

# The COMMUNIST REVIEW

EDITOR :: WM. PAUL

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## Review of the Month

### FREEDOM AND JUSTICE

**T**HE reactionaries in this country, with superb cunning, are aiming a powerful blow at the Parliamentary Labour Party by attempting to make it illegal for trade unions to use their funds for political purposes. We want the sentimental moderates of the Labour Party to note that the favourite argument advanced by the reactionaries to sustain their proposal is one based upon the "freedom of Labour." With righteous indignation these gentlemen contend that it is both unfair and autocratic to compel Liberal and Tory trade unionists to financially support Labourists, to whom they are politically opposed. Every crime committed against the working class is carried out under the slogan of "Freedom of Labour." When blacklegs are drafted into strike areas the capitalist Press hail them as "free" labourers. Strike pickets have always been denounced, by the upholders of capitalism, as an arrogant interference with the liberty of those "free" workers who desired to take the place of strikers. The fierce conflicts that often take place between strikers and the armed power of the State have generally occurred because the ruling class insisted upon defending the rights of the "free labourers" who were acting as scabs. In Italy the murderous brigands enrolled in the Fascisti are murdering communists and socialists, burning down their buildings and printing establishments, forcing town councillors and elected persons to resign, and are compelling the masses to leave their fighting unions and join reactionary organisations—all this is done in the name of justice, liberty, and democracy.

It must never be forgotten that freedom, liberty, and justice are *class* terms, and have never been anything else since the rise of private property and the beginning of political society, with its class struggles. Justice, democracy, and liberty are weapons used in the class conflict in propertied society by the ruling elements against the exploited slaves, serfs, and workers.

In Athens the wily Pericles could say:—"It is true we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the

many and not of the few. . . . The law secures *equal justice to all* alike in their private disputes." When the famous Athenian delivered his celebrated oration, he never dreamt of including the slaves, who were in the majority, as members of society, or of extending the same justice to them which was the birthright of every property holding citizen. Even the middle class revolutionaries who drew up the famous American Declaration on the Rights of Man saw nothing inconsistent in its proud boasts of freedom and justice with the existence of slavery. The great democratic Constitution of America was drafted by a small clique, representing the propertied interests, which conspired to carry it through by means of a *coup d'état*.

That magnificent monument of English "liberty," Magna Charta, granted a series of "liberties" to the feudal landowners and the rising commercial interests. English historians, even of the Liberal school, seem to be more cognisant of the class concept hidden in such terms as "liberty" and "justice" than the superficial moderates of the Labour Party. Prof. A. F. Pollard frankly confesses that "*the baron's liberty consisted in the servitude of his vassals.*" When we come to the capitalists' great struggle for justice and liberty, during the Civil War, no less an authority than Bishop Stubbs bluntly contends—"Like every other struggle for liberty, it ended in being a struggle for *supremacy*"—or, as the communists would say, for class power.

It is necessary to understand the class basis of liberty and justice in order to appreciate the drivel and nonsense propagated by the moderates in the Labour Party against the method adopted by the Soviet government in defending itself against the murderous hirelings of the Social Revolutionary Party. Just as every State wields the weapon of justice to maintain the power of its ruling class, so in Russia, the Soviet government of workers and peasants metes out proletarian justice to its enemies.

When the Hendersons, MacDonalds, and Vanderveldes talk about justice, they mean the legal code based upon the class relationships within capitalism. To talk about pure justice is nonsense. Centuries ago a wise Greek aptly said that justice is the interest of the stronger. So long as class society exists, so long shall justice be of a class character. Those who declare otherwise do not understand one of the most elementary facts of historical development.

## HANDS OFF !

**W**E wish to return to the attempt of the reactionaries in this country to prevent the trade unions from financing the Labour Party. It must be admitted that this move has stirred even the moderate and sluggish Labourists into activity. Two months ago, in these pages, we showed that the Labour parliamentarians looked upon the trade unions as a glorified milch cow to sustain them in their political careers. This is the main reason why these parliamentarians are terrified that the unions should be prevented from financially maintaining the Labour Party. The attack of the politicians of the F.B.I. upon the Labour Party, by threatening to make it illegal for the unions to render it financial assistance, has suddenly brought home to the pure and simple Labour parliamentarians the Communist axiom that the true source of their political

power is rooted in the industrial organisations of the masses. If the trade union support is taken away from the Labour Party, it would stand revealed in all its melancholy impotency. It is just because the unions are behind the Labour Party, and because it is the political expression of the best elements in the unions that the Communist Party desires to enter it. We know what Henderson, MacDonald, and Thomas are, but we do not wish to enter the Labour Party because of our admiration for them. Behind these careerists are the organised masses, who, for good or evil, believe that the Labour Party is *the* party of the working class. It is for their sake that we demand an entrance into the Labour Party. When these workers are on strike, or when they are locked out, we fight by their side and try to show them the real *cause* of their industrial struggle and the only way to end it. We do this because we are on the side of the masses in all their conflicts. We are not superior theoreticians seeking to create a sect apart from the masses. We are an integral part of the working class movement. We are neither above it nor below it, but of it. And we demand, not as a favour, but as a working class right, to enter and function within any Labour channels to which the organised masses respond. As we fight by their side during industrial conflict, we insist upon being alongside them in their political struggles.

The Communist Party, therefore, most emphatically opposes the move of the political touts of the F.B.I. who are seeking to dictate how the trade unions shall spend their money. Our opposition is not based upon any undue eagerness to help the moderate Labour parliamentarians, who hate us a thousand times more than they do the imperialist jingoes who are seeking to destroy them. We oppose the attack of the F.B.I. upon trade union political levies for the simple reason that it is an attempt to further strengthen the dictatorship of Capital over Labour. We have our differences with certain elements within the Labour movement, but we shall settle these within the orbit of that movement. To capitalist reactionaries who desire to exploit our internal dissensions we say: "Hands off the working class movement."

At the same time we desire to rebuff a lying suggestion that has been put forward, by some of our Labour critics, to the effect that the Communists are advocating amongst that unions that no payments should be made to the Labour Party. The Communists are not petty minded infantile idiots. The people in the working class movement who have always attempted to stop the unions paying the political levy have been the old die-hards of the "no-politics-in-the-union type." As fervent enthusiasts of the industrial masses utilising every expedient to participate in political action, we cannot be opposed to the working class paying for its political activities. We believe in the unions being levied for the education of their members. We believe in the unions financially maintaining their own Press and their own daily and weekly journals. We believe in the working class doing everything for itself, because the Communists are the only people in the Labour movement who declare that the emancipation of the working class is the special task of the working class.

### THE FASCISTI

Last month we drew attention to the German crisis, and showed how it had proven, up to the hilt, the policy and tactics of the Communist International. While events in Germany were exposing

the stupidity of the political methods of the Second International, very important things were happening in Italy.

Three years ago the Italian workers were sweeping everything before them; that they did not succeed in conquering the political power of the State was due to the timidity and treachery of the social-democratic leaders. While the workers were pressing forward, the Communist International appealed to the most virile elements in the Italian socialist movement to clear out the treacherous Second International leaders, like Turati, and to lead the masses in the struggle for all power. The most courageous group in the Italian socialist party joined the Communist International, but a great number of splendid fighters held back because of the vacillating policy of the Centrists, led by Serrati, who refused to throw aside the timid moderates. While the Centrists were hesitating, the capitalists and reactionaries seized the opportunity to arm the middle-class youth of Italy, who appeared upon the scene as the Fascisti. These have been ravaging Italy for two years. They have demonstrated to the whole world the contempt of the capitalist class for constitutional and democratic tactics. With bombs and dynamite they have tried to blow the Italian Labour movement to hell. They have murdered thousands of the best socialist fighters in Italy. They have chased democratically elected town councillors, who were socialists, out of the towns. They have destroyed hundreds of Labour institutes up and down the country, and have burned down the most important printing establishments of the socialists. They showed to those, who are slow to learn lessons, that the workers cannot control the political State without a terrific struggle against the forces of capitalism.

Three years ago, when the Communist International appealed to the Italian socialists to link up the real revolutionaries in the movement into a united fighting party, it pointed out that hesitation and timidity would only give the demoralised capitalists an opportunity to reorganise their forces and to crush the masses by violence. Serrati, the most powerful influence among the Centrists, imagined that time was on the side of the workers, and that delayed action would mean revolutionary strength. Time is only on the side of the masses when *they* wield power; so long as the propertied class dominate the State, the chief factors in the tactics of the workers are initiative, courage, and speed of action. The events of the past few months have demonstrated that Serrati was wrong, and that the Communist International was correct in its analysis of the Italian situation. It is possible that Serrati, who must not be compared with such people as MacDonal and Henderson, may now see his errors and seek to redeem them by taking his stand alongside of the Communist International.

WM. PAUL.

# AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND THE NEGRO

By D. IVON JONES

IN March of last year *The Philippines Review* reported the farewell address of Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison, after eight years of office in the Phillipine Islands, "carrying out the policy of the best President of the present generation," as he himself described it. It had evidently been President Wilson's objective to grant complete independence to the Phillipines, relying solely on the silvery threads of finance. But the sorrowful Harrison had to confess his great disappointment that he was not the last Governor-General. He had on a previous occasion gallantly offered to resign in favour of a Phillipine Governor-General. "I am convinced that you are ready to take your place among the independent nations of the world," he said. But he hoped to return again to pay his first official visit to the first President of the Phillipine Republic at Malaccnaby Palace.

However, that was not to be. The "best President" made way for Harding. And instead of the Jeffersonian Harrison came Major-General Wood, and a large contingent of American Jesuits to take the place of the Spanish Catholic missionaries hitherto established in the Islands. And so the Phillipinos were taught the elementary lesson that financial bonds are not the last, but only the first, stage of imperialist occupation.

And Wilson himself knew that; for even while he was drawing up the notorious Fourteen Points, were not his troops and marines in actual occupation of the Negro Republic of Haiti? Six times the Wilson Government made overtures to this island republic for the control of its customs during the imperialist war.

The need was urgent. The Island of Haiti, with its 2,000,000 negroes, is in a strategic position in the Carribean Sea\* commanding the Panama Canal. Finally, the disturbances of July 27th, 1915, afforded the pretext for securing control. We know very well that the United States is never at a loss for "disturbances," whenever it finds it necessary to intervene in any country covered by the Monroe Doctrine.

Since then the American occupation of Haiti (sketched in the May number of the *Labour Monthly*) makes a long and gruesome story, in which the browbeating of the negro islanders, putting them to forced labour, torturings and persecution by negro-hating Southerner officials (see *Negro World*, May 6th), in the approved style of King Lynch, are the dominant features. The description given in the *Negro World* of the "free" elections to the legislature is a typical example of the extent to which imperialist violation is prepared to go in keeping up the outward farce of democratic forms for purposes of home consumption. The anti-American votes were indicated by pink papers, and the pro-American by yellow papers. American marines, fully armed, stood on guard to see that fair play

\* To understand the menace of American imperialism in the Carribean Sea the reader is referred to an illuminating article on this point by J. F. Horrabin in the *Plebs* magazine for July.

was observed, and to do some observing of their own. There were piles of pink papers nicely tied up in bundles for anyone who might have the temerity to trouble the registration officer to untie them, while the yellow papers lay ready to hand for all who came to vote. The result, of course, was an overwhelming majority in favour of the nominees of the glorious Democracy of the West.

It is now announced that the United States Government is trying to force a loan of 14,000,000 dollars on the island, in order to liquidate certain European creditors. The loan is issued under such ruinous terms that even the puppet President himself is kicking against it. It will involve the Haitian budget in an annual deficit of 1,000,000 dollars. The scandal of the occupation is arousing the liberal elements of the States into vigorous protests. But the Government sits unmoved.

Dr. Burghardt Du Bois, the leader of the Negro intellectuals, announces in his paper, *The Crisis*, that the Republican and Democratic Parties have come to a pact not to compete for the Negro vote. And Du Bois exclaims: "May God write us down as asses if we ever support these parties again." The reason for this conspiracy of silence is obvious. Harding, in his election addresses, denounced the employment of American marines to subjugate a free and independent people, and proclaimed that he would never, no, never, be a party to such an outrage. Since his coming to office the American Government is digging itself in upon the island with a vengeance. The Senate Commission on Haiti has reported that things are very much better there now, thank you! And there the matter of America's little Ireland now rests.

Meanwhile, the distressed Negroes have been buoyed up with hope by the passage of the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill through the Lower House of Legislature. But great difficulties are being experienced in its further progress through the Senate, in spite of the fact that the lynching horrors and burning of negroes have again broken out at the rate of eight in two weeks in the Southern States.

But the American Senators are not altogether blind to the positive advantages to be derived from the Negro Movement, especially from the "Back to Africa" cry of these poor, hunted and harassed people who are looking for any way of escape. Senator McCullum, of Mississippi, and Senator France, of Maryland, have both expressed their sympathy with the "Back to Africa" movement of the Negroes. The former has introduced a resolution in the State Legislature to petition the President to use his good influence in securing from the Allies sufficient territory in Africa in liquidation of the war debt, "which territory should be used for the establishing of an independent nation for American Negroes."

Senator France, on his part, put the matter in the following noble terms:—

"We owe a big duty to Africa, and one which we have too long ignored. I need not enlarge upon our peculiar interest in the obligation to the people of Africa. Thousands of Americans have for years been contributing to the missionary work which has been carried on by the noble men and women who have been sent out to that field by the churches of America."

This was spoken in the Senate. Translated into plain English, Senator France wished to say it was about time that American busi-

ness followed up the labours of its own missionary agents-in-advance in Africa.

This proposal was immediately followed by a timely interview with Dr. Heinrich Schnee, a former governor of German East Africa, in which it was suggested that America should take over the mandates of Great Britain and France in Africa for the colonisation of American Negroes. Marcus Garvey's paper, *The Negro World*, was jubilant, and headed the announcement with big block letters, "Africa's Redemption Draws Near."

Secretary Hughes, no doubt, will keep that pot simmering for a suitable occasion. Meanwhile, he is taking practical steps. The United States Government has in one stride stepped across the Atlantic and planted its foot in the little African republic of Liberia. Liberia was founded about a century ago as a refuge for American slaves in West Africa. Within the last few years its narrow confines have been very much encroached upon by French and English expansion in the neighbouring colonies. Liberia has a foreign debt of 1,650,000 dollars owing to J. Pierpont Morgan & Co. and his financial confreres in New York, acting for themselves and for European banks. The United States has drawn up an elaborate agreement with the Negro president for the granting of a loan of 5,000,000 dollars to the Negro republic. Detailed stipulations are made regarding the spending of the money. One clause provides for the immediate repayment of the money owing to Pierpont Morgan & Co., with the result that the market price of that loan has already jumped up from 75 to 98, putting over 300,000 dollars in the pockets of Morgan & Co. at one stroke of the pen.

