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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

Editor: THOS. BELL

THE EDITORIAL VIEW

IN urging the Labour Party to take office we have heard echoes of the inevitable fears and doubts regarding the wisdom of such a course. Quite naturally, there is a fear in some comrades minds that, if the Labour Government should be turned out of office in a few weeks' time, and discredited because it was not courageous enough, or radical enough in its policy, we, the Communists, would be saddled with part responsibility for the disappointment and anger that would ensue amongst the workers generally. To all who feel like that we give the assurance that at no time have we turned our eyes away from our ultimate Communist objective. Before the election, during the election, and now, while supporting the Labour Party against all the capitalist parties we always had and have that objective in front of us.

Now, as ever, we hold that complete power in the state must pass into the hands of the working class and the working class *alone*. That, we regard as the essential and historic task of a *real* political party of the workers bequeathed, sanctified and made sacred to us, by the privations, sufferings and struggles of all the great proletarian fighters, across the ages, from the remotest beginnings of class rule down to the present time.

* * * * *

This bequest is the common heritage of the whole Labour movement. It has to be shared by all sections. To stand aside, therefore, and refuse to participate in the advancing columns of the army of the workers would be on all fours with the conduct of leaders in our movement who, at times, betray the trust reposed in them. The Communist Party refuses to do either. For us the guiding principle is quite simple. When the workers are in action it is the duty of all to help in the common fight. It would be well if that common fight was under common direction. But accepting organisational divisions in our ranks our guiding

principle must always be *the workers against the capitalists*. On that principle we are with the Labour Party in taking office.

* * * * *

Having said that we may as well be clear on something else. We have to recognise that there are obligations and responsibilities on our movement, applicable to the mass in our ranks as well as to our leaders. The most important of these is vigilance. Thus, the emergence of a Labour Government from the recent political tangle is something more than a personal triumph for either Ramsay MacDonald or, for that matter, the Labour Party. It is a triumph, if triumph it be, for the whole working class movement. As such, Mr. MacDonald and the Labour Cabinet have obligations to the organised Labour movement which they must not be allowed to evade.

Those who sent the Labour Party back to the House of Commons with increased numbers are by no means Communists, but apart from an amelioration in social conditions, they are certainly looking for different parliamentary standards than those of the tweedle-dee, tweedle-dum variety characteristic of our beloved (?) two party system. Not all the histrionics of either Asquith or Lloyd George can blot out the experiences of these last ten years, and the true alignment of political forces in the House must be the Labour Party, the party of the working class, against Liberals and Tories, as the parties of capitalism, finance and landlordism.

When therefore Mr. MacDonald pretends to rise above the Party spirit and exalt the private member even to the elimination of Party, we see here a positive danger which must be corrected. The way of the non-Party mind is the way of disorganisation, and demoralisation in the ranks. The Party in the House of Commons crystallises those common aims of the organised Labour movement that makes the Labour Party possible. The Party is nothing if it is not a class party. It is therefore for that reason a responsibility and an obligation upon the Labour movement as a whole, industrial and political, to be vigilant and intelligently critical of its representatives in the House.

* * * * *

So far as the responsibility of a Labour Government is concerned, the strike of the A.S.L.E. & F. men has taken place at an opportune moment, since it raises at an early stage the whole question of the purposes for which a Labour Government exists. Singularly enough, the strike has brought us right up against the

inevitable dangers of a minority Labour Government in the tendency to swing with the pendulum at present in the direction of parliamentarism, and to decry all industrial action, because forsooth, it might create difficulties for our parliamentarians! We have, for example, the *New Leader*, the official organ of the I.L.P. virtually condemning the Locomotive men, because they don't display those qualities of patience, etc., (so dear to our pure and simple parliamentarians), exhibited by the miners! This is an attitude of mind long familiar to all acquainted with the philosophy of "Gradualism." On the other hand, we have no less a danger in the sentimentalists in our ranks who chant about "unity in spite of our differences." Nothing could be more fatal for the workers or more satisfactory for our bourgeoisie, than the adoption of a policy of industrial passivity, or that the workers should turn their eyes to the parliamentary skies in the hope of something like the manna of old falling into their mouths if they only keep the peace.

The Labour Party must understand or be given to understand, that they were sent to the House of Commons in increased numbers to defend the class interests of the workers, as part of the defensive struggle forced upon all sections of the Labour movement during the last two years.

* * * * *

The case of the Locomotive men is not an isolated one. As may be gathered from our article elsewhere in this issue dealing with the ferment among the Dockers, and also the fact that the miners have now definitely rejected their infamous wages agreement, we are on the eve of another period of big industrial battles. Those who counsel "patience" which is tantamount to a policy of "do-nothing," have no place in our ranks. So likewise with those who shed crocodile tears about a unity, which is not a *real* unity of the masses from below, but a sham unity from above.

The United Front has never meant that we must remain dumb before the actions of every traitor in our ranks, merely to keep up the sham appearance of being united. We have to distinguish between the persons with bad tendencies in our ranks and those with good tendencies; to criticise and suppress the former, while encouraging the latter to come to the top. Thus, to talk about taking office in the "national" interest is clearly a bad tendency and sheer nonsense. The only interest a *real* Labour Government can concern itself with, is the class interests of the workers. The working class—that is the nation! and not until the last stronghold of the privileged order of things has been crushed for

all time will the "nation," *i.e.*, the working class have social peace.

Parliaments may come and parliaments may go, whether pale-pink, yellow or blue, but social strife will prevail until capitalism is ended. Nor can we believe the ending of this capitalist rule will come from a mere exhibition of parliamentary bourgeois decorum or fine speeches. We know our bourgeoisie too well for that. Obviously, to allow such a tendency as the Nation, *i.e.*, the bourgeois nation, to prevail in our movement without challenge is to court disaster and defeat.

* * * *

Mr. MacDonald has declared for a sane foreign policy as one of the first problems before the Labour Government. What that policy will be remains to be seen, but we may be permitted to hazard an opinion from the little booklet issued in his name by Cecil Palmer, entitled "The Foreign Policy of the Labour Party." We are promised by Mr. MacDonald fresh ideas and initiative in foreign policy. No doubt a laudable objective. As examples of the fresh ideas promised we may take the following:—

"The policy of a Labour Government will remove the hindrances to the co-operation of America." . . . "So long as the world is armed, the simple traditional determining purposes of British military policy will remain active." Again, "We have to abandon absolutely every vestige of trust in military equipment, and with that end in view we have to devise ways by which we can go through a transition time, when we may have to maintain a pure defence force relatively adequate, whilst we work sleeplessly to place national security on a totally different relationship."

Of course, it is sheer nonsense to suggest that the financiers of Wall Street will be more sympathetic towards Europe after a Labour Government comes into force than they have hitherto been. And what exactly is going to be the fate of British military policy under a Labour Government? Is it going to "remain active" or to be a "pure defence force relatively adequate?" There is so much of the 1914-18 spirit of the Second International in these statements forboding evil to the Labour movement of this country and Europe, that we fear the world will not change very much in its appearance from what it was before the Labour Party came into office.

* * * *

Perhaps the most disquieting statement of all is where Mr. MacDonald declares, "In any event, we should get the financial experts together again and take their advice." Have we not had enough of these wrangling experts who merely argue professionally with each other and whose remarks nobody understands but their colleagues? Really, if this is a sample of the fresh

ideas Labour is going to introduce into "our Foreign policy," there is no possible hopes of a long life for our first Labour Government. In any case, the Labour movement better be on its guard.

For our part we think Mr. MacDonald has an excellent opportunity for introducing fresh ideas, if he will but abandon the ideology of Liberalism reflected in these quotations we have cited.

* * * * *

Take for instance the situation in France. Supposing Poincaré, or, better still the Comité des Forges, remains adamant and refuses to respond to any appeal for international co-operation or conference what is Mr. MacDonald going to do about it? Will he abandon the field to Poincaré and come out of it? Will he come out of it without appealing to the masses in France over the head of Poincaré? These are pertinent questions the workers of Great Britain are interested in and to which they want a clear answer.

If Mr. MacDonald abandons the field to Poincaré without doing everything to strengthen the Left parties in France, particularly the Communist Party, which, like the Labour Party in this country has a wide support in the Trade Unions of France, he will indeed lose an opportunity to defeat French imperialism that may not arise again for a decade.

And French imperialism must be defeated. We want no highfalutin nonsense about the Labour Government being the "friends of France." French policy in Europe means murder and death by starvation for millions of our fellow workers in the Rhineland and throughout Germany. Already it has brought about the smashing of Labour organisations, including the moderate Socialist as well as the Communist press. It means the institution of the ten-hours day. That is why millions throughout Europe are looking to a Labour Government in Great Britain to scrap the Versailles Treaty. Will Mr. MacDonald do it?

DEATH OF COMRADE LENIN

Born April 10th, 1870. Died January 21st, 1924.

