. The League of Nations reports that war material excluding warships, aeroplanes, tanks and armoured cars, to the value of £50,000,000 was exported from twenty countries in the three years, 1920 to 1922. Then look at the Washington Programme—cruiser building :—

**STRENGTH IN CRUISERS AND LIGHT CRUISERS LESS THAN 20 YEARS OLD FROM DATE OF COMPLETION ON MARCH 31 OF EACH OF THE YEARS GIVEN**

	1914			1921			1924			1928 Built
	Built	Bldg.	Total	Built	Bldg.	Total	Built	Bldg.	Total	
British Empire	108	18	126	55	10	65	50 <sup>a</sup>	4	54	57
United States	30	—	30	19	10	29	25	3 <sup>b</sup>	28 <sup>b</sup>	24 <sup>c</sup>
Japan... ..	27	—	27	13	7	20	17	6	23	28 <sup>d</sup>
France ... ..	30	—	30	20	—	20	11	3	14	14
Italy ... ..	30	3	23	15	—	15	14	—	14	15

- (a) Includes "Courageous" and "Glorious" now being converted into aircraft carriers.
- (b) Excluding 8 projected but not authorised.
- (c) Includes 8 projected but not yet authorised (Sept. 1924)
- (d) Assuming that all cruisers of present authorised programme have been completed by March 31st, 1928, except for two 10,000 ton cruisers which are to be completed by March 31st, 1929.

This table indicates the naval increase even under the Washington Agreement and takes no account of the concentration of every country to bring every conceivable scientific improvement and every possible increase of fighting capacity into every vessel. How utterly hopeless is the policy of parroting liberal pacifist appeals to powers based upon force! Washington indicated neither the will to peace nor the will to disarm. It indicated only a departure from the old methods of warfare to new under a cloud of sentimental vapourings of peace. It was a clever capitalistic use of the mass repugnance to war for the purpose of applying the military lessons derived from the war.

There is no path to peace but that of striking at the roots of capitalism, the mobilisation of the working class against the capitalist class, the owners and controllers of war materials, and the makers of war. Neither capitalist Protocols, nor arbitration for capitalists nor disarmament propaganda can avail. The only path to peace, permanent and real, is the path of revolution. They who avoid this in the name of peace are consciously or unconsciously perpetuating and developing war.

J. T. MURPHY.

# The Trade Union Report on Soviet Russia

**T**HE result of the six weeks' investigations of the General Council's fraternal delegation to Russia are summed up in 250 pages of close type, full of descriptions, facts, statistics and illustrations. If all the reviews that appeared in the capitalist press during the week that followed its publication (February 28th-March 7th) were collected into one book, it would probably be not much smaller. Much ink has been spilled, and much long-suffering paper has had to bear multitudes of lies, misrepresentations, wilful misunderstandings and skilful distortion of fact. What are the lessons of it all?

The first and most obvious—one which you need not read the Report for—is that the capitalist press is pleased when Soviet Russia is painted in dark colours, but does not like to hear anything favourable about it. There is nothing surprising about this, if we recall that the capitalist press is pleased with the trade unions on all occasions except when they are pressing for improvements in wages or hours. Just as the worker concludes that the trade unions must be some good after all, when the enemies of his class abuse them, so he will begin to realise that Soviet Russia must have something in it when drives the *Morning Post* and the *Manchester Guardian* into a united front.

## **BUILDING ANEW.**

Secondly—and this you must read the Report to realise for yourself—the Soviet regime is making a success of the frightful job of reconstructing economic and social life after the war, the revolution, the intervention, the civil war and the blockade. Section by section, the Report deals with every side of it, quoting statistics and facts at every step, and carefully avoiding exaggerations of its case. Finance is a “long way ahead of other Continental countries”: industry is under State control, which “does not stint, but even stimulates economic recovery”: the reconstruction of railway transport is “fairly complete”: agriculture “is re-

covering slowly but steadily," and so is foreign trade: public order is on "a footing well above that in most Continental countries": the health, housing and prison system reforms show "the most remarkable results," and show signs of outstripping the most advanced countries: justice is cheap, equitable, uncorrupt: women are equal with men in industry as well as in politics: wages are steadily rising, working conditions improving, cultural work of the trade unions developing.

Even compared with the cultured West—not excepting Great Britain—it is clear that, judged by results alone, the Soviet Union stands alone in its record of unbroken progress and steady reconstruction since the end of the war.

### **A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT.**

Thirdly, these results have been achieved under what is unmistakably a working class Government. At every step the Delegation's Report reveals this, although it does not always state the fact expressly. "The object of the Soviet system in the economic region is to organise production and consumption so as to exclude exploitation of the worker and peasant" (p. 41). "Every effort is exerted to make the Red Army soldier conscious that he is a defender of the rights and revolutionary gains of his fellow workers. . . to create a force consciously ready and eager to defend the workers, its own fellows, against either outside or inside attack" (p. 87). "There is a general agreement that the courts 'weight the balance' in favour of the worker as against the well-to-do: and this is defended on the ground that it corresponds to the weighting of the other scale elsewhere" (p. 93). "A peasant or a worker can by his own energies rise in his or any other profession with the aid given him by the system. The pathetic feature in our own civilisation of wasted and dormant talent, the slave of circumstance, owing to the absence of all possibility of outlet or instruction through lack of means, seems likely to become very rare among the workers of Russia" (p. 121). "The majority of the workers have undoubtedly obtained better housing facilities" (p. 131). And finally there is this passage, which ought to be inscribed in red letters on the cover of the book: "The Russian workers are the ruling class of Russia. They enjoy the rights of a ruling class. They are beginning to exercise its responsibilities. They still have much to learn, but they have made a start" (p. 136).

The Delegation may, as it says, think that the U.S.S.R. is not Great Britain, and that this system "would not suit us." But let any of them, or any trade union leader, read out these passages before a working class audience, and then ask them if this system "would not suit us"! As was always foretold, the very existence and day-to-day work of a Socialist State (however imperfect and rudimentary as yet) is doing better and wider propaganda for Socialism than tens of thousands of Socialists.

### **INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY.**

Fourthly, and most important of all, the Report shows up the true character of the old phrases about "lack of freedom," "no liberty of the press or of the individual," used in the campaign against the Soviet Government (most freely by those organs of capitalism who live on the profits sweated and starved out of hundreds of millions of colonial peasants bereft of all civic and political rights). True, the Delegation did not particularly like the lesson it was teaching. It "does not wish to be regarded as apologists for the principles and procedure of Russian Communism" (p. 1): its first object is to enable the British electorate "to realise that the Russian Revolution has no real relationship at all to British evolution" (p. 1): and it thinks that all but a very small minority have renounced "rights of opposition that are essential to political liberty elsewhere" (p. 171). But these declarations—made full use of, naturally, by the capitalist press—acquire a different and deeper significance when we take them with their context.

This becomes clear when we read what the Delegation says about the Soviet system of government. "The Delegation finds no confirmation of the allegations frequently made that the present Communist regime has deprived the Soviet system set up by the Revolution of all representative character and real vitality. The Soviet system permits a perpetual change of personnel and policy without the periodic pendulum swings of party politics" (p. 9). "The Soviet system of representation and its scheme of constitutional and civil rights, so far from being undemocratic in the widest sense of the word, give in many respects to the individual a more real and reasonable opportunity of participation in public affairs than does parliamentary and party government. In other respects, such participation is still severely restricted" (p. 17).

In what respects? These amount in effect to two—freedom of the press and freedom of the individual. This is what the Report says on these subjects. “All opposition is as yet silenced. But the need of it is not so much felt owing to the extraordinary candour and criticism of those conducting affairs, and their readiness to conform their policy to new requirements of the moment. The constant elections and discussions at congresses keep those in power in touch with opinion: while the continuous stream of official publications and pronouncements keep opinion informed of any defects that may develop in the system, and of the proposals for reform” (p. 14). On the subject of the political prisoners, after having a heart-to-heart talk with them, “the Delegation did not feel, in the circumstances, that it could take the serious responsibility of pressing for the release of such irreconcilables” (p. 16). As for the Press, “there is still no opposition Press. In spite of this, however, very considerable latitude of criticism is allowed, these criticisms taking the form of open discussions on social and economic questions” (p. 121).

