

The COMMUNIST REVIEW

EDITOR :: WM. PAUL

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Review of the Month

Our Birthday

WITH this number of the *Communist Review* we pass into our second year. When our first issue appeared, last May, we promised our readers to produce a monthly journal that would devote its pages to a candid examination and a fearless defence of the most important pronouncements issued by the international working class movement. No sooner had the *Review* made its appearance than an unsuccessful attempt was made by the Government to suppress it. For a Communist publication, carrying on its work in a capitalist State, suppression is the highest form of flattery. We refused to permit the hostile activities of the Government, which were directed against the *Review*, to intimidate us. At a time when the Party was fighting in the courts to defend its right to publish the documents of the Communist International, the *Review* printed the most important theses issued by the third Congress at Moscow. At a time when worshippers of democracy, like Messrs. Snowden and MacDonald, were bravely protesting, in conjunction with the *Morning Post*, against the proletarian dictatorship of Soviet Russia, they cowardly and silently stood aside while their party printing works, the National Labour Press, working hand in hand with the Government, attempted to sabotage both the *Communist* and the *Review* by refusing to print these journals, which had, up till then, been printed at their establishment. These difficulties did not prevent the *Review* from going forward. Month after month, during the past year, our circulation swept forward until the *Review* became the most widely read monthly organ of working class political thought in this country.

We take this opportunity to thank the many comrades and friends who have assisted the *Review*. Some of them gave money and helped to enable us to produce some very important numbers; the call of the struggle against the Russian famine; the cruel victimisation of our active members, who are always the first to

suffer during periods of unemployment and industrial strife, has prevented us from getting much financial assistance recently. Despite this serious drawback we intend to carry on. We want particularly to thank those who so splendidly worked for the *Review* by sending in articles and by offering to do translations. Last year we had to depend upon one or two comrades to do translations; this year we have over twenty highly qualified linguists working for the *Review*. In every town in the country there are groups of comrades who have willingly undertaken the hard and difficult task of pushing forward the circulation. Many of these ardent workers are neither speakers nor writers for the movement, but inasmuch as they assist in circulating the written word their work is of insuperable importance and of undying value. The *Communist Review* has only attained its present importance and influence because it has behind it the ungrudging and loyal devotion of a band of the most enthusiastic and voluntary workers that ever came together to help a journal of the Labour movement.

The United Front

WHEN the three Internationals met at Berlin last month to discuss the need for a United Front of the working class against the attack of capitalism, it was an important occasion for the whole Labour movement. It demonstrated to the whole world that the Communist International is no sectarian band of infantile theoreticians. The second International had proclaimed to the world-wide masses that the Communists had broken the front of Labour, and were sowing dissension among the Socialist parties and were only noisy disruptionists. The reply of the Communist International to this was to test the sincerity of the Second International by demanding that an immediate and united struggle by all sections on behalf of the proletariat should be organised. As our report of the Berlin Conference shows, the Second International did not desire unity as a preliminary to organising an offensive on behalf of the masses; it wanted to turn the Conference into a discussion upon things that did not immediately concern the workers who are now retreating before the successful onslaughts of capital. The studied insolence of Vandervelde and the eloquent malice of MacDonald were the attempts of the Second International to wreck the Conference and to intensify disunity. The stinging, epigrammatic reply of Radek to Vandervelde and MacDonald is an object lesson to many of us, insofar as it demonstrated how Communists can slash the reformers while forcing them to line up in the struggle of the masses.

Radek's reply was a vindication of the attitude taken up by the *Communist Review*. Some critics of the United Front and of Labour Party affiliation ask if it is consistent for the *Communist Review* to advocate unity of action while attacking Henderson, MacDonald, etc. What seems to confuse such critics is the simple fact that *unity in action* to help in the immediate struggles of the masses against Capitalism is not the same thing as a *unity of organisations* wherein all are dissolved into one group. There is nothing inconsistent in that splendid industrialist organ, *The Worker*, using its far-reaching influence to rally the engineers in

order to bring victory to the A.E.U., while at the same time exposing the chicaneries of leaders like Brownlie and showing the limitations of the A.E.U. Its right to criticise Brownlie and the A.E.U. is abundantly increased for the simple reason that it is fighting alongside the A.E.U. in its struggle against the bosses. Not only is the right of criticism greater, but, what is more important, *the effect of the criticism upon the engineering masses is a thousand times greater.* Were the National Union of Railwaymen plunged into a big struggle to-morrow and if J. H. Thomas, by any chance, played the man, we would enthusiastically assist him, not for his sake, but because of the workers he represents. We are with the masses in all their struggles, political and industrial. We have time after time given proof of the fact that every fight of the workers is our fight. But there are some doctrinaires who are afraid to help the workers in their struggles because they are afraid to add to the power of false leaders. By assisting in such struggles these leaders are given an opportunity to reveal their treachery, and this enables us to denounce them, not from the coward's castle of sectarian aloofness, but from the fighting ranks of the indignant masses. The formula babbling revolutionary who cannot assist in the mass struggle because of the present leaders is like the bumpkin who declared he couldn't see London because of the buildings!

The Harmony Omnibus

IT is the insistent demand of the Communist Party that, while joining in every political and industrial struggle of the masses, it must retain its independence as a Party. It is this demand that gives us the right to criticise and denounce traitors during any struggle. And it is this very demand that makes the reformists and moderates afraid of us even when we offer our assistance during any conflict. It is important to grasp this because the sentimentalists of the Vienna International look upon the United Front as a sort of glorified omnibus wherein the three Internationals may sit in blessed harmony and revel in each other's company while all are journeying to some picnic. The United Front is not the sweet and blissful harmony of a Sunday school. This would seem to be the opinion of gentle souls like Mr. Wallhead and Mons. Lonquet. The United Front is *unity of action in the struggle of the masses* against the embittered attacks of the capitalist class. It would have been no breach of the United Front against capitalism had the British leaders of the Vienna International inside of the I.L.P. attacked Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald for his persistent advocacy of indemnities, or denounced Mr. P. Snowden for his reactionary enthusiasm for increased production. Mr. Wallhead knows that it was the Second International, of which his colleague MacDonald is the secretary, that refused to allow the Versailles Treaty and the question of indemnities from occupying a prominent place as one of the most urgent problems to be attacked by an international United Front struggle. Knowing this, his duty to the Vienna International, of which he is an executive member, and his duty as chairman of the I.L.P., which is supposed to stand pledged to oppose the indemnities as embodied in the Versailles Treaty, was to have denounced Mr. MacDonald's indemnity policy. Consider-

ing that the I.L.P. Conference was discussing problems of policy, and considering that the indemnity policy was such a burning question a few weeks ago at Berlin, when the three Internationals met, it was an obligation enforced upon Mr. Wallhead to have confronted Mr. MacDonald regarding his attitude towards the German indemnity. No doubt Mr. Wallhead will plead that unity was reached at the Berlin Conference. Berlin only decided upon *unity in action against capitalism*; it did not build up a wall to protect Imperialist indemnity mongers like Mr. MacDonald nor increased production reactionaries like Mr. Snowden.

Let us repeat the United Front is not an omnibus for harmonious sentimentalists. Radck made that clear in his speeches at the Berlin Conference, and so did the delegates of the Communist International in the declaration which they published at the moment when they signed the statement of the three Internationals.

Finding Them Out

ALREADY, from the standpoint of the Communist International, the wisdom of testing the Second International upon the policy of the United Front is revealing to the masses the reactionary character of the latter group. The Second International has refused, because it is afraid, to take its stand side by side with the Communist Party in the proletarian struggles in Germany. In order to carry out the policy agreed upon at Berlin, by the three Internationals, the United Front in Germany should be made up by the joint action of the Communists, Independents, and Majority Socialists. The Majority Socialists, of the Second Internationals, by refusing to fight alongside of the Communists, have compelled the Independents to take their place by the side of the Communists. This means that in Germany the Right is discredited, and that the Centre swerves to the Left.

As the class struggle develops it will be found that the Second International will openly identify itself with capitalist imperialism while the Centrist tendencies will be pressed ever towards the Communist International. The strategic value of the United Front tactics is that it will accelerate the development of these factors.

Genoa

RUSSIA, with her practical realism, is the most inspiring and yet, withal, the most disconcerting element at the Genoa Conference. While these notes are being written the Russian delegation has shown the way to solve the international problems at present confronting the various national States. Take Lloyd George's opening speech, which has been heralded as a most remarkable statement. What practical proposal did he make? None at all. It was and remains a superb piece of rhetorical eloquence, but it got nowhere and did not face international realities. The whole facade began to crack when the matter of fact Chicherin proposed universal disarmament. This simple touch of proletarian realism threatened to wreck the precious assembly of eloquent blatherskites, all of whom have been asking the heavens to observe their peaceful and brotherly

intentions. In the midst of the rhetorical rantings of the imperialists regarding the need for international peace Soviet Russia interjected to say: "Very well, then, let us all disarm"! That one pointed fact punctured all the eloquent phantasies so gracefully blown by balloon specialists like Mr. Lloyd George. Small wonder the Conference was staggered, small wonder that France wanted it ended there and then, small wonder that the journalists of the various nations stampeded from the gallery—for here was a delegation of so-called diplomats who were innocent enough to imagine that when imperialist statesmen talked about peace that peace was actually meant! They had hoped for better things from Chicherin. They were of the opinion that he was going to be a real diplomat and play the game. Instead of acting like a diplomat he clumsily butts in and says if we must have peace then let us all disband our armies. In very truth these Bolsheviks can never learn, because they cannot appreciate the fine art of high politics and the intellectual game of international diplomacy. Any child knows that without armies and fleets nations cannot fight or go to war, but imperialist statesmen never solve problems in that simple manner. True to the breed of Horatio Bottomley and Winston Churchill, it is a much finer thing to talk of peace when every nation is armed to the teeth!

May-Day is Labour Day

By T. O. WIGINTON

The May-Day of To-day

THE May-Day of old has practically passed away. In a few country districts, survivals of it are occasionally found, but it usually only takes the form of decorating a few vehicles and horses with streamers and flowers, and occasionally a few youngsters are to be seen carrying a small maypole strung with flowers around to the houses, a few songs being sung, in return for which a collecting-box receives a few coppers which are spent by the kiddies. Times have changed considerably since the keeping of Old May-Day; new industrial conditions have developed, these giving birth to a May-Day movement which both in significance and idealism far surpasses that which has gone before.

Old May-Day was a celebration of the revival of the plant life in spring, of the freeing of the earth from the icebound days of winter, of the return of the sunshine, of singing birds and of radiant flowers; it was a time for rejoicing. The new May-Day, which is frequently known as Labour Day, is also a day for rejoicing, but it is primarily significant of a very serious and sacred purpose. It is kept by the workers of nearly all countries in order to demonstrate their unity, express their ideals, to spread the gospel that the power of Labour and freedom shall prevail, and that privilege, vested interests, and oppression shall be swept away; it heralds the approach of the world for the workers, the brotherhood of man, the federation of the world.

Labour May-Day has its origin deep down in the sufferings of the working class. For many years Labour's future could not be visualised, but in 1847 Marx and Engels in their *Communist Manifesto* showed the workers of Europe to what their conditions were due, told them the name of the ruler to whom, in every country alike, they were enslaved; this ruler was Capitalism.

The fundamental proposition of the manifesto was: That in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that period; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolution in which, now-a-days, a stage has been reached where the exploiting and the oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot obtain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles.

In addition to this proposition the sequence of thoughts running through the manifesto, and which more or less are part of the proposition itself, may be briefly summarised as follows: free competition—a life principle of capitalism—forces the individual capitalist concern to strive for a lower cost of production. This purpose is attained mainly by improving the means of production and enlarging them to any scale called for by new scientific discoveries and the development of technique. The mass of products is thus constantly increased. But capitalist production is carried on primarily for profit. The profit can only be realised by the sale of the products. But inasmuch as the workers who form the great and evergrowing mass of the population, receive in form of wages only part of the product's value, the contradiction between the irresistibly growing mass of commodities and the conditions for realising the profit by their sale becomes ever greater. On the one hand the system tends to frustrate its own primary purpose, it forces unemployment and privation on the workers, who are thus forced to end the system.

The manifesto was published as the platform of the Communist League, and appeared in January, 1848. In the following month, February, the Paris insurrection took place, and the masses suffered defeat. For years afterwards wherever independent working-class movements showed signs of life these were ruthlessly hunted down. The Communist League, a working-men's association, first exclusively German, later on International, had its Central Board in Cologne. The members of the Board were hunted out by the Prussian police. They were arrested, and, after 18 months' imprisonment, were tried in October, 1852. This celebrated Communist trial lasted from October 4th till November 12th; seven of the prisoners were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from

three to six years. Immediately after the sentence the League was formally dissolved by the remaining members. As to the manifesto, it seemed thenceforth doomed to oblivion.

The International Working-Men's Association

However, when the European working class had recovered sufficient strength for another attack upon the ruling class, the International Working-Men's Association sprang up. The object of this Association was to weld into one body the working class of Europe and America, hence it could not at once proclaim the principle laid down in the manifesto. It was bound to have a programme acceptable to the workers in the different countries. The programme was drawn up by Marx to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. The Association, however, took part in many struggles. In 1871 the forces of French capitalism drowned in blood the Communards of Paris. Nevertheless, the work continued, and on the breaking up of the Working-Men's Association in 1874, the principles of the manifesto had made considerable headway among the workmen of all countries.

In 1889 another International was founded; it was known as the Second International. In 1914 it included twenty-seven countries, with a membership of twelve millions. These were composed of the Socialist and Labour Parties, each of which pursued their particular activities in the various countries along their own lines and with virtual independence. It was this body at its conference in Paris in 1889 which decided that every May-Day should be an international Labour day on which the workers should demonstrate their solidarity.

May-Day and Strikes

The Americans for the first time in 1884 decided that from the first of May, 1886, the working day should be eight hours, and that all working-class organisations of their country should prepare to adopt the same. Further, it was also agreed that all those industries in which the eight-hour day was not granted a stoppage of work should take place on this day. Many of the employers agreed to the demand before the date fixed. In spite of this, however, there were 5,000 strikes, but the needless provocation of the police rapidly transformed peaceful demonstrations into bloody riots. The government repressed, with brutality, this attempt of the working class to improve its lot. In December, 1888, a fresh agitation was decided upon with the same object:—an eight hour day. The demonstration was fixed for May 1st, 1890.

In France, at the third congress of the National Federation of Syndicats and Corporative groups, held October 28th-November 4th, 1888, it was decided:—

1. That on Sunday, February 10th, 1889, all the syndicates and workers' groups of France should send to the Prefecture or the Under-Prefecture, or to the Mayor of every commune, a delegation charged to claim the following reforms:—

1. An eight-hour day with a minimum wage.

2. That Sunday, February 24th, should be a day of demonstrations.

The success obtained was considerable. They then conceived the idea of an international demonstration, and at the Paris Congress the following motion was passed:—

“The workers of the different countries will find it necessary to carry out this demonstration in accordance with the special conditions which prevail in each country. Seeing that a similar manifestation has already been decided for May 1st, 1890, by the American Labour Federation, in its congress of December, 1888, held at St. Louis, this date is adopted for the International Demonstration.”

The Governments were distracted. Throughout France extraordinary precautions were taken. In most countries large bodies of workmen assembled. Grave incidents took place. At Fourmies, the army fired upon a disarmed crowd of women and children. Several people were killed. The indignation of the people was so great that the 145th line regiment which was responsible for the massacre, and was garrisoned at Mauberge, had to be removed in the middle of the night.

Ever since this date May 1st has been observed as Labour Day. In 1906 the capitalist class were seized with panic at its approach. The workers' unions in France had decided that from May 1st, 1906, on workman must work more than eight hours. An intense agitation preceded this demonstration. More miners than ever had decreed the general strike, and the government, true to its general custom, plotted to arrest the leaders. The governments of all countries were frightened. They feared a revolution. May Day, however, passed without their fears being fulfilled.

May-Day and the War

From 1891 to 1914, May-Day was celebrated and was used as a means to protest against war. These protests were initiated in the International Congresses. Much discussion took place in these congresses on how to prevent war. Keir Hardie was especially active as a spokesman of a full anti-war section. In conjunction with the French Socialist, Vaillant, he advocated at the Copenhagen Congress the proposal of a general strike against war. This, however, was defeated. And it was finally left for each country to do its best in its own way to prevent war, and if unable to prevent it, to do all it could to bring it to a speedy close, to rouse the masses of the people from their slumbers, and to hasten the fall of capitalist domination.

Loyal to this mandate, Karl Liebknecht, on May-Day, 1916, gathered together 10,000 men and women in Berlin to protest against the war which had commenced in 1914. He was arrested and thrown into prison. On May-Day, 1917, he was still in prison, and sent his thoughts for the day to his son, in the one word “Fidweit” (Stick it).

May-Day and Russia

By May of 1917 a revolution had taken place in Russia. Trotsky has written of that May: “All the forces of the Government and

the middle class were drawn into one aim: that of making the Bolsheviks impossible as a political party.”

Before May, 1918, however, the Bolsheviks were in power, and their glorious Soviet policy had begun.

In May, 1919, the Bolsheviks were fighting for their lives, and were reported to be reduced to the defensive on all fronts. However, in 1920 they had routed the counter-revolutionaries and consolidated their power. Thus in one country of the world a Communist party believing in the principles of the *Communist Manifesto* has won to power, thereby giving to every other country a tremendous incentive to demonstrate on the 1st of May, with increasing vigour, for the overthrow of capitalism. Thus modern May-Day stands altogether for a different set of principles to the old May-Day. It is no longer kept to revive a ritualistic ceremony in which custom played a great part. It is celebrated in order to remind the workers of the terrible iniquities that they have been called upon to endure for many years, and the great problem which dominates all others, is the reorganisation of a new society. The mass of workers lead a poor and miserable existence. They demonstrate on the 1st of May that they intend to leave the old beaten track that humanity has trod for so many years. They signify that they aspire to a life of consideration, a life of plenty and of beauty. And they demand with a greater force than they realise that life shall be fuller, more beautiful and more joyous for all. They know that the wisdom of man has invented machinery which is capable of being developed to an enormous extent. But they know that the machine can only accomplish its work of redemption in a social system which is favourable to it, and not in a society which paralyses it. They feel that it is only when the national and international work of the world will be effectively directed by the workers themselves can they hope for the elimination of the parasites, of the useless, and they will be able to utilise the productive forces to the benefit of all. They feel it is only by the same means that they will be able to hope for an equitable division of the riches which they create. This, then, is the meaning of the 1st of May. The workers proclaim on this day their reprobation of social inequality and their desire to put an end to it. So long as the capitalist system lasts the 1st of May will be used by the exploited class as a day for ever-increasing formidable protestations.