"If you will guard your liberty and land you must be prepared to pay the price with your blood if necessary." So spoke Lenin to the Petrograd workers in the stormy days of October, 1917. *Lenin has paid the price*, but not before he had seen the last of the double-headed eagle of Czardom—the symbol of tyranny and age-long oppression razed to the dust, and the Red Flag, bringing liberty and freedom to the Russian workers and peasants he loved so well, firmly planted upon the top-most dome of the Kremlin.

At once energetic and courageous, his domestic life interwoven with devotion to his revolutionary work, Lenin, as those who knew him can testify will ever remain an inspiration to all pledged



set his hands to over thirty years ago. The departure of our valiant comrade will doubtless be a decided loss not only to the Workers and Peasants Russia but to the revolutionary proletariat of the world in whose hearts the spirit of Lenin will ever shine. Lenin's death will only cement still firmer the united determination of the faithful comrades he has left behind him to carry on the work his assassins have forced him to untimely lay aside.

Lenin is dead. Long live the Russian Communist Party!
Long live the Communist International!

to the cause of working class emancipation.

A victim of the foul work of Churchill and the gang of international exploiters that rule the world outside of the Soviet Republic of Russia, Lenin has left us a heritage—that heritage is no less than the fulfilment of the task he

The Coming Dock Strike

THE dock workers are on the eve of the most strenuous struggle since the 1911 and the 1912 strikes. Very bluntly and defiantly the employers refuse to accede to the demands for 2/- a day made by the Transport and General Workers Union. The existing agreement expires on Jan. 31st., and the men in all the ports seem to be determined to recover the losses sustained by the 1922 agreement. And if the decision of the delegate conference of the Union means anything at all, when it instructed the negotiating committee to make the demand, it must mean the men are prepared to fight. But let there be no mistake; only the greatest solidarity upon a national scale, can achieve victory. Therefore, the Executive Committee of the Union must prepare for all eventualities. Every section of transport likely to be affected by the dispute should be ready to strike. Especially must the dockers and seamen get ready for concerted action against the determined shipowners, lest we find ourselves, once more, defeated sectionally.

THE LESSONS OF 1911.

The 1911 strike was successful because the Dockers, Railwaymen, Seamen and Tramwaymen, etc., acted together. They used mass action, and won notwithstanding the fact that the many unions involved did not start to strike simultaneously. The seamen got what was regarded then as a substantial increase in wages, which was long overdue, and abolished the "Federation Ticket"—the Shipping Federation black list.

They gained the right to belong to whatever union they wished, with the union delegate present when the sailors signed articles, and also the right to visit the ships when they arrived and paid off, and to receive any grievances the men had to present.

The Railwaymen came out on an unofficial strike. They broke their existing agreement to take the advantages offering through simultaneous action, and forced a revision of the agreement resulting in concessions being granted. The Tramwaymen and Carters, feeling that something could be gained by united action with their fellow workers, threw themselves wholeheartedly into the strike in many towns; thus common cause made easier a victory for all. But above all, the dockers did not blackleg the seamen during this strike. And in spite of the multiplicity of

unions then catering for transport workers, speaking generally, all won. Solidarity was established; they could not lose. And, no doubt, this marvellous fight marked a turning point in the history of British trade unionism, despite the disastrous termination of the 1912 strike at the London Docks.

This 1912 strike in the Port of London, in contrast to the one only a few months previous, did not find the ready response it deserved nationally. The workers had raised their standard of living slightly, and did not feel called upon to act *en masse*. Some of the leaders, instead of using the example and precedent established, urged the men in other ports to stay at work, thus nullifying the spirit worked up by the class-conscious militants. As a result the struggle was long and bitter. The seamen blacklegged the dockers by manning ships loaded by strike-breakers. Ships were diverted and union dockers discharged. The railwaymen remained at work hauling goods to and from the docks, and the carters also assisted the bosses by remaining at work. So the dockers were "made to lick the dust," as Lord Devonport said he would have them do.

WORKER'S AMALGAMATION VERSUS SHIPPING TRUST.

Since 1911 and 1912 there has been many changes. The National Transport Workers' Federation grew out of the lessons learned in the 1911 struggle. It was a great step in advance of the many unattached unions. But the maintenance of the multiplicity of executives with their different points of view, all having separate treasuries to protect, and constitutions to guide them, proved an obstacle to industrial solidarity. As such it must go the way of all things ineffective. Just as the federation of unions tended to overcome sectionalism and establish the principle of national agreements, so we must overcome the failures of federation, and step forward to a completely amalgamated union embracing the whole of the transport workers.

If a union, departmentalised, covering rail, sea, road, docks and air, etc., could be, and it can and will be, brought into existence, then by careful preparation all sections of transport could be brought into action. The dock workers would not be confronting the Shipping Federation alone, but with the surety that the seamen were of the same union, and, subject to the direction of one Executive, guided by one constitution, financed by one treasury, and the officials with one point of view. This would lead to the desire to end a dispute with the greatest possible speed, which means they would have to use all the forces to the extent

of a general strike in the transport industry if the employers hurled defiance at the union as they have done.

The employers are well organised nationally, and internationally. The shipping interests are also well represented on the Federation of British Industries, which embraces the dominant employers in every avenue of industry. So the dockers are not only fighting the Inchcapes, Ellermans and Pirries, but the combined employing class of Great Britain. Nay, this is not all; they enter into battle against the biggest and strongest international combination of exploiters. Because, although the waterside workers are employed by stevedoring companies, with their apparent independence, nevertheless they are, in most cases, subsidiaries of the shipping companies, therefore, we find the dockers are working for such companies as the International Mercantile Marine Company, of New Jersey. This corporation extends its tentacles into the Standard Oil Co., and the United States Steel Corporation. Another "foreign" organisation called the American International Corporation, owns more than 20 per cent. of the securities of the I.M.M. Co., and with their holdings in the United Fruit Co., and the Pacific Mail Steamship Co., American shipping companies, they operate 125 steamships. When we know that the I.M.M. Co. is composed of the Leyland, Red Star, White Star, British North Atlantic and the International Navigation Company's steamship lines, then we realise the importance of international solidarity to beat the shipowners.

The shipowners will use the power of their privately owned press. They will let loose their calumny and slander, and insist that the waterside workers should work harder, longer hours, and for less than the demands put forward. Their twenty-four Members of Parliament, representing fifty-one companies connected with shipping, will raise publicity questions for the purpose of embarrassing the Labour Government, and attacking the dockers. Nothing will be left undone to beat the strikers into subjection, nationally and internationally.

PREPARE FOR UNITED ACTION.

Notwithstanding that much has been done resulting in progress being made at uniting all transport workers into one union, nevertheless it leaves much to be desired. There are still several unions, outside the Transport Workers Union, catering for dockers. Those workers who left the National Union for the newly formed organisation arising out of the unofficial strike last July must not make a separate agreement, but they must stand for a settlement on a national basis. All unions involved must sink

their differences and start machinery for winning the demands. The printers, for example, must prepare to refuse to set up the lies against the dockers. The seamen must not man a ship loaded by blacklegs, should they be available, because they also will suffer a reduction if the dockers cannot win. There must be simultaneous demands for better rates. **A General Transport Workers Committee must be set up to deal with and arrange sympathetic action, since we have not yet got the transport workers into a union such as is depicted above.**

The shipowners' arguments in regard to foreign competition must be understood and met. But the dockers should not be so much concerned with the "poor shipowner" or his business. They must understand that the employers always try to get labour in the cheapest market, and that in the struggle to maintain a decent standard of living for our wives and children, we are always fought. But we must realise that conditions vary according to the degree of organisation among the seamen and dock workers. The Lascars in the ships of the P. and O. Line, as every one knows, are living under conditions bordering on actual slavery. They work every hour the company needs them. In the C. P. and O. S. the British sailors work their two watches, 12 hours a day, and for £9 10s. per month. However, the Australians have a militant union and therefore the Union S.S. Co., has to pay them nearly double the wages of the British, with three watches, eight hours a day. So it is clearly a proposition of creating industrial solidarity and a militant fighting front of transport workers.

Internationally, we must appeal to the dock workers. Through the International Transport Workers Federation and the Transport Workers Section of the Red International of Labour Unions the dockers of Britain must appeal. The Transport Workers Union is affiliated to the I.T.F., and if affiliation does not mean contact for action, then the "International" is meaningless. The Red International stands ready to realise the United Front resolutions passed by the two Internationals jointly at Berlin last May. We see we are fighting an international fight with imperfect organisation. But let us make this a start for international direct action. Not a ship must be discharged if they get to foreign ports with scab cargoes. Let the same support be given the British dockers as is indicated in the support given the striking seamen of Germany who have struck in British ports. But not mere cash, active support. This is the time for united demands by all marine workers ashore and afloat.