But that is only a little side-pocket money. The most significant clauses in the loan agreement refer to the appointment of a Financial Commissioner, with 21 other American officials under him. This official will control the finances and customs of Liberia. Certain provisions are also made for the control of the Legislature. The financial commissioner will determine the size of the Liberian police and the military frontier force, which will be commanded by American army officers. He will have the power of veto over the Liberian budget, and the right to order the passing of any financial legislation which he may desire. He is empowered to limit the annual expenditure of Liberia to a total of 650,000 dollars, of which 109,700 dollars will go to pay the salaries of the American officials. In short, he will be the well-paid dictator of Liberia, with an armed force of American paid police to do his bidding.

This control is to last for the lifetime of the new loan; and a special clause prohibits the contracting of other loans without the sanction of the financial commissioner, so that there is no chance of Liberia trying to buy itself out of Uncle Sam's clutches. The loan therefore promises to have a long life, long enough, in fact, to enable American Imperialism to get a foothold on the African continent, and to follow its religious agents further afield into the interior as opportunities arise.

In 1900, says the *New York Nation* (which gives the text of agreement in its issue of May 31st), we sent a commission to Liberia, which was much impressed by the high-handed methods of the British in assuming control of the Liberian customs and frontier force. This commission reported that "It is difficult to find

among the Liberians anyone who has entire confidence in the disinterestedness of Great Britain"; that "French interest in Liberia is apparently that of an heir-expectant"; that "Germany has lent her at least a sympathetic understanding," but that since Germany had "ambitious designs in Africa," Liberia naturally turned to the United States for disinterested help.

Nevertheless, it took thirteen long years for that wave of disinterested emotion to flow eastward in the shape of a financial dictator and an American police force.

The American bourgeoisie finds itself obliged more and more to renounce the angelic rôle of "pure democracy," and to take up the openly Mephistophelian one of Imperial expansion. The Negro question bids fair to become the moral lever for it. And soon we may have the whole history of England's criminality in starting the slave trade and the plantation system raked up as a preliminary to the reconsideration of the African mandates.

The Negroes themselves are being encouraged to look forward to a change of slave drivers for Africa. Marcus Garvey, the religious-racial charlatan who claims to voice the needs of the Negro masses, carries on a persistent campaign in his paper, which has a large circulation among the Negroes, for the liberation of Africa from the European Imperialists, and welcomes with joy the new loan to Liberia as a start in this direction. He is assiduous in the sale of excursion tickets for Liberia to his Negro dupes, on "The Black Star Line," the steamships of which are not yet built! A short while ago he was arrested for obtaining money on false pretences in this manner. But nothing further has been heard of the matter, and he now seems to be as busy as ever denouncing the Bolshevik members of his race. But even the *Negro World* is compelled to expose the crimes of American Imperialism in Haiti. So that Garvey and his organisation, "The Universal Negro Improvement Association," typify the immature consciousness of the Negroes in the first stage of awakening.

But the growing band of young Negro radicals, who look to Soviet Russia for guidance and inspiration in the struggle—they are not deceived. Under the banner of the African Blood Brotherhood, and in close touch with the class-conscious white workers of America, they are pointing the way to proletarian emancipation as the only hope for their oppressed Negro brothers in Africa and America.

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# On the Role of Criticism During the Revolution

By KARL KREIBICH

A MILD surprise was caused at the enlarged session of the Executive of the Communist International, last February, by the receipt by the delegates, half-way through the conference, of a document signed by twenty-two Russian comrades, in which complaint was made with regard to the management of the Russian Communist Party. There was no complaint against the policy of the Party, but against the state of affairs internally. In the document embodying the complaint the opposition alleged that the proletarian elements, as well as the opposition in the Party, were suppressed by the Central Committee. The Communist International thus for the first time was placed in the position of having to deal with an internal question of the Russian brother Party, and to act, as it were, as a court of common pleas in a quarrel within the Russian Party. The case ended in the complaint being dismissed, and a severe caution being administered to the opposition. Shortly afterwards the conference of the Russian Party took up this matter, and completely liquidated the opposition. The whole affair is now really settled. Nevertheless, it will be profitable to discuss it, as all the political experiences of the Russian brother Party, as well as the origin and character of the opposition, are extremely instructive from the standpoint of the Communist movement and the Proletarian Revolution. The question is: What significance can an opposition have, and what rôle can it play within a Party, and what should be the attitude of the Party towards it?

The Russian Revolution is the teacher of the revolutionary world proletariat, because it has already gone through every imaginable phase of a proletarian revolution. As the Communist Party of Russia is the bearer of this revolution, it sustains itself and its leaders in the rôle as the schoolmaster of revolutionary tactics. It was assuredly not ambition which made them strive for this office, for the way to it leads through revolutionary experience. But such experience tastes bitter, and the revolutionary experience of our Russian comrades savours not only of gall; it savours also of blood and of damp clay bread, of bitter cold, empty stomachs and bitter disappointment. He who has passed through this school, often speaks as a teacher in a coarse and rough language which is not pleasing to some Western European ears, nor to the ears of some Communists accustomed to the mild language of friendly and learned persuasion. But our Russian comrades in recent years had to conduct their discussions with machine guns and cannon, and that gives to their speech a tone somewhat different from that imparted by the atmosphere of the editorial room, of the study, and of the parliamentary chamber. In those strenuous years of struggle and of want our Russian comrades saw the significance of opposition in their own ranks in a somewhat different light from that in which such things usually appear in Western party conferences. In Russia the enemy did not allow much time for too long discussions and the opposition had to be finished with somewhat more

quickly than in the more pleasant atmosphere of Western party development. Iron necessity was the inexorable lord and master. It was not, to be sure, the absolute "must" in the theological or philosophical sense; and the babble, as well as the so-called deeds of the Mensheviks, even show that one can read from Marx something different from what the Bolsheviks have done. As revolutionaries, even the Bolsheviks could not have acted otherwise than they have done. As revolutionaries they had to make an end of the bourgeois-democratic by-play; as revolutionaries they had to lead the proletariat to the seizure of power; as revolutionaries they had to completely overthrow the sabotaging bourgeoisie, and to carry through the expropriation of the expropriators; as revolutionaries they had to give the land to the peasants, and to demand from them the utmost return in order to overthrow the home and foreign counter-revolution in a bloody war; and for many well-known reasons the Bolsheviks had to begin the retreat in their economic policy in order to retain the most important thing—political power. Thus, the Russian Revolution has passed through a hard-pressed defence, and has had to hold out amid sacrifice, pain and privation.

In all these phases the Russian Communists must have had valuable experience with regard to the condition of their own ranks. Revolution is war, and its strategy is a part of the science of war. The aversion of the Mensheviks to military terminology in the discussion of the problems of the revolution is a reflection of their antipathy to revolution in general. As in war, so in revolution, every phase of the struggle imposes new demands upon the troops, and produces dangers to the discipline and solidarity of the band of fighters. In the hour of revolutionary assault, of the revolutionary offensive, the spirit of the revolutionary troops is different from what it is in the difficult times after the first battle has subsided, when it is a question of maintaining and defending what has been gained. A retreat makes the heaviest demands upon the spirit, the morale and the discipline of a body of troops. Still, retreat does not necessarily mean a lost battle, not to speak of a lost war; it can mean the preparation for a future victory. In order to recognise this, a skilful survey of the whole strategical situation and a deep insight into all the conditions of the struggle are necessary. No great army is conceivable if every man in it were to act according to his own inclinations; only anarchists are capable of such a thought. For the purpose of struggle confidence in the leadership and faith in the cause for which one is fighting are necessary. If these are shaken, it is the easiest thing in the world to create confusion and panic amongst the retreating troops, and panic can turn a retreat, which otherwise would be a preparation for the next battle, into a defeat. It is self-evident that any attempt to utilise the retreat for such a purpose must be ruthlessly nipped in the bud.

The Russian Revolution and its bearer, the Communist Party of Russia, are now in the critical phase of a retreat. It is not the purpose of this article to inquire into the causes of the character of this retreat. We are only interested in the dangers which such a retreat creates for the party. The essence of the retreat consists in concessions to the peasantry and to capitalism. These signify a partial disappointment for the proletariat. It is not only that

the end of the sufferings and privations is not yet come, but that the Russian workers, who have laboriously been able to keep their feet, must assist the peasants, and must look on while the hated capitalists again receive a certain amount of freedom of action. The great masses of the Russian workers understand that this is necessary in order to save the proletarian State, just as it was necessary to defend it with arms. There are those, however, whose revolutionary instinct stood the test in the struggles against Yudenitch, Denikin, Kolchak, etc., but who in their innermost heart cannot see the necessity for the new policy. And let us not forget one thing: all these millions of Russian workers have already fought and bled and endured the most frightful privations for four years. Would it be surprising if some of those to whom the end of the struggle, privation, and the beginning of the ascent to a new and better economic life is not yet obvious, should begin to grow weary? More than ever in this phase of the revolution is it necessary to have courage and confidence in the leadership, belief in the cause, self-reliance and clearness of mind. And yet in no other phase is it easier to sow distrust, confusion, doubt and despondency. But the harvest from such seed must be the end of the revolution and the victory of the counter-revolution which lurks behind the slightest wavering of the ranks of the revolutionary Russian proletariat. Therefore, while there must always be much discussion and thorough consideration of the next steps, in the Russian Party, there cannot be any opposition. After the discussion, and after everyone has stated her or his viewpoint, and the party reaches a decision, the whole membership must wheel into line, and march with the unanimity of an army. There must be no wavering.

The most important spokesman of the former so-called workers' opposition, Shliapnikoff, at the last conference, said that it had been discussed at workers' meetings whether it would not be better to give up power and seize it again in ten years' time. That is a temper not too difficult to understand, and we can pardon it in a worker who has fought and suffered for more than four years, but it is unpardonable when such an old party member, as Shliapnikoff, does not see in this statement a warning sign, sufficiently grave to cause the immediate suspension of the whole work of manufacturing opposition. Every word that encourages this frame of mind is a crime against the revolution.

This, of course, does not mean that criticism within the party should be prohibited. Read the latest speeches of Lenin, and name the statesman or party leader who has ventured to submit his own system of government and its transactions, to his own party and its work to such sharp criticism as Lenin has done. But in such a critical phase of the class struggle there is an indispensable condition of criticism: *it must be coupled with practical proposals for improving the situation, it must be produced by revolutionary energy and clarity—in short, it must be revolutionary criticism.*

When, however, the speeches and assertions of the spokesmen of the so-called Workers' Opposition are carefully examined, nothing is found but general figures of speech, so-called eternal truths and complaints about injustice suffered in the party. Let us take only one example. The most important problem of the

Russian Revolution at the present moment is the new economic policy. In relation to this most important question the opposition had to reverse their true character. There was a prelude to this at the Third Congress of the Comintern, where Comrade Kollontai, one of the leaders of the opposition, spoke on the report by Comrade Lenin on the tasks of the Communist Party of Russia. All those who took part in the congress still remember the painful impression caused by the empty criticism of Comrade Kollontai of the new economic policy—a criticism expressed in general terms, and not exhibiting a single positive thought. Still more characteristic was the reticence of the spokesman of the opposition on this question in the commission and in the plenary session of the Enlarged Executive Committee. To the question whether they were in agreement with the new economic policy, they answered yes; they had to answer thus, because if they had replied in the negative, they knew they would have had no answer to the next question; what other policy, then, should the party pursue? Nevertheless, they put forward many “buts” which merged into the following pearl of wisdom—“the new economic policy was a somewhat unpleasant and dangerous thing, alike for the working class, the Soviet Power and the Communist Party.” But we all knew that before, and we did learn it not from the opposition, but from the comrades who inaugurated and championed the policy. Shliapnikoff thought he could tell us something, but he failed to say a single thing with which we were not already familiar. Thus he revealed the fact that strikes take place in Russia, but we learned this from the Communist Press before we came to Russia. For this reason, no doubt, he anxiously preserved his recipe for averting strikes, and all the disagreeable things and dangers of the new economic policy generally, a close secret. At the conference of the Russian Party Shliapnikoff said that crisis and depression prevailed in the Russian Party and in Russia generally, but the new economic policy is, after all, only the expression of a crisis and depression, and Schliapnikoff quite forgot to say how both are to be overcome. The increase of agricultural production is an iron necessity for Russia if the workers are not to die of starvation, and no opposition could point out another way to this increase than that of the agricultural tax in kind, which is part of the new economic policy. The provision of food, however, will be for a long time in the hands of the peasantry. Without their co-operation, or against the resistance of three-fourths of the population, no government in Russia can maintain itself; and the dictatorship of the proletariat can rest only on the peasants being satisfied with this system of government. The workers must make economic concessions to the peasants in order to command their active support of the present political system, by the production of food, and service in the army. The workers must bear the cost of these concessions, and the price will indeed be a heavy one for the poor exhausted Russian proletarians. What does the opposition say to this? Does it know any other way? No; but it complains at the Party Conference that the new policy is being conducted at the expense of the workers, and it has manufactured the phrases, “We neglect the workers while we hasten to help the peasants”; “We must get nearer to the proletariat,” etc., without supplementing

these general pious wishes by positive proposals. What is the use of this chatter about things which everyone knows, about afflictions which are as oppressive to every other Russian comrade as to Schliapnikoff? If the opposition knows another way, it should point it out; if not, it should remain silent, because by its complaint and lamentations, by its declamation of pious wishes, it only promotes that frame of mind which caused those workers to ask whether it would not be better to resign power. *Thus the negative rôle of the opposition changes into a positive counter-revolutionary one.*

The criticism of the opposition is also directed, to a certain extent, against the policy of the Party itself, and it is accomplished with tearful complaints and empty statements somewhat like those which say that it is easy to be warm when the sun shines, and to get wet when it rains. The attack is directed more against the internal conditions of the party.