Thus May Day is Labour Day.

It is the duty of every Communist to see that a Communist Review is in the local library

Revolt of the French Fleet in the Black Sea

By MAURICE PAZ

(Translated by L. Madeliene Wertheim)

[Herewith we present for the first time in English, the full story of one of the most thrilling episodes in the history of the international working class movement. The Soviet Republic is the first State in history that has been guarded by the heroic deeds of the world-wide masses guided by the inspiration of proletarian solidarity. The two leaders of the revolt among the sailors of the French fleet, Marty and Badina, are at present in prison. They symbolise both the spirit of the revolt and the persecutions that followed. The French Communist Party has roused the French masses to indignantly protest against the imprisonment of the heroes of the Black Sea mutiny by putting forward Marty and Badina as candidates at the municipal elections in Paris. The two mutineers headed the poll, but were disqualified. The elections were held again, but the Parisian workers for the second time returned Marty and Badina at the head of the poll! Here we observe a splendid lesson on the need for unity between the industrial proletariat and those employed by Capital to maintain the armed power of "democratic" States. The story of the Black Sea mutiny: the revolt of the British soldiers at Folkestone; the rapid rise of the Councils of Action; the refusal of the London dockers to load the "Jolly Roger," a munition ship that was being used against Russia—all these demonstrate working class solidarity. And upon solidarity, among all sections the world over, rests the safety and final triumph of revolutionary Labour.—Ed., COMMUNIST REVIEW.]

The Allies Confronted by the Russian Revolution

NOT without causing some consternation did the rumblings of the Russian Revolution break on the ears of Western Europe.

But the Allies soon made up their minds as to the attitude they should adopt. The fall of the Romanoffs did not signify that Russia had abandoned the Entente, and soon, the wish being father to the thought, the cabinets at London and Paris, with Kerensky's aid, came to believe that the Russian Revolution had been made *against* a separate peace desired by the Romanoffs, and *for* the prosecution of the war to a victorious conclusion.

It was for thus daring to misconstrue the will to peace of all Russia, it was for having let loose, at the orders of London and Paris, the bloody offensive of 18th June, 1917, that Kerensky was overthrown by the Bolsheviks. The latter, who were in the closest contact with the masses, knew well their aspirations: their first care, from the moment they came into power, was to initiate peace negotiations. Russia, who was driven to this pass actually by her exhaustion, saw herself, despite her past sacrifices, abandoned by her former allies, and delivered to the tender mercies of the German military caste.

From this peace of Brest-Litovsk dates the hatred of the Entente for the Russian Revolution: all relations were broken off with that criminal government which had concluded peace according to the unanimous desire of the Russian people, without having any regard to the injunctions of the Western Stock Exchange.

From that time Bolshevism became an enemy to be laid low at all costs: the struggle against it began in earnest. A noiseless struggle at first carried on by diplomats who unworthily abused their immunity; by military missions which became hives of conspiracy: rebellion and sabotage, treason and crime were prepared and paid for in the offices of the Entente.

Soon followed acts of open hostility. The Allies occupied the territories of Northern and Eastern Russia, at Archangel, at Murmansk, and in Eastern Siberia; they did not declare war, it is true, and they cloaked their invasion under hypocritical pretexts (economic relief, defence of Russia against Germany, etc., etc.), but their one thought was to overthrow the Soviet Government and proceed with the "public pillage of Russia."

The check that these first tentative excursions received did not deter the Allies: after the Armistice a great offensive against the Soviet Republic appeared to be indispensable. In fact, the various governments felt that the discontent of their peoples was growing; they greatly dreaded the general reaction to the war; everywhere proletarian consciousness was awakening under the impulse of events in Russia and Germany; everywhere the revolutionary tide was rising; they must strike the Revolution at its head, they must overthrow Bolshevism.

The Allies counted on achieving this result by strangling the Russian people with a pitiless blockade, and above all by establishing a counter-revolutionary base in Southern Russia. In order to carry out the latter plan it was necessary to have at their disposal a powerful fleet, and to create in that fleet a state of mind favourable to Russian intervention.

The Chief of Staff of the French Navy, Vice-Admiral de Bon, an avowed reactionary, made every effort to realise these two conditions; he based his plan of campaign on the assumption that he would have at his disposal in time of peace a Navy, the effective strength of which would be considerably higher than in 1914; at the same time, a serious anti-bolshevik propaganda was undertaken among the crews. This propaganda had very little chance of falling on favourable ground.

The fleet had suffered very much during the whole period of the war; heavy duties, often useless, had been imposed on them, while insufficient nourishment and that frequently execrable, was given to the crews. Add to the fatigue and hunger the discontent caused by the miserable supply of clothes, infrequency of leave, bad organisation of the postal service, and some idea can be formed of the state of mind of the French crews which were to be engaged in a criminal war against the Russian Revolution.

This miserable situation and this state of mind, this lassitude and this anger had been observed and pointed out in a report in March, 1919, by M. de Kerquezec, who drafted the Naval Budget, and who was then entrusted with a tour of enquiry in the East by the Budget Commission.

None the less, the Government was to persevere in its insensate policy towards the Russian nation; but this policy soon raised up against it the soldiers and sailors who were disgusted at the odious role that they were desired to play.

The Battle of Kherson

Certain French regiments had, therefore, been detailed to go and fight the Russians, and sent to Odessa. These regiments were for the most part composed of men who had just been fighting on the Western Front, and who could not but view with despair their embarkation on a distant expedition.

On the 8th March, 1919, two companies of a regiment of the 156th Division, billeted at Odessa, received the order to leave for Kherson. But at Kherson, when the soldiers had learnt for a certainty that they were to be employed against the Bolsheviki, they refused to fight.

The two companies were immediately brought back to Odessa, and on 11th March, six men from one of the companies and three from the other, chosen at random, were arrested.

Without previous "minutes of evidence," the Court Martial, *which had refused to have witnesses called in favour of the accused*, sentenced the nine accused men to five years apiece at public works for "Refusal to obey in the presence of rebel armies." (The rebels were the Russians who did not accept the dictatorship of their invaders!!!).

But the time when the movement could be checked had passed; discontent and indignation were to manifest themselves in the fleet with particular virulence from April to June, 1919; mutinies were to break out at Galatz, Sebastopol, Odessa, Toulon, Bizerta, Itea.

A crime on the part of the French command at Kherson was to hasten the explosion of the anger universally felt.

After the French soldiers, as we have just seen, had refused to fight against the Russians, Greek regiments were brought to Kherson.

The Russians who, up till now, had preferred to retire before the French, not wishing, they said, to spill precious blood, found themselves attacked by the Greeks with such savage violence that they made up their minds to defend themselves; a fight ensued for the possession of Kherson.

The Greeks, reinforced by Polish, German and French detachments, *commanded by a German officer*, held the town. In the port a French cargo boat was preparing to unload tanks detailed to support the Greek troops; the townswomen, with their children, had taken refuge on this cargo boat to escape the bombardment.

Seeing that the town would be taken by the Russians, the French admiral who was directing the naval operations, sent orders to the commander of the cargo boat to prepare to leave so that the tanks would not fall into the hands of the Bolsheviki; the women and children who had taken refuge in the cargo boat were requested to leave at once. As shrapnel was falling on all sides, the women threw themselves on their knees in supplication before the French officers who drove them from the ship with blows from their revolver hafts.

The unhappy women took refuge beneath the precarious shelter offered by some wooden hangars alongside the quay. It was then that the crime was committed: there were two French

officers, commanders of two gunboats in the port, who were undoubtedly so incensed by the victory of the Soviet troops that they wanted to avenge the loss of the town on these poor inoffensive women, and so there were found two French officers capable of giving the order to fire on the two hangars. Then followed this grisly spectacle: the two French gunboats *bombarded the hangars with incendiary shells*; the homicidal fury of the assassins was not even brought to a halt by the explosion of one of their own guns, which made a number of victims on board. And as the women, mad with terror beneath this bombardment, fled from the hangars, their clothes all on fire, they were pitilessly shot down by shrapnel from the two gunboats. These shameless crimes, these acts of bloody savagery—revolting to all the dictates of human conscience—immediately provoked a rising on the part of the populace.

While the French and German soldiers were hastily embarking on the gunboats and returning to Odessa, the inhabitants of the town, rushing to arms, attacked the Greek troops: and these, caught between two fires, sustained heavy losses.

The Protest by Marty and Badina

The torpedo boat "Protet" belonged to the division of the Adriatic fleet, an active division and one severely tried during the war; it had been sent, after the Armistice, to Constantinople and the Black Sea. Detailed to leave in December 1918 for the base at Galatz, it was put at the disposal of General Berthelot to transport staff officers in charge of important missions, to Odessa, Sebastopol and Novorossik. Thus at the beginning of April, 1919, the "Protet" transported four officers, of whom one was an Intendant General, from Galatz to Sebastopol, via Odessa, and back, in order to enable them to visit the Army Museum at Sebastopol! At that time the voyage from Galatz to Sebastopol cost 200 tons of mazut (1) at £40 a ton. . . .

The discontent of the crew, which had been momentarily appeased because the Armistice had made them forget their former sufferings and vexations, was increasing with each useless task, and the time kept on passing without bringing the liberty so much desired.

The chief engineer of the "Protet," Andre Marty, kept apart from the other officers, who did not share his tastes or his ideas, and who took revenge on him for his reticence by making him undergo all sorts of vexations; but Marty, scrupulous and upright, took no notice, having more serious matters to engage his attention. It galled him greatly to see the fleet, ever since the Armistice, wasting useless and costly energy; he was above all cast down at the ignoble political *rolé* which it was being made to play against the fraternal Russian people. At this time Marty's indignation was shared by the best of the crew. These sailors who had put up with everything—fatigues, inclemency of the elements, dangers—could not support this abominable crime against the Soviet Republic; they could not tolerate the idea—they who were the sons of working men—of raising a sacrilegious hand against their brothers in misery who had revolted against their exploiters.

(1) Mazut is a fuel derived from petrol, for information about which see Delaisi's "Oil," Labour Publishing Co. 2/6. Translators Note.

But it was above all in the person of the quarter-master, Badina, that Marty was to find a character capable of seconding his efforts. Badina was a man of feeling; intelligent and educated. These two men were made to come together: they had in common the same nobility of sentiments, the same horror of injustice and the same generous idealism.

Throughout the fleet a noiseless fermentation was taking place. In the month of March, the sailors returning to land were informed that the 176th and 158th battalions had refused to march against the Russians—and the soldiers expressed their approval of their comrades, saying "We too, have had enough of this odious campaign."

The men were anxious to know exactly what this Soviet idea was and why it was being persecuted; here, as elsewhere, the desire to learn helped the cause of the Revolution, and the crews were soon able to comprehend the greatness of the task upon which the first Proletarian State had embarked.

However, when at the end of March, the sailors learned of Tchicherin's radios protesting in indignant terms against the acts of savagery committed by the Allies, and in particular the massacre of 200 women and children at Kherson by the guns of the French vessels, this news appeared so extraordinary that many refused to believe it. But doubt on that score was soon dispelled. Vice-Admiral Amet took it on himself to confirm the news by congratulating the gunners of the "Mameluck" the heroes of this sad exploit. The officers and part of the crew of the "Protet" had been invited to hear the Admiral's discourse. He referred to the Russians as "bands of assassins led by a few blackguards," and he concluded: "You did not hesitate to shoot. That was very well done." Marty who was present, on hearing such words from the mouth of the man who had bombarded an undefended town, had no scruple about expressing his indignation to Commander Welfele, of the "Protet." As to the crews—who henceforth believed implicitly in Tchicherin's radios—they were definitely exasperated by this crime.

The discontented men of the torpedo-boat "Protet" grouped themselves about Marty and Badina and, on the 12th April, 1919, the latter drew up a plan to stop intervention and to bring about their return to France. The idea was to make off with the "Protet," taking the officers prisoners, and to take refuge in a Soviet port in order to organise; then the "Protet" reaching Marseilles with the other vessels which would join her, would demand the cessation of this criminal war which was being carried on in the face of all constitutional laws. A certain Durand, one of the ship's gunners, entered the conspiracy on 13th April; he had a bad record, but it was thought he could be depended upon as he owed much to Marty. He took up a very violent attitude, demanded the assassination of the officers and talked of using the machine guns against those of the crew who were not in the conspiracy; this *agent-provocateur* kind of language was attributed to his enthusiasm. It was he, however, who was to betray Marty and Badina. He worked two of his friends into the conspiracy, Le Goff and Bourrouihl, who took part in his shameful espionage.

On the 15th April the conspirators met at Galatz, and Marty, acting as speaker, emphasised the illegality of intervention in

Russia; in burning terms he commented on Article 35 of the Constitution of 1793 which in the last resort leaves to the people the weapon of insurrection to safeguard the law. Then he confided the first part of his plan which was to go to Russia with the torpedo boat. The execution of this plan was fixed for the next day but one.

The following day, 16th April, 1919, the traitors denounced the plot to Commander Welfele. That very evening Marty on returning on board, a little before midnight, was arrested, insulted, maltreated. Keeping perfectly calm, he openly admitted his responsibility for the scheme, but refused to give the names of any of those who had shown themselves in favour of it. On the quay at Galatz, Badina was present when Marty was arrested; his first thought was to go and claim his share of the responsibility. Hardly had he put foot on board when he found himself threatened with the revolvers of four non-commissioned officers who were waiting for him: "There are too many. One is enough," remarked Badina imperturbably. As the commander appeared to wish to make use of him against Marty, Badina requested them to treat him as the accused and not as a witness. Taken to prison on land, Badina escaped some hours later, persuaded that he could not present a useful defence under existing conditions. Marty, several times threatened with death by his warders during his detention, bore with courage the absolute isolation imposed on him; deprived of the guarantees of a normal defence he was sentenced by a General Court Martial to 20 years forced labour and 20 years exile. Badina was condemned to the same punishment for contempt of court. When he gave himself up in October, 1920, he found his sentence had been commuted to 15 years' detention.

Thus came to an untimely end the first attempt at revolt among the sailors of the Black Sea. However, this attempt was not without value; it was the spark that kindled the flame. Its effects were far-reaching, and the telegram sent by wireless to Odessa announcing the discovery of the plot and the arrest of Marty and Badina helped to open the flood-gates of the great protest movement against intervention in Russia.

Marty and Badina are still in prison; the proletariat must be mindful of its own; their martyrdom must not be prolonged; their constancy in adversity, their absolute faith in the triumph of their cause, demands both the active solicitude and grateful affection of the working class.

The Affair of the "France"

The man-of-war "France" had not touched at a French port since its departure from Toulon on 9th October, 1916. After the Armistice it was sent to the Black Sea and employed at very heavy tasks: day and night it was carrying on the evacuation of the upper Russian bourgeoisie who were fleeing from Odessa and Soviet rule. The men were unable to account for their presence in the Black Sea; they were discontented, and all the more so when they heard tell of the acts of savagery committed by the Allies against the civil population. They were, moreover, worked to death, badly fed, treated like dogs; the infrequency of the mails, the delay in granting leave, and the unwillingness displayed by the command to

demobilise the troops contributed equally to stir up serious discontent on board the man-of-war. On the 17th April, 1919, the "France" reached Sebastopol and executed what the crew believed to be trial firing with its 140's. On the 18th, the sailors learned that the pretended trial fire of the day before *had killed 180 civilians in Sebastopol and wounded a great number*. This new crime exasperated the discontents: the least incident would cause a revolt. This incident soon occurred: the following day, the 19th April, in the afternoon, the news went round on board that the "France" would coal the following day, Sunday, Easter Day; this was a long and fatiguing task and the sailors had justly counted on having a rest during the two holidays. The news was commented on and produced much grumbling. On an ill-timed remark of a non-commissioned officer, the demonstrators sang the "International" (it was heard often during these days of agitation) and they hastened aft. They met the Adjutant Commander, Gauthier de Kermoal, who proposed to transmit their demands to the Commander, Robez-Pagillon. But as the sailors, bursting with anger long restrained, were shouting all at once, he suggested they should appoint delegates who would bring him the demands of the crew on the following morning. He gave his word of honour that the delegates should be inviolate. The crew, singing all the time, went down to the cells and set free the prisoners among whom they found one named Vuillemin, hardly 20 years of age. This man was to become the hero of the revolt on the "France" by reason of his courage and his wisdom; his mental ascendancy was felt by all who approached him.

Three delegates were chosen, among them Vuillemin.

A wave of revolt seemed to have passed over the fleet at Sebastopol. To the revolutionary songs of the "France" responded those of the man-of-war "Jean-Bart" and of the cruiser "Du Chayla," riding at anchor at her side.

Now a sailor came on board announcing that the disembarkation company, barracked in a fortress, had also made protests against the bad treatment to which they were subject. The men had given a letter to their chief in which they wrote: "We do not wish to suffer any more. Henceforth the treatment hitherto dealt out must be discontinued. The treatment we undergo is odious. If you are more educated than we are, that is no reason for regarding us as slaves. You, the commander of the fortress, who have practised such violence on us, think the matter over. Know that we, *like our Bolsheviki brothers*, are justly following our ideal and claiming what are only our natural rights, as recognised by all mankind."

This news was received with enthusiasm by the crew of the "France." Then, although the officer of the watch wanted to interfere, the delegates embarked on the patrol boat in order to confer with the delegates from the other ships. From the steamer they called out to those on the "Jean-Bart" asking what they wanted, and they replied: "To Toulon!" "No more war on the Russians!" That was the watchword which was going to be taken up by the whole fleet.

During the delegates' absence, at about 10 o'clock at night, Vice-Admiral Amet arrived on board the "France," and without concealing his anger, he harangued the demonstrators, who noisily

interrupted him. Then, perceiving that anger would achieve nothing, he changed his tune: "My children," he sobbed, "I beg of you. . . ." Someone shouted out: "This is not the time to be saying Mass!" At last he did what he should have done from the beginning, and asked what the demonstrators wanted. A sailor came forward, and, in measured terms, put before him the claims of the crew:—

1. Immediate cessation of intervention in Russia and return to France.

2. Improvements with regard to the arrangements on board, food, leave, mails, etc.

Then the sailor enlarged on the question of intervention in Russia: "This war is unconstitutional, and the fleet is indignant at this attack upon Republican rights; a stop must be put to it." As Amet did not make any satisfactory reply, the demonstrators left him there, and went away to their own quarters singing the "International"; the Admiral went off uttering threats. It was half past ten; the steamer was bringing back the delegates; a great meeting was decided on for the following morning and all went to bed.