G. HARDY.

The "Crisis" in the Russian Communist Party

THE European bourgeoisie has a new lease of life. With the greatest of glee all the bourgeois papers are discoursing on the new "crisis" in the Russian C.P. and look forward to the usual split, bringing perhaps a collapse of the Soviet Government.

There is, in fact, a "crisis" in the Russian Party. We have no need or intention to conceal that. There is the same "crisis" in the Russian party as in the Communist movement throughout the world. The development of the social revolution has been much slower than most of us, our party executives and the executive of the C.I. as well, believed it would be some years ago. The working class, whose work and wage conditions are lower to-day than at any period in modern history, is therefore becoming impatient and is pressing on the parties with a view to more energetic action. The "crisis" in the Russian C.P. differs not essentially from the "crisis" in the other parties, but only in the special circumstances attached to it in Russia.

The effect of the bitter fight of the Russian C.P. for the conquest, and especially the fight for the maintenance of state power has necessarily brought into being a big administrative apparatus, and with it a *bureaucracy*. Indeed, the party has been forced to more or less transform itself into such an apparatus, and the state bureaucracy has accordingly become associated with the Party. When the Bolsheviks took power a stream of people from outside tried and partly succeeded in coming into the Party. At the same time, a big percentage of the workers had to be taken from the factories and be placed in administrative positions, with the result that they too became more or less affected with the bureaucracy. The Party lost necessarily to a certain extent, its proletarian character. It was thus inevitable that conflicts should arise between the proletarians and the bureaucratic elements within the Party, and at the same time, conflicts between the big proletariat, which is outside the Party, but which the Party has to understand and defend.

The Russian Party itself, however, better than anyone else has been aware of all these conflicts, which have arisen quite naturally out of the revolution. It has analysed the situation sincerely and critically, and tried to redress matters in accord-

ance with the development of the new social forces within and outside of the Party. This has always been the most characteristic trait of the Russian C.P.

This is not the first time there has been a "crisis" in the Party. There was a serious one in October, 1917, just before the revolution. There was a second before the Brest-Litovsk armistice. There was a third in 1921 (the "workers' opposition"). But all these "crises" were overcome and not only overcome, they were even all turned into a strengthening instead of a weakening of the Party.

It is, therefore, in perfect tranquility that we can relate the principal points of this last controversy.

CENTRALISATION OF DEMOCRACY.

The source of it, as already indicated, was the question of "strong centralisation" or "democracy" in the interior life of the Party. In the period of fights with the external enemies it was, of course, absolutely necessary to have a strongly disciplined, almost military organised Party. When this fight had finished successfully, and the Party started the so-called new economic policy, the "Nep," the question arose as to the consequences of the Nep for the interior life of the Party, "Was it to the advantage of the Party and the working class to maintain the strong military discipline or was it necessary in this new period to find new forces of life in the Party?"

A strong minority was of the opinion that the Party E.C. had followed a wrong line in maintaining the military methods in the inner Party life. The leader of this minority was *Preobraschensky*, who is well known as the author (together with Bucharin) of the A.B.C. of Communism. "In the last two years," he wrote in an article, "the Party pursues a wrong line in its inner policy." Instead of maintaining the old methods "another form of interior life than that of the period of armed fight ought to have been created." "The military methods should have been abolished, and a party life of the type of 1917-18 should have been re-established. Every member should have been given the opportunity to partake more actively and consciously in the decisions of the Party. Everybody should have had liberty to express his doubts, his hesitations and discontent to his comrades, and to get a fraternal, reasonable answer instead of severe reproaches, rigid formulas or learned proposals." In not doing that, the Party failed, according to *Preobraschensky*.

From the time of the finish of the civil and the external war, the Party life has become weaker, functionism has grown stronger

and the mass of the Party has partaken less and less actively in the initiatives and decisions of the leading organs. That is why the average level of the Party is not as high as it ought to be; everybody trusted to the good administration and the good functionaries. Many comrades did not bother to think any more themselves, to discuss or to investigate: they expected everything from above. It is characteristic that even the present discussion has been initiated from the C.C. and not from the Party groups.

The manner of nominating secretaries led to the C.C., and the administration of the Party acting and taking the responsibility for the whole Party activity. Even into the educational work of the Party according to Preobraschensky, there has come a bureaucratic tendency. "The Marxist culture should not be "academic," but "Leninistic," viz.: utilitarian. Then again, there is a disproportion between the rapid growth of young members, who learn the doctrines, and their participation in the active life of the Party. The young non-party workers often show greater ability and greater independence than the Party members, because they try to judge matters from their own intelligence and not from Party formulas. The same critical abstractions can be made both in the economic field and in the trade unions. Many decrees have had to be altered or abolished because they were not sufficiently discussed beforehand. In the trade unions, there is a tendency to isolation from the masses, and in the Soviet apparatus there is a definite tendency to bureaucracy.

It was on these lines that the critics of the Party mainly proceeded. Besides Preobraschensky, it was especially *Trotsky* who brought this discussion to the front, which is proof enough for all who have the slightest acquaintance with the Russian party that this "crisis" did not represent any danger for the unity of the Party.

ORIGINS OF THE "CRISIS."

In the resolution, which was passed unanimously by the political bureau and the presidium of the central commission of control, the whole crisis is historically analysed and the means to solve it outlined in detail. The origin of this "crisis" is traced back to the beginning of the present stage of revolutionary development, viz.: the contradictions of this transitional period, in which the proletarian state is forced to apply capitalist working methods, and to make use of a "*personnel*" which is not yet familiar with proletarian ideology. The circumstances that have arisen show, *e.g.*, an extreme inequality of material conditions

between the members of the Party, according to the positions they work at and the necessary associations with a bourgeois environment; the danger of losing their great socialist ideals and perspectives, and the danger of demoralisation of those comrades who because of their functions are most in contact with bourgeois circles. Finally, bureaucratic tendencies of the Party apparatus, and the danger of the Party isolating itself from the masses.

To combat these dangers it is necessary to intensify the spiritual life of the Party, critically to study its history, and to correct in common its errors. The leading organs of the Party must, therefore, listen to the voice of the Party members, and not consider all criticism as a manifestation of a fractional spirit, whereby they only drive the most conscientious and disciplined members either into complete silence or into fraction-making. *The Party ought not to be in any way considered as a mere administration, nor as a mere club of discussion for all sorts of tendencies.*

PROPOSALS OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

The special measures which it was resolved to take were principally the following:—

(a) All functionaries are to be elected, not appointed, and nobody appointed against the will of his organisation.

(b) All important questions are, as far as in any way possible, to be placed before the mass of the members and no appeal to "discipline" be made to prevent open discussion.

(c) New militants are to be sought, especially among the workers.

(d) The comrades who are most directly in contact with the working masses shall first of all be kept in close contact with Party politics.

(e) Constant reports of their activity shall be given by the Party organs to the members.

(f) Strengthening of the educational activity of the Party in all ways.

(g) Development in the Party press of columns on "The Life of the Party."

In order to realise these general resolutions, a long series of organisational measures are taken which we need not here recapitulate.

There are many more interesting points which might be mentioned in connection with this "crisis" in the Russian C.P. In a future issue, after the termination of the Russian Party Conference, about to be held as we write, we shall, perhaps, take up again some more points of this important Party discussion by our Russian comrades. The sketch of it which we have given above will, we hope, be sufficient to show the *character* of this "crisis" and the spirit in which the Party is facing it.

THOS. BELL.

JUTE INDUSTRIES, Ltd.

(WHY DUNDEE IS GOING RED).

SITUATED on a hillside overlooking the mouth of the River Tay, Dundee might very well be a health resort equal to any town and character in the North of Scotland. At one time, it may have been appropriate to describe it as "Bonnie" Dundee. To-day, its slums, with the consequent squalor and misery that accompanies them, surpasses some of the most sordid districts in the "black country" further South.

Just as Paisley is in the grip of the Coates' combine for thread manufacture, and responsible for a population where there are seven women to every man, so Dundee, and particularly the district of Lochee, is a veritable "she" town, under the heel of the great Jute Lords. Exploitation amongst the jute workers of Dundee is traditional and phenomenal. Those who are acquainted with the town have no need to be told anything about the ways of the Jute Lords, and the life of its wage slaves. But the following facts will give some idea of the power and the strength of the industrial opposition which the working class has to face.

JUTE INDUSTRIES, LIMITED.

The combine known as Jute Industries, Limited, was registered in October, 1920 to acquire the Ordinary Share capital of :
THOMAS BELL & SONS (of Dundee) LTD.,
COX BROTHERS, LTD.,
GILROY, SONS & CO., LTD.,
J. & A. D. GRIMOND, LTD.,
JOHN N. KYD & CO., LTD.,
HARRY WALKER & SONS, LTD.,

and also the whole of the Preference Share capital of J. & A. D. Grimond, Coy. These it contracted to purchase for £4,473,810. In addition, there was an agreement for the sum of £900,000 to acquire the Ordinary capital of Frank Stewart Sandeman & Sons, and the Preference capital of the other companies included in the combine, these investments, together with £78,320 in stamp duties and other expenses, amounting to £5,452,130.