Part of the attack of the opposition is based on the composition of the party, of the social layers of its membership, for which the policy and the leadership of the party are made responsible. The party, says the opposition, is no longer a genuinely proletarian party; the new economic policy has made the condition of the proletarians in the party worse, and has not only moderated the numerical strength of the proletarians, but has restrained their influence. The danger of the penetration of petit-bourgeois elements and of the petit-bourgeois spirit as a direct consequence of the new economic policy was painted by the opposition in very gloomy colours. None of the two dangers nor the danger for the party from the new economic policy generally is denied by the leading comrades. There is this difference, however—the leaders of the party comprehended these dangers more clearly and sought to avert them, while the opposition exaggerated them and only complained. The results of a statistical inquiry into the social composition of the party membership were in the meantime placed before the party congress, which very substantially modified the figures submitted to the Executive Committee by the opposition. According to these statistics the party numbered, as far as the social position of its members could be ascertained, 50 per cent. genuine proletarians, 25 per cent. peasants, and 20 per cent. Soviet officials and so-called professional revolutionaries. Amongst the Soviet officials there are undoubtedly elements who are Communists only because they are employees of the ruling party in the State; but our comrades know this perfectly well, and, as the late cleaning showed, they are constantly endeavouring to drive these elements out of the party. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that, included in this 20 per cent., there are many of the best comrades, who have remained for many years at the most dangerous and responsible posts in the revolution. And now as to the peasants. Amongst them are former urban proletarians who, in the period of want and unemployment, and also for agricultural and organisational purposes went into the country districts and became peasants. The other part of the peasant membership of the party is composed of soldiers and officers of the Red Army. Still, of the 98,000 Communists serving in the Red Army, two-thirds are peasants; of the students, the pupils of the officers' training schools who are the backbone of the elite of the Red Army, only 30 to 35 per cent. are

urban proletarians, while 60 to 65 per cent. are peasants and semi-proletarians. The opposition is of the opinion that the party can do without this group of members, and thereby betrays its complete lack of insight into the condition of the proletariat in the agrarian State of Russia.

The Party Conference has recently proved what was asserted in the report on the memorial of the opposition in the Enlarged Session of the Executive Commission—that the leaders of the party adopted serious measures to avert the dangers complained of by the opposition, while the opposition stammered out empty figures of speech. The party cleaning, which was carried out last autumn, is a thing unheard of in the history of the party system and of party rule. No ruling party has previously known how to do the utmost, on such a large scale, and with such disregard of consequences, to clean its ranks of all doubtful, wavering, indifferent, unreliable and speculative elements. The Party Conference, which was held at the end of March, did one other thing—it closed the doors of the party for a year to all non-proletarian elements. According to the decision of the Party Conference, only genuine proletarians may be admitted till the next Party Conference, peasants only in exceptional cases, and intellectuals not at all. At the same time, a programme of far-reaching action was drawn up for the training, educating and disciplining of the members of the party. Against this fundamental work were placed the empty phrases of the opposition. Their spokesman, Schliapnikoff, for instance, at the session of the Enlarged Executive, announced as a “practical question” for the restoring of health of the party the profound truth that “it must secure to the proletarian element the decisive influence in the party, and that at least it must be encouraged.” It is very interesting to compare the demeanour of the opposition in the enlarged Session of the Executive of the Communist International with its behaviour at the Russian Party Conference. How eager were Comrades Schliapnikoff and Kollontai on the former occasion, when they believed they could play on the ignorance of the foreign delegates of the conditions of a party which is in power in the midst of a revolution, in general, and of those of the Russian Party in particular, and how moderately and sentimentally they spoke at the Party Conference. As a result the Party Conference achieved an almost complete liquidation of the opposition, and showed fewer traces of opposition or of factionism than any previous conference.

The complaint of the opposition was directed largely against the alleged over-strenuous administration of discipline within the party. Here, however, it must be very plainly stated that the measures which the party has hitherto applied to the opposition have no relation to the serious situation which Soviet Russia and the Communist Party of Russia are in, or to the resistance to discipline of which the opposition had already been guilty. The opposition complained, for instance, that Miassnikoff, who was one of the signatories of the statement of the twenty-two, has been excluded from the party for a year. Now, Miassnikoff is really an old and proved Bolshevik, who, after the inauguration of the new economic policy, lost his bearings and got embittered with the party and quarrelled with it. But what were the reasons for his exclu-

sion? He sent a vindictive reply to a friendly letter which Comrade Lenin wrote to him; he got a pamphlet printed, of which the more important organs of the White Guard Press soon learned, and from which extracts were sent out from Warsaw to all the White Guard editors. For such a breach of discipline exclusion from the party for a year, with the possibility of being re-admitted, is certainly not too severe a penalty. The fact that Comrade Kollontai could have her libel on the party, of which, as in all other statements of the opposition, the evening Press in the West likewise learned with surprising rapidity, that she could have it printed at the State printing works is certainly no proof of the suppression of the freedom of expression of opinion. The opposition, it is true, guarded itself by its attitude at the Enlarged Executive against the suspicion of creating a faction within the party, but the Party Conference, by letters and documents, produced proof that the opposition had endeavoured, albeit in secret, to organise a group within the party.

The Party Conference came to a complete understanding with the opposition in a commission and in the plenum. The comrades who had been prominent in the previous discussions of this question purposely refrained from taking part in the debates on this subject. The comrade who submitted the report of the Commission was a rank and file worker.

The result of the negotiations was the complete defeat which the opposition had already suffered at last year's Party Conference, and at which it was shown that the opposition in its views of principles and tactics bore a semi-Anarchist and Syndicalist character. At the same time, the leaders of the opposition, in spite of their resistance to discipline, were treated very leniently.

Insignificant as the number of people in the opposition has been of late, the vanishing remnants of the "Workers' Opposition" were not at all united. Three groups can be distinguished in it. Part of the opposition is recruited from genuine old Bolsheviks and Communists, who have lost their bearings through the new economic policy and through the crisis of the revolution, and have departed from the true path. The others are ex-Mensheviks, who only came into the Party in the course of the revolution, and who, in considering the complex problems of the revolution, have undergone a relapse into Menshevik ways of thinking. To the first group belongs, for example, Comrade Schliapnikoff, and to the second, Comrade Kollontai. Besides these two groups, other elements have crept into the opposition, which in the revolutionary movement in general are unclear in their minds, and partly also dishonest. Against these three groups the Party Conference applied the measure of exclusion. It is to be hoped that the first two groups will properly understand that the result of their campaign in the Enlarged Executive and at the Party Conference is a grave warning that in the revolution, neither former services nor subjective honesty can be an excuse for objective injury to the revolutionary party, and thereby to the revolution in general.

The Enlarged Session of the Executive of the Communist International in its decided repudiation of, and warning to, the opposition, which were subsequently fully justified by the discussions at the conference of the Russian Communist Party, was also

actuated by the fact that the counter-revolution exerts itself to utilise the slightest weakening of the Communist Party of Russia. The bourgeois counter-revolution is cunning; it does not allow itself to be diverted from its purpose either by dogmas or illusions. It avails itself of the smallest possibilities. Since Tsarism is dead, the counter-revolution is republican. Since it was compelled to recognise that in Russia a Constituent Assembly is of no use, it even stands for the Soviet system. During the Kronstadt mutiny it supported the slogan: "Domination of the Soviets without the Communist Party." For the bourgeois counter-revolution knows that with the abolition of the domination of the Communist Party the backbone of the Soviet system would be broken. The collapse of the Kronstadt mutiny did not in the least disconcert the bourgeois counter-revolution. Its most capable and most intelligent leader, the Cadet Miliukoff, immediately after the capture of Kronstadt by the Communists, wrote that it would only provide a means for bringing about the fall of the proletarian revolution in Russia; and this means the carrying of disunity and division into the Communist Party of Russia. That should be brought home to all opposition elements. Any formation of opposition or of fraction in the Communist Party of Russia, be it only merely stupid or honestly meant, is, in this phase of the revolution, work for Miliukoff, work for the counter-revolution.

This is the only view that the Communist International can take in relation to the opposition in the Russian Party, and in concluding these remarks we repeat the words with which ended the report in the session of the Enlarged Executive: "Every injury to the compactness, the solidarity and the discipline of the Communist Party of Russia is high treason to the Communist International and high treason to the proletarian revolution."

## Questions to Vandervelde & the Second International

By P. STUCHKA (President of Latvian Communist Party)

**O**N your way through Riga—so the papers say—you paid a friendly visit to the Section of Government Socialists, who sequence, emphasised the fact that the position which you and they take is quite identical. But at the same time you visited, also in a friendly way, the Opposition Social Democrats, who belong to the 2½ International and whom you rightly reassured that no serious differences exist between them and yourself. You are a man who takes a sensitive attitude towards such as generally stand in need of defence. Now the Minister for Justice in the reactionary government is the "Socialist" Holtzman, who is a member of the Second International. You, in your turn, also held such a post in Belgium. I shall therefore be honoured by your reply to the following questions, which are a matter of anxiety not only to myself but also to others.

1. A telegram in to-day's papers states that forty political prisoners—"subjects" of Latvia—were taken from the central

prison in Riga (over which the Minister of Justice has authority) and were sent, as suspects of Communism, to the Soviet frontier without either their relatives or the representatives of the Soviet having been informed upon the subject. You may possibly be ignorant of the import of such a proceeding. Suffice it to say that this peculiarly democratic method is the way to get rid of communists. On reaching the frontier—the Russian frontier authorities had not been informed of the matter—they were exhorted to “fly to their paradise,” viz., into Soviet Russia. And the exhortation was emphasised by accompanying shots. In such a fashion many Lettish communists, without being tried, have been killed “during flight.” The last instances were last year on the eve of the present coalition coming into being, when two working men were killed.

The telegram referred to above mentions no details as to the number of victims in the present case. The Minister of Justice, a comrade of yours, in the International, refuses to give any explanation. What I wish to know is whether all your fellow jurists in the Second International look upon this method as a particularly human way of getting rid of political opponents. And do you yourself consider this to be a purely legal act or a political one?

2. A central trade union bureau which united all the Riga proletarian trade unions existed in Riga. You may be able to estimate their strength by the simple fact that their candidates to the Riga town election on the 22nd March last secured 17,500 votes—nearly one-sixth of the votes cast. And this was achieved without any agitation, since the democratic government does not permit trade unions to publish even a weekly paper of their own. The president of the bureau was a member of the Constituent Assembly, the left-wing Menshevik, Derman. Now this is what happened. In a way that cannot be explained counterfeit money came into the cash office of the Famine Relief Committee connected with the bureau. Counterfeit money circulates so extensively in Riga at the present time that, according to newspaper reports, a purchaser of a ticket for the theatre, when he offers to pay 500 roubles (10 francs) is asked to show his passport. And so, on the proposal of your professional and international comrade, the Minister of Justice Holtzman, arrests were made, and not only was the inviolable member of the Constituent Assembly taken, but 32 members of the central bureau of trade unions were also arrested. And immediately afterwards the entire administrative body of the transport workers union was arrested—and they are all under arrest up to the present hour. “The Village Labourer,” the paper of the Right Wing Socialists (Second International) comments on the arrest in this way: “It is said that Derman is innocent and that legal proceedings will show this.” Still, the arrest remains in force, and will so remain right up to the moment of the coming parliamentary elections in four months’ time. Now you have been in consultation with your friends in Riga. This crying incident took place just on the eve of your arrival there. How could they, therefore, avoid discussing with you such a great and “purely legal” affair, since both you and themselves are representatives of the same International? I trust you will not decline to state your opinions publicly about the conduct and principles of your junior professional and International colleague.

3. From the year 1919 the Lettish Government has been punish-

ing Lettish working men, not by the hundred but by the thousand. The method of punishment, up to the present coalition, has been that of shooting. It is due to your comrade in the International that in his period hanging has been substituted for shooting. Is this reform due solely to the initiative of Citizen Holtzman, or does he act in that way on the initiative of the Second International, and will this method be used in the case of court sentences only, or also in cases of "flight," opposition, etc.?

4. While I am familiar with the history of the Second International, I have not noticed among its "merits" one phenomenon—that of anti-semitism. But in recent times your Riga branches have been openly preaching anti-semitism through the lips of their leaders. For example, the Minister of Statistics, Skuenek—a comrade of yours in the International—proves by statistical figures the necessity for a pogrom of Jews (vide *The Voice of Labour*—Golos Truda No. 6). Further, the "Black Hundred" paper of the Peasants' Union—"The Free Land," Svobodnaya Zemlia No. 173—writes upon the subject in the following way:—

*"The extension of the anti-Jewish front by our social democrat minority in the person of Skuenek should be welcomed. But good wishes are obviously of small avail in this connection. The time has arrived when the most radical measures should be taken."*

There is no need for me to cite further passages, since you, surely, have a Lettish translator who can supply any further details you may wish. The point that interests us is just this. Is this what your companions in the International are doing of their own free will and at their own risk, or is all this brought forward, both with the baiting of Soviet Russia, and with the watchword of a united front, as a preparation for the Hague Conference?

5. One more final question. When in Riga you specially emphasised the fact that you also stood near to the present social democratic party of Latvia, though it is a member of the 2½ International. Will you, therefore, or your comrades of the 2½ International, express your opinion on the following subject. The Central Committee of the Social Democratic Party of Latvia has recently decided to undertake a stronger agitation for the recapture of those trade unions which have moved away from their influence in a leftward direction. Soon afterwards, as it happened before, arrests followed. The Riga central bureau, the administrative body of the transport workers' union, and other trade union workers were arrested. During the arrests special attention was paid to the names of those workers who were "Left," and these names have repeatedly been referred to in the social democratic newspapers. From the purely socialist legal point of view does this appear to you to be a mere coincidence or is there some casual connection in this matter?

## The British Empire

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# Indian Labour Movement : A Review of the Situation

By ABANI MUKHERJI

**T**HERE exists in India a powerfully organised Labour movement. The secretary of the Indian Labour Federation, or "Standing Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress," as it is called, is Mr. Chiman Lal, who claimed that under this federation are combined 97 unions, with 1,500,000 members. These unions embrace nearly all the industries of the country. The leading organisation is the Railwaymen's Union, which has organised 50 per cent. of those employed, which is about 325,000 workers. The second in importance is the Textile Workers' Union, and the third is the Miners' Union.

Trade Unionism is a new thing in India. Before 1918 it did not exist except for a few unions for white workers. It was out of the strike movement of 1918 that the unions came into existence. The first one was organised at Madras by Mr. B. P. Wadia. Since then the progress of the movement has been both rapid and successful. The amount of success can be determined from the huge number of organised members, representing about 25 per cent. of the total number of the factory-going workers. This growth indicates that the Indian labourers are speedily realising the need for their own organisations.