### **FREEDOM FOR WORKERS—NOT FOR CAPITALISTS.**

Where is the secret? Why is it that even the non-Communist Delegation could not press for the release of the “Socialist-Revolutionaries” and Mensheviks? What is this “opposition” that is “silenced,” and has no press, when “very considerable latitude of criticism is allowed?” How can such a state of things be compatible with “a more real and reasonable opportunity of participation in public affairs” than under parliamentary government? And why is it that all but a very small minority have renounced “rights of opposition”? These are questions that occur naturally—although the capitalist press omits them.

For the reply is obvious. The Soviet system means political freedom, industrial freedom, freedom of opinion of the workers from control by the capitalists. Elsewhere the workers have only the shadow—Parliamentary elections—while the capitalists hold the substance—economic and political power. That is why the “right of opposition” is essential to political liberty elsewhere, as the Delegation says: for it is a powerful weapon of the workers against the capitalists. But in Soviet Russia the workers and peasants have smashed the capitalists, and set up their own class government, relying no longer on that “very small minority” of capitalists and their hangers-on, but on the active support of

the large majority of the workers and the acceptance of an equally large majority of the peasants."

### **NOT STRUGGLE, BUT RECONSTRUCTION.**

Consequently the *political struggle* (the struggle for power) is no longer required, so far as the workers and peasants are concerned. The whole state system is under their control ("the franchise and electoral system in Russia can better be understood by approaching it from the point of view of the British Trade Union arrangements than from those of a Parliamentary system" (p. 10). If they are dissatisfied with personnel or policy, they can get them changed "without the periodic pendulum swing of Party politics." What they are concerned with is "social and economic questions?"—improving their own household, their own lives, rights of real practical value. And they are not concerned with granting the right of free Press, free opinion, and free opposition to that "very small minority" who are "irreconcilables," and who only want these rights in order to advocate the abolition of the rule of the working class.

An ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory. So the Russian workers have decided. So the British Trade Union Delegation, in spite of some prejudice and much hesitation, admit

And we think that the British workers, without any hesitation, and unmoved by any prejudice in favour of a democracy in theory which means starvation wages in practice, will agree with them.

C. ROEBUCK.

# The Situation in Egypt

[The following article, from a correspondent just returned from Egypt, gives a descriptive background to affairs in Egypt brought to the front this month by the successes at the polls of the Zaghulist Party notwithstanding the financial and material support of the imperialists to the present puppet government of Baldwin and Chamberlain. It confirms, from personal observation, all the Communist Party has said about affairs in Egypt, and shows the urgent need for a closer alliance of the native workers of the colonies with the working class movement in Great Britain.—Ed.]

**I**F there is one factor more than any other which emerges from a close study of Egyptian politics of to-day, it is that, in spite of the intense "atmosphere" created by the elections of the Delegate Electors and the close proximity of the final elections, yet there is no Party in existence in Egypt (in the sense which we English people regard a Party); all one can perceive is a national manifestation swaying the emotions of the people, mainly on the lines of national self-determination, with an attitude towards British imperialism grading from compromise to non-compromise. Even non-nationalist sections cannot be identified fully with favour of a pro-occupational policy.

In no country which is held down by the bondage of the British Empire is there such a great proportion of the nation against continued occupation, as is to be found in Egypt, and one would think that, on this point and on the question of resistance to the arrogant demands of the Residency following on the murder of the late Sirdar, Sir Lee Stack, it would be possible to bind the whole of the Egyptian community into one great Nationalist Party with a common programme and policy. What obtains at present, however, is exactly the reverse. The whole Nationalist movement is at the present time split into camps, each without any policy but one of recrimination of the leaders of the other camps, who are accused of weakness towards the Ministry and the Residency; but at the same time one has the conviction that, given the opportunity of office, these embryo Lloyd-Georges will pursue the same policy of facing both ways as did Zaghul Pasha in the last cabinet.

In the Egyptian press and on the platform, these bickerings and jealousies overshadow those great burning questions of the Sudan occupation and development and its inevitable effect upon

the economic life of Egypt. As for the general conditions of the great masses of workers and peasants, harrassed with a bondage which is little removed from the economic position of the slaves of ancient Egypt, who built the Pyramids—these long-suffering workers upon whose labour rests the whole fabric of the country are hardly given a passing thought. Condemned to labour from sunrise to sunset all the year round, seven days to the week, with never a holiday save perhaps on the festival of some dead shiek, toiling and moiling in the fields for the immensely rich Pashas who own them, and with but a beggarly pittance in return for their labour, the lot of the peasant is indeed a terrible one. Little better is that of the town worker. Artisan or labourer, man or woman, all have the last ounce of energy ground out of them in return for a wage which is insufficient to buy the bare necessities of life, and the housing conditions are dreadful in the extreme.

It would be a shock for those hordes of European parasites who flock over to Egypt to escape the rigours of winter, and who, guided by dragomans, go along the specially macadamised streets of the Mouski quarter (the native Arab quarters) where are the gaily dressed bazaars, if they could be induced to turn down the filthy back streets, as I have done, and see the vile middens called homes, where the Egyptian workers are condemned to live and be rack-rented by wealthy Egyptian property owners. To get an idea of the kind of "homes" where the workers live in thousands, one must call to mind the rows of privy dry closets which are still in existence behind slum property in many English towns. In size, structure and general condition, they resemble the Egyptian working man's castle as nearly as anything I have seen. Devoid of furniture, save perhaps a box and a few pots, the rags and mats are carried out into the open court by day and carried back to form the beds by night.

The question naturally arises, "How can any party exist which does not reflect in its policy and programme these crying evils of the common people, and aim at ending them, or at least alleviating them?" The answer to that question is that there is no Party in Egypt, and, therefore, no programme and policy. The great Zaghlul says of the Nationalist movement: "We are not a Party, we are the nation." And all the other leaders, Nationalist, Constitutionalist, and others, go on their merry ways, vilifying everybody else but their own followers.

In this most extraordinary town of Cairo, where, in spite of the great proportion of illiteracy amongst the population, there are more newspapers than are probably to be found in any other town of equal population in the world, day by day these papers come out attacking first this, and then that leader, and all the time Great Britain is quickly entrenching herself in the Sudan, exacting tribute from the Egyptian exchequer, and, with the proceeds of the spoliation, developing the barrages and reservoirs in the upper reaches of the Nile in the Sudan, which when completed will place the whole of Egypt at the mercy or the whim of any future Churchill, Curzon or MacDonald, by controlling the life-giving waters of the mighty River Nile.

In order to understand the immense importance to the Egyptian nation of the control of the waters of the Nile, it is necessary to remember that the land along the Nile Valley and at its delta, with the exception of a few oases or fertile spots scattered over the country, is the only fertile ground in Egypt. The total length of the River Nile in Egypt proper is about 600 miles, and by the construction of barrages, canals and dykes it has been made possible, by a stupendous expenditure of energy, to bring under cultivation approximately 9,250,000 acres of land along the valley. This land, especially in the neighbourhood of towns, is intensively cultivated and huge crops of vegetables, grain, fodder for animals, and, away from the towns, cotton is grown, the river itself forming the main means for transport to the sea, supplemented by the railway which runs along the whole of the valley from Alexandria and Port Said, to the interior of the Sudan.

Under normal circumstances, land which is cultivated on the intensive plan without being allowed to lie fallow must become exhausted, but this tendency in Egypt is largely (or has been in the past) counteracted by the annual flooding of the Nile which brought down huge deposits of alluvial mud from the African lakes and thus renewed the life of the soil. The interference with this annual phenomenon by the further conservation and arresting of the flow of the Nile by the construction of the enormous reservoirs and dams which are contemplated at Gezira and Makwar respectively in the Sudan, and the consequent retention in the Sudan of the mud deposits, raises a problem which seems to me of a very serious character for Egypt, and one to which little attention seems to be paid here. One can foresee that the cotton

and other crops, which have been reported to be worsening year by year, will suffer very rapidly within the next few years, and that in about seven years' time, Egypt will be faced with disaster if things are allowed to go their own sweet way.