The combine paid for them £4,500,000 out of its own share capital, (£3,000,000 Preference and £1,500,000 Ordinary) and £1,244,695 out of advances by the subsidiary companies, the difference leaving a balance over for working capital.

During 1922, there were further purchases of shares amounting to £113,094, and it was stated in the report that an agreement was entered into to purchase the shares in the Sandeman Cotton Belting Co.

On Sept 30, 1922, the position was :—

Balance of Investments, brought forward ...		£5,452,130
Additions during 1922		113,094
		<hr/>
		£5,565,224
Stocks of merchandise at cost		102,074
Preliminary Expenses	219,355	
Less written off	59,355	
		<hr/>
		160,000
Cash Balance		£163,092
		<hr/>
		£5,990,391
Combined Capital	£4,500,000	
Advances by Subsidiary Co's.	£1,314,497	
Unclaimed dividends	346	
Balance of Profit & Loss	175,548	
		<hr/>

Total £5,990,391

The aggregate net assets of the companies whose shares had been acquired were, in Nov. 1920, valued at £8,158,216.

It is recorded that since then two additional mills, the Manhattan and the Stanley works, have been included and new machinery installed, and the inference is that, with these additions the valuation holds good. Apart from fixed assets, the directors gave the following summary of the associated companies' liquid assets :—

Stocks of goods, book debts, investments, cash, etc.		£3,225,584
Less Liabilities		1,285,437
		<hr/>
Fixed liquid assets		£1,940,147
Preference shares still held by outsiders		67,040
		<hr/>
Net Balance		£1,873,107

This liquid assets total, on the valuation of Nov. 1920, leaves for fixed assets, £7,218,069. In 1921, however, the values of raw material stocks were written down out of earnings by £700,000, so that it may be assumed that the difference has been reduced to £6,518,069.

No dividend has been paid on Ordinary shares. On the Preference shares the fixed 9 per cent. has been paid.

SWEATING THE INDUSTRY.

The total manufacturing and commercial profit of the combined companies, less depreciation, for 1922, is given at £602,224, out of which £205,000 was paid in taxation, and £248,865 allocated to dividends. On the two years of its existence the profit and loss comparison of Jute Industries, is as follows :—

	1921	1922
Brought in		£12,693
Net balance available	£308,251	£271,453
Interest on shares purchased ...	£58,465	—
Preference dividends (9% p.a.)	£177,737	£197,156
Written off Preliminary Expenses	£59,355	£60,000
Carried forward	£12,693	£14,297

In February, 1922, the chairman said, that, had it not been necessary to write down the stocks, the associated companies made net profits of well over a million pounds.

Profits are shown on the 6 firms in the combine given in the Prospectus, Nov., 1920, as follows :—

Before providing for Income Tax, and E.P.D., but after providing for management, usual depreciation, and also the dividends and interest on existing Preference and Debentures, amounting to £38,500 per annum (now increased by £12,687 10s. od. per annum).

Pre-war standard of profit as adjusted for E.P.D., including the allowances brought up to date	£344,464	0	0
1916	£628,390	3	6
1917	621,483	3	5
1918	734,530	14	7
1919	1,224,139	17	11
1920 (down to close of last respective accounts)	1,497,557	15	4
or an annual average of	£941,220	7	4

GRIP ON RAW MATERIALS.

According to the chairman, Feb. 1922, the companies require about one-third of the total raw material consumed in the United Kingdom in order to keep their spinning mills supplied.

The company has therefore, entered with MESSRS. RALLI BROTHERS, into a 5 years' agreement covering the greater part of its raw material requirements.

It has further acquired, and formed into a subsidiary limited company, the jute goods exporting business of MESSRS. THOS.

TAYLOR & CO., of Dundee, and has been developing agencies for the sale of jute goods manufactured mainly in Calcutta.

During 1922, that department showed a profit of £11,436.

Also in the course of 1922, certain reorganisations were entered into with a view to economies, these including the concentration of the carpet machinery and the bleaching and dyeing plants of the controlled companies at the "Tay Works," together with the Sack-sewing flats.

In 1922, the difficulty was that production averaged only 66 per cent. of normal, though it was reported in the early part of 1923 to have gone up to rather over 90 per cent.

The company is very reticent about the accounts of the associated companies. The chairman said, Feb. 1923, it would be prejudicial to the best interests of the company to publish individual balance sheets.

The mills, together with the works deal with the weaving and other subsequent processes, employ about 50 per cent. of the textile operatives engaged in the jute trade in Dundee.

(Chairman, Feb. 1923.)

According to the "Manchester Guardian" Commercial Reconstruction (13), March 29th, 1923 :

"Labour costs in Dundee have been reduced by the Trade Board since the high war level. It is very doubtful if they can go lower. Already the minimum rates fixed (which, involving a reduction of $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. came into operation on February 23, 1923) on a lower level than that of any other industry having a Trade Board."

On the 16th Feb., 1923, we find the chairman saying :

"I am reluctantly driven to the conclusion that, in order to place the Trade on a more healthy basis, we shall have to press for further reductions in wages. We would expect no relief if we had been unfortunate enough to buy our jute badly, and it seems incongruous that, because we are on the right side in this operation, wages should remain untouched. There have, of course, been reductions from the extreme limit reached, amounting in all to $18\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. I have, perhaps, entered into a subject which is open to criticism, but I feel in my own mind, that the argument is sound, and that it would be far better for the industry that its prosperity should not entirely depend on the price paid for the raw material. Profits will naturally be swelled or diminished by good buying, but there should be the possibility of a profit, however small, on what I may call simultaneous business."

(Financial Times, 17th Feb., 1923.)

D. J. P.

(To be continued.)

Agriculture : The Subsidy Proposals

WHEN Mr. Baldwin was Chancellor, he made, at a meeting of farmers in Worcestershire, a somewhat significant remark as follows:—"I said, as far back as 1913, and I see no reason to alter my opinion on this matter, that you would get no Protection for the farmer until you had a Labour Government." It is not always easy to know the ulterior motives which underlie the actions and statements of politicians, and in this particular instance, the significance of the remark was probably lost upon the audience, but it is, in effect, an admission from an avowed defender of Capitalism of the impossibility of giving justice to Agriculture within that system. The truth is often heard in strange places, and the now discredited Mr. Baldwin was but reiterating a profound Marxian truth, *i.e.*, that the capitalist system is built up on the subjection of Agriculture.

So successful were these Tory propagandists in raising the bogey of Control, Government bungling, and farming from Whitehall, etc., that the complete abandonment of the industry after war-time control was carried out with scarcely a murmur. The Repeal of the Corn Production Act, which gave some small measure of security to the farmer and labourer, was quickly brought about. The payment of a lump sum in lieu of the Act, actually similar to a bankrupt paying a few shillings in the pound, was considered more or less satisfactory, and the much-disliked Wages Board disappeared. Since then, corn growing has ceased to be profitable, and corn growers must have lost much more than their grant, which was made on the basis of £3 per acre for wheat, and £4 per acre for oats. The lowest authoritative loss on wheat growing for 1923 is £2 9s. 9d. per acre, and the state of the market holds out no hope for the future. Such is the faith of farmers in the future of corn growing that self-binding and reaping machines have been sold at the autumn sales at £3 each, which would have been snapped up at £60 a few years back, and there are 1,250,000 acres less arable land and 46,000 less men regularly employed on the land than in 1919.

The object of the Capitalists is to force the prices of agricultural commodities down below the pre-war standard in a similar manner to that adopted with the wages of all labour, in order to

squeeze still more surplus values from the workers and producers. By this means they hope to retain the ill-gotten gains of the War period, and meet the interest on the colossal War Debt. But there comes a time when the producer can no longer produce. There is a limit to the process of extracting surplus values beyond which production ceases altogether. Farmers who had saved money during the inflation period after 1914 were enabled to bear the brunt of one or two bad seasons, fortified with the assurance that things would soon right themselves, but it was not long before they were to be disillusioned. Instinctively, they turned to their traditional friends, the Tories, who for a long time met their demands for help with a blank refusal.

FARMERS AND TORY PARTY.

Sir. A. Griffith-Boscawen, Minister of Agriculture in the Coalition Government, advocated increased production. Farmers, he said, must look to new methods, and their own initiative, and what a field there was in that direction, for were there not £200,000,000 worth of foodstuffs imported which could equally well be produced here? and so on. The leaders of the National Farmers' Union united on the same platform with Conservative and Coalition M.P.'s in their strong condemnation of Control, and in advocating "let your politics be the politics of Agriculture," and "Salvation must come by reorganisation within the industry." The N.F.U. President went so far as to congratulate farmers upon their Conservatism and the fact that the rural areas had always been "a bulwark against red revolution."