It is important to observe that the Indian Labour movement is rapidly becoming revolutionary. To illustrate this, take, for example, the number of strikes that have taken place in India since 1918, the history of which are written in blood. Strikes were common in the Indian factories, but they were never of a country-wide nature, and did not demonstrate any solidarity among the workers. The first instance of such a strike took place in Bombay, known as the General Strike, in which 120,000 workers, mostly textile operators, took part. The solidarity of the masses on that occasion was shown by sympathetic strikes in other parts of the country. The strike was practically lost. About 200 workers were shot down by the soldiers. There were no proletarian leaders at that time, and the Nationalist middle-class politicians who took the lead utilised the strike for demonstration purposes. Similarly, another strike of several hundred thousand plantation workers took place in Assam, about 2,000 miles from Bombay, three years after the general strike, and it, too, was lost, due to the Nationalist leaders exploiting it for political purposes. Once again strikers were killed. According to the report of the Government Commission appointed to inquire into the reason for labour unrest in India it was shown that in nine months, from July, 1920, to March, 1921, in the province of Bengal, 137 strikes took place, reacting on all branches of industry. 244,180 workers took part in these strikes, and 2,631,488 working days were lost. Of these strikes 110 were for higher wages and 13 were for the continuation of former strikes. A note issued by the labour officer of Bombay states that in three months, from April to June, 1921, 33 strikes took place in that town alone, involving 240,000 workers, with a loss of 500,000 working days. About the middle of the same year a strike

of 20,000 workers took place in the town of Madras. To suppress the labour movement in Madras, the Government, with the help of the capitalists, tried by all means to subdue the labourers. They imprisoned strikers, burnt their houses, and fined the unions, but the labourers were very determined in their demands. The strike ended in a compromise due to the reformist character of the leaders. This strike movement was country wide. In the north, in 1920, a strike of over 60,000 railway workers took place; the printers struck work to show their sympathy with their railroad comrades. Out of this strike was organised the Punjab Labour Union. The strike of the Cawnpore leather and textile workers, altogether about 30,000 men, is also noteworthy. They organised themselves and put forward 21 demands, including increased wages, unemployment insurance, and a share in profits. In short, in the year 1920, altogether 2,500,000 workers were involved in the strike movement, and in many cases it ended in bloodshed. It is estimated that altogether there were 1,000 workers wounded and killed.

An important fact is that this strike agitation was not a class-conscious revolutionary movement, but it does mark the beginning of the class struggle in India. To illustrate the growth of capitalism in India I quote the following figures from the 15 volumes of official statistics for the year 1917. In the year 1917 there were 8,000 mills and workshops, of which 67 per cent. were driven by mechanical power. The railway and tramways amount to 38,000 miles. The total industrial production was valued at £261,000,000. This is excluding handicraft work and including railways. The persons taking part in this production numbered 3,500,000; thus the production per person employed was £74 for the year. In the United Kingdom in 1907 the production per person amounted to £100. Of these workers 327,000 formed the bureaucracy, both native and Europeans; the rest were wage earners.

The sum paid as wages amounted only to £27,000,000, or little over 10 per cent. of the production, as against 53 per cent. in the United Kingdom and 56 per cent. in the United States in 1907. The salaries paid amounted to £33,000,000, or £6,000,000 more than the wages of the proletarians. These salaries are due to the existence of about 28,000 European workers, whom the capitalists have to bribe with high wages in order to keep them on their side and to keep them out of the Labour movement and away from the Indian native workers. Deducting 33 per cent. of the total production as cost of material and 23 per cent. from wages and salary, we can fix the profit at 44 per cent. on an average. To support this the following figures from the *Labour Review* of November last may prove interesting. In one year the Indian cotton textile mills profited 100 per cent. of its outlayed capital. One factory in 1920 declared a dividend of 160 per cent. on an inflated capital of £300,000, while the dividend declared becomes 500 per cent. when the original capital invested by the shareholders is taken into account, which was only £100,000. Another mill, the Ring Mills, declared a dividend of 365 per cent. in the same year. Over a dozen mills have given dividends between 100 per cent. and 300 per cent., and quite a number between 50 per cent. and 100 per cent. The same thing was also shown in the jute and textile industry, where numerous mills declared dividends from 150 to 330 per cent. Dividends in sugar works were about 60

per cent., and in the oil and flour mills 140 per cent. That of publishing houses was 100 per cent., etc.

The size and importance of the various industries can be judged from the following table:—

#### INDUSTRY.

Cotton textile, 284 mills, but capital only known for 264, amounted to £19,000,000.

Jute textile, 76 mills, but capital only known for 76, amounted to £10,000,000.

Coal mining, 850 mines, but capital only known for 236, amounted to £6,000,000.

Plantations, 1,300 plantations, but capital only known for 300, amounted to £22,000.

Railway capital at the end of the year 1917-18 was £366,436,000, and the percentage of return on capital was very high. The net gain from the railways to the Government alone was £10,000,000.

The coal mining industry in that year produced £4,512,000. Deducting from this one and a half per cent. to cover the cost of material, which is the rate in the United Kingdom, Germany and France, we get the income of the mines at £3,902,880; of this 25 per cent. or £978,036 was paid as wages against 56 per cent. in France and 59 per cent. in Germany before the war. The salaries amounted to £350,000, and the rest was profit. The coal mines show dividends which rise to 120 per cent. In one case the average dividend for 15 years was 95 per cent. The cheapness of woman labour has already caused their wholesale introduction into all industrial spheres. In one year 43 per cent. of the coal mine workers were women. No less than 40,030 women and 665 children were employed underground, and 18,872 women and 2,283 children worked on the top. The earnings of the miners were £10 8s. per year as against £55 in France and £57 in Germany before the war. The average wages of the mine workers were £6 in 1917, which was raised to £7 5s. in 1918, or 6d. per working-day. The cheapness of labour in India has kept the modern improved machines out of the Indian mines; as a result of obsolete methods 30 per cent. of the labour is wasted.

Again, in the tea gardens, the output amounted to £12,400,000, and putting 20 per cent. aside as cost of material, we get £9,920,000 as the income. The workers numbered 703,585, of whom 640,267 are women. The wages paid amounted to £3,579,952, or 35 per cent. of the income. The salaries paid amounted to 60 per cent. of the amount paid in wages, and two-thirds of these salaries were drawn by a few European supervisors. The average wage of a woman worker in the tea plantations was £5 per year.

Eighty per cent. of the factory capital, 30 per cent. of the plantation capital, 40 per cent. of the mining capital, and 2 per cent. of the railway capital is Indian. Three-fourths of the rest is British and the rest international, mostly American. The following figures will show the increase of the Indian industry since 1917:—"The average total capital of the new companies registered in India year by year was approximately £12,000,000 per year for the years 1910-14. In the first three years of the war the average fell to £6,000,000 per year. After the war it rose to the enormous figure of £183,000,000, and in 1920, to March, 1921, owing to the extra-

ordinary disturbances in the exchange rate, it went up to £100,000,000."

On the face of these figures it is needless to argue about the class struggle in India. These figures prove that the struggle between labour and capital in India is a struggle of a twofold character—it is both a class struggle against native capitalists and a fight against British imperialism. This explains why the class war sometimes appears in a national form.

There is an idea that the Indian workers are semi-proletarian; and that they have connection with their native villages, where they can take refuge in case of long trouble. To disprove this I quote the following written by a Indian trade union secretary who inquired into the matter after the plantation workers' strike of last year. He writes:—

"The nationalists repatriated the workers in their villages, with the result that all of them returned to the gardens and the strike was lost. I found that the repatriation of the coolies had practically resulted in sending them to death. Most of the returning emigrants had no homes, no lands. Many of them had been born in the gardens and did not even know the names of their villages. . . . The village people absolutely refuse to have anything to do with them. The villagers find it difficult to keep themselves from starvation, and therefore feeding the returned coolies is an impossibility. In the villages there are no industries in which these men might be employed, nor any kind of work can be found for the day labourers. It is futile to bring away the coolies from the gardens and send them to the villages, because 50 or 60 men are leaving daily for the gardens owing to the famine conditions prevailing there."

Indian labour can be divided into five groups: (1) The land labourers, who are the largest in number—about 30,000,000. Their chronic poverty, continual semi-starvation, are well known; it is bitterly illustrated by the fact that their earnings, including unemployed days, are between £4 and £6 per year. (2) The plantation workers, whom I have already described. The planters are organised, and consequently their misery is not growing. (3) The mine workers. In the mining districts rice is the main food of the miners. The price of clothing has gone up three times, but the wages have remained the same since 1918; the average wage is 6d. per day, and 300 working days a year. (4) The handicraft workers, numbering about 2,500,000 hand weavers and 8,700,000 metal wood, ceramic, and other hand labourers. Their income, according to the calculation of the India Industrial Commission of 1916-18, was, weavers £2 7s. per year, and others £4 a year. (5) The factory going workers, who stand as the advance guard of the labour movement. To a certain extent the second and third groups are still the mainstay of the Nationalist leaders, whose opportunism is forcing the workers towards class-consciousness, as was proven during the plantation strikes of last year.

The main principles of the Indian Trade Unions are as follow:—(1) The status of labour as a labourer, his relation to his employer, and effect on the economic and industrial life of the country. (2) The status of the labourer as a citizen, as related to the political movements and its result. (3) The status of the labourer in the industrial world, which has been rising ever since the Russian Revolution.

These extracts are from the Madras Labour Union's programme. It is said that the Union started with the first principle. "It was when the work of education was begun, when several questions were submitted by the Union men, that the second factor emerged. . . . In dealing with the second we were face to face with the necessity of recognising the third factor." It is further given out that in formulating these principles very little help was received from the educated class. "The workpeople themselves, with a culture of their own, vaguely felt, but were unable to express what was passing in their mind, and what was bound up in the three factors described above."

The value of solidarity has already been realised by the Indian workers. The president of the Madras Union, Mr. Wadia, writes: "Indian labour understands that men working on the railway in Punjab, in the mills of Bombay, in the engineering shops of Bengal, are no better off than those working in the mills of Messrs. Binney & Co., Madras. The distance of a few hundred miles makes no difference in their solidarity, which alone will lead them to the final victory, the destruction of wage slavery." About the International he says: "The fate of the International is in the balance, what with the activities of the Second and Third, but as soon as a properly constituted International begins to work the Indian labourers will naturally ally themselves with the movement. The labourers, by themselves, are not sufficiently organised; they are not educated in the modern method of political struggle, and, therefore, if a long, weary fight between labour and capital, between landlordism and peasantry, is to be avoided, *the Indian labourer must gain moral and other support from his comrades and brothers in other parts of the world.*"

The Unions in India were not recognised by the capitalists at the beginning, and the government backed their attitude. But the strength of the movement has forced recognition upon both of them. In November, when the Second Congress was to have taken place, the Mine Owners' Association opposed it and requested the Government to send the military to disperse it, but the Government refused. Consequently the conference went on unhampered, and the clever bourgeoisie, finding it not possible to fight labour face to face, adopted the diplomatic method and sent a deputation to make friendly relations with the workers, but not with the labour leaders. This capitalist deputation apologised for its former opposition and agreed to adopt 44 hours a week instead of 72, in addition to some other minor concessions.

The direction of this potential revolutionary labour movement in India is in the hands of people who can be classed into four groups: (1) The Nationalists; (2) The Reformists; (3) The Government and capitalist agents; and (4) the leaders who have come out from the ranks of the labouring class. (1) The foremost of the Nationalist politicians interested in labour is Mr. Lajpat Rai. He is the veteran centrist leader, a rich advocate, a journalist and landowner, but very orthodox. The same Mr. Rai in the year 1920 shamelessly condemned the printers' strike of Lahore because it touched his pocket. Despite this, in 1921, a year afterwards, he was elected as president of the First All-Indian Trade Union Congress. The union leaders who elected him to preside, by this action alone, demonstrated their real character. Another Nationalist labour

leader is Mr. B. K. Chakrabarty, an advocate, landowner, and multi-millionaire. He was the president of the Calcutta Tramway Workers' Union, one of the most virile groups of Indian workers. Dr. R. K. Mukherji, a bourgeoisie economist and professor, is a leader of a small national centrist group. He was delegated from the Bengal Unions to the First Congress of the Trade Unions. Some dozen other such advocates and professors can be shown to be interested in trade unionism; it is the fashion, at present, to become a labour leader in India. This is due to the fact that the nationalists understand the power of the industrial labour movement and want to control it; besides, it wants to frighten the Government with the organised force of the unions for political purpose.

(2) Mr. Gandhi, the now imprisoned leader of the Indian nationalists, also tried his hand on the trade unions, but without much success. He left the labour field after the workers of the textile mills of Ahmedabad, Gandhi's native town, refused to break the strike on terms agreed between himself and the nationalist mill owners. He said: "We must not tamper with the labourers. It is dangerous to make political use of the factory proletariat" (*The Times*, May, 1921).

The most prominent leader of the labour movement is Mr. B. P. Wadia. It was he who first started the labour unions in India. Wadia is an ex-member of the Indian Home Rule League (a moderate political organisation with a programme to achieve self-government by gradual concessional process) and a well-known theosophist. He is president of five virile unions in Madras. He says that the economic aim of the Indian labour movement is not only to get higher wages, etc., but the ultimate destruction of wage slavery. In his opinion the international labour movement is too materialistic, and lacks a soul. This spiritual task, he contends, is a special one left for the Indian workers to develop. His reformist attitude became most marked in his evidence on labour reform, given before the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which collected material to find the best means of introducing political reforms into India. He said: "It is my considered opinion that Indian Ministers are better fitted to carry out adequate factory reforms than the Official Executive."

The next leader in importance is the reformist Indian Labour leader, Mr. Joseph Baptista. He was president of the Second Congress of the Indian Trade Union Congress. Four months before the Congress, on the 20th July, he addressed a mass meeting requesting them to follow the pacificism preached by Gandhi. He was met with cries of "Shame." The chairman of this meeting was Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, a well known member of the Bombay Mill Owners' Association, and among those present on the platform was Mr. R. Williams, chief Publicity Bureau officer of the Government of Bombay. This bureau was specially created to fight the revolutionary tendency of the masses. Mr. Baptista came to the forefront after Colonel Wedgewood's visit to India, and though we do not know of any relation or agreement between them we know that Mr. Baptista is following the policy of the very moderate I.L.P. Labour M.P., and is introducing Fabian Socialism to India. In his presidential speech he declared that: "The political policy of the Congress must steer clear of extreme Individualism and

Bolshevism and follow the golden path of Fabian Socialism.”

The Government and capitalist agent types of labour leaders are Mr. Lokhande, of Bombay; Dr. Nair, of Madras, and Mr. Jones, of Calcutta. Jones was the general secretary of the All-Indian Railwaymen's union. He was the J. H. Thomas of India, and he had to resign because his treachery became too well known. The charges against the first two are so well known that Comrade Saklatvala had to warn everybody against them recently in the *Labour Monthly*. Regarding these types of labour leaders, there are very few Indians amongst them; they are mostly Europeans residing in India. We want European assistance, but we do not desire moderate Labourism of the I.L.P. brand. It is here that the British Communist Party can and ought to help us directly.