Vuillemin, however, drew up and posted a proclamation in the following terms: "Comrades, you made a very fine demonstration yesterday evening. I recommend you urgently to avoid all violence and all sabotage. Our claims are just and we cannot fail to win our cause." Then Vuillemin, who was now responsible for the safety of the vessel, posted the necessary sentinels and returned to the calls to sleep.

The Bloody Ambush

The following morning, after coffee, the crew assembled on the fore-deck, and at eight o'clock the red flag was hoisted to the strains of the "International." The "Jean-Bart" was doing the same. During the whole morning the two ships were in communication by means of a picket boat. The three delegates went to meet the Adjutant-Commander as had been arranged on the previous day, and Vuillemin acted as spokesman, denounced the crime which was being committed against Russia; the Adjutant-Commander refused to discuss the point, on the pretext that he had no information (!), and the delegates returned to report to the crew.

However, at 9 o'clock, Vice-Admiral Amet arrived, calmer than on the preceding day; on the rear-deck he made a speech to the demonstrators: "My children, you will regret what you have done and will repent of it. . . ." A delegate interrupted: "We will never regret having stopped this illegal and criminal war; we should be cursed by the working class and by humanity in general if we were to obey the orders given to us to kill our Russian brothers. . . ." Amet, without pressing the matter further, returned to the "Jean-Bart," his flag-ship.

Then the Second-in-Command came and promised champagne to the demonstrators if they would return to order. Sarcasms were heaped on him; it was indeed a question of champagne!

Towards one o'clock the Adjutant-Commander had it given out that all punishments were remitted and that the men could go on land; and in fact a certain number of sailors left in a launch.

On the quay, the people of Sebastopol were waiting for them; they had followed with emotion the demonstrations and had acclaimed them; the sailors of the "France" found comrades from all the ships in port: "Jean-Bart," "Justice," "Vergniaud," "Mirabeau," and "Du Chayla." They fraternised among themselves, and fraternised with the crowd who hailed them in triumph as liberators. They formed a cortege and slowly mounted the boulevards, headed by the Red Flag, and chanting the "International." Suddenly the cortege found themselves faced by machine-guns behind barbed-wire entanglements; a naval lieutenant was there directing the fire. The sinister crackling of the machine-guns broke on the dense and fleeing crowd: fourteen French sailors lay assassinated in the midst of Russians who had been pitilessly mown down, men, women, and children.

It was thus, beneath the hail of French shells that was cemented for ever the blood brotherhood of the French and Russian masses.

The officer who had given the order to fire, soon afterwards committed suicide in his cabin; perhaps remorse had done its work, or perhaps he was driven to suicide to avoid revealing the sanguinary orders which he must have received.

On board the "France," as soon as the news of the massacre was known, Vuillemin demanded of the Commander that an enquiry should be opened; then he claimed in energetic terms the return of the disembarkation company, so that the vessel might leave as soon as possible. Orders were given. At half past four, the disembarkation company and those on shore leave returned on board and joined the demonstrators.

Things did not happen quite after the same fashion on the other ships in the harbour; after having demonstrated, all returned to order except the "Du Chavla."

Amet believed it prudent to cut off all communication between the "France" and the "Jean-Bart." The demonstrators of the "France" went to complain of this to their commander, who declared he could do nothing against the orders of the Admiral: "If you, the Commander, cannot do it," said a sailor, "I will see that it is done, be he willing or not."

"Who is commanding this boat?" replied the commander.

"The crew."

"Then throw me overboard!"

"It is not into the water that you must be pitched, but into France. It is there you must take us. . . ."

At nine o'clock, the committee got a searchlight into working order so that the man-of-war should not be surprised in the night. At half past nine, the Commander sent for Vuillemin, with whom he discussed the matter till half an hour after midnight.

Once more Vuillemin set forth the claims of the crew: "The claims of the crew are just," he said, "and Commander, I advise you to request the officers not to use their arms. The crew is unarmed and I am doing my best to avoid a fracas. If any officer takes it on himself to threaten one of the men, disaster will be inevitable. Then, Commander, I who am now a preacher of calm, will then become a preacher of revolt." As an outcome of this conversation, the Commander gave his word that there would be neither repression nor punishment, and in case action should be

taken, in spite of what he could do, he would be "the foremost defender of his men": if there was a court-martial he would take his place at their side, on the bench of the accused. "Is it not, however, a scandal," he could not refrain from adding, "that a young man only 18 years old, should lay down the law to a man of 53 old enough to be his father?"

"Do not forget, Commander," said Vuillemin, who did not let himself be side-tracked, "that I am here as the representative of the crew; cost what it may, I will defend its claims."

The night passed peacefully; the sentinels were posted, the searchlights were working, the whole service of the vessel was secure, thanks to the delegates; they only were obeyed, and obeyed with promptitude.

The Return to Bizerta

The following day, 21st April, in the morning, Vuillemin went to have an interview with Admiral Amet which he reported to the crew assembled on the fore-deck. After the 11 o'clock meal, the delegates in their *rolé* of intermediaries between the commander and the crew, announced that the Commander had decided to leave on 31st April; the crew protested: they wished to coal the following day and sail the day after.

The demonstrators rushing off to see the Commander, came up with the Chief Doctor, and a discussion followed between him and Vuillemin: "The military caste," said Vuillemin, "is covered with shame; in particular the Minister and Staff who are driving the Navy to perdition. . . . The French capitalists are the cause of these criminal acts committed by France. . . . This war against Russia is above all things unconstitutional, and Justice must strike down the Clemenceau's and Pichon's who have violated the Constitution: they are the ones who are principally responsible for our mutiny. . . ."

The Commander could not be found. Towards three o'clock, the delegates returned on board the "Jean-Bart" and decided with Admiral Amet that the "France" should sail on the 23rd; as to the other ships, they would evacuate Sebastopol on the 28th. Amet recognised that their claims were well grounded; he excused himself, making out that he had only acted on the orders of the Minister of Marine, Georges Leygues. The following day, 22nd April, the man-of-war, "France" did its coaling under the directions of Vuillemin; it had been agreed the previous evening with the Commander that the officer would not appear. The crew worked with ardour and the job was finished more rapidly than usual; the Commander, astonished, congratulated Vuillemin. On 23rd April, the "France" sailed and left Sebastopol.

The voyage was to pass without incident: *until 11th May the delegates of the crew remained masters of the situation.* On 25th April, the man-of-war passed before Constantinople, escorted by the gunboat "Escout" also in revolt; they arrived on 1st May at Bizerta, where they were at once put in quarantine. The Commander then showed Vuillemin an order from Admiral Amet instructing him to put the whole crew into prison. Vuillemin intimated that under those circumstances he would no longer be a counsellor of calm; and to prepare for every eventuality, he had the

ship cleared for action. The Commander referred him to Vice-Admiral Darriens, the Naval Prefect at Bizerta. The latter decided to institute a commission of enquiry, and the crew agreed to bow to the verdict of the commission.

On the 4th May, the commission arrived on board; it was presided over by Rear-Admiral Barthes: the men passed one by one before the commission and explained their grievances. On the 9th in the evening the enquiry was completed. Its conclusions may be summed up as follows: the Commander, the Second-in-Command and the Adjutant-Commander to be deprived of office, the other officers to be degraded in rank; the delegates to be congratulated, and 23 sailors to be sent to the disciplinary section. In spite of the conclusions of the commission of enquiry, the delegates were arrested and imprisoned on 11th May.

So concluded the revolt of the "France," one of the most decisive on the Black Sea: *the crew were masters of the vessel for more than three weeks.* A long judicial process was opened, and at Toulon, at the Court-Martial of 29th September, *in spite of the promise given by the officers,* numerous sentences were pronounced, varying from 15 years to six months. Vuillemin, who was sentenced to five years, has just been set at liberty.

Affair of the "Waldeck-Rousseau"

From Galatz and Sebastopol, the movement of protest against intervention in Russia was soon to reach Odessa.

The cruiser "Waldeck-Rousseau," which arrived in Odessa at the beginning of April, 1919, found the man-of-war "France" and the cruiser "Ernest-Renan" in port with their guns turned on the town; in the harbour were the man-of-war "Justice" and several torpedo-boats. The "Waldeck-Rousseau" took similar precautions with a view to protecting, so it was said, the retreat of the "colonials." Discontent was general on the cruiser, and the gunners showed themselves determined to refuse to fire on Odessa if the order was given.

One day four men came on board leading an officer prisoner; it was learnt that his name was Marty and that he had wished to raise a mutiny to protest against intervention in Russia. The news, which arrived at the same time as that of the revolts at Sebastopol, produced the highest pitch of excitement among the crew. On 26th April, the sailors planned to rescue Marty, but their project was betrayed; on the 27th, the "Protet," drawn up to take a supply of water, prepared to sail and took away Marty at the last moment.

The crew, exasperated, appointed delegates; the torpedo-boats "Mameluck" and "Fauconneau" were acquainted with the movement. A letter demanding their return to France was sent to the Commander by a delegation. "Commander," it ran, "your reply will dictate future events. . . . We *still* salute you as Commander." After a violent discussion, the Commander refused to reply, and the delegates reported to the crew. The red flag was hoisted, while from land the Soviet workers made signals of encouragement.

Rear-Admiral Goubet, commander of the "Waldeck-Rousseau," had the delegation sent for. He promised that no

punishments should be inflicted and that in 48 hours the vessel should return to France. A delegate said to him: "It is as well that you should know the truth: if within 48 hours we do not return to France, we will draw the vessel up to the quay." On the very next day, the "Waldeck-Rousseau" sailed for Constantinople; during the voyage, the officers succeeded in persuading the crew to touch at Tendra, and all returned to normal. But at Tendra they found the "Bruix" and the men came on board and recounted what had happened at Sebastopol. A second outbreak occurred on the "Waldeck-Rousseau"; again delegates were nominated who acted with those of the "Bruix"; the Commander refused to receive the new delegation.

Some days later, the "Waldeck-Rousseau" sailed away, passed Constantinople and arrived at Cattaro; during the voyage, the revolt died down of its own accord.

On 15th May, Admiral Dumenil came on board and pronounced a discourse in which he declared that everybody in France was blaming the sailors for the mutiny. The men of the delegation were questioned and denounced before a Court-Martial on 8th June for "having, on 27th and 28th April, fermented a plot against the Commander and the security of the vessel"; *in violation of pledges given*, numerous heavy sentences were pronounced.

The Affair of the "Provence"

It was not only in the Black Sea that the crews were protesting against intervention in Russia; at Toulon, on 10th June, 1919, the sailors of the "Provence," mutinied because they were going to be sent to fight against the Soviets. The "Provence" was the Flagship of the Inter-Allied squadron in the Mediterranean; life there was especially hard, the discipline severe, and the food stinking; moreover, the "Provence" had already been the scene of protests in March 1917 on leaving Toulon, in September 1917 and November 1919, at Corfu. On 21st May, 1919, the "Provence" arrived at Toulon; they were to leave on 10th June for Constantinople, it was said. But the sailors knew what that meant. . . .

On 6th June were the first signs of revolt; that day the question of the Sailors in the Black Sea was to be raised in the Chamber, and as a protest against the imprisonment of the mutineers the crew of the "Provence" hoisted the red flag. On 10th June, at the moment of departure, a violent demonstration, without any previous arrangement, broke out. Spontaneously the men assembled on the fore-deck where a tumultuous meeting was improvised; under these circumstances, the Commander called the crew to battle stations, many refused to appear and some attempted to hoist the red flag. But soon, by means of promises, the officers succeeded in restoring order and disarming the sailors.

Vice-Admiral de Bon, Commander-in-Chief, in tears, gave his word of honour that no punishments would be made if the crew would from then on return to order: "I am your father," he said, "Can a father send his children to prison. No, it is not possible!"

None the less proceedings were opened, and at Toulon, the Court-Martial, sitting from 25th September to 2nd October 1919, inflicted heavy sentences.

The Affair of the "Voltaire"

Everywhere, however, the resistance to counter-revolutionary expeditions was growing stronger. The "Voltaire," damaged by a torpedo, was undergoing repair at Bizerta when, on 19th June, 1919, the Admiral informed the crew that the vessel was going "to represent France in the East." The crew of the "Voltaire" had suffered privations and much ill treatment. The men well knew the ugly task reserved for them "in the East." They decided to refuse to do any kind of work henceforward. The following day the Commander asked the crew to appoint four delegates, assuring them in advance that no action should be taken against them. The delegation communicated to the Commander the firm intention of the crew not to allow themselves to be used in the counter-revolutionary manœuvres in the East. As the Commander acquiesced in the general wish, the delegates advised the crew to resume work. Two days afterwards, the classes '10, '11, '12, and '13 who were still on board, were repatriated. Vengeance was going to be taken on the younger ones: one morning, thirty-two men sent on duty on land were arrested by a regiment of blacks. They were to remain under detention till the 24th September. The appearance before a Court-Martial on the cruiser "Waldeck-Rousseau" was a parody of justice: in a quarter of an hour, *one hundred* years of imprisonment were distributed to ten among them: Roland Roger, sentenced to 20 years, was not even present at the time of the trouble!!!

The Affair of the "Guichen"

The man-of-war "Guichen," which was used to transport troops detailed to fight the Russian Revolution, also knew how to manifest its intention of no longer being implicated in a criminal policy. On 24th June 1919, it sailed from Tarento with the destination of Itea (in Greece), having on board 900 troops who were timidly protesting against their transportation to Russia. On the 26th they arrived at Itea. After the disembarkation of the troops, the crew addressed a round robin to the Commander to demand their return to France, and as the Commander would not have anything to do with it, the sailors refused to return to work. Senegalese troops with bayonets pointed, soon brought these unarmed men to "reason."

That very evening, 26 sailors were arrested, haphazard, and classed as "leaders"; brought to prison on land, they were the victims of the ill-treatment by a brute, Captain Faucon, commanding the 124th battalion of Senegalese rifles.

Conclusion

Too much importance cannot be attached to the revolts in the Black Sea. As an immediate result a grave military menace was lifted from Russia; the French Government was in fact forced by these mutinies to cease open intervention in Russian affairs; henceforward, they had to content themselves with subsidising bandits, and equipping adventurers. The intervention was broken down by the tenacious will of the sailors of the Black Sea; the hour was passed for expeditions to Archangel, Murmansk, Eastern Siberia

and Southern Russia: the Entente persisting in its desire to overthrow the Soviets, was reduced to furnishing arms and munitions to the assassins of Koltchak, Denikin, Yudenich and Wrangel—without any further success, for these attempts were also to fail before the energy of a revolution determined to live at all costs.

But these revolts have had even more far-reaching moral consequences: having affirmed in this effective manner the solidarity of the French proletariat with the Russian Revolution, they have given to the workers of the world a great example and a great lesson. The sailors have made a breach in the mockery of the "Union Sacree" (political truce) and the lie of the "Righteous War"; they made it clear that the time was over for this blood-guilty complicity. This was the first great shock to the French conscience since 1914.

The sailors of the Black Sea were heroes; to-day they are martyrs; in the face of all justice, *twenty-one* of them are still in prison. They must be liberated by the unanimous protests of all honest men. No longer must public clamour hesitate to bring forth from prison these heralds of a new era.

The Industrial Heroes of "Don Bas"

What we saw in the Ukraine

By IVON D. JONES

WE have heard a great deal about the new economic policy of Soviet Russia. We have heard how the "Communist Motherland" has been compelled to call a retreat in the march to the great objective. We have heard gloatings of capitalists and bourgeois penny-a-liners over our forced concessions to the decadent bourgeois world; and even faithful Communists have shaken their heads in dismay at the bigness of the retreat.

What do the workers of Russia think? The Russian proletariat does not think that it is retreating. It has not been sufficiently made clear, to the masses outside of Russia, that the new economic policy has two aspects—it is simultaneously a retreat and an advance. In the streets of the city it looks like a complete reinstatement of the bourgeoisie—shops and traders everywhere. In the factory, however, *a big step forward towards Communism has been made in the last two months.* Our foreign comrades have heard too many alarmist reports of the alleged decay of the Revolution. Let us give them the other side of the picture for a change.

We went down to the Donetz Basin to see this new advance, and on the way called at Kharkov. We had already read the returns from all parts of Russia, published within the last month or two, of how the production of Don Bas coal was increasing by leaps and bounds; how the salt mines were producing four-fold; and the factories and workshops were catching the general contagion for

work. But these figures gave no idea of the heroism and the revolutionary effort which contributed to make up the results. Why did production sink so low from April to August, and why the sudden upward bound with the introduction of the new economic policy? The factory workers were not thereby turned into private traders, just the reverse. . . .

At Kharkov we went to see the locomotive works. There were also tanks for repair, and Diesel engines on the stocks, designed and made there complete. We first went into the "Iatcheka" office. This is the office of the works branch of the Communist Party. What a change from the capitalist world! The Party office is an inevitable section of every factory office. Workers were going in and out. We were told that this Branch had over a hundred members. The comrade who took us round his department of the works also carried with him a bundle of "*Pravdas*" and Union papers to give out at the benches. Bolshevism, which started in the factory with leaflets, and then was found in meeting halls, and then in street demonstrations and the barricade, and then in the battle field with the Red Army, has now finally settled down in the factory, building locomotives, etc., in spite of Lloyd George's sneer that it cannot do it. And how enthusiastic this Communist was over the new spirit of work which they had found, how they were producing four times as much as a few months ago! How proud he was of the fact that they had turned out six brand new locomotives last month, every plate and rivet made on the spot. And there were already three more on the stocks. What was the secret of this new enthusiasm? Before going to Don Bas I had better explain one aspect of it as it has been given to me from various sources.