In these circumstances, and in face of the absolute inefficiency of the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia to work out a common programme of action and their utter disregard of the suffering which must inevitably come to the workers and peasants in the years to come, some effort must be made to arouse the workers and peasants to a sense of their danger and their right to consideration. The country is crying out for a revolutionary lead, and the building up of a mighty Workers' and Peasants' Revolutionary Republican Party, which will sweep away all the effete and intriguing elements and take the lead in the political struggle against British Imperialism, now slowly embracing Egypt in a death grip.

The difficulties in the way of achieving such a Party are enormous at the moment. The Residency, Zaghlulists, Constitutionalists, Unionists, and all sections are united on one thing, and that is to crush every manifestation of Egyptian Labour's attempt to get a place in the sun. Trade unions have been completely smashed and hundreds of its members imprisoned. Every active member of the trade unions has been dismissed from his employment. The Communist Party has been raided, and its members cast into jail for long periods of imprisonment, houses searched, literature seized; in fact every vestige of rebellion is brutally put down. Even the students at the universities, the only virile section of the intelligentsia, have been prohibited under penalty of instant dismissal from their schools from taking part in elections or other political activity, and generally speaking a reign of terror exists here.

Let it not be thought, however, that by brutally smashing the trade unions and the Communist Party the authorities have crushed out the rebellious spirit of the workers. On the contrary, whilst the persecution may have frightened the more timid of the workers, it has acted like a breeze which has fanned the smouldering resentment of many workers into a flame of anger which will certainly break out again more fiercely than ever. With that arrogance born of the long-suffering toleration of the oppressed workers, Zaghlul Pasha, the willing tool of British Imperialism when in office, smashed the trade unions, suppressed the Alexandria strike

with violence and imprisoned trade unionists and Communists alike, and then with a piece of sublime cheek "created" a trade union of his own, a Confederation of the filleted variety, wherein the members are asked on joining to forego the right or intention to strike. This action has had the effect of driving underground what was hitherto open organisation, and from one's experiences of similar movements, it is easy to comprehend that behind the surface of things there is a growing determination amongst the best of the Egyptian workers to re-erect on a more sure foundation their own free organisations, which will go on from day to day, profiting from their past failures and defeats, and slowly but surely building up a movement which will at the crucial moment sweep forward to success.

In this task it is the privilege and the duty of their English fellow trade unionists to assist them by all the means in their power. This they can best do by carrying on an increased agitation against the British Imperialist policy in Egypt, and against the machinations of the State-subsidised Sudan Cotton-growers' Association, in which so many prominent English politicians are interested financially. It is also the duty of the British workers to endeavour to remove from the minds of the Egyptian workers that feeling of bitter disappointment and resentment occasioned by Ramsay MacDonald's handling of the Egyptian situation whilst in office, and to disabuse their minds of the opinion which is widely held by all sections of the Egyptian people that the British Labour movement, in which they had placed so much hope on its accession to Government office, would show in no uncertain manner that it was prepared to make an attack upon British Imperialism by introducing measures into the House of Commons calculated to grant the fullest right of self-determination for all subject races, and so assist the struggling masses in Egypt, Palestine, India and other colonies and protectorates which are at present under the heel of British Imperialist satraps.

The continuation by MacDonald of the pro-imperialist policy of the governments which preceded the Labour Government came as a staggering surprise and a bitter disappointment to the Egyptian people, and, so carefully is the news sifted before it reaches here, that it is understandable that the Egyptian nation believes that this retrogressive attitude of MacDonald and Co., with its gross betrayal of all that the Labour movement stands for in its programme and policy, has the unanimous backing of the whole

of the working class of Great Britain. They are unaware of the fact that there is an ever-growing left-wing of Labour in Britain lead by the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, which has bitterly opposed the Imperialist tendencies of the Labour leaders, that this movement is growing at an enormous rate and that, thanks to the constant propaganda of these bodies, thousands of workers in their trades councils, trade unions, local Labour Parties and other working class organisations are week by week registering their protests against the brutal suppression of the Egyptian people, and against the blatant imperialism of so-called Labour leaders. They do not realise that there is a different mentality growing up in the English working class movement—a mentality that no longer looks to the efficient exploitation of the colonial peoples as a means of providing higher wages or better conditions of labour for the British workers.

**It is the urgent and vital need of the moment to work for the withdrawal of all British troops from Egypt, and for the complete separation and freedom of the Egyptian people from any entanglements or control by the British Empire.**

C.T.J.



# The Re-organisation of the Labour Exchange in U.S.S.R.

**A** PART from isolated cases prior to the revolution and during the war, it must be recorded that the real development of the Labour Exchange began only after the February revolution. Labour Exchanges came into being as mediatory organs and retained this form also in the beginning of the post-October Revolution period. In connection with severe unemployment caused by the demobilisation of the army and curtailment of industry, the Labour Exchanges extended their functions considerably, paying doles to the unemployed, organising dining halls and night shelters for them, etc.

In the epoch of military Communism when all able-bodied persons were obliged to work (with certain exceptions laid down by law), Labour Exchanges became State organs for the supply of labour power, and formed part of local labour departments, such as the sub-department of accountancy and distribution of labour power, which was the title under which they functioned until the introduction of the New Economic Policy. At that time it was not possible to employ people at will (an exception was made in the case of persons whose work is of a confidential nature, and in the case of experts).

Since 1922, when the New Economic Policy began to operate, Labour Exchanges have again come into being, and the obligation to engage labour through the Exchange is in force. Persons not registered at the Labour Exchange had no right to be engaged and employers of labour transgressing this rule had to answer for it before the law.

Exceptions were made in cases demanding political reliability or special knowledge on the part of the person to be engaged, and also in case the Labour Exchange could not satisfy the demand of the hirer within the stipulated time. In such cases the hired persons were registered at the Labour Exchange after their engagement.

Thus even in the period of NEP the monopoly of the Labour Exchange in connection with the hiring of labour, and obligatory

registration of agreements remained in force. Persons registered at the Labour Exchange could not be engaged out of their turn; this applied to all professions and occupations.

However, one must admit that because of the enormous number of registered unemployed, the Labour Exchange found it difficult to satisfy the exact demands of the would-be employers.

Enterprises and institutions required carefully selected employees with a definite qualification. As the Labour Exchange had to observe the sequence on the register, it could not always give satisfaction to would-be employers, and it invariably happened that considerably fewer persons were engaged than were sent by the Labour Exchange. In view of this, exceptions were allowed for a number of professions and posts when, in accordance with specially published lists (such lists were published on several occasions) would-be employers could engage workers, registering them subsequently at the Labour Exchange.

While not satisfying would-be employers the Labour Exchange failed also to satisfy the unemployed. In view of the enormous number of people on the register of the Labour Exchanges, especially in big centres where unemployment was very severe (in Leningrad for instance, about 150,000 people were registered at the Labour Exchange before the reform, and almost as many in Moscow) there were thousands of people on the lists of every profession, and people had frequently to wait many months for their turn. In the meantime, the more enterprising among the unemployed could have found suitable employment if left to themselves.

But if the registers of the Labour Exchange were filled to overflowing, this was not only due to the growth of unemployment, but also to a number of other circumstances. On the one hand, the obligation to hire labour through the Exchange resulted in those who had already found work, who went from one place of employment to another, being obliged to go again through the Labour Exchange, thereby increasing the number of those on the register. On the other hand, the fact that unemployed received doles and also enjoyed other privileges (they live almost rent free, pay very little for communal services and are almost free from taxation), caused a great influx into the Labour Exchange of fictitious unemployed, people who registered not in order to get employment, but merely to benefit by the privileges of unemployed workers.