The labour leaders who have come from the masses themselves are not very well known. One who has become prominent is Comrade Viswanandda, leader of the miners of Bihar. At the Second Congress he declared that “If the present misery of the workers of India is allowed to continue nothing will stop Bolshevism. Let them take due warning, because the Indian workers are determined to become the rightful owners and rulers of the wealth produced by their labour.”

These mass leaders lack a definite viewpoint. They have picked up, here and there, some news of the Russian revolution from the bourgeoisie newspapers, and a few Communist ideas have influenced them. But they are our men, and we ought to gather them together for the Indian Communist Party and then push them to take leadership of the unions. This is the immediate task of the Party.

But in India there is no strong Communist Party, and it will take some time to create an effective one. The Internationals are not yet in touch with India, and at the present rate no one knows how long it will take them to reach the native masses. On the other hand, as I have shown, the Indian Fabians and moderates are spending all their energy to capture the masses. That they are somewhat successful may be seen in the growing timidity of the strike movement. The Indian workers have been flattered by the moderate labour leaders, and have been urged to be contented with the little increases in wages, etc., which were won during the time of the great strikes.

The British Labour Party is also busy with the Indian workers and their unions. These British leaders must understand, however, that the industrial victories of the English workers can only be maintained by co-operation with the Indian masses. For their own interests, therefore, the British workers must stand on common ground with their coloured comrades of India. The tie of economic interests that binds them is very close. The British Labour Party, which expects to control the governing power very soon, must stop fooling the Indian masses by pushing the Baptista moderate type of labour leader. On the other hand the organising radical societies in England for helping the Indian workers must show the International comrades that the real driving force in Indian emancipation rests in the organised power of the native masses.

# The Cauldron of the East

*[While the eyes of most people are watching the amazing developments in the European situation, it is necessary to emphasise that an equally critical problem is rapidly rising in the Near East. In order that our readers may understand what is behind the conflict between France and Britain, and between Turkey and Greece, we have arranged for three very important writers to deal with the subject. The writers show how much Soviet Russia is concerned in anything that happens in the Near East. Newbold's analysis of the financial ties that bind Greece to Britain also shows, indirectly, what the Entente financial groups in the grain trade lost when the Bolshevik revolution tore the Ukrainian and Volga grain areas from their grasp. We have here an additional reason why Soviet Russia was attacked by armies financed by Entente money; why these armies sought to devastate the Ukrainian and Volga regions; and why the Entente States refused to help to fight the famine when it appeared in those very districts. The article by Rosenberg clearly proves that the European crisis has important roots in the Near East. Finally, Radek deals with the internal problems of Turkey and states the attitude of the Soviet Government towards that much harried country, and incidentally offers it some good advice.—EDITOR OF COMMUNIST REVIEW.]*

## 1. The Greek Grain Kings

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

**I**T is a feature of history, as it is presented by the orthodox interpreters of events and movements, that it omits to mention or, at all events, seriously to take into account what are amongst the most obvious factors determining its course.

During recent years there has passed into circulation in Europe and America an immensely voluminous literature dealing, from one point of view or another, with the complex problems of Balkan politics. It has championed the several causes of the separate nationalities and religious faiths. It has explored the superficialities of the present and the profundities of the past. It has added whole libraries to the already abundant studies of ethnology and the vast range of polemical and propagandist material arguing for and against the cult of Islam or one or other of the Christian faiths.

But almost without exception there occurs not so much as a hint or a suggestion of the great underlying influences which have, at successive though intermittent stages, but with continuously increasing emphasis, pushed into the foreground of international politics the conflicting interests and aspirations of the Ottoman Empire and the Greek Nationalists. It is the silence upon these matters, whether the result of a deliberate conspiracy or, as is more probable, of an utter inability to comprehend their significance, which makes a mystery of a present-day political issue which is of epochal importance to the peoples of Europe and of Asia.

### THE QUESTION OF THE KHALIFAT.

The question of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and the retention by the Khalifat of Constantinople and other holy places of Islam has become one of the greatest gravity throughout vast areas of Asia and of Africa. The indignation caused by the support given by the British Government to Greek claims in Asia Minor and Greek aspirations again to rule at Constantinople is causing a seeth-

ing ferment throughout India and Egypt. Tens and hundreds of millions of peasants and proletarians, upon the surplus of whose labour the economic and, in the last resort, the imperial power of British capitalism has come, in the course of its expansion, to rest, are receiving an added stimulus to revolt by reason of the indignation which they feel at the aid that Britain is, officially, rendering to the Greek Imperialists. The resentment which the Punjabi subjects of the British Raj are feeling at the disturbance of their customary mode of life by their growing initiation into the deceptive rites of exploitation under the yoke of industrial capitalism; the anger which the tribesmen of Irak and the Hedjaz experience at the intrusion into their midst of mining prospectors and drillers for oil; the rage which the Egyptian peasantry and town dwellers know as the British aeroplanes sweep over their villages and cities, keeping watch and ward for Allenby—all these and a score of other and gathering hatreds find their common link and their sanctification in the thought of the indignities heaped upon the Khalif of Islam by the single enemy and the identical plunderer of them all.

Everywhere throughout the Near and Middle East outrage is being done in these days to the accepted customs and the traditional beliefs of centuries by the insinuatingly insistent advance of a new economy, an economy of exploitation alien to the immemorial habits of tribal herdsmen and peasant cultivators. To make the innovation more abominable, it comes in the guise of the Greek, comes in the person of a huckster no less importunate and much less tolerable than the Jew, comes in the service of a type which, as the officialdom of the old government of the Sultan and his viziers, was notorious for its exactions and its overbearing audacity. It is this fact of the increasing saturation of the East with Greek capital that makes it so important to understand the economic basis of Greek Nationalism and of the surreptitious influences which, in so many parts of the British Empire and spheres of British investment, are really fed from the same source as the forces of Greek "Liberation."

#### CORN FOR CALICO.

The rapid growth of manufacturing industry in this country towards the end of the eighteenth century, with the resulting increase in population occasioned, in all but very good seasons, an extensive demand for imported corn. This demand was supplied in the main from Poland, and the traffic passed either through Danzig and other ports of the Baltic or else through Odessa on the Black Sea. The corn trade was largely in the hands of German Jews from Frankfurt and from Hamburg, but no inconsiderable part was in those of the Greeks. There was repeated reference to this trade in Russian corn through Odessa made inside and outside of Parliament during the agitation for the Repeal of the Corn Laws. One writer, in 1839, made significant allusion to this trade in Russian corn in these words:—

"We know by repeated experience that the Russian Government, despotic though it be, dare not offend the great proprietors of the soil, by risking that export trade to England, upon which their revenue principally depends. . . . It was the national resentment kindled in Russia, by the interruption of commerce, which gave birth to the grand effort against France, then apparently irresistible,

which ended in the downfall of Napoleon." (*Effects of the Corn Laws*, R. Torrens.)

The corn trade with Russia, it is evident, was even in 1812 a factor of consequence. It was still more important in 1820 and in 1830. In the latter year statistics prepared in Frankfurt showed that an enormous proportion of the grain trade with Russia was in Greek hands. In the former year, Britain was sending more than 13,000,000 yards of cotton cloth to Russia, and in 1837 more than 23,000,000 lbs. of cotton twist. Great volumes of calico were also being sent to Turkey and being paid for in corn.

Another writer, in 1840, in *Influences of the Corn Laws*, dilated on "the regular and extensive trade" in wheat "carried on between Odessa and Malta, Leghorn, Trieste, Marseilles, and other places." In Odessa and in Moscow there were, from 1814 onwards, most influential associations of Greek merchants maintaining very intimate relations with the Czarist Ministers. For a time, according to J. Gennadius, Greek Minister to this country, the Rallis organised the trade in corn between Odessa and this country.

When we remember how important a trade for industrial England was that which exchanged the universally needed wheat for the calico of Lancashire, we understand better the enthusiasm of Joseph Sturge, corn merchant, of Birmingham, W. E. Gladstone, son of the corn merchant Gladstone, of Liverpool, and Richard Cobden, calico printer, of Manchester, for free trade in corn and calico between Britain and Russia and for liberty for the Greeks to enjoy undisturbed the transport of these to and from Roumania and the Ukraine.

Considerable before 1850, the import of wheat from Russia, after that date, became very great indeed. In 1850, the imports from Russia totalled 630,000 quarters. By 1860, they had considerably exceeded 1,000,000 quarters, a level not reached by Canada until 1880, or South America until 1891. By 1905 they exceeded 6,000,000 quarters.

#### THE GREEKS AS CAPITALISTS.

These figures give some idea of the immense value of this trade and the profits that must inevitably have accrued to the Rallis, the Rodocanachis, and others who carried it on. The Greek bourgeoisie, always powerful in Roumania, and long established as traders and bankers in Constantinople and in Smyrna, was becoming the creditor of Czarist Russia, of the enfranchised nations of Greece and Roumania, and of the bankrupt Empire of the Ottomans. They were becoming most influential as merchants, as bankers, and as shipowners in Trieste, in Leghorn, and in Marseilles. They were entrenched in Liverpool and Manchester, in Amsterdam and New Orleans. They were not only in corn, but also in raw cotton. They were becoming concessionaires of the mineral oil lands of the Caucasus and the minerals of the Donetz. They were interesting themselves in railways in all the countries where they handled grain shipments.

They became in awakening Russia and in the "liberated" territories of the Balkans as, also, in Turkey, of their "oppressors," universal providers of mercantile services and of credits. The richest of the Greek bourgeoisie hailed from an island opposite Smyrna, viz., Chios, "the garden of the Archipelago." Thence

came, according to Gennadius, in *Hellenism in England*, the Rallis, the Rodocanachis, the Mavrogordatos, the Petrocochinos, the Agelastos, the Argentis, the Sechiaris, the Scaramangas, and many other families, who, in Alexandria, Constantinople, Marseilles, London, and Manchester, have become well-known in merchandise and in shipping. All of them closely associated together, whether in business or in more intimate marital relations, these immensely wealthy families constitute what is, beyond the shadow of a doubt, one of the most powerful groups in world capitalism.

#### THE MIGHTIEST OF MERCHANTS.

There is no firm of merchants anywhere so influential as that of Ralli Brothers. They are generally acknowledged as being the greatest traders in the world. Their transactions in wheat, which is but one of the staple commodities they handle, not infrequently run into the tens of millions sterling. They have enormous interests in Argentina and in India, where, to the most remote railway depot, they are known as clients to be treated with expedition and respect. They do a huge business in cotton and in jute. They are big merchants in rice and other cereals. Beginning as traders in the corn and cotton of Asia Minor, the corn of Russia and the cotton of Egypt, they have extended their activities to embrace the commerce of whole continents. They have become rich beyond the wildest dreams of avarice. Rarely to be detected in politics, and seldom, if ever, appearing in any prominent capacity in banking or investment, one is conscious of the influence which they exert by reason of the fabulous credits at their disposal, and the position they they have long held in high society.

The daughter of Thomas Ralli, the grain "king" of Odessa, became the wife of Sir R. C. Moreton, Master of the Ceremonies at the Court from 1887 to 1913, and *her daughter's husband, Lord Byng of Vimy, has recently been appointed Governor-General of the greatest corn-producing and exporting province of the Empire, the Dominion of Canada.*

Gennadius, long the Greek Minister to this country, received his financial training with and continued, on his own confession, on the closest terms with Ralli Brothers. He was a most intimate friend of King Edward, and extremely influential in all affairs wherein finance commingled with diplomacy.

The Rallis of the present generation are known, whilst British in nationality and residence, to exercise enormous weight in Greek politics, being, as Gennadius says, "passionately devoted to the great and glorious Fatherland."

#### GREECE IN THE AGE OF IMPERIALISM.

That the merchant princes of Greece should, in these days, be so potent, whether in Britain or in the homeland, is not to be wondered at, when one recollects that the fundamental basis of their economic power is also the fundamental commerce of capitalist society. They have, for a whole century, traded in cotton, the greatest of the staples of British manufacture. They have traded, also, in jute. They have handled wheat, the universal and indispensable necessity, the primary foodstuff of a people which seldom has more than six weeks' food supplies in hand in the country. They had the initial advantage of securing the sentimental attachment, combined with the community of economic interest, of the

Liberal capitalists and those progressive Tories who, in Manchester and Liverpool, were in the critical years of Greece's economic regeneration and national emancipation themselves accumulating vast surpluses for investment, and, at the same time, waging class conflict with the Turkey, Levant, and India merchants of an older school. They were able to establish connections with persons powerful in the financial world and influential in politics—such men as Ricardo, Cobden, Gladstone, Goschen, Evelyn Baring, and, later, Milner, Long, and Churchill.

They were trading and negotiating money transactions in the seething cauldron of Near Eastern diplomacy, in a position to drive good bargains and secure valuable patronage now from one high contracting party and now from another.

Russia, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Italy, France, Britain, and America—in all of these the Greek bourgeoisie was buying and selling cotton and corn, lending and borrowing cash and credit, making bargains in the market, the stock exchange, and in the chancelleries. In every capitalist country these traders in the staples were reproducing, on a heroic scale in this, the imperialist period, the achievements of the Portuguese and Frankfurt Jews in the Europe of Louis XIV., of Charles XIII., and of William III.

These Greek bourgeoisie had great expectations that, as a result of the Balkan and the Great Wars, wherein they were making enormous profits as war contractors and financiers, they should enter into and exploit the disintegrated provinces of the Turkish Empire. They had high hopes of falling eventual heirs to the Straits over which they foresaw Britain, France, and Czarist Russia would inevitably quarrel. They dreamed and, until the Bolshevik Revolution spoiled their scheme of brigandage, not without good grounds, of tremendous opportunities to develop the resources of the Danube valley, Poland, the Ukraine, South Russia, the Caucasus, Anatolia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Soudan, and Algeria. Amid the ruins of the French, British, and Russian Empires, the Greek bourgeoisie saw rising a new dominion, a new republican régime, reviving the ancient glories of Ionian Chios in the Age of the Amphytionic League, when, once before, its argosies came from Pontus laden with golden grain.