But unfortunately for them, hard economic facts cannot be concealed even from rustic minds. The increased production ramp was exploded in an uncomfortable manner by the milk crisis, and the potatoe glut. Actually, the enormous decrease in the workers' wages, following the successful capitalist offensive, immediately reflected itself in an artificial over-production of these commodities (more correctly, of course, under-consumption). The consumption of milk fell 50 per cent. in a short time, and, following a plentiful crop, potatoes became almost unsaleable, and many hundreds of tons were allowed to rot. Still, the Government remained impassive, but at the fall of the Coalition, and the return of a Tory Government, the new Minister of Agriculture became more cautious. He reversed the advice to increase production by saying that there was a world over-production of agricultural commodities and that "it was by a *diminution* of production that prices must be put down to a proper basis again." At the same meeting of farmers in February, 1923, he said, "It is of no use expecting

such heroic measures as Subsidies or Protection. They are political issues. They have been before the country and, rightly or wrongly, turned down."

Farmers have always looked to a Conservative Government to give them Protection, that is to tax foreign foodstuffs. In the face of such amazing contradictions, is it not almost incredible that they should still place any faith in Conservative administration? But such is actually the case. The President of the N.F.U., Mr. German, has continued publicly his adhesion to Conservatism and Imperialism. Upon the announcement of Mr. Baldwin's policy of Protection for the manufacturing industries with a subsidy of £1 per acre for arable land for the farmers, he still gave the official N.F.U. support to the Conservative N.F.U. candidates. This was particularly noticeable in the Wells division of Somerset, where both the Conservative and Labour candidates were farmers and members of the N.F.U.

THE N.F.U.

Before examining Mr. Baldwin's proposal for a subsidy, I should like to record my opinion of the National Farmers' Union. I consider that by its actions it has consistently played the capitalists' game. It has adopted a negative policy, and appears to be dominated by a few men of the Diehard Imperialist Tory type of mentality. The 1923 President, Mr. German, has so well played his part, that Tory candidates on the Election platforms were extolling him as a great and self-sacrificing statesman, one who made no demands, but quite disinterestedly put the case of the farmers before the Government, and was prepared to accept and advise the farmers to accept thankfully anything that the Government could do for them, considering the exigencies of these distressing times, etc., etc.

One of the pressing needs of the moment is for a class-conscious move by farmers analogous to the Farmer Labour Party in the United States. I have, through the Agricultural press, urged this view upon the farmers and the N.F.U. in no uncertain manner. The amazing success of Magnus Johnson in the Minnesota U.S.A. elections last summer, who gained the support of the Trade Union movement in the industrial towns, as well as the farmers and rural voters, should surely have been an event worth investigating* particularly in view of the N.F.U. leaders advocacy

* [As we go to press, the formation of a Rural Party is announced, with the following programme, as summarised by "The Times," 9/1/24 :

(1) The maximum economic production from, and the maximum employment on, the land; (2) a living wage and better conditions of life for the rural worker; (3) the organisation of agriculture and its allied industries; (4) a flourishing agriculture, which means prosperity to every rural dweller.—Ed.]

of the need of educating the urban population, which, they affirm, is antagonistic to a progressive policy for Agriculture. But, no! The N.F.U. preferred to send members to America to enquire how the milk consumption could be increased by advertisement!

A split must come between the few big reactionary farmers and the mass of small working farmers, and the sooner the better. The N.F.U. is actually working against the latter section. The great need is for a sustained propaganda and for a special Agricultural weekly publication, which will criticise remorselessly the actions of the N.F.U. and Government spokesmen, etc., in an enlightened manner.

It would appear that, with the advent of a Labour Government, a supreme opportunity will arrive for immediate and sympathetic action on behalf of the Agricultural Industry. The stabilisation of the price of home grown wheat, say at 60/- per quarter, (which various authorities consider practicable without raising the price of bread), coupled with a statutory minimum wage for the farm labourer, and other similar measures, might easily have the effect of severing the old political ties of the bulk of the farmers and of definitely enlisting the sympathies of the rural voters, on the side of the workers in the final struggle for the overthrow of Capitalism.

MR. BALDWIN'S SUBSIDY.

Now let us examine the discredited Tory Government's proposal for the assistance of Agriculture. Setting aside the insignificant relief from local rates, which has been granted with much trumpeting, the Tories would offer an annual subsidy of £1 per acre of arable land. What does this mean? Is it a business proposition? To begin with the Capitalists are by no means unanimous! The "Daily Mail," said:—

"The subsidy will not increase the production of wheat, our prime necessity, for it will not make good the current loss on wheat growing."

"About 50 per cent. of our farmers are wholly grass farmers, and outside the scope of the subsidy."

"We doubt whether the subsidy will even arrest the decline in acreage."

"The vote catching gifts now proposed will do little good and may do much harm. The Government seem to be fooling the farmers again, as they did over the Corn Production Act."

It is not our business here to analyse the motives of the proprietor of the "Daily Mail," but whatever they may be, the above statements are substantially correct. His own suggestion, whereby he showed his capitalist perspicacity, was that the subsidy should be increased to £2 per acre. Although this would be a marked improvement on the original proposal it can be shown that even this would still leave the farmer below the pre-war standard of prices, and, as I have shown in a previous article, these pre-war prices were only compatible with a sweated industry. Mr. Baldwin in an election speech, justifying the subsidy, said: "The cost of living is 75 per cent, (now 78 per cent.), the price of wheat 19 per cent. and other agricultural products 43 per cent. above pre-war level."

Actually £1 per acre means a further increase of about 15 per cent on the price of wheat, at the average yield of Great Britain. £2 means, of course, about 30 per cent. Add to this the admitted 19 per cent. and we have grand totals of 34 per cent. (Baldwin) and 49 per cent. ("Daily Mail,"), as against 75 per cent. increase in the cost of living.

Hay stands, this season, at little, if any, more than pre-war price, and roots, the remaining crop, in the rotation have never been considered a profitable crop apart from the following effect on the land, the benefit of which is reaped in the ensuing cereal crop. So that it is clear that the subsidy would be utterly inadequate which ever way we look at it. But this is not all. Mr. Baldwin's subsidy was to depend on revenue obtained from tariffs on manufactured articles, and he gave no sort of promise that it would be re-adjusted if the cost of production rose with the imposition of these tariffs. Neither is there any assurance that the market prices will not fall still further, which is not at all unlikely.

Apart from the business side, the effect of a subsidy on acreage would be not so much to encourage the good farmer as the careless or thriftless one, although it must be admitted, that the difficulties of administration would seem to be against any effective subsidy on the yield per acre. I am entirely against subsidies of any kind. Agriculture, like all other industries, must be re-organised and secured by systematic control throughout all branches of its activities, productive and distributive. The interdependence of all industry is so obvious, that subsidies, which still leave it at the mercy of the better organised industries and the general anarchy of Capitalism, are just trifling with the question, and that in a very irrelevant manner.

THE SUBSIDY AND THE LABOURER.

In my opinion the farm labourer is a skilled craftsman. Mr. Baldwin and the Tories think otherwise. The Earl of Selbourne hypocritically says: "He (the farm labourer) is so necessary to the stability of the country," and Mr. Baldwin values that stability at 30/- per week gross! This, he suggested, should be paid as a minimum wage before the farmers were eligible for the subsidy, (nothing where no subsidy is paid, that is in about 50 per cent. of the farms) but no machinery is provided whereby it might be guaranteed. Sir Robert Sanders, Minister of Agriculture, said: "The 30/- need not be a money payment!" Thus did he provide the loopholes for all sorts of evasions.

This 30/- is equivalent to 17/- pre-war. With the increase of living inevitably following the imposition of the proposed traiffs, it must sink still further in value. Nothing is coupled with this fiendish proposal to mitigate its worst aspects—not even a rural housing scheme. Only those who live in the rural areas know how appalling is the shortage of cottages and the condition of the few which have escaped being turned into week-end cottages, the best, of course, being taken for this purpose. And is it surprising? I do not think it is.

After the Napoleonic wars, single men in the county of Sussex had their wages registered at 7d. per day for six days per week, and married men (if fortunate enough to be on full time) 1/6d. per day, which money was of no greater purchasing power than now, and considerably less than the cost of keeping the inmates of the gaols. Indeed, many of these sent thither for poaching and theft, found themselves better off than outside. The advance on this state of affairs to-day, is very small. Prior to 1914, the food of agricultural labourers with families consisted largely of potatoes, suet pudding and a small quantity of bread and cheese, meat being reserved for Sunday only. The hours of labour were often twelve or fourteen daily, no extra for Sunday labour. I know of men to-day rising at 4.30 a.m. to milk, working till 5.30 p.m., Sundays included, for 35/- weekly.