How large was the percentage of these so-called unemployed can be judged by the results of the re-registration and of investigations which were made almost everywhere. For instance, an investigation of all the cases of unemployment was carried out in Moscow in the autumn of 1924. As the result of this investigation 42,117 people were taken off the register of the Labour Exchange, namely 39.2 per cent. of the total number of unemployed.

It was discovered that among those who had registered as unemployed, there were people who kept two servants, were the owners of shops, and frequently whiled away the period of unemployment in Crimean sanatoria. The Labour Exchanges were full to overflowing, and moreover many of those on the register were utterly unqualified people.

According to the data given by Comrade Hindin in his pamphlet "From the Labour Exchange to the Employment Bureau," out of the total number of registered unemployed there were on July 1st, 1924, 26.2 per cent. who had never worked for wages, and 7.8 per cent. who had not done any work since January 1st, 1922, while 50 per cent. of the unskilled workers had never worked for wages.

In July, 1924, there were in Leningrad among the 146,000 unemployed over 90,000 women, most of them with no qualifications whatever. Out of the total number of unemployed 60,000 were unskilled workers mainly from the villages. To provide work for such an enormous number of people is, of course, extremely difficult, even if it could be done systematically, and the fact that all these unemployed were registered at the Labour Exchange did not actually help them and greatly impeded the activity of the Exchanges. That is why it was proposed in the summer of 1924 that the Labour Exchanges be re-organised and be converted into Employment Bureaux.

The Government monopoly in connection with the engagement of workers has been abolished. People may be engaged and can find work for themselves without having recourse to the Labour Exchange. The Labour Exchange itself becomes an ordinary Employment Bureau and registration there is voluntary. Unemployment doles and various privileges are henceforth not dependent on registration at the Labour Exchange, but are granted in accordance with the economic position of the unemployed person. Unemployment doles are paid at the proper insurance bureaux and their branches.

In order to prevent doles being paid to those who have already found work, the following method has been adopted in Leningrad : when a person is sent to work, or on the registration of that person on engagement without the assistance of the Employment Bureau, a note to this effect is made in the documents of the unemployed and, as the same documents are required at the insurance bureau and for the registration of the contract, no abuses can take place. Experience has shown that such a method is also very convenient for the unemployed, as they need now only go to the insurance bureau.

Registration of unemployed at the Employment Bureau is voluntary. Moreover, the Bureau does not register all unemployed, but only in accordance with the demand. Those who wish to be registered have to undergo an examination as to their qualifications. This enables the Employment Bureau to send only people for whom there is a demand. The Bureau does not give any certificates to the unemployed and is in no way responsible for them. The Bureau does not make any charges to the unemployed for its services. A small initial fee is taken from the employers of labour.

But the abolition of the monopoly in connection with the engagement of workers does not mean that private employment bureaux can be established. In accordance with the law, the People's Commissariat of Labour and its organs retain monopolist rights as intermediaries in connection with the engagement of workers. In the interests of proper control all contracts between employers and workers must be registered.

As to the control of unemployment throughout the country, trade union members have to register as before with their unions, which is found quite sufficient. But, of course, those who are not registered in the Employment Bureau cannot be properly controlled. But if one takes into consideration that there are not more than five to six per cent. out of the total number of manual and brain workers not registered in trade unions, one can see that only a very small number of people can escape control. Thus, statistics will not suffer much from this reform.

Such in general is the character of the reform.

Before dealing with the methods of its application and with its results, it is essential to ascertain what influence trade unions will have under the new conditions on the engagement of labour

power, and also to what extent the interests of the organised workers will be safeguarded.

Employers have the right to engage labour power to suit their requirements. But factory, workshop and local employee committees register the engagement of every newly engaged worker. Thus trade union control over the engagement of workers is even stronger than before. Moreover, special paragraphs are inserted into collective agreements making it incumbent on employers to give preference to trade union members, non-members being engaged only in the event of none of the trade union members being able to do the required work. At the same time the engagement of a non-union worker must have the sanction of the union. These measures are a sufficient guarantee that trade union members' interests are safe, and experience has already given proof of this.

Another safeguard is that trade unions take a direct part in the establishment of Employment Bureau and in the formation of these bureaux' committees. Although there are representatives of economic and State organs in these bureaux and committees, the predominance of trade union influence in them is thereby guaranteed.

Of course, the reform of the Labour Exchange does not solve the question of unemployment. But it certainly makes it easier to help the unemployed. And we see already that, after the reform, the number of unemployed sent to work is growing, and this in spite of the fact that those provided with temporary work are not taken into account. This reform is all the more important as it has given an opportunity to ascertain the exact extent of unemployment, which turned out to be considerably less than the number of registered unemployed gave one reason to assume. At the same time it has made it much easier to give the unemployed effective help.

I. RESSNIKOV.

# Links with October\*

(Continued from Last Issue)

## 3. *THERE ARE MANY OF THEM.*—Continued.

"What for? The Whites are approaching, and you are in danger."

"Comrade Chashkin, I can do anything! I can work a machine gun, I have been a nurse and a scout."

If it hadn't been so dark, Comrade Chashkin would have seen tightly compressed lips and determined eyes, cold like an autumn sky. Such people do not lose their heads in the midst of danger, and are not afraid of death. But it is night now, and Chashkin hears only the entreating voice of the woman and the heavy firing of the batteries.

"But where shall I put you," he says in a worried voice.

He was sorry for this small, unknown grain of sand which the storm was driving before it.

"Hello there," Chashkin called into the darkness, "Comrade Zakarov!"

"I am here," was the answer.

"Examine this comrade and let her mind the machine gun together with Lebedev. . . Well . . . ?"

"Yes, my commander . . ."

At midnight the enemies' guns made themselves heard unexpectedly in the vicinity of the bridge across the Olkhovka, and soon the scouts of the enemy appeared from behind the dark fir trees.

"Good lord, the cadets! Damn it, the cadets have broken through!" There was excitement in the trenches.

"Are there many of them?" And the answer was "I believe so."

Commander Chashkin was here, there and everywhere, and did his utmost to inspire everyone with the energy and bravery that was peculiar to him.

"Comrades, we must defend the Olkhovka Bridge even if we have to die in the attempt!"

And over there the shots were coming thick and fast, and it was just like hell.

The Red Army men saw before them visions of large enemy forces, of infernal machines, and it was in vain that Chashkin

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\*"Links with October" is suitable for reading aloud and for dramatic sketches.

ordered, commanded and implored. Fear had taken possession of the men, there were no more serried ranks, one more minute and the terrible thing will happen: the whites will succeed in their attempt and will outflank the Red Army.

All of a sudden there was a rattling sound in front of the detachment. It was repeated again and again—the machine gun had begun its work.

“Follow me, comrades. Let us drive the enemy away!” The voice of the white apparition was only heard by the front rank. Ten or so of the bravest followed her and crossed the bridge, but the rest of the detachment remained on the other side of the river.

The White spotted the machine gunners and drove them, with their fierce fire, into the river. Here standing up to her waist in the icy water, the white apparition was firing on the enemy.

She was shouting encouraging words to her comrades:

“We are better off in the river under the bridge, which is a kind of a shelter!”

The Red Army detachment responded to the sounds of the machine gun with a fighting song.

Someone in front shouted:

“It’s a woman who is firing on the enemy!”

“Comrades, are we going to be outdone by a woman?”

This irregular firing was gradually replaced by a steady fire against the Whites. The latter was still continuing their attack, but the well-directed machine gun fire was interfering with their forward march. Soon all signs of fear had disappeared, and the Red Army detachment began to press fiercely against the enemy, the White ranks began to waver and to retreat.

When the firing had ceased it was already early morning. A drizzling rain poured from the grey sky. The wind was whistling through the damp fields and wooden spaces.

Commander Chashkin ran to the white apparition to congratulate her, but was met by a Red Army man who was blue with cold, and whose lips and whole body were trembling.

“Comrade, commander, our machine gunner, that is to say, our butterfly, wishes you a long life! They killed her with their shrapnel—the hounds!”