## 2. The New Fight in Constantinople *By* A. ROSENBERG

**L**OVERS of historical romance will rejoice at the thought that the Greeks have set out once more to wrest Constantinople from the Turk, after the rule of the Crescent in Stamboul from 1453 onwards. Romance is strengthened by the fact that the Greek King Constantine bears the old imperial name of the Byzantine Empire, and would thus seem destined to call it once more into being. But in our times, modern capitals are no places for the romantic. They are more adapted to hand grenades and speculation. When to-day Greece advances on Constantinople, it is no fight between Cross and Crescent, neither is it Europe against Asia, but it arises from the intrigues of the great capitalist powers and the chicanery

of the Foreign Offices of London, Rome and Paris, which, in turn, take their instructions from the Council Chambers of the Big Banks. The modern Leonidas is in the service of a London petroleum trust, and the modern Solomon conquers in the name of a good Christian or Jewish Parisian banking house.

The new Greek operations in Smyrna and before Constantinople mean that British capital is trying to get out of an unbearable situation created by the foreign policy of Lloyd George and Lord Curzon. It is becoming daily more evident that Great Britain in the East has backed the wrong horse. London under-estimated the vitality of Turkey, and believed that with the aid of Greek business men, bankers and ship owners they would fall into the old Sultan's inheritance. In the winter of 1918 England occupied Constantinople, allowing the old Sultan to devote himself to his amusements as a puppet monarch. They also allowed the Turkish Government to remain in Constantinople, but the Grand Vizier and the other ministers are more impotent than the famous Egyptian Government in Cairo. Britain is the master of Constantinople. The British fleet commands the seas and British generals rule Constantinople. A few French regiments have been allowed to enter the city to show that the control of the town is under the Entente. But the fact remains that for 3½ years British capital has ruled Constantinople.

In Thracia, the last European Turkish province west of Constantinople, England's Greek friends made themselves at home, and Greece undertook the conquest of Turkish Asia Minor from the West Coast onwards. But the Turkish population did not surrender without a fight to the appetite of Anglo-Greek capital. Without troubling about the puppet government in Constantinople, Kemal Pasha formed the new nationalist government in Angora and organized the resistance of Asia Minor.

The collapse of Constantine's offensive on Angora and the retreat of the Greek army from Smyrna before the Turks is still fresh in our memories, and, above all, the elegant *right about face* of French capital to an understanding with the Angora government.

The situation in the early part of this year was such that no one believed in the possibility of a Greek victory in Asia Minor. But, on the other hand, the strength of the Turks was not sufficient to drive the Greeks into the sea. And the mass of Greek peasants and workers began to realize that they were being sacrificed for British capital. The anti-war feeling in Greece is growing. It will be impossible for the Greek troops to remain in Asia Minor for ever, thus risking the possibility that one day the Greek army will demobilize of its own accord. On the other hand, the Turkish peasant-soldier holds fast to the idea that he must protect his existence from foreign capitalist exploiters. But the concessions made by Kemal Pasha to French capitalists do not mean the open, brutal slavery which a victory of the Greeks and English would impose upon the Turkish masses.

The French are making clever use of the Turkish victories. The difficulties of the English international situation brought about a retreat of the British Government in the East. On March 26th of this year a treaty was signed by the Foreign Ministers of England, France and Italy which in its broadest extent conformed to the aspirations of the Turks. This document, signed by Lord Curzon, Poincaré, and Schanzer, recommended a peace between Greece and

Turkey on the following basis: The Greeks evacuate Asia Minor, and Constantinople once more unite with the Turkish State of Angora. But the Greeks still hold Adrianople and the Gallipoli Peninsula south of Constantinople. This heavy sacrifice was made by Britain on account of the Indian Mohammedans. The religious solidarity of all Mohammedans with Turkey had led to an intensification of the Indian difficulties. Through the re-establishment of a strong Turkey, with Constantinople as the capital, Britain hoped to smoothe down the opposition in India for a time. The war-famed Gallipoli Peninsula remained in Greek, that is, in British hands. Who holds Gallipoli, holds the Dardanelles, and who holds the Dardanelles, commands Constantinople. Thus, although forgoing much of its power by the March Treaty, Britain nevertheless maintained its military position in the Dardanelles.

The decisions of 26th March, however, were never realized. The Greek Government refused to admit its defeat by evacuating Asia Minor. They fear an inner political reaction in Athens which would sweep away the jingo capitalist and military cliques. But France demands that the Eastern situation be cleared. The treaty was a strong trump in M. Poincaré's hand; it prevented Mr. Lloyd George from retracting his concessions of March 26th. Now comes the London Conference, in which the conflicts between France and England should be cancelled—at least provisionally. The English Government desires, as it has often done before, to exchange concessions in the East for concessions in Germany. But to exchange one must possess something. And the signing of the March Treaty by Lord Curzon consenting to the return of Smyrna and Constantinople to Turkey, means that England stands empty-handed so far as the Near East is concerned. English capital therefore had to find new securities for the London Conference. And this is being done by the instrumentality of Greece.

Greece remains absolutely a British colony. Only a short time ago the English petroleum trust obtained a complete monopoly of oil rights in Greece. And now England is playing a double game. Publicly they deny any support of the Greek adventure. Indeed, they even declare that they will take up arms to oppose the Greek advance on Constantinople, but in reality Greece is playing England's game. The first step was for the Greeks to proclaim the independence of Ionia. That territory is still occupied by the Greeks in West Asia Minor with Smyrna as capital. The old game of Fiume and Vilna is being re-enacted. Formally, Greece is not responsible for independent Ionia. In Athens the Greek Government will shrug its shoulders and point out that, apparently, the workers, peasants and soldiers of Ionia are against Turkish rule. A new factor is thus introduced into the Orient question. The Treaty of March 26th, as far as Smyrna goes, is invalidated. England can now demand a French equivalent for having contributed to the Ionian solution.

The occupation of Constantinople by Greek troops would not affect the position of British capital in this city, but would mean that Kemal Pasha does not receive the city. And this would introduce another new factor. But Kemal Pasha threatens that he will advance from Asia Minor if the Greeks threaten the town. It is doubtful whether, in case of a serious advance on the city, the English troops would actually fire on their Greek friends.

Besides, the French are too weak numerically to offer any resistance for the present. From a purely military standpoint a Greek attempt on Constantinople is not without prospects. But in such an event France would raise such an outcry against England that Mr. Lloyd George would not dare support such an adventure. But, diplomatically, Britain contents herself with the fact that the Greek Army is threatening Constantinople. England can show its good will by protecting Constantinople and sending the Greeks back home. And, at the same time, Lloyd George can be paid for this good will.

Greece is thus a helpless instrument of English capital in its quarrel with French capital.

The nationalities of the Near East are pawns in the chess game played by the great powers. But Constantinople is not only a question for France and England, but one of vital importance for Soviet Russia as to who rules Constantinople and the Bosphorus.

An agreement in London which disregards the interests of Soviet Russia will not be recognized by her, so that the end of the refined chess party in which Lloyd George is playing with Poincaré will be "Love's Labour Lost."

## American Coal Strike: Peace reigns at Herrin By K. Haessler

**T**HERE will be no scabbing on union coal miners in Herrin for at least ten years to come.

No editorial in the capitalist Press or in the Labour Press, so far as I have read them, has touched on this fundamental result of the massacre in the Williamson county mining town in Southern Illinois. We call the affair a massacre, though only nineteen non-union men were killed and a score or more wounded, while three union coal miners lost their lives as well. In India, when the British kill or wound 1,500 unarmed Hindus, as they did at Amritsar soon after the war for democracy, that begins to look like a massacre, though nobody seemed to care very much, but here a battle provoked by gunmen and lost by them is by common capitalist consent known as a massacre.

The moral issue, the question as to whom to pass the buck, will be decided again in August, when the special grand jury empanelled at Marion, near by, will report. The coroner's jury of three miners and three business men, the first official body to pass judgment, held the Southern Illinois Coal Company directly and indirectly responsible for the deaths on the testimony of a wounded scab, and named C. K. McDowell, the one-legged company superintendent who lost his life in the outbreak, as the man who had murdered George Henderson, an unarmed union miner, and so started the shooting. When McDowell's body was found it is said the word scab had been branded or painted on his wooden leg. Attorney General Brundage, of Illinois, has offered \$1,000 to any informer assisting the jury to stick someone with the blame.

Leaving the moral issue to the gentleman taking an official interest in it, let us return to facts.

The outstanding fact, pleasant or unpleasant, is that there will be no scabbing for about ten years. Another fact is that a

crop of children prematurely born during the excitement, like the Peoria babies born during the trouble there some decades ago (of whom Tom Tipett, of the Federated Press, is one), will grow up with the impress of industrial civil war stamped into their being.

As for the events leading up to the Herrin battle, the *Chicago Tribune* carried an account about ten days late substantially like that reported immediately by the Federated Press. Needless to say, the first reports of the *Tribune*, sensationally displayed just when readers' mind were still plastic on the question, gave a very different impression.

Herrin is a small place devoted almost exclusively to coal mining. The principal businesses, according to the *Forward* correspondent, are in Jewish hands. The civil offices are filled by the organized votes of the union miners. The miners are of American stock, with Italians, negroes, Hungarians, Slavs, and Finns giving an international flavour to the community. The owner of the miners' jobs is William J. Lester (Damned-If-I-Will Lester), president and principal stockholder of the company, which runs a strip mine near Herrin. Ordinarily coal veins are worked underground, but when the vein runs near the surface it is cheaper and quicker to strip off the soil with a steam shovel and excavate the coal and load it on cars with another steam shovel. When the coal strike began, April 1st, it sewed up underground mining in Illinois because of a state law forbidding men to mine without certificates based on several years' experience. Strip mines, also abandoned operations, except to uncover the veins, which was done by union men. Lester worked along under this agreement until the beginning of June, when he ordered the union men to load coal in the cars. They refused, and lost their jobs. Scabs and gunmen were brought in from Chicago, and everything was set for trouble. June 16th a miner in another country wrote to a friend: "Will them hell-hounds go the limit? If the law can't stop 'em, the men will." June 21st Henderson, the unarmed union man, was killed. June 22nd the battle was fought.

Before fighting it over again here a bit of Herrin gossip lifting the affair into the largest circles of corporation control will assist in estimating the importance of the scrap. Lester, this story has it, was hard up for capital at the same time that he saw a fortune in strip coal at famine prices if he could only sell it. He could not get a loan from the usual sources, but obtained it in the end, the rumour runs, from United States Steel Corporation quarters on condition that he introduced the open shop and dent a hole in the solid union line-up in the Illinois coal fields. With money in his pocket and riches in sight he could go cheerfully forward.

He knew what the consequences of his determination would be. He told Governor Small hell would break loose unless troops were sent down. When Colonel Samuel N. Hunter, Illinois, national guard, implored him to stop operations to avoid bloodshed, Lester replied: "I'll be damned if I will." He may have had the business advantage of bloodshed in mind. Immediately following the casualties he announced, through his attorney, that he would sue the miners' union and the county for over a million dollars, citing the Coronado decision of the United States supreme court.

The account of the battle as given by an eye-witness who saw it all through has a Homeric swing. Troy probably was no larger

than Herrin, and the casualties on the Trojan plain seldom more serious than these on the Illinois prairie. "Until dark, firing was intermittent," he writes; "a searchlight at the mine was turned upon the attackers. A rush was made to disconnect the power lines. A rush was made over the barbed wire and breastworks which had been erected. An aeroplane was fired upon by machine guns from the mine. Shortly after the aeroplane had flown overhead a white flag was raised by the men in the mine. A truce was arranged. The flag had been up but a short time when several of the armed men who had hoisted it re-opened fire. When it was seen that the flag of truce was being used as a ruse it was decided that no quarter would be granted. The screams of injured men in the pits could be heard above the roar of battle, and a voice shouted to the men that the first man to attempt to leave the pit would be shot. At daybreak the attackers formed in column. They worked their way into the stronghold and captured those who remained alive."

There were 60 or 70 men in the mine premises. Some were killed during the fighting, some while being led away as prisoners, following heated exchanges of West Madison Street, Chicago, Billingsgate, and the Southern Illinois variety. Nineteen scabs and guards were killed. A union miner dying of wounds on July 13th brought the union death list up to three. There was some rough handling on both sides, but no atrocities of the Belgian propaganda sort. The coroner found a number of scabs shamming severe injuries.

The dead on both sides were buried in the same cemetery.

Wounded scabs in the Herrin hospital were remarkably communicative. Joseph O'Rourke said: "I don't blame the miners much for attacking us. We didn't know this was a scab job. We were given arms when we arrived and a machine gun was set up at one corner of the mine. Most of the guards were toughs sent by a Chicago detective agency." The agency was the Edward J. Hargrave Secret Service. Ed. Green told reporters the boss told him he would be shot if he tried to quit the job. Other men gave similar details of being lured to the mine from Chicago under false pretences. The timekeeper of the company guards testified that Superintendent McDowell had killed Miner Henderson in cold blood. He also said the gunmen's chief got \$14 a day, and the rest \$5 a day. McDowell had previously told the sheriff that the unusual quantities of ammunition in the company buildings were being kept "for ducks." Asked to withdraw the gunmen, he replied: "I've broke other strikes, and I'll break this one." He had seen similar service in Colorado and Kansas. At Herrin he made the supreme sacrifice, as it is phrased.

Testimony before the coroner's jury by police, farmers, business men, miners, the sheriff and women unveiled a record of days of lawless behaviour by company guards before the clash. They picketed public roads, compelling farmers to detour to get to town. They yanked people out of passing autos and searched them. They slapped pedestrians and tried their way with women. A representative of the august *Chicago Tribune* standing on the highway got a summary invitation to take the air. The terrorizing was the first break in 20 years of peace in Williamson county.

The mine is shut down. The steam shovels are wrecked. The

box car living quarters are burnt. The power plant is dynamited. The scabs are dead or gone, except two or three wounded still in Herrin hospital. Gunmen all over the country have made mental reservations regarding service in Herrin. There will be at least ten years more of peace in Williamson county.

Peace obtained in this way is as embarrassing to present society as an illegitimate child. It should have been sanctified in some way beforehand, perhaps by a Wilsonian message to congress, about "voices in the air," But here it is, like the child. The parentage may be dubious, but the child is quite a strapper, good for at least ten years. And the moralists assert that illegitimacy is a growing evil.—(From *The Liberator*.)

## Soviet Russia at the Hague Report of Russian Delegation to its Government

**T**HE Hague Conference was summoned on the initiative of the Russian Government (Memorandum of May 11th) to deal with the problems which had been left unsolved by the Genoa Conference. Nevertheless, the Soviet Government was at one with foreign governments in considering that the principles adopted at the Genoa Conference should not be subjected to further examination at the Hague, and that, on the contrary, the Hague experts should begin at the point at which Genoa left off. With this premise, the Russian Delegation on its arrival at the Hague considered as firmly established the following propositions:

On the condition that Russia would be granted the credits necessary to rebuild her economic life, disorganised by intervention and the blockade, and that the claims on her for war debts would be abandoned, Russia would consent (1) to renounce her counter-claims for the damage caused by intervention and the blockade; (2) to recognise pre-war debts of the Russian State, not including arrears of interest; (3) to compensate former foreign owners of confiscated or nationalised properties by granting them preferential rights to concessions of their former properties.