The Collective Wage

Owing to the exigencies of the civil war a kind of petty Communism was established wherein all had to work, and each received his ration or "payok" direct from the centre. Lenin had made it clear that this Military Communism was enforced by the terrible demands of the conflict, and was in reality a departure from the original line of development as marked out. And so it was that everybody got his payok, worker as well as loafer. There was no time to be too particular. The enemy was at the gate. During the Imperialist war, in the time of the Czar, thousands of petty agents and traders flocked to the munition factories to escape being sent to the front. Since the Revolution this process has continued. Large numbers of non-proletarian elements have thronged "to work" in order to get a "payok." These elements were incapable of work, and not imbued with the proletarian spirit; for a proletarian is not made in a day. And their influence upon the general tone of the factories and the workshops was an extremely demoralising one. Instead of the tens of thousands of fiery and revolutionary proletarians, aglow with the spirit of the revolution, who left the factories for the field of battle never to return, and whose place was taken by masses of non-proletarian and non-revolutionary elements too great in number to be properly

absorbed in a time of crisis. Thus the proletarian worker lost heart. He saw around him strangers drawing "payok" and loafing. A remedy had to be found.

I think it was found by a Moscow tailoring factory. These Moscow tailors said: "Here we are, all half starving and doing very little work. Half of us could produce double the quantity of clothes if we were permitted to organise the factory and sack the loafers. Give us the total 'payok' for this factory, and we'll divide it among the workers, and deliver the goods, yes, double the goods." "Agreed," said the Soviet. And so it was done. The number of workers were reduced from 1,400 to 700, the production jumped three-fold, the pay of the workers became higher, and the cost of production to the Soviet was reduced by 26 per cent. This is how increased production operates under the Soviet system.

And the idea spread everywhere. It is called "the collective wage." In a sense it is the abolition of wages, an advance from the previous system, for it is a contract entered into by a body of workers to produce a certain minimum for a certain quantity of goods or money. Here we have all that is meant by Workers' Control. The full implication of this new idea cannot be realised except on the spot. It is self-government in the factory. The workers in a plant have suddenly become a collectivity, that "association of free individuals" referred to in the closing chapter of the *Communist Manifesto*.

And who is the "Blackleg" to-day? In Soviet Russia the blackleg is the "won't work." And the Workers' Committee have now no hesitation in asking the "won't work" to quit their groups. To-day this régime, where a scab is a loafer, once considered by the revolutionaries a vision of the distant future, is in full vigour in the proletarian province of Don Bas.

Donetz Basin

And so to Don Bas over the treeless steppes. The province of Don Bas spreads over a considerable stretch of country, and has been especially created by the Soviet regime to include not only the coal, but also the metallurgical and chemical industries, in order to make the political boundaries co-extensive with the economic ones. Bakhmyt is the administrative centre. Here are located the Central Trade Union Office under Comrade Briskin, the Metal Workers', and the Mineworkers' Union Offices under the control of the Chairman, Comrade Kalni, a brawny miner with Australian experience, and therefore able to speak English. Here, too, are the big pile of offices of the C.P.K.P., letters of great import in Don Bas, for they represent the central management of the coal and metal industry of the region.

Under Comrade Briskin's guidance we went the round of the mining groups of Kadivka, Pavlovka, and Briansk. Here we came into touch with the proletariat of Don Bas, in class consciousness and proletariat spirit second only to Petrograd. Here we heard stories about . . . WORK. Work, and how to do it was the

topic of all conversation. And there was a pervading sense that the workers spoke as the conscious owners of the industry. And there were deeds of heroism recorded to us. In those dreary months from April to July, when Don Bas only received twenty per cent. of its food supply, and people were flocking out of the region, how valiantly the proletarian fighters stuck to the work. Comrade Kalni, the Chairman of the Union, related to us how they had to fight the rising water in the mines, and save them from destruction. Hundreds literally collapsed at their work, and had to be carried away, to return again to the struggle in a day or two. There were two thousand such cases, we were told, and next month a festival will be held to honour a first batch of three hundred of them. In the hall of the C.P.K.P. a big notice board was displayed, half black and half red. Above the red stood the word "Heroes," and above the black "Deserters." Comrade Kalni said that there was no mine where heroes equal to any found in the field of battle were not to be found.

Much was also told us of how the Don Bas workers made Denekin's life a misery, and eventually contributed to turn him out. When the Germans came to the Ukraine after Brest Litovsk, the Kadivka Secretary told us, they proceeded to take away the stocks of coal lying there. The Don Bas workers went on strike, because, they said, the coal belonged to their Soviet Republic. However, the Germans paid for the coal, and deported 300 of the agitators to Soviet Russia!

Everything is proletarian in Don Bas, so it seemed to us. The very generals are from the working class. Verishiloff and Permakoff, and other brilliant leaders of the Red Army are justly claimed by the Don Bas workers as their own sons. The manager of the biggest mine at Briansk was a proletarian who had shown a genius for management. By the way, we had our meal at his house before the meeting, and I could not help remarking what a bad lot of Amsterdammers we were having dinner there with the Boss. But the tables were now turned. Comrade Briskin now represented the owners, the workers themselves, and that in no mere theoretical sense either.

I have already mentioned one or two aspects wherein Labour after the Revolution reverses its slogans. Comrades Briskin and Kalni emphasised another. The Unions are trying to limit the hours strictly to eight owing to the intensification of the work, but many "Workers' Committees" are continually breaking the rule and working ten and even twelve in the eagerness to make up the program.

In the summer months, owing to the conditions stated, the production did not exceed nine million poods. In October, the total quantity of coal produced was 35 million poods; in November, 43 million poods, besides a Voshkrasnik (Communist Sunday) for the famine relief in the Volga. In December, they hope to reach the 50 million pood mark.*

* The actual returns were 51 million poods.

In September, the programme for the *Allianza Rayon*, for example, was fixed at 75 per cent. of the pre-war standard. The workers did so well that in November the norm was put up to 100 per cent. of the pre-war figure. This means that to get the same pay the workers are prepared to try and reach a mark one-third higher up. Henceforward, says Comrade Kalni, the objective will be to reduce the hours to six, for in many parts the production per head is equal to that of pre-war in spite of the twelve-hour day and the capitalist whip then prevailing. In short, Don Bas is a magnificent demonstration of the truth that Communist production can beat capitalist production to a frazzle. The secret has been found how to combine individual incentive with the principle of each for all and all for each. And this is the collective wage.

It must not be supposed that everything is smiling now in Don Bas. Transportation is bad, housing is wretched after the long years of war and banditry, the region is threatened with a bread shortage in January, Comrade Kalni told us. It is a hard struggle. But the workers have found new heart for the struggle, and Kalni thought that in four or five years Don Bas would build itself up into a great industrial machine second to none in the world.

The Labour Army

The Don Bas proletariat turns every one into its own image. It communicates its spirit to the nondescript and to the peasant recruit. A novel feature of the Don Bas coalfields is the Labour Army. This Labour Army is now very different to that which volunteered for the Labour Front after the civil war. It numbers 12,000, soon to be increased to 20,000 by new drafts from Moscow. Comrade Kalni informed us that it is now mainly composed of semi-proletarian elements and unsuitable material found in the Red Army and drafted out. Young men whose characters are intractable to the cultural agencies of the Army are drafted here. The idea is that nothing but a course of training to be an industrial proletarian can save these boys from criminality, and the idea works magnificently. At Pavlovka, there was a regiment of 2,000, whose commander, a member of the Union Executive, presided at our meeting. Let it not be supposed that there is any militarisation of Labour in the system. At work they are Union men, the officers are Union officials, or take part in production. The military formation is preserved, and the educational work of the Red Army is continued. They soon become proletarians, for in Don Bas a proletarian is nothing less than a revolutionary worker. The figures of production of this unit and its efforts for the relief of the famine are a splendid testimony to the revolutionary contagion of the Don Bas proletariat. Comrade Kalni mentioned 4,000 Black Sea sailors and others sent up for schooling to Don Bas. At first the task seemed hopeless, he said, they were such a wild, truculent, anti-social crowd. Now they have become splendid workers, and in the school of revolutionary trade unionism are learning the dignity of a proletarian.

What strikes one in Don Bas is the complete absence of watertight compartments. Each institution melts into another. The

Labour Army is controlled by the Union, the Union is led by Communists, the C.P.K.P. is indistinguishable from the miners and the metal workers, who compose or appoint the directors. Comrade Kalni himself is one. The C.P.K.P. is organising mine farms in the coalfields to provide food for the miners. Fifty-nine farms with 20,000 hectares were started last year, and this year double the area will be worked. In a few years it is hoped to produce all the necessary food for the miners. Tired workers and women are sent to work these. Here, again, the management of this section, though run by the C.P.K.P., is part of the Union offices.

This great coal region is being organised by the workers into three or four big State Trusts. What our comrades in Russia mean by a State Trust is an organism, for instance, of coal, metal and chemical plants, such as they are building in Don Bas, each feeding and depending upon the other, more or less self-governing as far as control from the Supreme Council is concerned, which sees to the food supply, and the exchange of the products, and appointment of managers through the local organs, and, of course, technical equipment.

In short, Don Bas aspires to become quite a self-supporting unit, a Republic of its own, although the workers are anything but parochial in their outlook; as witness their paper, which they are careful to name "*The All-Russian Stokehold*" (Boeressiski Kechigarka).

The example of this glorious proletariat deserves to be made known to all the world's workers. Its heroism, its revolutionary ardour, and its devotion through every trial—that is the guarantee for World Communism. Comrade Meshkin, the Miners' Secretary at Kadivka, whose drawn face told of the long struggle, speaking to us on behalf of the miners assembled there, desired us to take their greetings not only to the revolutionary workers of the English movement, but to the backward and misguided ones as well.

Anyone who wishes to be re-baptised with the revolutionary faith, let him go to Donetz Basin!

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Does the World Need More Money?

A Reply to Major Douglas

By MAURICE H. DOBB

FOREWORD.

During every period of social crisis the attention of the masses is sometimes diverted from the real problem by the intervention of high sounding and alluring schemes generally propounded by well-meaning but superficial middle-class economists. The Labour movement has very little to fear from the weird credit theories so bombastically propounded by the disciples of Major Douglas. But as the function of the COMMUNIST REVIEW is to critically examine every serious idea advanced regarding the solution of the social problem, we place the Douglas theory, this month, under the microscope of Marxism in order that our readers may see what a peculiar thing it is. Comrade Dobb has conducted his analysis very minutely and has subjected the Douglas theory to the severe test of an economic and theoretical examination.—
ED.—COMMUNIST REVIEW.

I.

“More Money” Fallacies

WHEN I am asked the above question, my answer is: “No! More money will not give you more *goods*. What the world does need is a change in the *ownership* of money. For ownership of money means ownership of the means of life.”

There have always been persons, who, during “hard times,” have brought forward wonderful theories to show how all economic ills are due to the fact that people have not enough money with which to buy, and, if only people were given more money in some way, trade would recover and “the wheels of industry” would be set humming merrily once more. The technical name for the various theories, having as their main aim increase in the money supply, is *Inflationism*.

Now, as is the case with many fallacies, what the Inflationists say has a *small* amount of truth in it. It is probably because half-truths are so much more difficult to combat than complete lies, that these fallacies have been so difficult to kill, have recurred in various forms so often, and have gained so much popular support among those who have devoted little study to the intricate mechanism of Finance. “Douglasism” is merely a modern version of the Inflationist fallacy. What is *true* in Inflationist arguments is the following:—

(a). One of the functions of money is that of a *medium of exchange*. It is something which we can use to buy all other commodities. If there were no money, we should have to exchange things by direct barter, and very little exchange would be possible at all. A shortage of money will hinder exchange.

The fact that the exchange of goods is hindered results in a "glut" or a piling up of stocks, which cannot be disposed of; and there consequently follows a slowing down of "the wheels of industry"; people are unemployed and have no money to buy, and so the situation gets worse. Therefore, as the quantity of exchange transaction increases—as it tends to increase with the growth of production and of the "division of labour"—the quantity of money needs to increase. Otherwise the scarcity of this necessary "oil" on "the wheels of industry" causes them to rust and slow down.

(b). It is quite true that under the conditions of modern competitive industry, where production is in the hands of private persons, who produce only when they can see an effective demand (expressed in a price offered), sufficient to give them an average rate of profit, the inability of one set of persons to buy (e.g., they may have been impoverished by a famine or a war, as is Central Europe to-day) causes merchants to stop ordering more goods from employers, and causes employers to "close down" and throw workers unemployed. In turn, the workers, being unemployed, cannot buy goods. And this makes matters worse. A person's *power* to buy goods depends on the money he gets for producing goods; this depends on the possibility of selling those goods, and so on—in a circle. The process of a trade "slump" or trade depression, therefore, tends to reinforce itself cumulatively.

Now, it is perfectly true that, if money could be distributed, giving people *power* to buy, those from whom those people bought would also be given the power to buy, and so on—like a rolling snowball. Therefore, say the Inflationists, the only thing needed to cure the situation is "more money." But, as we shall see later, this is only a "half-truth." It is to be noted in passing that both (a) and (b) are, as a rule, satisfied under the present banking system; (a) by the normal development of the use of cheques, etc., which economises the use of the existing stock of money; (b) by the lowering of the rate of interest on bank loans during a depression.

The chief fallacy of Inflationism lies in its neglect of the fact that money, besides being used as a medium of exchange, acts as a *standard of price*. It is in terms of money that the prices of all other goods are expressed. The *level of prices* expresses a quantitative relation between the goods, which people want for consumption purposes, and the money, which people want, as a rule, merely to exchange for those goods. When the money gains its value chiefly from the fact that it is a commodity (e.g., gold), the quantity of money in circulation tends in the long run to be adjusted so that the level of prices measures the relative values of the commodity gold and other commodities. When the money is inconvertible paper (e.g., Bradbury notes), its quantity in circulation will not be affected by its value as a commodity; and it will acquire what Marx called an "imaginary value" or price, which will depend purely on its *quantity*, relative to the quantity of goods, for which it needs to be exchanged. Said Marx: "Gold circulates because it has value; paper money has value because it circulates." Double the quantity of Bradbury notes, and, other things remaining

the same, the value of a Bradbury note will be about halved. The level of prices will be approximately doubled. This is shown by the experience of the war.

To put it more simply: money is only of use *in so far as it enables us to buy the goods we want*. No amount of increase of money, e.g., printing of Bradburys, will by itself bring us the food and clothing we want, if the wherewithal to produce them is not in existence. It can only happen that, if you or I are given more money, we may be able to buy goods *instead* of someone else; but *everybody* cannot buy more goods, if those goods are not there. As we have seen, the more money there is issued, the higher will go the Price Level, since more money increases *people's power to buy*; and if effective demand increases, while the supply of goods remains the same, Price must rise.

To give a concrete instance: the Inflationist, seeing food in Argentine and machinery in England lying without purchasers able to offer a sufficiently high price to cover the cost of transporting them to Europe, may say: "Give more money to Central Europe in order that they may buy these goods." They do not see that if the banks in Central Europe issued more money, that this would inevitably inflate their currencies, depreciate their exchange, and so depreciate the purchasing power of the money of Central Europe; and Central Europe's power to buy would be no greater than before. There might be advantage, it is true, if British banks lent money to Central Europe. But the result of this would be for the Foreign Exchange to turn against Britain, and consequently to depreciate the purchasing power abroad of British money. The advantage would be not that of more money all round, but of the better distribution of existing money. Central Europe would gain in purchasing power only what Britain lost.

Therefore, as the American Marxist, Hermann Cahn, has shown, there is a contradiction between the two functions of money, as a Medium of Exchange and a Standard of Price. Inflationists are always crying out for more money as means of exchange to "oil the wheels of industry." But more money can only be issued at the expense of *depreciating* the Standard of Price (which, as we know, has many disadvantages), or, in other words, by causing a rising Price Level (or Inflation).

II.

The Evils of Inflation

Now, the Inflationist will interrupt us at this point of our argument, and will reply that we are wrong in assuming that, if the quantity of money is increased, the quantity of goods will remain the same. He will maintain that, in so far as more money "oils the wheels of industry," and sets them moving faster, the supply of goods will increase too, and there will be no rise of the Price Level. But here he is wrong; for although, *if* more money means more production, more goods will be produced, the supply of goods will *not be increased anything like so fast* as the supply of money under a policy of Inflation. Further, there are reasons

to suppose that, although, *for the time being*, more money may increase the pace of production, over a long period and in the long run a policy of Inflation will not at all result in an increase in production, but probably the reverse.

The chief reason why *goods* will not increase as fast as *money* is as follows:—

Production takes time. Therefore, the "more money" will have to be issued *before* more goods are produced. In the meanwhile, Prices will rise as a result of this issue of money. The goods will sell at a higher price, and to exchange goods at this higher price *more* money will be needed than before. The *effect* of more money has become in turn a *cause* of the need for more money. Thus the demand for more money will always increase faster than the increased supply of goods. For instance, suppose there are £100,000,000 Bradburys in circulation, and we add £10,000,000 more to permit of £10,000,000 of new goods being produced during the year. The result of this will be that prices will rise about ten per cent. all round; and the new goods, by the time they come on the market, will be able to fetch a price of £11,000,000. If the next year, you intend, not to *expand* production, but to keep it at the same level and turn out the *same quantity* of new goods, you will have to issue, not £10,000,000, but £11,000,000 of new money to permit of your new production. This will again raise prices by ten per cent., and so on the year following. If you wish production, not to remain at the same level, but to *expand*, the increase of money (and the rise of price) will have to be still faster relatively to the increase of goods.

But there are reasons, too, why, not only will goods not increase as fast as money, but the *rate of increase* of production of goods will tend to slow down, so that, in the long run, a policy of Inflation may mean an actual *loss* in productivity. First, the effect of rising prices is to *disorganise* production, and to stimulate one *part* of industry more than another part.

There exists under Competitive Capitalism a continual tendency for production in the Constructional Trades (machine making, etc.) to go ahead relatively much faster than production in other trades; and hence for continual maladjustments to occur, which have continually to be corrected. If they are not corrected quickly by an early checking of the rate of expansion of the Constructional Trades, the maladjustment becomes much greater, and the corrective process is, of necessity, more severe. The reason for this tendency is as follows: machines, ships, factories, etc., last for some time, say ten years. The demand for these is not steady, like the demand for most things, but *recurrent and periodic*. If an order is placed to-day for a new locomotive, it will not be placed again for, possibly, ten years, since the locomotive has a long life. When a trade boom starts there is a tendency for everyone to place orders with the Constructional Trades; but these orders being once satisfied will not probably be placed again for several years. This large expansion of demand is purely *temporary*, and will not continue at its expanded level. But the result of these orders being placed all at once will

be the raising of prices and the profits of the capitalists in the Constructional Trades; and the competing capitalists, attracted by high profits, will expand their production by employing more labour and investing more capital, imagining that the higher level of demand will continue. But since the expansion of demand, prices and profits, is purely temporary, much more capital and labour will have been attracted into those Constructional Industries, than will actually be wanted over the next few years, after the temporary expansion of demand has subsided. Therefore, as soon as this batch of orders, stimulated by the Trade Boom, is satisfied, machinery and labour in the Constructional Industries will be idle, until production in other industries catches up to the same level, and the increased production of Constructional Goods is absorbed.