What the Capitalist was prepared to do after the Napoleonic wars he is prepared to do to-day. He is, if anything, more dangerous, for he is fighting now for his life. Let the working farmer and the labourer unite against the tyranny of these predatory scoundrels, and link hands with their industrial brothers in a supreme effort to overthrow the barriers, which hold them back from the just regard of their labour—a free and full existence.

E. BATTEN.

The Party Conference

LOOKING BACKWARD—AND FORWARD.

[In view of the postponement of the Party Conference, we are arranging for further representative opinions on the problems before the Party to appear in the succeeding issues of the "Review."—Ed.]

THE article in last month's "Communist Review" by Comrade Murphy, on the new developments that have been taking place in the Party, will have roused great interest amongst Party members. What is the issue we have to face? Let us first remind ourselves what was the situation before the Battersea Conference. I thoroughly agree with Comrade Murphy, when he asks, "Is it not time we pulled up a little and asked whether we are travelling along right lines?" It is! and comparisons of the Party now, or even as it has been any time this last 12 months will prove that, in spite of difficulties we have had to face, the Party is immeasurably stronger and more influential than it has ever been. Further, for the first time since its inception, it is now being taken seriously by the other working class parties, and these facts are surely an indication that we are on the right lines.

What was the old position? For two years prior to the Battersea Conference, we had lived in times of revolutionary happenings, the Party had a full feast of the "high politics" school, revolutionary phrase-mongering was the order of the day, nothing but the "dictatorship of the proletariat" would satisfy us. Meanwhile our influence in the working class movement was negligible, not because the active members weren't trying, but because the policy they were working had no relation to the needs of the workers, and because they were not organised to carry out pieces of work so that they could see the results, which are the test of any policy, namely, increased membership, increased influence amongst wider masses of workers, and the increased circulation of the Party organ.

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND ORGANISATION.

The Communist International recognised that it would never become the vanguard of the international working class unless the members of its constituent parties, were organised to carry out effectively the work of their various Parties and the International. They, therefore, drew up at the Third Congress a statement on Organisation, that, after revision, was adopted, and is now in operation amongst all the Communist Parties. It is well that this

should be made clear, for the new form of organisation was not the result of a "brain wave" by three persons, who had found a "magic cure," it was the considered statement of the International, drafted by comrades with great experience and judgment, all of whom had seen it work in actual practice.

It was the task of the Party Commission to show how the new methods would be applied to our Party, and how adapted to the situation in this country. This was done, and the Battersea Conference adopted the Report of the Party Commission. It was, perhaps, adopted uncritically, certainly many members thought it was a magic wand; quite true, others have attempted to quote from it as if it were a Communist Holy Bible. This is no doubt a tribute to their good taste and judgment, but a highly embarrassing one, although the Holy Trinity are quite prepared to hold a laying on of hands ceremony, but despite these little things, which after all are inevitable, and nothing to worry about, the big things the Report stood for were correct, are correct, and where they have been carried out have proved correct.

These were the principles of a working party, carrying out the daily work of agitation in an organised manner, under central direction ensuring a lead on all the current issues, that would be transmitted into action throughout the whole working class movement, by the organised nuclei of party members.

AIMS OF BATTERSEA CONFERENCE.

It will not be amiss to quote what the Party Commission actually had to say at the Battersea Conference in presenting their Report.

"Certain alarms and misunderstandings which naturally arise on a first acquaintance with the proposals need to be dispelled at the outset. In the first place, what is here set out is not a fancy scheme which must be carried out in every detail on the morning after the Conference."

"In the second place, and most important of all, organisation must not be regarded as a panacea. Organisation has no meaning at all apart from policy."

"Organisation is only important as a means of achieving a certain policy: otherwise it is dead. Its value, therefore, depends on the value calling for it. The success of the Commission's proposals will depend on the leadership of the new Executive thrown up by the Congress. But that is why we should like to say as our last word to the Party, that the main task before the Party now is to discover a strong Executive."

There has never been any attempt to make a fetish of organisation; what has been has been to try and show the need for group working, reporting on work done, and above all, for concentrating on what Comrade Murphy despises, the "mundane activities" of the workers. There have been difficulties, there always will be, and we shall overcome them as we go along. During the last 16 months we have tried to get down to brass tacks. It

has been a hard task; many members have fallen out, because the demands made upon them were too exacting, but many more new members have come in, who are carrying out the work well. There are more members active than ever before. Work is being more evenly distributed than before. Even a hostile witness, like Comrade Murphy, admits, in speaking of the present state of the Party, "its increase of influence, the development of the circulation of the paper, the growth in the number of Party representatives in the unions and Labour Party are great achievements," and then, as if to take back what has been reluctantly forced from him, he goes on to say, "but these have been accomplished through making the maximum demands on the time and energy of our members, and in spite of our mistakes."

Of course, they have, and maximum demands will always be made upon the active members of the Party, but one gathers from later remarks of Comrade Murphy, that all this has meant neglecting Party Training and "political discussion."

True there is a very real sense in which we need political discussions. We need to stimulate keen questioning and constructive interest and discussions by Party members in all affairs local, national and international in relation to the Party's struggle, and their own daily activity. The Party members have need for a correct understanding of the political situation, nationally and internationally, but the biggest need of all is how to apply this understanding in a practical manner, so that the masses understand what we are driving at. One of our biggest drawbacks is our ability to talk about "The German Situation," or "What is happening in Czecho-Slovakia," without being able to rouse the workers of London, Manchester and Glasgow to a real sense of what is happening here, and what is wanted at home.

POLITICAL THINKING VERSUS ACTION.

It sounds the real business to write about. "The Need for Politics"; it will be much better for our Party when we try and learn how to apply them. And when we do that, then we come up against all the petty detailed mundane work of the Party. There's not much romance or excitement in it—but it has got to be done if the Party is to grow. It is a slow and painful process. It means getting down to it in a way that may be tiresome and tedious, nevertheless, it has yet to be done. The Party could possess the cleverest Executive Committee in the world, the lead given could be 100 per cent. perfect; the political thinking could be quite excellent, but if the members of the Party are not

organised to carry out the clever policies and the leads given, then they are in vain and we get nowhere.

Now at this moment more than ever, when the Party is beginning to get down to this job successfully, and producing positive results, we must beware of being led away by phrasemongering, which means nothing, and gets nowhere. For example, Comrade Murphy writes: "We absorb the will to revolution in the overwhelming demand for *mundane* activities, and smother the desire for a thorough understanding of our struggle and our aims." It sounds fine, but what does it mean in understandable language, and what earthly relationship has it to the present position, either of the workers or the Party.

Then again: "We must release the Party from the fetish of mechanical formalism and make way for the dynamics of life, which alone can give enthusiasm and power to our movement;" and after all this, he forgets to indicate a single practical proposal, however small, for in the whole of the article there is not a definite proposal on which one can pick, that throws any light on how to develop "the will to revolution" or anything else. Are we to take it from his series of general statements, that he is in favour of electing an Executive Committee from the districts? Does he mean to place the organisers on a full time wage? If so, will he indicate where the money is to come from? And why not have outlined for the benefit of the Party in general, and the organisers in particular, what this "real work" consists of? What exactly does he mean by deadly formalism?

OUR PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES.

No, comrades, Murphy's criticisms won't do. I understand and appreciate as well as any comrade in the Party the difficulties we are faced with. They are practical difficulties that face every party, and we shall get over them as we go along. Where modifications are needed and necessary they can be put into operation, but do let us avoid getting a warped sense of what is the real position of the Party. Discontent exists! of course it does, and so it does in any other Party. It always will exist; whatever the policy or organisational methods of any Party, that factor has always got to be faced.

But that is an entirely different proposition from trying to use that discontent to prove that the present development of the Party is all wrong when the actual facts show the very opposite. The Party was never as strong and influential in its history as it is now, and this despite the lack of finance and the influences of doubting comrades. Our Paper is the most influential circulat-

ing amongst the active workers. We have no big personalities amongst us, we are all much of a muchness, but we are growing and we shall continue to grow.

The greatest hindrance to the growth of our Party is not the lack of political training, it is a number of practical difficulties that our members are meeting with, and which in many cases prevents them from getting the close contact, experience and discussions that all of us recognise as being necessary and desirable. Ask any local Organisers in South Wales or Scotland what their biggest problem is, they won't say it was the absence of "the will to revolution," they would say it was the lack of a common meeting place. Ask them what other things they were up against, and we would find it wasn't "the fetish of mechanical formalism," but lack of finance due to the poverty of the members.

Many of the grievances quoted by Murphy are imaginary ones, there is nothing to stop any local or any members from writing into the Executive, criticising Party policy or the policy of the Party organ. It will be a grave mistake to go back to the old method of electing the Party Executive. It means a definite set back. The difficulty here is one of keeping the Executive in London. The Party's financial position won't allow of a full time Executive, and that should be frankly faced. In the present position of the Party, the Executive will have to be elected from members resident in London, and who can serve without being a financial responsibility. This will have to be done, even if it means electing a smaller Executive and electing a Party Council on the basis of district representation that shall hold a meeting every two months, and that can then report fully to the districts they represent.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE CONFERENCE.