Three questions, therefore, had to be decided at the Hague. The first was the size and the conditions of the credit to be granted to the Russian Government. The second was the concrete form in which pre-war debts were to be recognised. The third was the method of compensation of foreign former owners of private property.

The scheme of work for the Hague Conference adopted at Genoa insisted, in spite of the objections of the Russian Delegation, in uniting the delegations of all non-Russian States in a single non-Russian Commission, thus presenting a kind of united front to the Russian Delegation.

At the Hague, the non-Russian Commission, going further along the same path, broke up into three sub-commissions—private property, debts and credit—inviting the Russian Delegation to do the same, in order that the sub-commissions might arrange joint sessions. At its very first interview with the President of the non-Russian Commission the Russian Delegation refused to break up into sub-commissions, and declared that it would participate in its entirety in the sessions of all the sub-commissions of the non-Russian Com-

mission, hoping in this way to ensure a permanent liaison and sequence between the labours of the various sub-commissions.

As the success of the labours of the private property and debts sub-Commissions depended, in our opinion, upon the results obtained by the credits sub-Commission, we requested that the latter sub-Commission should be the first to meet. At this session the representatives of the non-Russian Commission asked the Russian Delegation to present a detailed plan for the economic restoration of Russia which would permit them to judge what credits were necessary. Desiring to facilitate the work of the non-Russian Commission as much as possible, and to contribute to results which would be advantageous for both parties, the Russian Delegation presented a detailed memorandum enumerating a first group of necessary expenses, which would involve foreign credits to the amount of at least 3,284,000,000 gold roubles, preferably in the form of goods. Following upon this, in the course of two sessions, we furnished detailed verbal replies to questions put by the sub-Commission, and explained why it was indispensable that these credits should be furnished to the Soviet Government itself. No serious objection was raised against the figures we indicated.

In this way the Russian Delegation did all that lay in its power to facilitate and accelerate the work of the credits sub-Commission. Unfortunately the latter, after repeatedly evading the direct questions of the Russian Delegation, waited until the last session before declaring that no Government credits and no Government guarantees for private credits would be granted to the Russian Government. By this decision the sub-Commission rendered quite impossible any favourable outcome of the conference.

In the private property sub-Commission, the Russian Delegation declared from the outset that it stood by the proposal it made at Genoa with reference to the priority rights of former property owners to take concessions for their former enterprises. The Delegation even declared itself ready to go further, and to examine other forms of compensation for those amongst the foreign former property owners who would not be satisfied with concessions: always providing, however, that the Soviet Government would receive a firm assurance that credits would be granted to it. In point of fact, only under such circumstances could the Soviet Government have the certainty of being able to restore national economic life, and immediately thereafter commence the execution of the engagements into which it had entered.

But the sub-Commission of private property refused to examine the question of credits, as falling within the competence of another sub-Commission, and demanded of the Russian Delegation the absolute and unconditional recognition of the principle of restitution of nationalised foreign property, or of compensation therefor: and its President explained that, in the view of the sub-Commission, the sole effective compensation which the Soviet Government was in a position to make was restitution. It is evident that such a method of tackling the question could not presage any favourable issue to the labours of the sub-Commission; although the Russian Delegation, responding to its express desire, immediately furnished the sub-Commission with a list of possible concessions (not quite complete), together with the most detailed information as to the general con-

ditions attending the grant of concessions and as to labour conditions prevailing in Russia.

The unyielding policy of the private property sub-Commission, influencing the decisions of the other sub-Commissions of the non-Russian Commission, was the principal cause of the failure of the conference as a whole. In this way the interests of the overwhelming majority of small bondholders and the economic development of Russia and Europe were sacrificed for the sake of the advantage of a relatively infinitesimal group who formerly owned property on a large scale.

The debts sub-Commission questioned us at great length on the financial situation and the budget of the Russian State. The Russian Delegation presented a detailed verbal and written report on the budget. Comrade Sokolnikov, at three successive sessions, supplied the most circumstantial explanations to the sub-Commission. Nevertheless this sub-Commission also decided to conclude its work without having considered the concrete proposals brought forward by both parties on the questions of a moratorium and modes of payment.

An essential characteristic of the Hague Conference was that, while demanding all kinds of information of us, which we always supplied with the least delay possible and with all the details at our disposal, the non-Russian Commission never once in any of the sub-Commissions, vouchsafed a reply to the questions formulated by us. It even rejected our proposal to collect, by means of a system of questionnaires (of which we supplied a specimen), information concerning former debts and confiscated or nationalised goods in respect of which claims are made against the Russian Government.

On July 14 we found the three sub-Commissions of the non-Russian Commission deciding that for the future any joint session with the Russian Delegation was useless: which was equivalent to breaking up the conference. Seeing the explanation of this outcome not only in the general attitude of ill-will, founded on political considerations, of most of the experts towards the Russian Government, but also in the artificial division of the conference labours amongst three sub-Commissions, and wishing to make a last attempt to bring the conference to a satisfactory conclusion, the Russian Delegation on July 16 sent a letter to M. Patijn, President of the non-Russian Commission. In this letter we declared once again that we were ready to examine concrete methods of compensation for former property owners, providing the non-Russian Commission simultaneously considered concrete proposals for credits in our favour; and we requested a joint session of the Bureau of the non-Russian Commission with the Russian Delegation in order to arrive at a method of continuing and making a success of the conference.

In reply to this letter, M. Patijn, after declining our proposal on formal grounds, invited the Russian Delegation to attend a meeting of the private property sub-Commission for the purpose of making new proposals concerning compensation for losses suffered by former property owners. In this way the non-Russian Commission rejected our attempt to examine the problems laid before the conference in all their amplitude, refused us the possibility of raising anew the question of credits, and requested us merely to make new concessions in favour of private property without the least allusion to the credits necessary for that purpose.

We protested against this attitude of the non-Russian Commis-

sion, and demanded the summoning of a plenary session of the two Commissions, Russian and non-Russian. This session was summoned for July 19, and, in the letter announcing his consent, M. Patijn warned us once again that its sole object was to hear new proposals on our part.

Thus the non-Russian Commission, itself refusing to make any concession whatsoever, agreed only to listen to any we had to make.

In such conditions there could naturally be no question for the Russian Delegation of going further along the path of concession. We resolved to make use of this last—and solitary—joint session to define the real intentions of the Governments represented in the non-Russian Commission, and, if possible, to arrive at an agreement. In the person of Comrade Litvinoff, the Russian Delegation drew attention to the fact that the non-Russian Commission had rejected our formulation of the various questions and our proposals without making the least attempt clearly to formulate its own counter-proposals, *i.e.*, the conditions on which it would consider possible to recommend the Governments to resume relations with Russia.

Comrade Litvinoff, taking as his basis declarations made in the sub-Commissions by various members of the non-Russian Commission, then attempted to formulate the probable requirements of the latter. The expression which seemed to him could be given to those requirements was as follows: the Soviet Government recognises in principle its obligation to pay pre-war debts and to give effective compensation to foreign former property owners who were not satisfied by concessions, offers of participation, &c. The Soviet Government binds itself to conclude an arrangement within the next two years with the interested parties on the method of debt repayment and on compensation.

If we had hit upon the correct interpretation of the demands of the non-Russian Commission, and if that Commission, not enjoying sufficient power to enunciate its demands, were to ask for the guidance of the Governments concerned on the proposal thus formulated, the Russian Delegation on its part was ready, Comrade Litvinoff declared, to take the opinion of the Russian Government on the same question.

Thus the Russian Delegation consented under certain conditions to ask the Russian Government whether it agreed to continue negotiations after a radical change in their basis, that is, whether it was ready to renounce the question of credits to be granted or guaranteed to the Russian Government as a result of the conference, and to be content with the situation which logically followed from Comrade Litvinoff's formula (the *de jure* recognition of the Soviet Government), and which would facilitate the obtaining of the necessary credits, not from Governments, but from individuals and private groups.

The non-Russian Commission did not accept in principle the proposal formulated by Comrade Litvinoff, and did not consider it useful to ask the opinion of the Governments. It replied clearly and unmistakably that even concessions on the part of Russia as important as the recognition of pre-war debts and the undertaking to compensate former property owners, while at the same time agreeing not to raise further at the conference the question of governmental or Government-guaranteed credits, as well as the abandonment of the

question of the Russian counterclaims did not constitute a sufficient basis for the conclusion of a general agreement with Russia.

The Russian Delegation considers that, after a decision of this nature, there can remain no doubt, even in minds most prejudiced against the Soviet Government, as to where the responsibility really lies for the failure of the conference and of the attempts to arrive at an understanding between Russia and the other States.

After the reply of the non-Russian Commission, any necessity of specially consulting the Russian Government naturally disappeared, and the Delegation can confine itself to communicating the present report and the contents of the resolution adopted by the non-Russian Commission. The Delegation is persuaded that, if the Hague negotiations had taken place under normal circumstances, an agreement might have been reached even at this point with all the Governments concerned, or at least with the majority.

The Russian Delegation desires to draw attention to the two distinct stages through which the negotiations passed. The first is characterised by the information supplied by the Russian Delegation in reply to the requests of the non-Russian Commission. During this period the work of the conference continued in a normal and energetic way, without complications of any sort or external shocks. During the second period, when the examination of proposals and concrete requirements began, there manifested itself the divergence of interests existing amongst the participants of the non-Russian Commission. There then made itself felt a determination at all costs to force the labours of the conference in the hope of bringing about a rupture. It became clear that certain members of the non-Russian Commission—those who at Genoa raised the greatest objections to the summoning of the Hague Conference, who in the interval between Genoa and the Hague attempted to make the latter impossible, who are the most interested parties in the continuation of the financial and economic blockade of Russia, and who appear as the principal obstacle in the way of the economic restoration of Europe—desired to wind up the conference as rapidly as possible in the fear that, were it to continue, their anti-Russian front would be broken up.

They were successful: and the conference has been prematurely broken up, without completing its labours or playing the part which had been assigned to it. But the Russian Delegation is firmly convinced that the problems discussed will soon find their solution in a form as favourable, if not more so, for Soviet Russia.

#### The Russian Delegation:

M. LITVINOFF, Chairman.

L. KRASSIN.

N. KRASTINSKY.

*July 21, 1922.*

Every man is a consumer, and ought to be a producer. He fails to make his place good in the world, unless he not only pays his debt but also adds something to the commonwealth.—*Emerson.*

# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



## America GOMPERSISM IN FULL FLOWER

By WM. Z. FOSTER (Chicago).

**N**EVER was a labour movement in more dire straits than ours is now. Viciously attacked politically, industrially, and every other possible way, it is literally backed up against a dead wall fighting for its very life. Yet in this supreme crisis its leadership is utterly incapable of even thinking clearly upon the situation, not to speak of doing anything vital to remedy it. To those who have hopes of some day seeing the working class master of society, the recent A. F. of L. Convention was a tragedy. Faced by a multitude of grave problems, the solution of which would have required a conscientious overhauling of the labour movement from top to bottom, it did nothing but play politics, mumble patriotic phrases and run around in the same old circles, which are responsible for its present desperate plight. The Cincinnati Convention was the most spineless, hopeless affair that has ever been staged even by the hard-boiled A. F. of L. It betrayed the complete intellectual bankruptcy of the old Gompers machine and showed clearer than ever its entire unfitnes to lead American labour.

### POLITICAL STUPIDITY.

One pressing problem before the Convention had to do with political action. As every one with a spark of intelligence and honesty knows and will admit, the Gompers political policy of rewarding Labour's friends and punishing its enemies has made a political zero of the American working class. Besides degenerating the unions into appendages of the corrupt capitalist parties and injecting crooked politicians directly into the ranks of the workers, where they have poisoned everything about them, its preaching of

capitalist conceptions has prevented the development of the class understanding and feeling without which no labour movement can prosper. It has also prevented the workers from securing any representation in the various local, state, and national legislature assemblies. It is one of the best aids to capitalist class rule. We have long paid the penalty for this foolish policy, but especially is its harm evident during the present big "open shop" and general anti-labour drive. Having full control of all legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Government and despising the politically misled labour movement, the employers are ruthlessly destroying the basic rights of the workers. Free speech, free press, and free assembly—in the true sense of the word—are now things of the past. Besides, hard-won legislation is fast going by the board; the Seamen's Act has been practically wiped out; the Federal Child Labour Law has been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court; and now the Coronado Coal Company decision, which killed the Clayton Act—apple of Mr. Gompers' eye—is threatening the whole Labour movement with destruction. It is a grave crisis. If there ever was a time for serious thought and action it is now. The need of the hour is for the workers to cut loose from their old political moorings; to bid defiance to their tormentors, and to launch forth upon a campaign of militant working class political action through a party of their own.

But the hidebound Cincinnati Convention did not understand this need any more than it understood the other problems confronting Labour. Made up for the most part of petty politicians and dominated completely by the arch-reactionary Gompers, it so entirely repudiated the idea of a labour party that the backers thereof dared not even introduce a resolution calling for one. Forty years ago or so Mr. Gompers decided that there

should be no working class political party. That settled the matter. No matter how much current events may show this decision to be wrong, he still clings to it with all the stubborn bigotry which characterises his nature. And this Convention, like so many others that he has carried in his pocket, docilely bowed to his will. The best it had to offer was to enlist Labour in a campaign to put across four constitutional amendments clipping the prerogatives of the courts and guaranteeing the workers the right to organise. What a programme! To send Organised Labour, demoralised, poisoned, disheartened, and disfranchised by Mr. Gompers' stupid policy of "rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies," out to enact four constitutional amendments! Were it not so tragic it would be ridiculous.

#### INDUSTRIAL INCOMPETENCY.

If the Cincinnati Convention failed dismally in the political field, it did no better in the realms of industry. Here again the Convention was faced by a grave crisis. Our trade union movement, beset on all sides, is now actually threatened with extinction. According to Secretary Morrison's report the membership of the A. F. of L. dropped 710,893 during the past year, bringing the total down to 3,195,835. But everyone knows these figures were juggled. The condition is far worse than they show. If it is safe to say that in the last twelve months at least 1,000,000 workers, disgusted with Gompersism, have turned their backs on the labour movement. It is doubtful indeed if there are over 2,500,000 members in the Federation at present. If the present rate of decline continues the organisation will be wiped out in three years. Could the situation be more serious?