#### 4. HOW THE FACTORY WAS SAVED.

While the Butterfly was laying down her life in the fight with the Whites on the distant steppe front, Martroisha Kazanina was doing her bit in the rear.

The cloth factory where Kazanina was employed was in a state of decay. And this was a big factory on which the front depended. The army wanted cloth for soldiers' coats, but the factory was in such a bad state that it had almost come to a standstill.

"They stole it from us," said the former owners viciously, "Let them show what they can do."

"It cannot be tolerated that workers should not be capable of conducting a factory," said Kazanina defiantly when she gave herself up to work which she had never done before.

She was on her feet from morning till night. The manager of the factory, Runin, who had been the former owner, was seemingly doing his utmost to keep the factory going, but it was all to no avail.

At the meeting of responsible workers, Runin pulled a long face and said somewhat mysteriously :

"I really do not know what to do. I have no more strength left ; would you like to relieve me of my responsibilities?"

This statement was met with exclamations from all sides.

"Tell us what is the matter, for we cannot spare such valuable workers as you."

Runin settled himself comfortably in his chair and said deprecatingly :

"For God's sake, comrades, do not press me, do not compel me to speak up . . . It is awfully unpleasant!"

"No, no, you must tell us!"

The manager gave in, and with a voice which seemed to come from a distance he said :

"The workers are quite out of hand! They steal the raw material and carry off parts of the machinery . . . and one cannot say a word to them!"

He put his hands to his head and almost groaned.

This gave Kazanina her opportunity.

"Comrades, it cannot be true that our workers have become thieves. I worked with them many years, and never noticed anything of the kind."

Runin was offended.

"There you are . . . you do not even believe me. No, I positively refuse to go on with the work."

"You must not do that," Matroisha intervened. "I do believe you, perhaps this is all a mistake."

After long persuasion, Runin consented to stay.

From that time, Matroisha kept her eyes on the workers, and in spite of her watchfulness, she could not catch them doing anything wrong.

One day she met Runin in the passage. He seemed sad and hung his head.

"Has there been again some unpleasantness," Matroisha asked.

Runin nodded politely in the affirmative, and his voice sounded like broken string when he said sadly :

"What is the use of all my efforts . . . Everything was in vain, and the factory is going to be closed down."

"How is that?" and Matroisha sprang at him like a tigress.

"Nothing can be done in the matter, for we have no raw material," said Runin with a despairing gesture.

"But why did you not speak up sooner, before it was all used up?"

Runin shook his head as if in despair, and went on his way.

From this day Kazanina knew no rest. She was away for three whole days, knocking at the doors of the Soviet of National Economy, of various Supreme organs, as well as of other factories. At last she came to Runin looking done up and haggard, but with a joyous smile on her dry lips.

"Comrade, manager," she said already on the threshold, "we have raw material and plenty of it!"

He started, grew red in the face and shouted angrily :

"It is too late, too late! We are liquidating the factory."

At first Matroisha was taken aback, but she soon recovered and said, her eyes burning with indignation :

"Is that your game? Are we your playthings? Cloth is needed for the army, and you want to close the factory . . . We will not let you do it!"

At this Runin could not contain himself any longer, and shouted : "What business of yours is this? Do not interfere where you are not wanted! I am manager here, and not the workers."

This was all he said.

Matroisha was dumbfounded, and a terrible suspicion rose up in her mind.

Without a word to Runin, she ran to the Party Committee and demanded to see the secretary.

"Comrade Siregin," she said, "do not close down the factory! This man, Runin, is deceiving you."

"You must give us proofs of this, comrade. Runin has

shown himself as an honest expert . . . You must give us facts to go upon."

"I cannot produce any facts as yet, but give me time and I will do so, if you will hold up the liquidation."

Her emotion was so great, that the secretary of the Party Committee began to waver.

"All right," he said. "I will give you three days."

When Matriosha returned to the factory she went straight to the workers.

"Comrades, you must all come to the meeting!" The manager heard it and said :

"A meeting? Well, well, why not?"

Matroisha drew herself up and said :

"This meeting is only for the workers, and you cannot be present."

Runin looked daggers at Kazanina and went away.

Matroisha told the workers the whole truth. She told them about her fight with Runin, about the hasty decision to close the factory, and about her suspicions of the manager.

"What shall we do?" the workers asked.

Then a broad-shouldered grey-bearded working man, whom everyone called "diadia" (uncle) Gregory, said : "You are right, Kazanina, I have proof that Runin is a scoundrel!"

"But why did you not speak up before?" asked Matroisha angrily. "But never mind, better late than never. Tell us what you know."

"First of all," said Diadia Gregory, "Runin has as little respect for us workers as for a dead cat. His only thought is to get back the factory, and that is why he is ruining it, in order to show that it cannot be worked at a profit. That is one thing, and another is that he sells the raw material of the factory to private traders, and puts the money into his own pocket!"

At this there was tumult among the workers, who shouted :

"Damnation on this son of a dog, who dared to put the whole blame on us," and dozens of fists were raised threateningly.

"If there is any more, tell us everything you know," implored Matroisha.

"There is nothing more to say, the whole thing is as clear as daylight, and the thing for us to do is to search his premises."

"You are right, that is what we must do."

Two working men, together with Matroisha went to the Tcheka (Intelligence Department). They did not have to waste many words, for the Tcheka had been keeping an eye on Runin.

When police agents wanted to search his apartment, he played the offended, and refused to let them come in.

"How dare you," he said. "I am a trusted servant of the State, and you have no right to enter here!"

The search was made, nevertheless.

In the large cellars under the house, machine parts were found in large quantities, and in his writing desk there were plans and sketches of the factory. Here was also a note laying down the reasons for the absolute necessity to hand over the factory into private hands.

Rudin was arrested, and Matroisha Kazanina was elected manager of the factory by the unanimous vote of the workers.

"You have saved the factory," they said, "and you shall be its manager."

"With you, my fellow workers?"

"Yes, with us."

"Well, be it so . . . If all of you are with me, I will venture it!"

And she began work in good earnest.

And it was hard work indeed, but everyone listened to her, and each tried to outdo the other.

Raw material was procured. The rusty machine parts were polished and the machinery was get going. The workers carried fuel to the factory on their own backs.

And since then the factory worked to its utmost capacity, and after a little while become again the foremost factory of the whole region.

The Young Communist Leaguer, Grusha, composed even a piece of poetry on this occasion, and although it was not up to much, the workers liked it. Here it is :

The manufacturer is raging,  
That we should work for ourselves.  
But we will raise production,  
And then we'll live quite royally. . .

# Party Documents

(Presented to the Open Session of Executive Committee at Birmingham, Saturday, 10th January.)

## **THE IMMEDIATE POLITICAL TASKS FOR THE CREATION OF A MASS COMMUNIST PARTY.**

A mass Communist Party can only be created by the closest participation of the Communist Party in the everyday struggles of the working class.

This participation in the struggles of the working class must not be taken to mean that the party waits until a struggle has actually developed and then takes part in the struggle alongside the workers involved. The party must give the working class a lead by anticipating the development of events and laying before the workers the correct methods of struggle.

At the moment events are moving towards a heavy struggle in the industrial field, both employers and workers moving forward together. The party must intensify its campaign to secure the unity of the working class in the industrial struggles which are pending. It must also endeavour to force the parliamentary Labour Party to struggle for the workers' demands in Parliament in strict co-ordination with the workers' struggling outside.

The Party campaign for the All-in Conference must, therefore, be intensified with a view to not only securing the unity of the workers, but also with a view to developing the influence and membership of the Party.

The intensification of the industrial struggle demands at the same time that the party energetically support the Minority Movement in its Trade Union Congress, International Unity, Colonial and other campaigns, endeavouring to build up that organisation both in affiliations and individual membership. The Communist Party declares that it hopes through the association of its members with the left-wing trade unionists organised on the basis of the Minority Movement to win them over to an appreciation of the necessity of a revolutionary Communist Party and the need for them becoming members of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party must also enter into relations with all genuine left-wing elements who are growing up in the Labour Party with a view to uniting them around a concrete programme. Realising that a left-wing in the Labour Party must have a programme which deals with all the concrete questions before the working class puts the Minority Movement before all left-wingers as a basis for discussion.