Rising prices increase the profits of capitalist entrepreneurs more than would otherwise be the case; for the entrepreneur has bought raw material and machinery at the lower level, and sells his products after a period of time at the higher level. Now, Price is the index by which the capitalist entrepreneur judges effective demand. If Price is rising for other reasons (i.e., currency reasons) than because effective demand has risen, he over estimates demand, and tends to produce more than demand at the moment warrants. Further, high profits increase the optimism and over-confidence of the entrepreneur, and his errors of judgment are consequently greater, and he expands production more than he otherwise would have done. The pendulum being tilted too far in one direction, has to swing back again the farther. To put it differently: large profits and higher wages attract increased supplies of capital and labour. The larger the profits the larger the supply attracted, and so in the end the larger the over-supply. Hence Inflation increases the tendency for maladjustment in industry, and so increases waste of economic resources and results in lower productivity than otherwise would have taken place. The more the continuance of Inflation postpones the day of "correction" and readjustment, the worse the disproportion and dislocation and the greater the wastage in the long run.

A further point is that the production of raw materials and foodstuffs on the land obey the "law of diminishing returns" (or increasing cost). This means that their production expands more slowly and at an ever-increasing cost. This fact alone acts as a brake on the rate of increase of productivity; and the rising costs of raw materials in some industries may increase so fast as to cut into the capitalist's profit, and check production there considerably. The supply of labour, too, cannot be very largely increased, once the surplus of unemployed has been absorbed; and this fact, too, checks the extent to which production can go on increasing at an ever greater rate.

For these reasons Inflation involves a rate of increase of money ever faster than the rate of increase of goods. This means a Price Level rising at an ever-increasing rate, until the industrial machine is probably completely dislocated. This illustrates Marx's contention that it is the circulation of commodities which determines

the circulation of money, and not the circulation of money which determines the circulation of commodities.

To sum up the fallacies common to all Inflationist theories, claiming that the root of the economic problem is that more money is wanted:—

(1). More money does not necessarily mean more goods. More money being issued (in the shape of a Bank Credit) *in advance* of the production of goods, causes inflation; and the inflation of prices always goes ahead faster than any possible increase of goods.

(2). Rising prices disorganise production by making business men over-confident, thereby increasing their liability to make errors and by intensifying any tendency to temporary over-production in one line of goods relative to others; for the demand for one sort of goods depends upon the production of others. The faster prices rise, the more production gets dislocated and slows down.

(3). Supplies of raw material and labour are at any one time limited, and can only be expanded slowly. If the increase of the supply of money, stimulating production and the demand for raw materials and labour, is faster than the possible increase of the supply of raw materials and labour, the price of the latter (owing to their scarcity), will rise with ever-increasing rapidity, until their cost becomes prohibitive and makes production in many branches unprofitable. This fact alone is probably sufficient to produce a Trade Depression.

After all, we have only to look at the chaotic condition of Poland and Austria to see practical examples of Inflation.

III.

Is the Problem of Production one of Purchasing Power?

As I have said, in my opinion, the Douglas-*New Age* theory is merely a particular form of Inflationism. "Douglasists" will probably deny this and will say that their scheme will get over the evils of Inflation. With that point I will deal later. But I have spent some time in dealing with the fallacies of Inflationism, because the popular appeal which "Douglasism" makes is the same as that of all "more-money" fallacies; and because it shares with Inflationism the claim that the social problem is one fundamentally of *purchasing power*, and of nothing else; and that it is shortage of purchasing power that alone hinders expansion of production. Before I go on to deal with the distinctive features of "Douglasism," I will outline what are the *real economic* (as distinct from purely monetary) limits to productivity. Since "Douglasism" neglects these, the Douglas Scheme, however much it may increase purchasing power, will not bring increased productivity.

Let us suppose for the sake of simplicity a period of normal trade prosperity, when the whole available labour supply is practically employed (or when the margin unemployed is so small as to make only a very small difference to our argument). There will be at any one time a fixed flow of goods—food, clothing, machines, raw material—out of the industrial machine into the various markets. These goods will tend to flow where the highest price offered attracts

them. Now, let us suppose that Mr. Get-rich-quick, being an optimist, wishes to increase this rate of flow by setting up new factories, and so get profit for himself. To do this he must *first of all* buy more labour-power and machines and raw material and set them to work in his factory. Now, he can only do this by attracting those goods to Get-rich-quick factory, instead of to some other factory. The method he uses of attracting them is that of offering a higher price than is offered elsewhere.

To offer this higher price Mr. Get-rich-quick must have money. This is where our friend, the Inflationist, come in. "Only by issuing more money or credit to Mr. Get-rich-quick will you get the expansion of production you want," he says triumphantly. This is true, but it is very important *where* that more money comes from. That makes all the difference. It may come in one of two ways:—

(a) The money given to Mr. Get-rich-quick to buy his new machines, etc., may be *transferred* (either directly by investment or through the medium of a bank) from Mr. Put-by-for-a-rainy-day, who has *saved* it, or postponed his spending of it. In this case, Mr. Get-rich-quick will only be spending what Mr. Put-by-for-a-rainy-day has abstained from spending. The total consumption demand or expenditure of the community will be the same as before; the supply of goods coming into the market will be sufficient *at the existing price* to satisfy all demands; and Mr. Get-rich-quick's action will not result in a rise of prices.

(b) The money Mr. Get-rich-quick spends may be new money, turned out from the printing press, or an *additional* bank credit, which adds to the level of existing bank credits. In this case it will be an *addition* to the existing money supply, not a mere transference. It is not balanced by any equivalent saving on the part of Mr. Rainy-day, who spends his money at once this time. The consumption-demand of the rest of the community is the same as before. Mr. Get-rich-quick's demand for machines, etc., is an additional demand. Since the supply is for the moment fixed, Mr. Get-rich-quick can only buy by bidding in the market and offering a *higher price*, until he has outbid a rival, and transferred the goods he wants to himself instead. By this process of "bidding" he has raised the general level of prices and so reduced the purchasing power of other people's money, including that of Mr. Rainy-day. This is Inflation. In other words, he has *forced* Mr. Rainy-day or someone else to refrain from buying the machines, etc., by out-bidding him in price. We may call this "involuntary saving." In this case the new money has *added* to the existing money supply, and hence increased the community's ability to demand goods, and as a result, prices have risen in response. In the other case the money supply (and hence the ability to demand goods) has not been added to, but merely *transferred*, and as a result no general rise of prices has taken place.

To give a concrete instance: during the war money was transferred to the Government by persons who "saved" it and invested in War Loan. This enabled the Government to spend this money in paying munitioneers' wages, and for them to spend it in buying

foods, etc., without raising prices. But as soon as the Government paid munitioneers' wages by printing Bradburys, they were creating an addition to the money supply, without any balancing saving by someone else. As a result prices were inflated. This meant that the purchasing-power of wages was reduced (i.e., wage-earners were forced to save or abstain from buying); and only what other people were forced to go without, on account of rising prices, were the munitioneers, whose wages were paid by the Government in newly-printed Bradburys, able to buy.

Hence we see that production can only be extended in so far as saving or abstaining from what otherwise would have been bought takes place in one of these two ways. *The quantity of social saving is the material limit to expanded production.* No amount of purchasing power will enable production to expand beyond this limit. In so far as social saving is done in the way described under (a), no Inflation takes place. In so far as it is done by (b), Inflation of Prices results, and put a concealed tax on wage-earners (i.e., it forcibly throws the burden of saving or "going without" on the workers). Extension of production is impossible in the absence of voluntary or involuntary saving in one of these two ways.

IV.

Where the Douglas Scheme Fails

The Douglas theory says that the main evil of the present is lack of purchasing power. If the consumer had enough money to buy the goods produced, production could expand, prices would fall, and all would be merry and bright. The Douglas Scheme, therefore, proposes to set up Producers' Banks in each industry. These will issue Financial Credit to capitalists to extend their production; and this Financial Credit will be issued solely on the basis of estimated ability to produce goods for future use. This liberal issue of Credit, say the "Douglasists," will enable employers to set the "wheels of industry" running merrily; whereas at present Credit is limited by the need of the banks to keep a definite proportion between their Credit Liabilities and their Cash Reserves of legal tender currency. They admit that this issue of Credit (giving the right to draw money) *in advance* of production will tend to raise prices and so "dilute" the purchasing power of fixed incomes. But they propose to remedy this by forcibly *lowering prices* to counteract this "dilution." The lowering of price is to be achieved by rather a complicated system of price regulation, by which price is fixed at the same fraction of cost as the total consumption of the community is of the total production. The more production increases, the lower price is made to fall.

But the fallacy of this is that they neglect what has recently been shown—that "the quantity of saving is the material limit to expanded production." This saving may be involuntary or voluntary. By issuing money, to enable producers to buy labour, machines and raw material as Douglas proposes, the *spending*, not the saving of the community, will be increased. By regulating prices and preventing them from rising to meet the scarcity of

supply, relative to the increased demand brought about by the increased money, the "Douglasists" will be preventing Inflation from inflicting that forced saving, which alone allows Mr. Get-rich-quick to buy the raw materials, etc., he wants, instead of Mr. Rainy-day. The "Douglasists" cannot have it both ways; *they cannot both inflate credit and deflate prices!* By reducing prices to an artificially low level they are defeating their own ends; they are making impossible the only way in which Mr. Get-rich-quick can attract the goods he wants into his factory, i.e., by offering a higher price for them.

Yet there is a further fallacy. Under the Douglas price-regulating ratio the price falls as production increases (relatively to consumption). But every expansion of production, financed by Credit from the Producers' Banks, means increased money, and hence increased demand for goods on the part of consumers. At the same time prices are reduced, which means that every £1 of money buys more than before. And all this before the results of the expanded production (which takes time) have come on to the market! What is the result? Wholesale shortage! And when you have shortage, you must have rationing; or else some people will have excess and others none at all. Rationing may be a good or a bad thing; but if you are going to have it, why have all the paraphernalia of "Douglasism" as well?

Another fallacy of the Douglas Theory is to be found in the way that they try to prove that the money distributed in the process of production is never sufficient to buy the goods produced. They point out that into the cost of an article there enter two elements:—

(a) *Payment to persons*; wages salaries, dividends.

(b) *Payments to organisations*; to the machine-making industries, etc.

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Price} = \text{Cost} \\ \text{Money distributed to persons} = \text{(a).} \end{array} \right\} = \text{(a)} + \text{(b)}.$$

Therefore, they say, the fetters on production can only be removed by giving people enough purchasing power to buy the goods produced. This they propose to do by reducing Price below Cost, and allowing (b) (capital expenditure) to be borne by the community. This reduction of Price they consider equivalent to giving "credit to consumers."

But their analysis is wrong since *payments to organisations are also ultimately payments to persons*. (b) also becomes (a). Payments to the machine-making industry for machines bought is really payment to machine-makers in wages, etc., and these are used to buy goods in the market.

The usual reply to this criticism is, however, for "Douglasists" to say that there is a difference of time in this, and that the *rate of flow* of (b) into Price is faster than its rate of flow into the hands of consumers as purchasing power. As a matter of fact, the reverse would seem to be the case, since (b) is usually paid out as wages *before* the finished goods come on the market. But the "Douglasists" support their contention as follows: When money is paid out in advance of the production of some goods (x) by a

Bank Credit advance, this inflates Price and "dilutes" existing purchasing power. This extra money, created by a Bank Credit, being paid out in wages, is spent, and being paid to a manufacturer is used by him to repay a former Bank Loan. When (x) finally comes on the market, there is no money to buy them; for the money advanced to finance (x) has been swallowed up again in the Banking System, and all existing purchasing power has been "diluted."

But the plain answer to this is:—

(1) Prices only rise in the first place in so far as the Credit issue is an Inflation, and not the result of voluntary saving or *transference* of purchasing power. This happens, not when Credit issue is limited, but when unlimited; and by removing limits on Credit issue "Douglasism" is increasing this Inflation.

(2) The appearance of (x) on the market, in so far as it means an increased supply, will tend to reduce Price, and so will correct the original Inflation of Price, caused by the issue of Credit in advance of (x). There will thus be plenty of money to buy (x) at its normal cost price.

(3) But further, the money issued as Credit to finance (x), when paid in wages and then spent and used to pay off a Bank Debt, does not disappear. The Bank, unless it is pursuing a policy of Deflation (which is in contradiction with the Inflation, previously assumed), will re-issue it to someone else—say, to finance the production of other goods (y). Hence the volume of purchasing power will still be inflated; and the goods (x) will actually sell *above Cost* for this reason, that there is an *excess* of purchasing power in the hands of consumers.

It should be borne in mind that Price is merely a quantitative relation between Money and Goods, and has no separate existence apart from the things between which it is a relation. The "Douglasists" seem to think it has; and so get involved in the amazing confusion that an Inflation of purchasing power can produce an Inflation of Price, which in turn can produce a Deflation of purchasing power! *Inflation and Deflation together!*

It is to be noted that the "Douglasist" argument about the necessity of Communal Control of Credit is quite a different question from whether the Douglas Scheme is the best way to get it. The Soviets in Russia at once nationalised the Credit System, but—thank heavens!—they did not use the Douglas system of doing it! The fact that so many people are attracted by the muddled economics of Major Douglas shows to what length of absurdity the lower middle-class mind can go, when terrified by the sight of Finance Capital on the one hand, and of the organised proletariat on the other. "Douglasism" is a pitiable attempt of the petit-bourgeoisie and the bourgeois-serving "intelligentsia" to save Bourgeois Democracy by fettering the power and depredations of Imperialist Finance Capital.

V.

The Real Causes of the Crisis of Capitalism

“If Finance is not the cause of the present trade depression, what then is?” the “Douglasist” will ask. We must conclude therefore with a brief résumé of the real causes of the existing crisis of world capitalism, and show that it cannot be remedied by a mere superficial juggling with credit. These causes are as follows:—

(1) Europe lived on its capital during the war, and was generally impoverished. Plant, roads, railways, mines, houses, etc., were allowed to deteriorate; current investments (about £300,000,000 annually) were, in Britain, transferred to purely war purposes; Britain alone borrowed £1,200,000,000 from U.S.A.; something approaching £1,000,000,000 of British investments abroad were sold (e.g., Dr. Bowley, *Division of the Product of Industry*; 2s. 6d.). Mr. McKenna has estimated British producing capacity at about eighty per cent. of pre-war. That of other countries must show a greater reduction. This means that the demand for labour is everywhere lower, and the demand for labour being reduced, the price of labour was in most cases higher than could be maintained under the new capitalist conditions, and permit the employer an average rate of profit. This fact acted as a brake on production and brought the trade boom of 1919 and 1920 to an end. This is what Keynes meant when he said that Europe could not maintain (as a result of the war) its existing population, and that millions would have to emigrate; and what Trotsky means in his new book, when he says that Capitalism can only stabilise itself on a very much lower standard of productivity, involving a partial depopulation of Europe.

(2) Europe lived at the expense of economic adjustment and organisation during the war. This happened as follows: the demand for the goods of one industry depends upon the production of goods in another; for it is in production that the “power to buy” is distributed. If, relatively to the demand, the rate of production increases or decreases uniformly in all branches, the exchange of the goods of one industry against the goods of another proceeds smoothly. If, however, as we have seen, production slows down in one branch relatively to others, the “power to buy” of the people employed in it is diminished; and this means that the “power to sell” of another branch is reduced. There is at present relative over-production in certain branches of industry, owing to the dislocation of the right proportions between the various sections of the international Division of Labour. This has been accentuated by currency inflation and exchange fluctuation and by Government regulations which checked some branches and over-stimulated others for war purposes.

During the war Central Europe was impoverished much more than was Western Europe; production slowed down relatively to production in Western Europe. The result was that England and America could not dispose of their products. This is what Trotsky and Varga mean, when they say:—

"The crisis of 1920 was . . . a profound reaction consequent upon the artificial stimulation that prevailed during the war and during the two years thereafter, and was based upon ruination and exhaustion. . . . The present European crisis is one of under-production. It is the form in which destitution reacts against the striving to produce trade and resume life on the usual capitalist level."

The depression will continue until the right proportions between the various branches of industry are more or less restored. This involves idleness in those branches which have been relatively over-stimulated and gone too far ahead. "More money" will not remedy this.

The trade boom continued up to the end of 1920 *in spite of these conditions*, partly because Inflation continued and postponed the evil day and because a market was found in South America and in the East, which placed orders to make up for war deficiencies. This demand was not, however, steady, but purely temporary. When this temporary demand came to an end, and in 1920 the demand in the East slumped owing to a famine in China and a bad monsoon in India, the tide turned in Western Europe and America.

(3) These economic conditions have been accentuated and prevented from recovery by politico-psychological conditions, resulting from the Imperialist war. The desire of the Imperialist Powers of Western Europe to control vital sources of raw material, e.g., iron, coal, oil, and to indemnify their war losses by levying tribute on the defeated countries has caused them to carve up Europe into political areas, which cut across economic units, and so has still further lowered the productivity of Europe. The fate of Silesia, Saar Valley, Austria, are examples of this; and every such settlement is a political irritant, which contains the germs of fresh conflict. Extortionate reparation demands have at the same time prevented any economic recovery in Central Europe. The more the productivity of national capitalisms decline, the more does finance capital, which controls Governments, seek to indemnify itself by using the State machine for predatory Imperialist aggression (e.g., France and Poland). Thus are sown the seeds of further Imperialist rivalry, alternating with declining economic productivity in a vicious circle. If, in fact, capitalists were all rational beings, there would not be this contradiction between the economic demands of capitalism and the political conditions created by capitalism. Actually, however, the mass of men are not rational; and though a Keynes or a Loucheur may take a detached long-view, the majority think only of their short-period interests.

(4) This growing impoverishment and decline of the "National Dividend" of capitalism causes a falling-off in the demand for labour and an increase in economic inequality, which reacts through existing social relations on the psychology of the workers, and intensifies the Class Struggle. This enhanced industrial dislocation is likely to be cumulative; for the more capitalism declines, the more the Class Struggle will be intensified, and in turn the more dislocation will take place.