And what did the Convention do about it? Practically nothing. Above all there is a vital necessity for amalgamation, for the workers to fuse their many scattered organisations together so that they may be able to make a united fight. Merger after merger is taking place among the employers. Their fighting force is ceaselessly being unified and strengthened. But the unions go along in the same old rut of craft division. Our backwardness in this respect is shown by the fact that in Germany the General Trade Union Federation, with 8,000,000 members, has this enormous army condensed into 49 national unions, whereas the A. F. of L., with only one third as

many members, has 117 national unions. In other words, the degree of consolidation among the German workers is six times greater than among us. But the Cincinnati Convention ignored this entire situation completely. The assumption was that its fragmentary and split-up unions represent the very acme of trade union achievement. A resolution offered by the Railway Clerks to reorganise the movement upon an industrial basis was voted down unanimously. Not a single voice was raised in favour of amalgamation. The Convention, characteristically enough, re-endorsed its stand of 81 years ago, by which the A. F. of L. graciously permits its affiliated organisations to fuse together if they so desire. The powerful employers are cutting the unions to pieces, because the unions are wrongly organised, but our labour leaders, intent primarily only on keeping themselves in office, stubbornly refuse to consider the cause or to adopt the obvious remedy of amalgamation. Not only that, but they denounce and attack anyone else who dares to point out the truth. The A. F. of L. Convention was as barren industrially as it was politically. It had nothing to offer to the workers, no programme that would rouse them to action to defend themselves from the exploiters. It was mentally dead.

#### REACTION ALL AROUND.

Stagnant and refusing to take a single step ahead, the Convention endorsed every reactionary proposition and condemned every progressive measure brought before it. Oppressed Russia, of course, came in for bitter condemnation. Again Mr. Gompers took his side with the Koltchaks, Denikins, and the rest of the crew trying to crush the Workers' Republic. In this, however, he had some opposition, and he had to call to his assistance such good friends of the working class as Herbert Hoover and Chas. E. Hughes, both of whom sent telegrams damning Russia. By refusing to endorse the opening up of trade relations with Russia, the A. F. of L. continues to maintain the most reactionary position of any labour movement in the world on this question. All the others, no matter how much they may differ in political opinions with the Bolsheviks, at least are enlightened enough to want to give Russia a chance to live. We alone among the world's organised workers are so barbarous as to try to starve her into re-accept-

ing capitalism. It is a disgrace, a crime against American Labour.

Another cause to suffer was that of a genuine workers' press. The programme now is to destroy the Federated Press. This is one of the few institutions of which the American labour movement may really be proud. It compares favourably with any labour news gathering agency in the world. It is one of the most promising organisations in the country. But because it refuses to consider the Socialists, Communists, I.W.W.'s and other radical and liberal tendencies as wild-eyed destroyers of civilisation as Mr. Gompers does and gives them their due as parts of the great labour movement; because it dares to tell the truth about Russia, the Federated Press is slated to go. The reactionaries are determined to destroy it, hence they had their Convention pass a motion to "investigate" it. Mr. Gompers and Crown Prince Woll were behind this move, and they will pick the "investigating" committee. As both these gentlemen have recently denounced the Federated Press in the public papers, it may be guessed what treatment it will get at their hands in the proposed "investigation." The time is at hand for the radical and liberal elements to rally behind this splendid press service; otherwise Mr. Gompers, who can brook nothing that is even mildly progressive, will stab it to death.

An effort was made to have the A. F. of L. affiliate to the International Federation of Trade Unions, with headquarters in Amsterdam. This is the Yellow International, which is a loathing to all real rebels. But the A. F. of L. refused to become part of it, not because it is too conservative, but because it is *too radical*. The Executive Council was instructed to continue its efforts to get the statutes of the Amsterdam International changed to Mr. Gompers' liking—that is to destroy even the trace of militancy that still remains in the organisation—so that our capitalist-minded labour leaders need not be compromised or shocked by them. Once again European Labour will guffaw at our unparalleled intellectual timidity and backwardness.

One might continue far beyond the limits of this article pointing out the failures of the Convention, such as the defeat of the resolution instructing the Executive Council to seek to bring the Amalgamated Clothing

Workers into the Federation; the refusal to support Howat and Dorchy's fight against the Industrial Court Law; and the crime that was committed against the Maintenance of Way and the railroad workers in general by giving the Carpenters' Union the jurisdiction over some 25,000 of their craft working on railroads. This latter was a long step backwards, it means the encouragement of craft unionism at the expense of industrialism. It divides the railroad workers just that much more. Only at this great cost, only by giving up all these workers to the Carpenters' Union, which has absolutely no business on the railroads, was the Maintenance of Way allowed to re-affiliate with the Federation. Some of the short-sighted enthusiasts in our ranks are gloating over the victory in thus getting the track workers back with us, but before long they will learn that the price has been altogether too high. The presence of the Carpenters' Union on the railroads bodes no good to the railroad workers as a whole. It menaces their growing solidarity and further complicates their already too complicated problem of developing concerted action. The Maintenance of Way decision was a distinct blow at Railroad Labour and altogether in harmony with the reactionary policies of the Gompers administration.

#### A NEW TRIPLE ALLIANCE?

The American Federation of Labour, the American Legion, and the Ku Klux Klan—are their executives about to join hands in a common cause? At first blush this seems an absurd suggestion, but there was much in the Cincinnati Convention to make it a plausible possibility—and then anything may happen in a labour movement that permits its chief officer to sit in the inner councils of the enemy, the Civic Federation. What would these three bodies do in common? Fight the "reds" perhaps, for that, in Mr. Gompers opinion, is one of the chief functions of the labour movement, just as it is admittedly of the other two bodies.

So far as the American Legion and the A. F. of L. are concerned, their relations have gone beyond mere friendliness and are approaching an actual alliance. Commander MacNider addressed the Convention, not failing to point out in his patriotic talk, the common interest both organisations have in beating the radicals. To him replied George L.

Berry, of doubtful fame in the printing trades. Major Berry, besides being President of the International Union of Pressmen and Assistants, is also Vice-Commander of the American Legion. He seems to be a sort of unofficial delegate between the two bodies. Mr. Gompers also took a hand, saying:—

“So long as American Labour will hold its high ideals of freedom and justice and progress and safety for the American Republic, and the American Legion will stand true to its traditions, its history and its declarations under the leadership of a man of the character and type and idealism and practical understanding of Commander MacNider, there can be no division in our joint ranks.”

The day following the expression of these true and noble sentiments the Convention adopted a glowing committee report endorsing the developing alliance and instructing President Gompers to attend the National Convention of the American Legion in New Orleans next October.

Friendliness was also shown towards the Ku Klux Klan. Since the exposure several months ago by the *New York World*, hundreds and thousands of organisations and individuals with some degree of public spirit have condemned this hooded menace. A delegate, innocently believing that the A. F. of L. Convention might be as progressive as these, submitted a resolution censuring the Ku Klux Klan as a danger to the working class. This resolution was laid aside and a substitute adopted which made no mention whatever of the Klan, and which merely disapproved mildly of parading through the streets with hoods. What is the explanation of this remarkable procedure? Why cannot even this American Fascisti organisation be criticised by Organised Labour? How does its influence reach so high into the councils of the labour movement? Who among the A. F. of L. heads belong to it? Considering the Convention action, these are pertinent questions. The A. F. of L. leaders condemn the Federated Press, tried and true fighter for the working class, but they refuse to censure the vicious Ku Klux Klan. Could anything more clearly illustrate the perversion and degeneracy of the Gompers machine?

#### THE WEAK OPPOSITION.

More deplorable even, if possible,

than the course of the Gompers Administration was the attitude of the so-called Opposition. This consists primarily of the railroad trades and the miners. Possessed of enough latent strength to have swept the old guard off its feet, it accomplished absolutely nothing. This was because it lacked leadership and programme.

Johnston, the soft pedaller, was no man to fight Sam Gompers, the valiant battler. Had the Opposition proposed anything and fought for it with a little “guts,” the old man and his cohorts would have been beaten. Witness the great drive in the Montreal Convention, when the Plumb Planners knocked the machine into a thousand pieces. A fight like that at Cincinnati might have easily ended the old regime. Among the delegates there was a deep-seated discontent. But no one was at hand to organise it. Johnston fell flat. Despite all the force behind him, he could not elect a single member to the Executive Council.

But bad as was the showing of the Railroader-Miner Opposition, that of the Socialist minority was even worse. The time was when the Socialists in the Federation waged a determined battle against Gompersism, but now, with the exception of a few irreconcilables, they seem entirely domesticated. They went along with the Gompers machine 100 per cent., voting for all the Administration candidates and measures, and against everything in any way radical or progressive. They voted against trade with Russia and industrial unionism. Their leader was Benjamin Schlesinger, President of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, who has gone over to Gompers boots and baggage. For his treason he was elected fraternal delegate to the British Trade Union Congress. Three years ago he was so despised in the Convention because of his Socialism that Frank Duffy refused to serve on the same committee with him, and Schlesinger had to get out. But at this Convention we find Wm. Green, General Secretary of the United Mine Workers, nominating him for fraternal delegate, and the Crown Prince, Woll, seconding the nomination. No doubt the needle workers will be heard from regarding this betrayal of Schlesinger.

As a result of the lack of an intelligent fighting opposition to Gompers, nothing was done by the Convention. The only thing that in any way might be construed as a progressive step

was a demand for a new trial for Sacco and Vanzetti. But the A. L. can claim small glory for that. Long after the labour movements in all other countries have demonstrated and protested against this brutal frame-up, we come and join the tail end of the procession. Had it depended upon the A.F. of L. to save them, Sacco and Vanzetti would have been long since devoured by quick lime.

After having visited the A.F. of L. Convention, one may well be excused for being profoundly pessimistic as to the future of the American trade union movement. But it must never be forgotten that the deplorable condition in evidence there is largely the fault of the rebels. For years and years they have made no effort

to establish their influence among the masses. Consequently stagnation reigns. But this will not continue. The hopeful sign is that the militants are now getting down to work for the first time through the Trade Union Educational League. And they will find a fruitful field, as the movement is fairly shrieking for competent and aggressive leadership. The big thing then for us to do is to redouble our efforts to the end that in every section of the labour movement all the live elements will be set into motion. The future of the labour movement depends upon the success of our work, because the old Gompers machine is intellectually and spiritually dead. The Cincinnati Convention demonstrated that beyond all question of doubt.

## The Situation in Italy

**A**LL the errors of vacillation and weakness committed two and three years ago were renewed the other week in Italy. The workers do not always retain their revolutionary fervour; it comes and goes in cycles which coincide with the intensity of the industrial and political situation. No one better understands this aspect of revolutionary mass psychology than the propertied ruling class. In recent years this has been one of their most absorbing studies. The tension created by a revolutionary situation is so great that it cannot be maintained for any great length of time. Two years ago the Italian masses were so stirred that, with courageous leadership, they could easily have captured all political and industrial power. The cowardice of the leaders so disgusted the workers that they retreated. The savagery of the Fascisti, however, re-kindled the latent revolutionary enthusiasm of the Italian masses. During the past month they made a determined stand against the Fascisti White Terror by declaring a general strike.

We must pay no heed to the attempt of the capitalist Press of this country to belittle the Italian general strike. It was much more successful and more epoch-making than these journals dared admit. The spirit and courage of the workers were magnificent, and they gave the Italian "black and tans" a thorough beating in certain parts of the country. The real weakness, as always, was in the leaders trained in the Second International. For several months the Italian Communists have been demanding that a determined stand be made against the Fascisti. They outlined a plan of campaign, in order to smash the armed power of the White Guards, which was repudiated by the moderate leaders. The Communists were denounced as adventurers. But the Fascisti, becoming ever bolder and more savage in face of the cowardice of the Moderates, forced the masses into action and dragged their leaders after them. Even then the reformists preached pacifism in face of the murderous violence of the Fascisti. When the Turatis and D'Aragnas at last consented to a general strike they adopted tactics which, in practice, simply meant sabotage. At a

moment when the masses were creating local organs of revolution and when the strike was just getting its stride; at a moment when great numbers of workers were exchanging blow for blow with the Fascisti and when they were meeting force by force; at a moment when the strike was spreading and was stimulating the most backward artisans into revolutionary activity—at such a moment the strike was declared off. The excuse of the reformist leaders was that they did not desire to extend the civil war and encourage violence. This climb down, however, did encourage violence, and has intensified the civil war. The Fascisti interpreted the calling off of the strike as a surrender of the workers. And what has happened? The darlings of the *Morning Post* have burned down the printing offices of *L'Avanti* in Milan, the *Il Lavoro* establishment in Genoa, and set fire to the Labour halls in Bologna.

It is necessary to comment on the attitude of the British Press, which reflects the opinion and desires of the master class, on the struggle in Italy between the murderous Fascisti and the workers. With scarcely an exception the British newspapers gloried in the exploits of the Fascisti. They were hailed as the “glorious youths” of Italy and the “saviours” of their country. The Press beamed with delight at the “defeat” of the workers and the “cowed Communists.” This sympathy with the Fascisti shows how our masters view the problem of the coming struggle of the workers for power. Unlike MacDonald, they do not view it as a policy of “peaceful persuasion.” While the Second International in this country is getting ready to count votes our masters are preparing for an embittered struggle.

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# THE RED CALENDAR

- July 12. Elections in Finland. Twenty-seven Communists elected in Parliament in spite of the terror.
13. Czecho-Slovakian chemical workers expelled from the National Federation of T.U.'s.
14. Fusion of the Parliamentary factions of the German Majority Socialists and Independent Socialists.
17. General strike in Novara (Italy).
18. The Defence of Republic Act carried by German Parliament.
18. General strike in Warsaw.
19. The Facta Cabinet defeated in Italy.
20. General strike in Piedmont and Lombardy.
20. The Hague Conference ends.
20. Editors of the Greek Communist daily paper— *Rizospastis*—arrested.
20. Conference of the London, Vienna and Amsterdam Internationals in Amsterdam.
23. General strike in Piedmont and Lombardy called off.
26. Fascisti's ravages in Ravenna. Twelve workers killed.
28. Jules Guesde, French Socialist leader, dies.
31. General strike declared in Italy.
- Aug. 3. Italian general strike called off. Numerous fights between Fascisti and workers.
3. Badina and six other French Red sailors released. Marty retained in prison.
6. Genoa, Milan, Ancona, Parma and Leghorn placed under military control.
7. Allies' Conference opens in London.
8. End of the trial of the Social Revolutionaries at Moscow. Death sentences suspended.
10. R. Dunn and J. O'Sullivan executed in London.
10. Death sentences on South African strikers.

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