At the same time the Communist Party places before all left-wing elements the proposition that a real left-wing in the unions, the Labour Party, or both, must not confine itself to paper programmes which may appear to be more left than those of the present leaders, but must also differentiate itself from the right by its actions in the everyday struggle of the workers both inside and outside Parliament. Otherwise "left" phrases may be a screen for "right" deeds.

The Communist Party declares that any so-called left movement against reformism in the Labour Party and the Unions which refuses on principle to associate with the Communist Party on a basis to be mutually agreed upon, has already capitulated to reformism. All left-wing movements will be strengthened by the presence within them of members of the Communist Party.

At the same time no left-wing movement in the Union or the Labour Party can be accepted as a substitute for the Communist Party.

While co-operating with left-wing elements which are prepared to fight on the basis of the class struggle against the MacDonald policy, the Communist Party declares that it is opposed to the fatalist idea prevalent in left-wing circles that objective conditions alone will force the unity of the workers, that theoretical differences to-day will be solved by the actual crisis and that a revolutionary Communist Party is unnecessary. Without a revolutionary Communist Party giving the lead to the workers in the struggle, permeating them with a revolutionary consciousness, the Labour movement will not be able to rise above the level of reformism.

The immediate political tasks in the building up of a mass party are :

(1) The stimulation of a spirit of struggle in the working class as opposed to the belief in class co-operation and parliamentarianism.

(2) The carrying out of an intensive campaign for the unity of the workers' forces, politically and industrially, on the basis of the Party Council resolution for the All-in Conference.

(3) To work with all left-wing movements in the trade unions and the Labour Party, to endeavour to secure their unity on the basis of a left-wing programme and left-wing activity, and by retaining the liberty of criticism with regard to their general outlook, thereby endeavouring to win them to the Communist Party.

(4) To relentlessly oppose the idea that it is possible to overthrow the capitalist class and establish a real workers' government without the existence of a revolutionary Communist Party having, by the quality of its leadership and its fidelity to the workers in their daily struggles, secured the leadership of the Labour Movement in its struggles against capitalism.

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## TOWARDS A MASS PARTY.

Thesis of the Organising Bureau.

1. The problem of creating a real Communist mass party involves practically all the aspects of the policy of the Party. The problem is just equally political and organisational. Still we believe there are certain organisational measures which must be considered as preliminaries to the campaign for widening the basis of our Party.

2. The membership of our Party, small as it is, is divided into many locals spread all over the country; and it is quite obvious that not all the members of the Party take an active part in carrying through our policy.

Our first policy, even before approaching the question of creating a mass party, is to make all the members of the Party active and working in harmony with us. We must enlist the active participation of all the members collectively and of every member individually. The division of work between the members is only a part of the general problem of how to adapt the machinery of the local organisation to the requirements of the movement. Our locals are not sufficiently well knitted together. *The most important problem is to improve the Local Party organisations and transform them into harmoniously working bodies.*

Whilst continuing all our activities, and especially our recruiting work, we must pay special attention to the improvement of the existing local party organisations.

3. The local party organisations should be considered only as a temporary form of organisation. The I.L.P., which is practically only an election machine, concentrates its energies in the constituencies. The elector. booth is its greatest

ambition. The constituency becomes naturally its battlefield. It is quite different with the Communist Party. The chief road towards becoming a mass party for us lies through the factory, the workshop, the mill, the mine, and so on. The formation of factory groups thus becomes an urgent necessity. Those members of the Party who are sufficiently well grouped in different factories must form factory groups at once. Other members, as well as the local organisations, must work to prepare the conditions which are necessary to re-organise the whole Party upon the basis of factory groups. The eyes of all Communists should be directed to the factory, and to the factory gate, having in mind that the main problem of the Communist Party is to organise the workers for a victorious class struggle.

*The establishment of factory groups is the second task of the Party on the road to becoming a real mass organisation.*

4. Segregation from the masses spells disaster to our Party, whatever our organisational form may temporarily be. Small as we are, we can be strong and influential if the local organisations establish and maintain permanent contact with the rank and file. We can continue to discuss the best ways and means of gathering our sympathisers under our banner. Nothing, however, should prevent us from maintaining constant contact with our sympathisers, and through them with the mass of the workers at large. We must invite our sympathisers to our aggregate meetings as often as possible. Special meetings of sympathisers, together with our members, should be arranged. All ways and means which will help to link us up with the masses must be tried.

*The third practical problem on the road to a mass party, therefore, is to work with the masses; among the masses, participating in all activities which are of interest to the masses.*

5. The next Communist Party Congress will need obviously to pay a great deal of attention to the general problem of enlarging the basis of our Party. It is the easiest thing in the world to prepare schemes and plans to that effect. Unfortunately, however, the easiest way is not always the best way. A few practical endeavours initiated by the local party organisations, in order to bring together our sympathisers and to make them active supporters of the Party, are likely to be of more value than a hundred good plans. The best plan will never be found by the way of theoretical reasoning. Practical experience is the thing that tells. The Party needs practical experiments which will result in certain achievements. If the Party Congress is able to compare different ways and methods of widening our basis that have already been tried, it will be in a much better position to take the right decision.

*Work in the direction of uniting and organising our honest Left-wing supporters is the fourth important step on the road towards a Mass Party.*

6. All the four steps above mentioned apply both to the local party organisations and to all our members. There is a fifth practical step which concerns principally the district party headquarters. We refer to the task of organising new locals. We have only to compare the number of our party locals with the number of local branches of the I.L.P. to come to the conclusion that we have not sufficient local organisations to cover the whole ground. Whilst working to strengthen the existing organisations, to increase their membership, to re-organise them on the basis of factory groups, and to bring the whole Party in direct contact with the masses, we must see that in all those places where members of the party or sympathisers are available, new local party organisations are created. The last election showed that there were several places where labour organisations were prepared to nominate a Communist Party candidate, but the Party was unable to undertake such candidatures, because there was no local party organisation in the particular constituency (Halifax, etc.).

*The organisation of new locals is the fifth step to be undertaken to prepare the necessary conditions for the creation of a Mass Party.*

## **THE PARLIAMENTARY STRUGGLE.**

The first session of the new Parliament has clearly revealed not only the reactionary character of the Government, but the fact that the Labour Party opposition is a sham opposition. The strategy of the capitalist class against the Labour movement has proved successful, as evidenced in the tragic policy of the Labour Government in carrying out the will of the capitalists. It has fettered the Labour Party in opposition and made it incapable of offering real resistance to the measures of the Tory Government.

Comrade Saklatvala, the one Communist within the Parliament, is now, therefore, the only spokesman of the workers unfettered by the imperialist pledges of the Labour Party in office; the only spokesman who can voice the aspirations of the workers. We, therefore, call upon the workers to support every effort that our comrade Saklatvala makes as an integral part of their struggles outside Parliament, in which our Party fights and will continue to fight until the workers become the victorious rulers of the country.

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## **THE PRISONERS OF CAPITALISM AND IMPERIALISM.**

This open E.C. meeting of the Communist Party of Great Britain protests against the capitalist persecution now raging against the active members of the working class in the British Colonies, India and Egypt, and in other capitalist countries, such as Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, Rumania, Hungary and Esthonia.

Especially do we protest against the murderous outrages now taking place against the workers of Esthonia, whose ruling class are to-day the mere pawns of British capitalism and Imperialism.

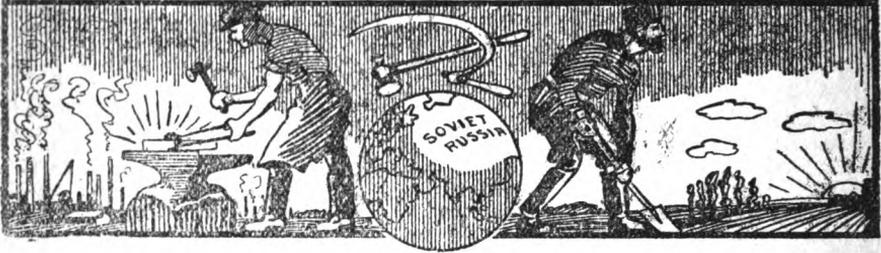
We call for the workers of Great Britain to show their protest in meetings and demonstrations, and demand the release of all those workers now incarcerated in the above-mentioned countries because of their working class activity.