The organisers cannot do their work properly unless they have a living wage. That is a question that concerns the members in the localities and districts. It may be necessary to place some of our existing District Party Committees back in the status of Local organisations, attached to the Centre, as in the present case of Dundee, Barrow, etc., but this won't ease the financial problem, for in the other districts our organisers have already got enough ground to cover. The fact is, that until we can get a larger Party, and also until more systematic efforts are made to raise money, and the membership also is prepared to make bigger sacrifices, this acute financial problem will remain with us, and we should never forget that it is more organisers we want, not less.

In locals where meeting places for group meetings and training

classes are hard to obtain, it may be possible to get over the difficulty by holding fortnightly aggregate meetings which would preserve contact, and also allow of a continuity of training to be maintained. A reduced entrance fee for candidates, and a lower subscription for probationary members is advisable. Greater attention should be given to the problem of retaining members once they have been won to the Party, and care taken not to frighten them off by giving them too many tasks at the start. Most important of all is the question of personal recruiting, one of the weakest sections of our work. If each member pledged himself or herself to win one new member to the Party every three months, it would make an immense difference to our fighting strength, and the financial sacrifices demanded by our members. The number of tasks we are called upon to carry out can all only be lightened in the degree that we win new members to the Party to share in its work.

These questions we can face at the Conference, if a small Organising Committee is appointed. It can go thoroughly into all these questions and other grievances, and present an agreed Report to the Conference, thus saving the time of the Conference being taken up mainly with organisational questions. I would like as my final word to warn the members of the danger of vague articles containing no specific practical proposals. Let us remember our past experiences, and in doing this, I am convinced that we shall refuse to be dragged back along the old path of barren political controversies. Instead, let us go forward along our new lines, confident that with all our little difficulties and drawbacks, that we are on the right lines to building a mass Party.

HARRY POLLITT.

A Textbook of Revolution

GERMANY IN TRANSITION by M. PHILIPS PRICE. The Labour Publishing Company, 1923. 262 pp. 5s.

WHAT are the chorus of indolent reviewers for the capitalist press to make of this book? Their business is to do some little log-rolling, either by praise or dispraise, for one another (for nearly all authors are reviewers), or to present their good friends the publishers with suitable puffs for the good of the book trade; or even to indulge their own fancy, to "say what they think"—provided always it is kept within bounds, and dedicated to the greater glory of Democracy, the Traditions of our Race, the Finer Strain in Modern Thought, Western Civilisation, the Anglo-Saxon Mind, Liberty not Licence, or any other one of the innumerable aliases in which Capitalist Imperialism rejoices. Of course, they are accustomed to slate certain kinds of books. Besides, there are continually little tournaments being got up in the periodical press in which, for example, one eminent author (Socialist) is ponderously fought by some person of distinction, such as an ex-Lord Chancellor.

Nothing is more delightful than these pretty little combats in which one knightly figure, wearing the red favour of Socialism breaks a lance with some well-horsed Churchman who champions capitalism. Quite often they take the form of reviews of books: and accordingly, from much watching of these tourneys, the ordinary reviewer gets to know the rules of the game, exactly how capitalism should be attacked, and also how it should be defended. If any book transgresses the rules, it is adjudged that "the tone" of the publication is bad. It is pointed out that the author is doing a disservice to his own cause. He is a sort of intellectual Jack Jones or Kirkwood, bawling out and causing a breach of the peace, where all had hitherto been calm and decorous.

A MASTERPIECE OF SOCIAL ANALYSIS.

Now, M. Philips Price's new book cannot be dealt with in any of these ways. His opening page deprives him of the benefit of clergy which more honeyed writers can obtain by wearing the livery of the Society of Authors and Booksellers, and suiting their sentiments to the public palate. Price begins, quite,

roughly, by saying of the German Revolution of November, 1918 :

“ Power fell out of the hands of the ruling classes in Germany, not because the masses were ready or even anxious to take that power, but because the old regime was exhausted Once again, an historical truth was demonstrated that a class or party, into whose hands power falls without fighting, can rarely hold that power.”

After these sentences in the opening paragraph, he goes on immediately to ask why the ruling classes let power fall from their hands; and, after saying that the answer is to be found in the further question, “ Why was Germany defeated in the War ? ” he makes the following disloyal utterance :—

I doubt if any one now seriously believes that the defeat of Germany was due to the more righteous cause of the Allies, whose passions for liberty and self-determination form expression immediately after in the treatment of Ireland, India, Egypt, Syria and the Russian Revolution.

Finally he begins page 2 with the statement that the defeat of Germany can be explained in terms of class dynamics. At this point the capitalist reviewer, (who is mildly pacifist in the year 1924, and has been holding out because he also vaguely associates references to self-determination with sneers at Lloyd George), becomes completely disgusted. On the other hand, he cannot slate the book effectively without reading it further : and further reading reveals it to be a masterpiece of social analysis. And, as the reviewer is entirely unequipped for a scientific controversy upon the correctness of the analysis, he is reduced to silence. Accordingly it may be predicted that this book will be boycotted by the capitalist press.

A REVOLUTIONARY TEXTBOOK.

What makes this book so dangerous to the capitalists as to demand a boycott by them, so useful to the workers? In the first place, it is dangerous because it is social analysis, a thing of which in England there has been very little, though of sham “ sociology ” there has been plenty. What has been done for Germany can soon be done for this country. When a society is broken up by analysis into its elements, so that the play of social forces is made clear, it means that the time is not far off when this abstract thing, analysis, can become concrete, when the society will actually be broken up into its class elements, struggling for mastery. In the second place, and following from this, it is clear that a book which analyses, the development of the class struggle in one country, can give many lessons to workers in other countries, can teach them what to avoid, what to expect. It can become a textbook of revolution.

This textbook, then, is divided into four parts, as follows :—

- The German Revolution ;
- The New Powers in Germany ;

The Versailles Treaty and the Economic Condition of Germany ;

German Socialism and the Interpretations of Marx.

These parts are not continuous. They present Germany in Transition from four different aspects : and are, as it were, four separate booklets bound up together. But this does not mean that they are disjointed. On the contrary, Price has taken the only means possible within the short space he had of presenting as many aspects of the class struggle as clearly as he could. No doubt it would be more satisfactory if the book had been a complete historic survey, in the German professorial manner, in which 500 pages would have been devoted to this heading and 700 pages to that heading, and so forth. But in that case, it would have been much too dear for the workers to buy. Price has preferred to write a book which would be generally available.

BUILDING A CONSTITUTION.

The first part begins with a wonderfully clear survey of the historic factors of the last four hundred which made Germany what she was, and led inevitably to her defeat in the world war. This leads on to a consideration of the rôle of the Social Democrats in the November, 1918 revolution, followed by a sketch of the "Noske period" of 1919, and a study of the Weimar Constitution. The Weimar Constitution was to have been the enduring foundation of the new Germany. Alas, it is now crumbled to pieces; even the von Seeckts have more permanence; while in Russia the Soviet Constitution, which the framers of Weimar regarded as an ineffective and short-lived piece of propaganda, has out-last-ed them and is likely to outlast every other constitution in Europe.

The section headed the New Powers in Germany, deals first with the Coal and Steel Rings, Stinnes, Rathenau, Krupps, etc., and with their international connections. Secondly, it explains Bavaria and the German Fascisti. Thirdly, it treats of the Food Kings or Junkerdom, up to date, showing exactly what is the land and food question of Germany. To summarise the contents of these three chapters (I have given no more than three headings) is impossible. They are full of material, set out without confusion. Not that they are easy to read. So many new names and new facts make hard reading. But, read through once, they give a clear picture in broad outline. Those who wish to get the details must read it again, if need be, with a notebook.

Nowadays when both mental and bodily food are usually half-cooked and half-digested beforehand, it is wholesome for once to

get the coarse-grained oatmeal. Those who lust after diagrams and charts in every publication should remember that easy reading often makes poor understanding. I would not have a single chart in Price's book : and I am glad to say there is none.

THE FRAUD OF "REPARATIONS."

It is now five years since the Reparations question first began. Since then, day after day, week after week, there has been a ceaseless moaning in the newspapers. Every worker, not only in this country, but in France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, etc., has been subjected to the endless noise caused by Reparations. Gradually, under cover of this, the French worker is to be persuaded that the Ruhr must be occupied, the British worker is to be persuaded that France is "a menace." To that extent there is purpose in it. But in the main it has been simply a meaningless noise, and so bewildering is it that the first bourgeois economist (like J. M. Keynes) who propounds what seems a way out of the trouble, is at once accepted by the leaders and scribes of Labour as their economic Saviour. In reply to Mr. J. M. Keynes, the intellectual standard-bearer of Mr. Asquith, there has been in this country no book written showing what are the true interests of the working class in questions of the Versailles Treaty and Reparations, until this third section of Philips Price's book.