The orthodox economist always says—and the "Douglasist," no doubt, will say it too—that a Proletarian Dictatorship will not cure (1) and (2), which are the root of the trouble. Quite true,

it will not *directly* do so; but it will *indirectly*; for it will cure (3) and (4), which are at the present time accentuating (1) and (2) and preventing any economic recovery. The seizure of power by the workers will cure (4) by revolutionising the class relationships of capitalism, which are the prism through which material conditions project the psychology of the Class Struggle. The seizure of power by the workers will cure (3); it will dissolve the contradiction between economic needs and political conditions by abolishing the dominance of Finance Capital with its Imperialist aims over the State.

Whether capitalism will be able to attain stability by internationalising itself is another problem of immense importance; and whether if it is able to do so along the road of Genoa and Geneva, that is desirable, is the main question, which divides Menshevism and Communism to-day. Bertrand Russell, who is likely to become the theoretical leader of English Menshevism, answers "Yes" to both questions. To examine why the Communist answers "No," must be postponed to another occasion. Suffice to indicate the following points: (a) although it might have been possible in 1918, four years of dislocation and of Imperialism have intervened since then; (b) the rivalry of powerful groups, e.g., Stinnes and Rathenau, British *v.* American oil companies, etc., is too great to permit of anything more than a temporary union; (c) the growing indebtedness of Europe to America contains germs of inter-continental rivalry between the Finance Capitals of Europe and America; (d) an international consolidation of capitalism would be undesirable, since it would inevitably strengthen the capitalists in crushing the workers' organisation and in binding them in a kind of serfdom, as depicted by Hilaire Belloc, with the aid of judicious doses of welfare work and Whitley Councils. The horizontal combination of capitalism would be accompanied by the forcible *vertical* combination of the workers.

I mention this to show that the working class cannot afford to be led astray by petit-bourgeois currency theories, which claim to be able to solve the present crisis, while leaving the more fundamental economic and social factors untouched. My analysis of the real causes of the present trade depression suffice to show, I think, what is the only possible remedy for the phthisis of world capitalism; and to show the futility of the quack remedy of "Douglasism."

THE WORKER

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Weekly

Book Reviews

A "Red" Book to be Read

By H. WYNN CUTHBERT

Communism and Society. By Wm. Paul. 200 pp. index. 2/6. Post free 2/9. Communist Party, 16, King St., London, W.C. 2.

THERE was probably more truth than some of us were prepared to admit in the anti-Socialist argument "that Socialism is always for to-morrow, but never for to-day"; that Socialists had therefore no solutions for the urgent problems of the moment, and that they were, in short, mere utopian dreamers. Much of what passed for "Socialist literature" in pre-war days afforded considerable evidence in support of this contention. It was too vague, too abstract, and often revealed a lack of even an elementary understanding of social conditions and of the problems to which those conditions gave rise.

To-day, however, under the impelling force of post-war conditions, all classes in society, and none more so than the workers themselves, have been driven to a serious consideration of immediate social realities. The present crushing out of "moderate" parties and opinions is an inevitable result of this necessity to face the naked truth about classes and their social relations, and to come to grips with the realities of life. In his endeavour to deal thus faithfully with the problems that surround him, the Communist who has made a careful study of the literature of the movement can derive much satisfaction as well as great stimulus to further effort from the fact that the theories of Communism have been proved true by the facts of history, present and past. Indeed, the Communist may fairly claim that the only true and complete explanation of social phenomena from cave man to capitalist, from the incipient struggles of Labour and Capital at the dawn of the modern era, right up to the Russian revolution and on to the international class struggle in which we find ourselves engaged at the moment, is to be found inscribed in "the classics" of international Communist literature. The growth and development of this literature is itself a study of very great interest to the social student. It represents the highest points reached by the consciousness of the workers all through the capitalist era, and that not so

much because it was written (when it was so written) by actual members of the working class, but because it accurately reflected, as in a mirror, the workings of the proletarian consciousness. That history has yet to be written, and, it is safe to add, it will have an intense human and literary interest, surpassing in its fascination any other literature of the past, for those fortunate generations who are destined to live in the Communist era which is gradually coming to the birth.

At the moment that literature finds its highest expression, so far as Britain is concerned, in William Paul's *Communism and Society*. That this statement is no exaggeration can be proved by the simple process of reading the book. The intelligent reader, whether he be Communist or anti-Communist, will at once realise that it is impossible to over-estimate the social importance and historic significance of this work. It will raise a storm of controversy not only in the Labour movement, but in political circles generally. The hostile criticisms with which (it is safe to anticipate) its appearance will be greeted by the capitalist press will afford interesting examples of capitalist psychology. The more intelligent anti-Communist critics will be quick to realise that the importance of this book lies not in any denunciation of capitalism contained in it, but because it is in itself a revelation of the degree of class consciousness of understanding of social relations to which the most advanced section of the workers has attained and to which the great masses must inevitably reach as well. Indeed, the fact that the literature of the working class movement should have reached this stage of enlightenment is clear psychological proof of the beginning of the end of capitalism. It is a book that could not have been written before the war, and it derives its significance, not so much from any theories the author may hold or from the literary ability with which he elaborates the case for Communism, but simply because it is such an amazingly accurate reflex of contemporary social conditions. Therein lies its supreme importance and value. The purpose of the book is to show that Humanity is now at the cross roads. One

way leads to Communism, Liberty and Life; the other to Capitalist Imperialism, Slavery and Death. The developing industrial conditions compels the workers, as the class with whose interests those of Humanity are united, to choose one road or the other. There is no alternative to Communism but that social disintegration and ruin to which capitalist Imperialism in staggering on to its inevitable destruction is trying to drag down the human race. This tremendous pronouncement is not made by way of a mere rhetorical flourish with which to round off an extravagant denunciation of the evils of Capitalism; it is not penned by an emotional visionary seeking to rouse the passions of the masses and to goad them on to an indulgence in useless violence and bloodshed—far from it. It is the final conclusion of a closely reasoned line of argument based on the undisputed facts of social evolution which are accurately traced from their historic origin in the past ages of primitive communism.

That the book is a tremendous challenge to the supporters of the Capitalist system goes without saying. It contains a terrible indictment of that condition of utter moral corruption into which modern "politics" have sunk. And the truth of that indictment is proved by the numerous quotations from the speeches and writings of anti-Communists to be found in its pages. But it is more than that. It is a challenge to the Labour Party as well. The futility of the divergent views and policies of the Labourites is exposed and the reasons for their inability to solve the problems of modern social conditions are lucidly explained. Yet in order to justify its existence the Labour Party must attempt some solution. It is claimed, however, that the problems begotten of Capitalism are insoluble except on lines laid down by the principles of Communism. But the Labour Party repudiates Communism! So be it. Then the Labour Party owes it to the workers whose support it demands and upon whose authority it claims to act, to find an answer to the criticisms of its position outlined with such pitiless logic in this book.

Finally the work is in itself such an exposition of Communist principles and contains so practical a programme for immediate action as to render it an education to the working class reader. Comrade Paul has long been known for his happy facility of expression and for the ability with which he is able to summarise the truths of social science.

In none of his writings has he been more successful in this respect than in the subject of this review. Opening with an analysis of the historical origins of Communism, the author explains how the productive forces destroyed primitive communism and made way for a social form based on private ownership of property and slave labour. A chapter of absorbing interest is devoted to (in many quarters a much needed lesson!) explaining the origin and function of the State as an instrument used by the ruling class to preserve their property and to suppress revolts of the subject class. The State as an instrument of class dictatorship is an essential element in any social system based on class antagonism. How the State is used to-day as the instrument of finance-capital and its political expression Imperialism is graphically portrayed. It is from this function of the State that there arises the necessity for "the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," of which much misunderstood phrase a perfectly frank and lucid explanation is given and its temporary nature emphasised. The author then presents in twenty pages the essentials of Marxian economics, and this with a simplicity of language that defies misunderstanding. The commodity status of the worker, his freedom to work or starve, the necessity for using industrial power to enforce political policy, the failure of reformist Labourism which creates revolutionary activity, all these points and many more are ably discussed. Passing on to "Capitalist Democracy in Practice," the answer is given to the "pure and simple" Parliamentarians on the one hand and to the anarchist industrialists on the other. How the dice is loaded against the workers by the Press, by education, and by the cinema is clearly shown.

Parliamentary corruption and the farce of representative government are merely external symptoms of the decay of Parliament as a means of government. The necessity has now arisen for government to be based on industry. Parliament cannot function as an expression of industrial organisation. Hence this useless organ of the body politic becomes atrophied and dies out. The workers have no use for Parliament beyond using it as a sphere for revolutionary agitation and destructive criticism. Meantime they proceed to build up the industrial organisation—workers' councils, etc., which will carry out economic, social and administrative functions, satisfying thus the immediate social needs of the masses, and appearing as

the new organ of the government. The importance of the industrial organisation cannot be sufficiently emphasised; through it is developed the class consciousness of the masses from which grows the demand for the control of industry, "the logic of which is the destruction of Capitalism." The essential conditions for the social revolution are outlined in a chapter devoted to "Tactics and Problems of the Revolution." Present day experience shows that the use of physical violence by the capitalist class must confidently be expected—and the perplexing position into which the Labourists are led in consequence must be read in order to be appreciated. But the question of the use of force has got to be faced. At the

same time capitalism produces world-wide revolutionary situations and the effect of these will be felt here.

The book concludes with an appeal to the workers couched in language of the sublimest idealism. "The transition to Communism means the dawn of a new era, in which will arise the cultural development, not of a favoured few, but of the entire human family!" One who is in sympathy with the ideals of the author may review, but cannot criticise such a work as this. Enlightening Truth defies criticism. It remains for each one of us to make this magnificent contribution to the literature of our movement as widely known as possible.

The Book Hustlers

Revolution: from 1789 to 1906. Documents selected and edited with Notes and Introductions by R. W. Postgate. 400 pp. 9s. net. Plebs Book Dept., 162a, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1.

WE are more than pleased to note how active are our friends in the book department of the Plebs League. They possess enthusiasm and initiative. Their latest enterprise is the production of a special cheap edition of R. W. Postgate's *Revolution*. This book is the fruit of a long period of patient research work and combines both industry and scholarship. It is the most masterly contribution to revolutionary history yet made by a member of the British working class movement. When *Revolution* was first published its price was 18s. net. The Plebs League has now arranged to issue a special edition, limited to its own members, at half-price—i.e., 9s. For a 400 page book—and a Pelican printed book mark you—the price is ridiculously low. Comrades who are not Pleb Leaguers, and who want the book, had better send in their 1s. subscription to the secretary and thus obtain the right to get Postgate's book at half-price rates.

Revolution is a study of the various revolutionary movements that existed between 1789 to 1906 as expressed in their

official literature and documents. By no means the least important part of the work is Postgate's valuable historical introductions to each period. The very nature and scope of the book shows how indispensable it is to the more serious minded workers in the Labour movement. The data it contains cannot be found in the ordinary text-books on industrial history, despite the fact that the economic and social undercurrents, which were the compelling forces that led to the rise of the revolutionary movement, form the warp and woof of any serious study of industrial development during the nineteenth century.

We congratulate the Plebs book department for issuing this splendid encyclopaedia of revolutionary movements at the sum of 9s. Such business ability shows that all the hustlers are not on the capitalist side; it augurs well for the Labour movement that we have some comrades who understand that commercial acumen wedded to propaganda enthusiasm is one of the most urgently needed things in working class organisations at the present moment—particularly in our book departments and literature distributing agencies.

Have you ordered your copy of

Communism and Society

By WM. PAUL

Price 2/6

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German Trade Unionism Since the War

By J. WALCHER (Berlin)

FOREWORD.

[Several years ago, many active revolutionary workers in this country believed in destroying the old unions and replacing these with organisations based upon certain theoretical concepts. The course of the industrial struggle, during the war, showed that the proper course for Communists to adopt was to fight the reactionary leaders inside the unions. The events of the last few years modified the outlook of many Communists. Judging by a series of brilliant articles written in THE WORKER, by Comrade J. R. Campbell, in opposition to certain dogmas put forward by a few theoretical "die hards" it would seem that there are one or two who still cling to the old dogma of creating special revolutionary unions. Experience is the test of revolutionary tactics. We, therefore, publish the following important statement by one of the ablest trade union tacticians in the Communist Party of Germany.—

Editor COMMUNIST REVIEW.]

AFTER the war the same phenomena were to be observed in Germany that attracted attention in other countries. The Trade Unions registered a great increase in membership. The membership of the German Trade Unions rose from approximately 2,000,000 in November, 1918, to 7,000,000 in March, 1919. This development is to be explained by the general political and economic conditions in Germany after the armistice. Naturally enough, the masses of the proletariat drawn into political life as a result of the November Revolution vacillated in their opinions and in the midst of the general insecurity searched for a point of support. They thought they found such a rallying point in the economic organisations which promised to fight against the impoverishment of the proletariat. The most prominent of these organisations were the (Socialist) "Freie Gewerkschaften," i.e., Independent Trade Unions.

With the exception of the small group of the Spartacus Bund and later the Communist Party, the proletariat was not clear as to the way out of the impossible situation. It needed, and to-day, still needs, lots of experience and agitation in order to destroy all the hopes and illusions which the workers placed in the Trade Unions and the petty bourgeois parties. It needed many revolutionary lessons in the so-called "Noske Course"; it needed to see the practical results of Democracy in the political field and of class collaboration in the economic field, to be able to convince itself that it was not only necessary to organise, but to fight. This process has in Germany not yet been brought to an end. However, it can be said that the workers' distrust of the policies of the Social Democracy and the Trade Unions is continually growing. On the one hand this feeling is evident in the increasing influence of the opposition in the Trade Unions and of the Communist Party on the

political field. On the other hand the workers and clerks who have been deceived in their hopes and illusions are again leaving the Trade Unions and becoming indifferent. With the increasing influence of the opposition in the Trade Unions this indifference will decrease and the workers who withdrew will re-enter in greater and greater numbers, since the Unions are becoming the crystallization point of the dissatisfied masses. So much for the general sketch of the development of the German Trade Union movement.

Now for the experiences of the Communists in their activity within the Trade Unions.

The Trade Unions exercised a very strong counter-revolutionary influence upon the events of November, 1918. One month before, in October, 1918, they had formed a working agreement with the German employers. According to the reliable testimony of the Syndic of the Association of German Employers, this had as its express purpose the neutralising of the threatening revolution whose rumblings were already apparent to the ears of the employers. This counter-revolutionary activity of the Trade Union leaders was unknown to the public and thus it is comprehensible that entirely other questions stood in the foreground at the Charter Convention of the Communist Party at the end of December, 1918—at a time when the workers were still daily demonstrating in hundreds of thousands in the streets in all parts of the country. The Charter Convention paid only superficial attention to the Trade Union questions. However, it was at that time already apparent that a number of the delegates had a very simple attitude to this problem—the Trade Unions are counter-revolutionary; therefore they must be destroyed and we must immediately set to work on the founding of new Trade Unions. Comrade Rosa Luxemburg at that time replied in the name of the Provisional Central Committee that the problem is in no way as simple as all that, and that the Party would subsequently have to go to the bottom of the question in a fundamental discussion of the matter. The stormy events of the next few weeks and months, in which Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and thousands of our best comrades were murdered by the counter-revolution, and which compelled the newly born Party to carry on its work illegally, made a calm discussion of the Trade Union question impossible. In the interim the slogan, “Out of the Trade Unions into the Unions!” was propagated in Berlin, Central Germany, the Northern districts, the industrial region of Westphalia and the Rhineland and on the coast.

The leaders of the Communist Party, with Paul Levi at their head, not only did nothing against the spread of this tendency, but, on the contrary, supported it with propaganda and material. With the consent of Levi a Union of Railwaymen, Agricultural and Mining Workers was founded. The practical experiences which were made in this field have done more than anything else to convince the Communists that the propaganda for the destruction of the Trade Unions and the foundation of new Unions is absolutely false, and only facilitates the misuse of the masses by the Trade Union bureaucracy. A few months after the foundation of the Railwaymen's Union, which had spread over the entire country and was divided into 21 districts, 18 of the 21 districts demanded in a National Convention that the Union be dissolved and the member-

ship re-enter the German Railwaymen's Union. Similar experiences were made with the Agricultural Workers' Union. As a result of these facts there arose in the Summer of 1919 serious differences of opinion in the Party on the Trade Union question. A number of comrades held that, in spite of the practical experiences, the Party was obliged to destroy the Trade Unions.

Because of the differences of opinion, here sketched out in short, there arose sharp conflicts at the Heidelberg Congress of the Party in October, 1919, which led to a split. Thenceforth, there existed two Communist Parties—the Communist Party (Spartakusbund) and the Communist Labour Party. The first of the two stood for the conquest of the Trade Unions and against the founding of new Unions. In addition, the two parties differed upon participation in Parliament. The Communist Labour Party was for the destruction of the Trade Unions and against Parliamentary activity. To-day, after two years of development, it can safely be said that the tactics of the Communist Party, the conquest of the Trade Unions, has proven its correctness. While the Communist Party has grown larger and stronger, while its influence among the workers is continually growing, and in the Trade Unions the Communists, as the opposition, have already rallied around their banner large numbers of the Unionists and often dictated to the reformist Trade Union bureaucrats, the Communist Labour Party (K.A.P.D.), is of no actual importance. The Unions founded artificially have either partially dissolved, or have, like the Miners' Union, discarded their former principles and adopted those of the Red Trade Union International. The Allgemeine Arbeiter-Union (General Labour Union), which has a few adherents in Hamburg, Berlin, and some other cities, is absolutely insignificant. The "Union of Hand and Brain Workers," which was formed by the fusion of the Miners' Union, the Agricultural Workers' Union, and the Hand and Brain Workers' Union, has affiliated to the Red Trade Union International and recognises the policy of the Communist Party in the Trade Unions as correct. Further, the Union aims to obtain admission in the Trade Unions, in order to strengthen the opposition therein. At first only a few words were spoken upon our tactics in the Trade Unions. Our methodical work in the Trade Unions really first began after the unity convention in December, 1920. A special office was attached to the Central Committee of the Party, exclusively devoted to Communist propaganda in the Trade Unions. This bureau is called "Reichsgewerkschaftszentrale der K.P.D." (National Trade Union Headquarters of the German Communist Party), and now consists of five comrades specialising in Trade Union work. In order to ensure a united front of all comrades in the Trade Unions, we called upon the Party members to organise all the Communists in the Trade Unions to carry on discussions, and create groups, and present the Communist view-point on all questions that came before the Trade Union. In short, we have carried through the tactics of "cells" as proposed by the Second Congress of the Communist International.