We warn the British workers that with the intensification of the class struggle in this country similar methods of repression will be used against them, and we therefore urge the fullest support to the British section of the International Class War Prisoners' Aid which has been established in this country to; at present, collect and disseminate information concerning the White Terror and to raise funds for the aid of prisoners and their dependents.

We declare a National Campaign under the auspices of the Party to commence on February 8th, against British Imperialism and the repression of the workers in the Colonies and other parts of the world.

We proclaim our international working class solidarity and declare that the wholesale persecution against the working class, and the sufferings that are being undergone by the tens of thousands of class war prisoners to-day, will only serve to strengthen and intensify our struggles for the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of world Communism.

# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



## THE SITUATION IN GERMANY

(From our Correspondent.)

The Dawes Plan is in operation a few months only, but already we can clearly see the tendencies of the future economic development in Germany. With the acceptance of the Plan a tremendous amount of Anglo-American capital was poured into Germany. It is estimated, that over one hundred million pounds—besides the loan of forty million pounds—has been given in form of loans to various industrial concerns and municipalities at exorbitant rates of interest. One example may suffice: the municipality of Dresden received a loan of fifteen million dollars; more than five millions of which never left the hands of the bankers. *Within ten years the city will have to pay back an interest and redemption not less than twenty-seven million dollars, and that for less than ten millions received.*

The influx of foreign capital has had, nevertheless, the result of staving off, for a time at least, the breakdown of the economic fabric of German capitalism, since the payments for the first three years are considerably less than one-half of the full obligations undertaken under the Dawes Plan.

The credits obtained abroad by the big industrialists, as well as the enormous gifts they received from the German Government (of which the thirty-five million pounds given to the Ruhr magnates without sanction of Parliament is only one, although the largest amount) have had the effect of temporarily reviving certain industries, e.g., mining and heavy metal industry.

The Ruhr magnates have used the period of passive resistance to increase the productive capacity of the coalfields, and by forcing the eight-hour shift upon the underground workers they are now in a position to compete more successfully on the foreign markets.

We see a rise of the export in anthracite coal from 126,203 tons in July, to 339,370 tons in October, and 637,795 tons in November, 1924. At the same time the number of employed miners in the Ruhr district alone has sunk from 530,909 in 1922 to 453,595 in 1924.

Even this temporary stabilisation in some of the industries has been attained entirely at the cost of the workers. The Association of the Mineowners in its coloured reports has to admit, that the real wage of the miners in August, 1924 was only 83 per cent. of 1913. The truth is, that the real wage amounts to about 65 per cent.

Conditions in the metal industry are not different. According to the statistics of the I.F.T.U. the weekly wage of a metal worker in Berlin was 44.44 marks in 1914; in November, 1924, the average wage in thirteen big cities dropped for skilled workers to 30.72 marks (in Berlin to 31.01 marks), for unskilled to 22.56 marks per week. Compared with July, 1914, this amounts to a real wage of 57 per cent. The conditions in other industries are worse still.

There is no decrease in unemployment. At the end of December,

1924, there were 529,000 unemployed on the register, who received a weekly dole from 4.32 to 12 marks. Roughly only one-third of the total number of unemployed—which is between 1.5 to 1.8 millions, with more than the equal number of dependents—gets this miserable benefit. Besides this, there are an equal number of workers on short time.

The organ of the Ruhr magnates *Deutsche Bergwerkszeitung*, admits that "the extended unemployment seems to have become with us a permanent condition, as it was formerly, only in Great Britain." And another organ of heavy industry *Industrie und Handelszeitung* admits "the workers cannot exist for any length of time on the present wages." (20/1/25.)

That Germany is approaching another great crisis of the first magnitude is best shown by the rapidly increasing adverse trade balance. The rapidity of this development can be judged by the following figures indicating (in round figures) the excess of imports over exports in million pounds:

September, 2.9; October, 10.2;  
November, 20.0; December, 28.5;  
January, 1925, 33.7.

For capitalist Germany, with few investments abroad, with no colonies and dependent for food and raw materials upon other powers, such an adverse trade balance has quite a different significance, as for instance, in Great Britain. As a matter of fact, the hole is being filled up with foreign credits. The latter cannot pour into Germany for ever. Whenever these credits are stopped, or their ratio slows up, a great economic crisis is bound to follow. It is the realisation of this fact, which has already increased the reluctance of the bankers of the City of London and New York to give further long term loans.

#### THE POLITICAL CRISIS.

These economic conditions are the background and in many cases give the explanation to the long drawn-out political crisis in Germany. Heavy industry and large landed interests try to save themselves through the establishment of high tariff walls. But this again has the effect of other industrial countries following

the same line. The inflation of the currency was one of the means to save the big industrialists at the cost of the working class, and by the ruthless expropriation of a numerically strong middle class. This, however, at the same time has reduced the absorbing capacity of the home market for manufactured goods.

The ruling class knows very well that in spite of its victory over the workers in 1923 it will soon be faced again with great struggles. There can be no doubt whatever, that the bourgeoisie is preparing to wage the war against the workers in an even more ruthless manner than hitherto. Having used social-democracy to the utmost the big industrialists are determined to get rid of the influence of the petty bourgeois party in the Government of the Reich, and the largest federal states.

The present presidential elections show plainly, that, of all the bourgeois parties, the Right, under the leadership of the People's Party, is the most consolidated. What remains of the bourgeois "Left" is tending more and more towards the Right, while Social-Democratic Party—having never played an independent role—will continue to serve its masters. This is plainly show by the attitude of the trade union leaders and the Social-Democratic Party towards the movement of the workers for higher wages and shorter hours, which they continue to sabotage with all the means at their disposal.

The Social-Democratic Party of Germany, although still one of the largest parties, has already decided, to switch the vote of its adherents on the second ballot for the presidential elections to one of the other "republican" candidates, presumably Dr. Marx. The putting up of a candidate of their own for the first ballot is but a concession to the sentiments of the membership.

The German bourgeoisie will make frantic efforts to overcome the innumerable difficulties. In this connection it is of the utmost importance to watch the efforts of the British ruling class to form an alliance between the main European powers. According to the press, the German Government has taken the initiative in the proposal for such an alliance. Of course it is ridicu-

lous to speak of the German Government having taken the initiative. As a matter of fact, the name of Lord d'Abernon is freely mentioned by the *Westminster Gazette* as the negotiator for Chamberlain. The policy of the British Government is to play out Germany and Italy against France on the European continent and in the Mediterranean. For Britain it is simply a question of getting a pact combining the greatest possible security to herself with the minimum of obligations. Besides this, we can be sure, that all efforts will be made to drag Germany into an Anti-Soviet Alliance.

There is little doubt, that the "National" Government in Germany, which recognises the Versailles Treaty, is very eager to serve as a tool of British Imperialism when it can get a few concessions thereby.

The Social-Democrats of Germany support that policy by praising the Government for its "initiative" and by conducting the most violent anti-Bolshevist propaganda. But the "outlet" towards the East, which some of the German capitalists hope to receive as the price of a war against Soviet Russia will remain a dream.

The greater the pressure in Germany, the greater will become the efforts of the ruling class to plunge into a new war. But on the one hand there is the increasing antagonism between the European powers, which Mr. Chamberlain will not be able to overcome, but which he will increase. On the other hand for the first time in the history of the working class movement there exists a revolutionary leadership, powerful

Communist Parties, ready to seize every opportunity to terminate such a crisis by the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Under these conditions it is of the utmost importance that the German working class regains its fighting strength as quickly as possible. The extent to which our Party is able to lead the workers in the economic and political struggles of the day, will determine the speed of the revolutionary development in Germany.

The British working class is confronted with the attempt of its own bourgeoisie to reduce wages in Britain to the level of those in Germany. This is the direct outcome of the introduction of the Dawes Plan. On the one hand British capitalists are screaming about the competition of German industries, on the other hand, the British military authorities in the occupied territory use *by order of the home government* all the power, in order to crush the attempts of the German workmen to raise their standard of life. This was again shown during the dispute of the railwaymen in March, when the British authorities prohibited every strike, and used force to break the resistance of the workers.

The British working class movement must protest against such acts of the Baldwin Government. The interests of the British workers are now linked up with those of the workers of the continent closer than ever. We must combine our forces under one powerful Trade Union International in order to co-ordinate our struggles in the different countries.

## PARTY CRISIS IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

A serious conflict has been going on during the last months in the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia, and has only just been satisfactorily wound up.

*The development of the crisis.* The C.P.C. is one of the numerically strongest sections of the Comintern, having more than 100,000 members in a country of only 17 million inhabitants. The Party, and especially its old leaders have very strong Social-Democratic traditions and in consequence have always been very inac-

tive. There was a strong tendency within the leadership to form a government with a section of the bourgeoisie agrarian party on a parliamentary basis in the year 1923.

There was also considerable opposition against the policy of the Comintern towards the National Minorities within Czecho-Slovakia.

The Second Party Congress, held last year, brought a certain change; a new Central Committee was elected, which gave a majority to the Left; the old Party leaders around Smeral,

with the exception of Kreibich, were also elected.

The Minority accepted the decisions of the Congress on the Fifth World Congress, but have never ceased to put obstacles in the organisational and political development of the Party.

*The outbreak of the crisis.* The real state of the C.P. was revealed when the Central Committee decided on a great campaign against the high cost of living. On February 10th, the Central Committee called upon the Prague workers to organise a demonstration against the police, which had broken up a previous demonstration of the workers. In the midst of this campaign, Bubnik, Secretary of the Prague Committee of the Party, and a member of Parliament, sabotaged the decision and openly took a stand against the demonstrations and organised a campaign against the policy laid down at the last Party Congress. He further attempted to organise a split. He tried to influence Hais, who is president of the Red Unions, as well as members of Parliament and a number of Party districts to back such a venture. The political Bureau thereupon expelled him from the Party.

Bubnik succeeded in seizing, with the help of the police, the daily paper *Rovnost*, after a meeting of the Enlarged District Committee of Bruenn, where a resolution containing the views of Bubnik was accepted with the following vote: for 21, against 17, and 3 abstentions. Bubnik and his friends refused to call a meeting of the Party functionaries.

Part of the Czech organisations, and all the Party organisations in Slovakia, Carpatho-Russia and the German section of Czecho-Slovakia approved the decision of the Political Bureau. The Party organisations of Bruenn, Kladno, a part of Prague and or two other districts adopted resolutions hostile to the political bureau and making personal attacks upon members of the Central Committee. Seidler, Horne and Vorcek, members of the C.C. temporarily gave up their functions, demanding investigation of the charges made against them.

It is noteworthy, that the whole of the Government press welcomed the

action of Bubnik, calling him a Czech patriot in revolt against the "German-Magyar" leadership of the party, and against the Moscow dictatorship.

The Presidium of the Communist International in a telegram sent to the C.C. approved the expulsion of Bubnik.

*The attitude of the Smeral group.* There is no doubt whatever, that this crisis could have been liquidated very easily, if it would not have been for the attitude, taken up by the Smeral group. Not only did Kreibich write an article against the expulsion of Bubnik, but in a meeting on February 25, of Party functionaries at Bruenn, the members of the C.C. Smeral and Zapotocky, assisted by Hais, Muna, Taussik and others brought in a resolution against the one put forward by the Polit-Bureau. After a short discussion closure was moved, and carried by the adherents of Smeral. His resolution also was carried. The representative of the Comintern demanded that a declaration be read *before* the vote was taken; this, however, was refused.

Smeral's resolution can be summed up as follows:

1. It says not a word, that the expulsion of Bubnik is right;
2. It states openly that the present C.C. should be removed, as its composition was not in line with the "inner views" of the delegates of the last Party congress;
3. It states, that the Polit-Bureau and not Bubnik hampered the action against the high cost of living.
4. The resolution demands the calling of a meeting of the National Council at once, i.e., before the Enlarged Executive Meeting.

It must be understood, that the National Council consists in one-half of elected delegates, and to the other half, of the secretaries and editors of the Party. Smeral hoped to get a majority in that body and thereby to bring the Party as a whole against the Comintern. Against this the Central Committee put forth the proposal of an extraordinary Party Congress to be held after the meeting of the Enlarged Executive.

*The Winding-Up of the Crisis.* On February 28th an Extended Session of

the Central Committee was held, with participation of delegates from the E.C.C.I. The report on the political situation was made by Haken, chairman of the Central Committee. The representatives of the E.C.C.I. characterised the crisis as a struggle of the opportunist elements following Bubnik against the Bolshevisation of the Party, and stressed the necessity of unconditionally supporting the Central Committee of the Party.

The minority representatives declared that they had no idea of splitting the Party. After the report of the Control Commission, and discussion, the vote was taken by roll-call late at night. The resolution proposed by the Political Bureau received 18 votes. The resolution of the minority proposed by Smeral and Zapotosky, received 11 votes. Immediately after the vote, Zapotosky, on behalf of the minority, declared that they accepted the decision, but insisted on the publication of the minority resolution which had been defeated.

The resolution adopted emphasises that the Party leadership of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia had, in the course of a few months, developed extensive activity in the organisation and leadership of the workers in the struggle against the government's economic policy. Thanks to this. Communist influence over the Social-Democratic and Nationalist workers had increased. On February 10th, the Party won a big victory when, at its call, the working masses flooded the streets. From that moment, the opportunist elements supporting Bubnik felt themselves out of place in the Communist Party. Bubnik sabotaged the action of the Party after February 10th, and had prepared a split even earlier. Immediately after establishing the fact of Bubnik's treachery, the political bureau was bound to draw the logical conclusion and prevent Bubnik from continuing a moment longer his activity against the C.P.

The resolution describes the expulsion of Bubnik and the declaration of the Brn District Committee as facts without great importance. The chief source of the crisis, it says, is the opposition of some members of the Central Committee. The resolution rejects the minority proposal for the summoning of a national conference

before a discussion of the question at issue between a delegation of Party workers and the Communist International, as the highest instance.

The resolution declares that the Party approves the policy of the Central Committee, and must strengthen its unity for further struggle to win the majority of the workers. The expulsion of Bubnik is confirmed. It places on record that the right-wing elements have used the expulsion of Bubnik as a pretext for a fractional struggle against the Party leadership and the Communist International. The delegation to the Extended Executive in Moscow must be supplemented by representatives of the workers of Kladno, Brn and Prague, in order finally to liquidate the Party dispute. The resolution further notes that the minority insisted on the holding of a conference, in spite of the fact that this would only strengthen differences and increase the danger of a split in the Party. Immediately after the session of the Extended Executive of the Comintern, an extraordinary Party Congress must be held. Two Czech workers are added to the Political Bureau, and the editorial board of *Rude Pravo* is supplemented likewise. The discussion in the press is closed. All members of the Party are instructed to defend the unity of the Party, and its loyalty to the Comintern, against the attacks of the bourgeoisie.

The session then decided to appoint a commission of enquiry, consisting mostly of workers, which, together with representatives of the E.C.C.I. will investigate all the charges made against individual members of the Central Committee.

On March 1, *Rude Pravo* wrote: "The bourgeoisie and the government will soon convince themselves that the Party is once again united. A demonstration is being organised, in the near future, in which the Party will prove its strength and unity, and readiness for struggle with the bourgeoisie."

On March 2, Bubnik and another deputy, Warnbrunn, who resigned from the Party, informed the Presidium of the Chamber of Deputies that they had constituted themselves as an "independent Communist Group," under the leadership of Bubnik.