In Germany there are fifty Trade Unions organised in the Allgemeine Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (General Federation of Labour). We have divided these organisations into 15 industrial

groups, at the head of which there stands a responsible comrade of the Trade Union section of the Communist Party. Furthermore, in each of the 28 districts of the Party there is a comrade in charge of the Communist work in the Trade Unions.

Naturally the organisational aspect of our activity was not without friction. The Trade Union bureaucracy rightfully saw in our tactics a great danger to their position, and commenced a slander campaign against the Communists. They attempted to slander the Communists in every possible way and thus to sow distrust between the Communists and the rest of the working class. Because of the huge apparatus of the Trade Union bureaucrats they had some measure of success in their attempts to incite the workers against the Communists. It required some time for the workers, who had been incited against the Communists, to gain confidence in us. The workers very soon realised that we are engaged in the determined defence of the interests of the entire labour movement. In this situation we made the mistake (in spring, 1921) of convoking open national conferences of all the elements of the opposition. That is, the calling of the conferences was no error, but it was merely a mistake to hold these conferences in public, and not to restrict them to our Party comrades. The Trade Union bureaucracy took advantage of these conferences to expel a number of our comrades. It did not even confine itself to the expulsion of individual members but went so far as to expel entire local organisations out of the Unions. Thus, for instance, in the Building Workers' Union the Chemnitz district organisation was expelled and the Halle district organisation was also expelled from the Metal Workers' Union. We are now at work in an endeavour to secure the re-admission of these locals to the Trade Union. In Halle we have succeeded, and the Convention of the Building Workers' Union in March will show whether our influence is strong enough to put through the re-admittance of the Chemnitz organisation. These experiences have naturally taught our comrades very much and the Trade Union bureaucracy cannot to-day expel our comrades so easily and summarily. It may be said that our methodical work in the Trade Unions has already created a state of affairs where not only expulsions of Communists are on the decrease, but the Trade Union bureaucracy is now being compelled by the Union membership to reconsider the cases of Communists formerly expelled. What is more, the Social-Democrats and the Independent Socialists have now "cells" in the Trade Unions.

Naturally the organisation question is only the prerequisite for the work of our comrades in the Trade Unions. We first had to make a number of mistakes and go through various practical experiences before we obtained the clarity necessary to win the confidence of the Trade Union members. At the beginning, our comrades believed that all that was necessary was to convince the masses of the correctness of our views in long theoretical discussions with the Trade Union bureaucracy. The detail work in the Trade Unions was almost entirely neglected, which thus gave the Union leaders a very plausible argument. They said: "the Communists are merely beautiful phrase-mongers, but pay no attention to practical work and the lesser problems of the Union members." This cheap argument was very soon taken out of their hands. Our com-

rades are to-day very active not only as Union officials, but also as treasurers, leaflet distributors, branch secretaries. In short, they are performing all the detailed work in the Trade Unions. Only then can they obtain contact with all the Union members, and then it is easy to win the workers for our cause. We take advantage of every opportunity to bring forward our views in the spirit of the Red Trade Union International. Whether it be a question of the increase of dues, the employment of secretaries, questions as to leaflets, newspapers, wage agreements, industrial disputes or labour congresses, our groups in the Unions take a stand on the question, define our views in resolutions and motions, and determine upon speakers for the various points in the order of business. In all general meetings and congresses the Communists act as a united body and decide upon what our speakers must say, and thus attempt to unite the Union members on our position by means of motions and resolutions.

This is a short sketch of the activities of our comrades in the Trade Unions. We have already had a large measure of success and have reason to expect still greater successes in the future. We have already mentioned the decrease in the number of expulsions from the Unions and the re-admittance of the expelled members, which is entirely due to the increasing influence of the Communists in the Trade Unions. Some figures of recent date will serve to confirm this statement. Thus we had 114 delegates at the congress of the Metal Workers' Union in Jena, in September, 1921, who represented over one-third of the membership of the Union. The Union has now about 1,500,000 members. In Berlin, for instance, our strength is so great that in the election of delegates to the congress the Communist list received 28,000 votes, against 31,000 votes for the Social-Democrats and the Independent Socialists together. Our influence among the Berlin Metal Workers is almost as great as that of the two Socialist Parties united. The state of affairs in other Unions is not quite so favourable, but is developing along similar lines. In various provinces, as, for instance, Rhenish Westphalia and Wurttemberg, the Communists have control of entire city and town organisations. In various Unions our influence goes as far as the Executive.

We believe that this short report will give an idea of our hitherto experiences. We can sum up as the conclusion from all our activity that the slogan "founding new revolutionary Trade Unions," in other words, the destruction of the present Trade Unions, is absolutely false. As a result of our practical experiences we can say that the tactics decided upon by the Second Congress of the Communist International have proven to be the best and that only by the Communists remaining within the Trade Unions and working therein, can the cause of Communism and the World Revolution be served. We are convinced that you in England will take our experiences into account in deciding upon your tactics in the English Labour movement. These experiences have already been successful in Germany, Soviet Russia, Czecho-Slovakia and Austria.

We are sending you, together with this article, a number of important publications of the Party, from which you will be able to obtain further information upon our work in the Trade Unions.



The Comintern

Resolutions on the United Front

THE following resolution on the United Front, presented by the Presidium of the Comintern, has been adopted; the votes of the French, Italian, and Spanish delegations were against.

"After a discussion which has cleared up all misunderstandings and has shown that the tactics of the united front as it is proposed by the Executive does not mean an enfeeblement of the opposition to reformism but the continuation and development of the tactics followed by the Third Congress and by the national sections, the Enlarged Executive confirms the December Theses on the united front. It instructs the Presidium to come to an agreement with the delegations of all the important sections regarding the immediate measures which should be taken in the respective countries for the carrying out of the determined tactics, and which, naturally, should be adapted to the situation of each country."

The defeated motion of the French, Italian and Spanish delegation was as follows:—

"The Enlarged Executive declares that the Theses of the Third Congress concerning the Appeal to the Masses and the gathering of all workers with the aim of struggling for the immediate demands of the proletariat, shall be scrupulously applied by all sections of the Communist International. These should utilise the tendency for the unification of the fight, which tendency is becoming manifest amongst the workers.

But it declares that this necessary action should be led without any formal approach to other political parties, which are in-

capable to serve, efficiently, even the most pressing demands of the working class."

On the question of the proposed Conference of the three Internationals the following resolution has been carried:—

"The Enlarged Executive of the Communist International, taking note of the proposition of the Vienna International, declares for the participation of the parties of the Communist International in the projected Conference.

The Enlarged Executive of the Communist International also proposes the participation in the Conference of all industrialist Federations and Associations both national and international; of the Red International of Labour Unions; of the International Federation of Trade Unions (Amsterdam International); of the C.G.T.U. of France; of the Italian Syndicalist Union (U.S.I.); of the American Federation of Labour and of other autonomous industrial associations. The Communist International also considers it necessary to invite the principal anarcho-sindicalist organisations: the I.W.W., the Shop Stewards, etc. The International Conference ought to be an effective and universal representation of all Labour organisations of the world. The world conference of labour organisations should put one great task before itself, *the organisation of the defensive fight of the working class against international Capital.*

The capitalists of the whole world have passed into a systematic offensive against the working class. Everywhere wages are being reduced, working hours lengthened; and unemployment, taxes, and hunger and destitution are increasing.

World imperialism utilises the divisions of the working class and endeavours to impose upon its shoulders the burden of the financial and economic consequences of the world butchery.

The Imperialist policy continued after the war, and which finds its most striking expression in the Versailles Treaty, has divided the whole world into new rival camps, and has led to new attempts of imperialist alliances which must fatally lead to new wars. Washington, and Genoa, are the halting places of this new expedition to ravage the world and are the workshops where future wars are forged.

Even the leaders of the International Union of Transport Workers (affiliated with Amsterdam) and recently also those of the International Federation of Metal Workers (also affiliated with Amsterdam) denounce before the proletariat the imminence of this danger.

In face of such a situation, it is necessary that all workers should close their ranks without any delay, for the defence of their most elementary and immediate interest. Those, who under these conditions reject the formation of a united front, prove with it that they are partisans of a united front of the workers with the bourgeoisie.

The Communist International proposes that no other questions should be dealt with at the future International Conference but those concerning immediate, practical, and concrete policies of the working masses. The agenda of the International Conference shall have only one objective, namely to secure unity in action of the working masses, as this can immediately be realised in spite of the existing essential political divergencies.

The masses who are quite aware of the deep motives of these divergencies, nevertheless, together with the great majority of the working class, demand unity in action for the urgent and vital interests of the proletariat. This imperative will, arising from the depth of the working masses, is in complete accordance with the attitude of the Communist International.

The Communist International maintains its fundamental conception of the tasks of the working class in the present revolutionary period. It proclaims that only the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet system can lead the world out of capitalist anarchy. But it also knows that the way leading to the final battle passes through the struggle of the united working masses against the attacks

of the capitalist class; and this is the reason why it is prepared to participate in an International Conference which would serve the cause of united proletarian action.

The Communist International accepts the agenda of the Conference as proposed by the Vienna International, viz., a defensive fight against the capitalist offensive and a struggle against reaction, as an addition it proposes to complete the agenda with the following items:—

1. Preparation of the fight against new imperialist wars.
2. Relief action for the reconstruction of the economic life of Soviet Russia.
3. The reconstruction of the devastated territories and the attitude towards the imperialist treaties of Versailles.

The Enlarged Executive is of the opinion that owing to the present world situation, it is necessary that the International Conference of labour organisations should meet at the same times as the economic conference of the various countries in Genoa: this has already been suggested by the Socialist Party of Denmark belonging to the Second International.

The progress of events assures the victory of communist ideas amidst the world proletariat. The quicker the gathering of the great masses for the defence of their elementary interests, the nearer will be the victory of Communism.

To this declaration the French, Italian and Spanish delegations put forward the following motion, which was defeated:—

“The Enlarged Executive, after discussing the invitation addressed to the Communist International by the Vienna International for the participation in a common conference of the Second, 2½, and Amsterdam Internationals, decides not to accept it.”

After the vote in the name of the French, Italian, and Spanish delegations, Marcel Cachin read the following declaration:—

“We have accomplished the mandate with which we have been charged. We have expressed our attitude and defended our motions up to the vote. It seems to us that the reformists of all countries are parting more and more with the working class and that they follow a policy contrary to the daily defence and welfare of the proletariat.

We do not doubt that they will be, under any conditions, the adversaries and saboteurs of the real united front of the working masses.

The Executive is in accord with us at this point, though they do not entirely accept our viewpoint.

We bow before the majority which has accepted the tactics proposed by them.

We ask you, however, to consider, very carefully, the significance of the vote. Three countries have unitedly expressed their reservation. We record with satisfaction that through repeated declarations the Executive pledged itself to take into

account the situation with regard to the practical execution of these decisions in the various countries.

As to ourselves, comrades, you may be assured, that in this case as in any other one, we remain disciplined and true to the resolutions of the Third International. The debate which has ended today has shown that the Communist International continues to be more than ever the vanguard of the world proletarian revolution."

Report of the Berlin Conference

The Three Internationals Meet

Declaration of the Delegation of the 3rd International

THE Delegation of the Comintern considers it their duty to issue the following declaration, already issued at the commencement of the negotiations with the representatives of the Executives of the 2nd and Vienna Internationals:—

It is the first time since 1914, the last session of the International Bureau in Brussels, shortly followed by the world war and the breakdown of the 2nd International, that the representatives of all parts of the International Labour movement, who once belonged in a united international organisation, sat down at the same table for negotiations.

This fact should not pass unnoticed. This Conference should not start without stating to the international proletariat, what caused the great split. It was caused due to the fact that certain elements of the working class movement entered into a temporary community of interest with the Imperialist States, the effect of which was expressed in a counter-revolutionary attitude on the part of many parties and organisations of the working class.

As long as the working class is not united in a common fight for its interests against international capital, as long as it does not break with the coalition with the representatives of Capitalism, and does not enter the fight for political power, so long the split will last and will mean one of the most important sources of capitalist power. This fact cannot be altered by any complaints or by any curses. Because the working class has not

yet awakened for its united fight, because it has not yet learnt, in the struggle, to understand that Capitalism can only be overcome when the great majority of the proletariat seize power by a revolutionary fight, and establishes the dictatorship of the working masses, therefore we declare that the unification of the three international organisations of the proletariat, which at present follow different policies is entirely utopian, and therefore harmful. But this understanding does not prevent us from seeing what the general world situation imperatively demands.

The working class must unite in a defensive fight against world capital, in spite of all the deep separating divergencies. When, at the conclusion of the war the armed enthusiastic working masses returned home they realised that democracy, and the welfare of the people for which they were alleged to have bled, was nothing else than a Capitalist lie to mask and hide the fight of capital for interest and profit. At that time would have been the opportunity to have overturned the Capitalist world. But the irresoluteness of the large masses of the working class and the democratic illusions which were spread among them, which were systematically fostered by the Reformist parties, with their open and hidden coalition with the bourgeoisie, prevented the majority of the working class from following the glorious example of the Russian Revolution. Instead, many of them supported world capital in its attack upon the first attack of the proletariat. The working masses of

the whole world can now feel, on their own bodies, the consequences of this policy. The international bourgeoisie is incapable of bringing order into the world except upon the basis of the capitalist system and this means to enforce the pre-war standard of life and even worse upon the proletariat. For the capitalist world, shattered to its deepest foundations, has still sufficient strength to try to impose the expenses of the war upon the proletariat.

The world bourgeoisie has not yet given up the hope that it may realise a big part of its war debts through the increase of the exploitation of the German proletariat, through the reparations payment, through the exploitation of the whole Russian nation and a peaceful penetration of Soviet Russia (whom to defeat with arms the bourgeoisie was incapable), through the exploitation of the newly formed states who are used as instruments of the military and Imperialist policy of the big states, and through the increased exploitation and suppression of the colonial and semi-colonial nations (China, Persia, Turkey). But certain circles of the International bourgeoisie who have not yet understood that it is hopeless to extort hundreds of milliards from the impoverished masses of the defeated States, or from Soviet Russia and the Colonies, even they understand—were they successful in attaining their object—that such enormous extortions would not be sufficient for Capitalist reconstruction. Therefore, the bourgeoisie, all over the world, is launching its offensive against the working class. It tries to lengthen the hours of labour in all countries, in spite of unemployment. And for this reason it demands reductions in wages. In this way, it is hoped, that the International working class shall pay all the expenses of the war, and thus create means for the new strengthening of the Capitalist world system. This position places important problems before the international working class. Either it will unite now for the defensive against all the attempts of international Capital, either it will march unitedly against the attempt of the economic exploitation of defeated countries, of Soviet Russia and of the Colonies, either it will struggle against the waves of lock-outs, and fight for the cancellation of the Versailles Treaty, for the recognition of Soviet Russia and for her economic reconstruction and for the control of production in all countries, or it

will bear the expenses of the Peace with its bones and its health in the same way as it paid for the expenses of the war.

The Communist International calls upon the working masses, without consideration of their opinion regarding the ways and means leading to the final victory, that they should unite for the fight against the *present* offensive of capital and attack it in a most energetic manner. The Communist International has, therefore, issued the slogan of the Proletarian United Front for the fight against the bourgeoisie, and has welcomed the initiative of the Vienna International in calling for an International Labour Congress. It sees in the present and in the proposed Labour Conference a means for united action in the coming labour fights.

To ensure that this Conference shall be a successful one, the Communist International proposes that all proletarian industrial organisations should be invited to participate. The Trade Unions comprise the majority of the proletariat. They comprise the working masses, irrespective of their political differences, they comprise the masses struggling to secure their daily needs. If the International Labour Conference is not to be a mere demonstration but a real unity of the international in action, then the Trade Unions must participate in it. The split of the central organisations of the proletariat and even of the mass organisations is no reason against but is a reason for, the participation of the Trade Unions. Just because the Trade Unions are grouped around two international centres, is the most urgent reason for united action at the present moment. We propose an invitation be sent to the Amsterdam Trade Union International, to the Red International Labour Union, to the Syndicalist organisations which stand apart from them; invitations also to be sent to the American Federation of Labour, and the various other independent industrial organisations.

As to the proletarian political parties, we propose that besides the representatives of the parties affiliated with the three Executives, also those Parties and Party groups should be invited which stand outside these International organisations. We have in mind all the Anarchist and Syndicalist organisations, etc. They are not big in number but they comprise honest revolutionary labour elements who should be enrolled in the general fighting front of the proletariat.

Strong differences separate us from these groups. We consider it to be our

duty to try and secure an understanding with them, regarding the problems of *united action*, at a time when the situation has necessitated the making of an agreement between us and the Reformist Parties whose policy reacted against the interests of the working class and furthered the deviations and errors of these Left Wing elements.

We consider the calling of an International Labour Conference in the shortest time as being highly imperative. The Genoa Conference shows an attempt of world capital to introduce a new division of the world, a new world capitalist system. During the Versailles Conference the international working class remained irresolute and incapable of action. Only Soviet Russia fought, arms in hand, against the attempt of capital to enslave the whole world. To-day, after three years of capitalist decomposition and chaos, Soviet Russia stands untouched and victorious in the military sense. But she is the subject of heavy "peaceful" attacks of world capital. Now is the time to give practical help to the first State, which has created and formed the first wave of the world revolution, against the attempts to force it into economic capitulation.

The German masses, in spite of their desperate resistance, have become the wage reducers of the world proletariat—thanks to the complete capitulation of the German bourgeoisie before the Entente. The fight of the German masses against the Reparations policy of the allied powers is a fight for the standard of life for the working masses in the Entente countries and in America.

If the international proletariat does not oppose with all its energy the policy of the Versailles Treaty, the attempts to economically strangle Soviet Russia, the ravaging of the Colonies, and the exploitation of the population of the newly formed States, one cannot even dream of palliating unemployment or of minimising the economic crisis. Therefore, the international working class must raise its voice during the Genoa Conference. It must try to force the Genoa Conference, whose work is alleged to be the reconstruction of world economy, to be busy with the labour question, with unemployment, and with the 8-hour day. There

must not be another Versailles, where the representatives of certain labour organisations, behind whom there were no fighting masses, requested the Entente, with hats in their hands, to consider the interests of the proletariat. Relying upon fighting masses the international representatives of the working class must call to account the representatives of world capital, gathering in Genoa, for the promises so shamefully broken.

The Delegation of the Communist International, without concealing for a single minute the vital things that separate us from the Reformist and semi-Reformist Parties, is prepared to join and to support with all its power the united fight of the international proletariat. It can do this the easier, because it is convinced that every day of the fight, and every experience of the fight, will show ever more clearly to the masses of all countries that no compromise with Capital can secure them peace and decent conditions. To attain these a victory of the proletariat is first of all necessary. In this new struggle the proletariat will begin to understand that it must take in its own strong hands the organisation of the world in order to build it up in accordance with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population.

The Delegation of the Communist International, for all these reasons, proposes that at the coming International Conference only those concrete questions should be dealt with which serve the *immediate practical united action of the working masses* and which do not separate but solidify them. Therefore, the Delegation of the Communist International proposes that the following be the agenda for the International Conference:—

1. The fight against the Capitalist offensive.
2. The fight against reaction.
3. The preparation of the fight against a new imperialist war.
4. Support and reconstruction of the Russian Soviet Republic.
5. The Versailles Treaty and the reconstruction of the devastated territories.

Signed,
Delegation of the Executive of the
Communist International.

Diary of the Berlin Conference

THE FIRST DAY.

THE Conference opened on the 2nd of April in one of the halls of the German Parliament.

The delegations were composed of the following members:—Third International: Bucharin, Radek, Zetkin, Frossard, Stoyanovitch, Smeral, Katayama, Rosmer, Warski. As guests: Bujanovioz and Vuyovitch.

Vienna International: Adler, Crispicn, Longuet, Bauer, Czermak, Wallhead, Martov, Kalmin, Faure, Grimm. As guests: Schrieder, Abramovitch, Kaplamski, Bracke, Locker, Dittman, Compere and Morel.

Second International: Vandervelde, Huysmans, Wels, MacDonald, Tom Shaw, Gosling, Vliegen, Stanning, Mueller, Tcheretelli. As guests: de Man, Dr. Adolf Braun, Schiff, Lutkens, Bovina, Grilles, Cox.

Socialist Party of Italy: Serrati with decisive voice, Adelchi and Domenico with consultative voice.

The presidium of the Conference consisted of Clara Zetkin, Friedrich Adler, Tom Shaw.

Friedrich Adler opened the Conference with a speech explaining the motives which led the Vienna International to make the present Conference possible.

Then Clara Zetkin made a declaration in the name of the Executive of the Third International, and described the history of the Labour International, or better, of the Labour movement, since 1914, when the shameful attitude of the Second International caused the split of the International. (Full statement of this declaration appears on page 52).

In the afternoon session Vandervelde spoke on behalf of the Executive of the Second International. Amongst other things he declared:—

“We have some reserve with regard to the agenda. It is planned that we should examine the means how to discharge the German proletariat from the obligations of the Versailles Treaty. This solution would please undoubtedly the German proletariat, and even Stinnes, but it would please even less the workers of the countries who have suffered mostly the damages of the war and who have made large advances for reconstruction.

But there is one point where we agree with the Viennese and Third Internationals; it is desirable to organise the

socialist proletariat of the whole world for the defensive against capitalist reaction. . . .” We have nothing against common conferences.

We want to put some questions before the Third International.

First, we must demand guarantees of good faith, guarantees against the formation of nuclei, against attempts of new splits to break the proletarian unity in those countries where this is still existing.

The second question is, that in the movement, when the defence of the proletariat is being organised, also those comrades of the Border States—as those of Ukrania, Georgia, Armenia, who are in a clip between Kemalist and the Red army—should have a word against that foreign influence, which they are calling—in my opinion with full right—bolshevist imperialism.

And there is a third serious question, which has deeply moved the socialists of all countries. This is the question of political prisoners. We ask the Communists: Will you allow those who are in prison at present in Russia, and who are in danger of being executed, who, after having starved in prisons under the Tsar are now starving in the same prisons under the regime of the Third International, will you allow them to be present at this Conference?

I must state at once, that these three questions should be solved first of all.

After the speech of Vandervelde Paul Faure read the declaration of the Vienna International. The following are the most important parts of this declaration:—

“... The Executive of the Vienna International states that the working masses of Russia, under the dictatorship of the Communist Party, are deprived of every political right and of every industrial freedom; the socialist parties are persecuted with terroristic means and are deprived of any possibility of activity, and that the right of self-determination of socialist Georgia has been violated by military occupation. The Executive of the Vienna International considers as a necessary condition for a real united front of the whole proletariat, that equal political rights should be given back to the socialist parties of Russia, freedom of political and industrial autonomy to the workers and peasants of Russia, and the right of self-determination to the working population of Georgia.”

“... The Executive of the Vienna

International further contends that in many capitalist countries, even in those where the Right Wing Socialist Parties are participating in the Government, Left Wing Socialist and Communist Parties are oppressed by brutal persecutions, and the right of self-determination of the nations is violated by such governments. The Executive declares as an indispensable condition of the proletarian united front that all socialist parties should make every effort to re-establish full freedom of speech for the Communist Parties as well as for all socialist parties and to enforce the liberation of the numerous victims of revolutionary struggles who are still suffering in prisons. . . ."

After the provocative utterance of Vandervelde and the statement of the Vienna International, Radek made a great speech, the important parts of which we translate from the Berlin Independent Socialist organ, *Freiheit*. He said:—

"In our declaration we placed ourselves on the ground of the invitation made by the Viennese International. We desist from balancing the accounts of the past, not because of our liking to suppress that which ought to be said, but because we have before our eyes the misery of the present moment.

The representative of the Second International considers it to be important to draw a certain balance from his side. He spoke in the same manner as before in Basel, when he made an oath to lead the International to fight against the war. In the meantime this voice of Vandervelde was drowned by the roaring of the cannons. If we draw a balance of the past eight years, the balance which will perhaps blow up this Conference, and it will not sound pleasant to the ears of the late royal minister of Belgium. He has forgotten the sea of blood and the mountains of corpses. After such a balance he comes to us and says: 'A little confidence, a minimum of confidence, the slightest confidence, and if you do not give us this confidence on credit we have nothing to discuss about,' and we answer in the face of citizen Vandervelde: 'Not a farthing of confidence.'

We ask the representative of the Second International: Where is the tribunal of all the three Internationals who have to try the murderers of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht? They have been sentenced by the emergency tribunal of the Berlin Guards Division, and if you dare to speak of the Russian tribunals, then we tell you: 'Hands off, ere they

have been washed clean from the blood of Luxemburg, Liebknecht and Levine.'

If you are fighting now together with us, together with the proletariat of all countries, for a piece of bread, then the workers will draw near each other in the fight and then we shall judge you not on the basis of the terrible past but on the ground of the new facts. As long as these facts are not at hand we go into these negotiations, cold to the very heart with the deepest mistrust that you will fail ten times in the fight.

Now about the conditions. The Second International has attempted a daring attack and the Viennese International *nolens-volens* (willingly or unwillingly) has made some music to accompany it. I speak of the conditions that the gentlemen of the Second International have put before us.

After having refuted the accusations *re* Georgia and the Russian Social Revolutionaries, Radek concluded:

"We are not accustomed to try to avoid discussions. Therefore, if you want discussion we shall make a *tabula rasa* (clear table) at this Conference and shall put before you the balance of the eight years. We shall remind the German Social-Democrats who are now shouting 'Hands off the Social Revolutionaries!' that the fighters of the Bavarian Soviet Republic have been imprisoned since 1919 in Bavaria, and the militants of the March rising are also still in German prisons.

In conclusion, we propose a *Conference of action* which has to deliberate what we ought to do in this moment when Capital is gathering its forces. That is *our programme*. If you desire besides this to lead discussions we are prepared to go into the discussions. But in order to tranquillise the delicate feelings of Vandervelde and Wels with regard to the fate of the accused Social Revolutionaries: Show that you are better men than we are—propose to exchange the Russian terrorists sanctified by you, for the militants of the Bavarian Soviet Republic and of the March action—and we shall accept the proposals.

For these reasons I say to you, if you want to smash this Conference you may do so. But *you* will bear the responsibility for it."

SECOND DAY.

There was no meeting on the 3rd of April owing to the differences which had become so manifest in the speeches of Vandervelde and Radek. The delegation of the Comintern sent a written communication to both the Second and the

Vienna International explaining their attitude with regard to the incident and the continuation of the Conference.

THIRD DAY.

After Clara Zetkin had opened the meeting, Ramsay MacDonald spoke in the name of the Second International. His speech may be summarised in the following words:—

“I must admit that I have come here with very little hope. But when on Sunday the representative of the Third International spoke, even that little hope disappeared. The representatives of the Second International have already clearly declared, in Frankfort, that they are willing to come to a Conference, but before there may be any question of common action, some questions must be made clear. We cannot come to common actions, because you do not give us guarantees. Vandervelde has already mentioned the Border States. Georgia has had a socialist government, the party which was responsible for this government is sitting at this table. They have been suppressed with armed force. How can we meet together, how can we act together as long as the military occupation of Georgia is not raised. We demand the formation of an impartial commission to examine the position. You cannot have at one moment a military imperialistic attitude and transform it in the next moment into a communist one. You keep the political prisoners in the prisons of Russia. You operate, in order to raise our feelings, with the names of Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Rosa Luxemburg wanted to free Germany. The political prisoners, kept in your prisons, wanted to free Russia. There is no question now to talk about tactics. In the name of the Second International I give the following declaration and repeat the conditions already put forward by Vandervelde.

- (1) No formation of nuclei.
- (2) A commission of inquiry of the three Internationals to examine the Georgian and similar questions.
- (3) The release of all political prisoners, judicial process against the accused Social Revolutionaries under the control of delegates of the three Internationals.

Vandervelde shall have the right to be present at the trial and to lead the defence.

If these conditions will be accepted, or satisfactorily settled, then the Conference proposal by the Vienna International may take place. I ask you, once more: Are

we comrades in common action? If not, let us go further on our different ways.”

Serrati was the next speaker. He stated: “We did not come here to judge each other. Mistakes have been committed by each side. The mistakes of the Communist International were errors in their endeavour to help the proletarian revolution: but the mistakes of the Second International were errors committed in aiding the bourgeoisie. Our political actions must be decided from a viewpoint of historical necessity. If we would have been in the place of the Russian Communists, perhaps we would have acted in the same way. Russia is now threatened by a grave danger, that of a “pacific” infiltration by capitalism. Our duty is to defend the Russian revolution, even if it would be against the very Bolsheviks. The moment will come when Russian Communists, Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries will be compelled to defend the Russian revolution shoulder by shoulder. Therefore, there is no reason to put conditions which could only aggravate still more the situation.”

Otto Baner then spoke. He declared that the chief question is to unite the forces of the three Internationals. It is necessary to have definite conditions for these collaborations, but these conditions must be different from those put forward by the Second International. It is true, the Bolsheviks have violated the freedom of Georgia, and the Vienna International protests against this action, but the parties of the Second International have also violated the right of self-determination of several nations, also on the question of political prisoners the Second International has committed just as grave acts as the Bolsheviks. He opposed the conditions of the Second International.

Radek then replied to MacDonald, Serrati and Bauer.

Radek declared that he would answer MacDonald first in a general way, and then deal with the conditions put forward by the Second International. MacDonald has presented the programme of Lloyd George. He spoke of the freedom of small nations, but what is the attitude of his party with regard to Ireland, Egypt and India? Great Britain is always for the freedom of small nations as far as they are not yet under her domination. Speaking of the Border States, Georgia, etc., you support British imperialism, which tries to secure Batoum, the door of invasion towards the Russian Naphtha. Why did not the Second International

demand the independence of Georgia during the rule of the Tsar?

Radek quoted secret documents of the Menshevik Government of Georgia, found in Tiflis by the Red Army, and reproached the Georgian Mensheviks with having collaborated first with German imperialism and then with British imperialism. Nobody amongst you denies that Russia is a revolutionary State whom to support is in the interest of the world proletariat.

We say to MacDonald: "You are an unconscious instrument of British imperialism." The attitude of the Vienna International, who criticises in equal measure both the Second and the Third Internationals, may be explained by the intermediate position of this organisation.

Our attitude in favour of the united front is not a manoeuvre. Whatever you may reproach us with you cannot reproach us with fear of the fight. The actual misery compels us to participate in the common fight.

I repeat, that we do not accept the conditions which you put before us, but we are prepared to make an agreement with you in order to arrive at a minimum of accord. As for the question of trade union nuclei, we have never intended to split the Trade Unions. The Theses of the Second Congress showed that certain Left Wing elements left the Comintern because it is against the splitting of trade unions—but as long as we exist we shall never renounce the fight against reformism.

You wish to examine the question of Georgia and of the other Border States. We, too, should like to examine the questions of Ireland, Egypt and India. We are also prepared to submit to the commission the documents on Georgia, which we shall publish in the near future.

You have not made sufficiently concrete your question with regard to political prisoners; we understand that Vandervelde would like to go to Moscow to defend the prisoners before the revolutionary tribunal. We shall do everything to make this possible for him, though he is, so to say, an accomplice of the accused, but in no case is Soviet Russia inclined to place herself under the protectorate or control of the Second International.

We know that a deep gulf separates us yet, but the common fight will accomplish the united front without any conditions.

FOURTH DAY.

Adler read a common declaration of the three Internationals. The following is the text:—

The Conference is of opinion that however desirable the unification of the organisation of the proletariat is, at this moment, there cannot be any question of the need for common deliberations for common actions with concrete aims.

The Conference proposes to form a committee of organisation composed of nine members, whose task it will be to prepare a further Conference of the three Executives on a broader scale, which should also admit Parties not belonging to any of the three organisations.

The Conference urges as useful that a committee of organisation be formed which should make an attempt to introduce a parley between the R.I.L.U. and Amsterdam International and to examine the question of the maintaining and reconstruction of the Single Industrial Front on a national and international scale.

The Conference records that the trial of the 47 Russian Social Revolutionaries will be open, and that the Soviet Press has declared already, before this Conference, that the lives of the accused are not in danger. The representatives of the three Executives may assist at the trial as audience.

The Conference records that each of the three Executives has declared they are prepared to examine the documents which shall be placed before them by the parties regarding the Georgian question. The Committee of Organisation will correct the results of this examination and put them before the future Conference of the three Executives.

The Conference records that the representatives of the Second International have declared it impossible to organise a General Conference in April, i.e., during the Genoa Conference. The General Conference, unable to meet during this month, have decided to express the united will of the conscious proletariat immediately by international mass action.

The Conference calls upon the organised workers to organise mass demonstrations on the 20th of April or the 1st of May—

For—The eight hours day.

Against—Unemployment, greatly increased by the policy of the reparations of the Capitalist powers.

For—The united action of the proletariat against the capitalist offensive.

For—The Russian revolution.

For—The starving Russians.

For—The re-establishment of the economic and political relations of all countries with Soviet Russia.

For—The reconstruction of the united proletarian front in every country and in the International.

These declarations have been signed by Karl Radek, Zetkin, Frossard (Third International); Adler, Bracke, Crispian (Two and a Half International); Vandervelde, MacDonald, Wels (Second International).

After the acceptance of the common declarations in the plenary session, each of the three delegations read special declarations expressing the particular view of its Executive.

The Communist delegation declares that it has decided to sign the common declaration, but not without grave hesitation. These hesitations have been caused first of all by the refusal of the Second International to admit as a slogan for the

planned manifestations, the cancellation of the Versailles Treaty.

Although the resistance of the Second International had made the project of the International Labour Conference against Genoa impossible, the Communist delegation has agreed because it will not put the slightest obstacle in the way of the United Front.

It has also regrets that in discussion at this Conference the absence of the question of the assassination of Liebknecht and Luxemburg; the part of the Socialist Parties in the persecution against Communists in Latvia, Poland, Yugo Slavia and Hungary; the attitude of the British Labour Party with regard to Ireland, but it reserves the right to demand the formation of a commission of inquiry upon these questions.

The Communist delegation has decided to sign the common declaration with the firm conviction that the pressure of events will oblige the proletarian masses to fight and will compel them to force the Reformist leaders to change their policy, or otherwise they will be abandoned by the proletariat.

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The Red Calendar

- Mar. 10. Martial Law proclaimed on the Rand; heavy fighting.
 10. Gandhi arrested.
 10-13. Conference of Italian Syndicalist Union.
 11. Engineers' lock-out commences.
 14. End of Rand strike.
 14. Strike in all Italian ports.
 14. 70,000 glass workers locked out in Czecho-Slovakia.
 14-20. Congress of Communist Party in Spain.
 18. Gandhi sentenced to six years' imprisonment.
 18-19. Policy Conference of Communist Party in Britain.
 20-24. Congress of Communist Party in Italy.
 21. Grileirog, German Communist, arrested in Berlin.
 24. 47 engineering unions in Britain reject overtime agreement.
 24-27. Communist Party Congress in Austria.
 26. Marty and Badina, Black Sea mutineers, elected for second time, in Paris elections.
 27-Apr. 2 Congress of Communist Party in Russia.
 29. Shipyard workers locked out in Britain.
 29-30. Conference at Riga of Russia, Latvia, Esthonia, and Poland.
 30. End of strike in Italian ports.
- Apr. 1. Strike of 600,000 miners begins in America.
 2-5. Executives of the three Internationals meet at Berlin.
 4. Locked-out workers in textile industries in Czecho-Slovakia occupy a number of factories.
 6. Soviet delegates arrive at Genoa.
 10. Genoa Conference begins.

A Second Edition

Pen Pictures of Russia. By John S. Clarke. Cloth cover. 327 pp. Illustrated. 4s. 6d. net. National Workers' Committee, 31, North Frederick Street, Glasgow.

SINCE this book was reviewed in our columns a new edition has had to be printed. The new edition is just as well printed as was the first one. It is easy to understand why Clarke's book has had such a large and ready sale—it is written in a style that "gets there." It tells the story of Russian life, past and present, and holds the atten-

tion of the reader from beginning to end. For the worker who wants to know why the Bolsheviks came into power, why they are able to hold power, this is just the ideal book. It is neither burdened with stodgy matter nor weighed down with difficult theoretical abstractions. It is vivid, and it is this quality that has made it so popular.