There is little space left to deal with "German Socialism and its Interpretations of Marx."

This is the most exciting part of the book. Like the Marriage Feast at Cana of Galilee, the good wine has been left to the last. The section on Rosa Luxemburg and the Centrists gives the marrow of Communism, of the international workers struggle against the capitalists, besides being the shrewdest criticism of the I.L.P. standpoint that has appeared in this country : while the general value to the International of Price's concluding chapter on the Communist Movement in Germany has already been recognised by the incorporation of large sections of it in the Liebknecht-Luxemburg Commemoration volume.

This book marks a great advance in Price's thinking since the writing of "My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution." The breadth and grasp displayed (see particularly the summary of what makes up "France") confirm the view that it is one of the first pieces of real social analysis that has been written by an Englishman.

R. P. A.



COMMUNISM IN PORTUGAL

On the 10th November last, the C.P. of Portugal held its inaugural Congress at Lisbon, which will prove an important event in the political life of Portugal and of the Comintern.

Portugal possesses a small Socialist Party not adhering to any International, and whose influence on the working class is extremely limited. The working class of Portugal was, and still is, very largely under anarcho-syndicalist influences. In this anarcho-syndical atmosphere, the Russian Revolution was welcomed with ardent sympathy and enthusiastic support. Old militant syndicalists today form the elite of the Communist Movement. They are not all in the Party. A certain number of them form the syndicalist minority which defends adhesion to the I.S.R. within the General Confederation of Labour.

During the last three months, we have seen this syndicalist minority formed, and also a provisional committee charged by the Comintern with the preparations for the first congress of the Party. The first number of the journal of the syndicalist minority was rapidly exhausted, and it was necessary to bring out another edition. A certain number of important unions such as that of the Arsenal Workers of the Army and Navy have joined the minority.

At the head of the General Confederation of Labour, the anarcho-syndicalists are divided, and distracted by personal feelings, and incapable of developing, or even maintaining life in the syndicalist organisation. So much so that 50 per cent. of the members of the General Confederation of Labour have been lost, and our comrades are certain of securing a majority at the next confederal congress.

At this first congress, the Party has given notable proof of its serious character. Portugal is essentially an agricultural country, and it was there-

fore interesting to see at the Congress the important delegation of peasants. In the majority were the agricultural workers of the great states of the south, while others represented the poor peasantry of the north, where smallholders predominate.

The Party is small at yet, but it has already gathered to itself the elite of militant workers, and active and intelligent peasants. Coming from the anarcho-syndicalist school, they have been through the school of concrete reality, have learned the lessons of the Russian Revolution, and have arrived at Communism. Their past as militant revolutionaries, and their loyal adherence to Communism, constitute an example which will be followed by the mass of Portuguese workers tired of the high-sounding theories and empty phrases of the anarchists.

SAXON SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN CONFERENCE.

At the Party Congress on December 2nd, coalition with the bourgeois Parties was condemned. Notwithstanding this decision, the fraction in the Landtag on January 4 decided by 22 votes to 14 in favour of a coalition with the Peoples Party and the Democrats, and received the approval of the Central Committee in Berlin. The Communist Party proposed the dissolution of the Landtag, but this was rejected by the Right Social Democrats, who were thus placed in an awkward position when the Party Conference opened on January 6th at Dresden. The Left section of the Party warmly approved the action of the Communists and criticised severely the action of the Right in not carrying out the Party policy against coalition.

The following resolution was adopted after much recrimination:—
"This Congress of the Social

Democratic Party of Saxony declares :

(1) The majority of the fraction in the Landtag (in all 25 comrades) had formed on January 4th, together with the Populist Party and the Democrats a government, thus violating the decision of the Congress of December 2nd., and making the formation of a coalition cabinet with the bourgeoisie dependent upon a new Congress of the Party.

The majority of the fraction has elected with the votes of the bourgeoisie, a Minister-President (Premier) and are thus responsible for the split which has arisen in the Party group in the Landtag. The attitude of the majority of the fraction is a breach of Party discipline without precedent in the history of the Social Democratic Party. And this breach of discipline on the part of the majority is all the more serious inasmuch as it was this group itself which demanded that only the Congress of the Party should decide the question of a coalition. Yet, in spite of all this, the decision to form a coalition was taken two days before the Party Congress.

The majority of the fraction has equally violated the decisions of the last Congress which placed a limit on its rights, and declared that all important Party questions should be decided in common with the Party Committee. Even after the formation of the Coalition Cabinet, the fraction has not consulted the Party Committee, but rather kept it away from all discussion.

The Congress therefore expresses its want of confidence in the majority of the fraction and approves of the attitude taken up

by 14 comrades of the minority who have remained loyal to the decisions of the Party.

(2) The collaboration with the Peoples Party and the Democrats is a complete capitulation before the policy of bourgeois violence, which by its coup d'etat in Saxony and Thuringia, as well as by the destruction of the government of these two countries, has undermined the position of the socialist and sought to reform the grand coalition.

This capitulation before the big bourgeoisie destroys completely the freedom of movement of the Party. That is why the Congress approves the action of the minority which rejected the grand coalition.

(3) The Congress calls for the withdrawal of the Premier. It calls upon the fraction to take immediate steps to bring about the dissolution of the Landtag. In the event of the Landtag refusing to be dissolved, a parliamentary referendum should be demanded.

(4) The Congress demands that the fraction shall submit without reservation to these decisions, in accordance with paragraph 23 of the Party statutes, which declares that all local organisations and districts have the duty to intervene and protest against members who refuse to apply the decisions of the Party Congress.

(5) The Party Congress demands that all comrades of all sections shall remain loyal to its decisions and fight against any attempts to split the Party. Especially at this moment when all the forces of reaction are concentrated, the maintenance of Party unity is our first task."

This resolution was adopted by 77 votes for, and 16 against, with 4 abstaining.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE POSTHUMOUS WRITINGS OF MARX AND ENGELS.

By D. B. RYASANOV.

[Comrade Ryasanov, after his return from Germany where he investigated the unpublished writings of Marx and Engels, delivered a lecture on the results of his work in the Socialist Academy in Moscow. From this lecture we print the following extract.—Ed.]

The posthumous writings of Marx

and Engels were treated with gross carelessness by those to whose care they were entrusted. The Manuscripts were scattered in Berlin, in London, and in the Archives of the German Social Democrats. The huge library left by Marx and Engels to the German Social Democratic Party has almost entirely disappeared. Bernstein and Bebel, who were the trustees of the bequest, considered themselves as the absolute owners and disposed

of it at their own discretion.

Mehring was the first who, on behalf of the Party, set himself to the study of these posthumous writings. The great gaps which I found in the collection published by him seemed to render it necessary to go carefully through the manuscripts; the final reasons which induced me to do this, were the incompleteness and inaccuracy of the "German Ideology," Engels' reference to the manuscript in the preface to "Ludwig Feuerbach," the pamphlets by Mehring on Marx, which appeared in 1918, and lastly, the Biography of Engels, published in 1919 by Meyer, in which some pages referring to the "German Ideology," plainly contained discoveries.

It is for this reason that I postponed the planned publication of further volumes of the collected works of Marx and Engels (In the Russian language, Ed.) and proceeded to Berlin in order to undertake the study of the unpublished material.

My troubles began in Berlin. I had to fairly wrest the material from its possessor, Bernstein. All the documents lent out by him were photographed. The publication of several documents was made dependent on special conditions.

The most valuable and interesting among the documents found, and till now unpublished, is the MSS. of the "German Ideology," with a criticism of German philosophy after Hegel, and of the "True Socialists."

By a comparison of the MSS. with the Bernstein edition, it became evident that the latter contains not more than two-fifths of the MSS. As an excuse for this Bernstein stated: "The mice had nibbled away the rest." As a matter of fact, the MSS. had not been nibbled by mice, but by Bernstein when he finally went over to Revisionism. But this manuscript is only a part of the critique of "German Ideology," and of that part which contains the critique of Stirner. The second part of the MSS. undeciphered by Bernstein, is dedicated to Feuerbach and contains a criticism of Feuerbach's conception of "Man." We are endeavouring to publish this manuscript as soon as possible.

Among the notes we found a criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, and outlines for a chapter of the "Communist Manifesto," in which there is a criticism of socialist literature.

In this collection of notes we find a special work on Mathematics, a philosophical fragment, a Greek MSS. etc. Other documents contain unused material for "Capital." Among other things is a leaflet on the Theory of Surplus Value. Marx wished to publish this material in the fourth volume of his chief work. The imperfection and deficiency of the present edition of "Capital," is so great that, for instance, the third volume can quite rightly be called an Engels' Variation.

The unpublished material which was found here, amounts to about six volumes.

The next group of MSS. brings us to the personal life of Marx and Engels. They reveal to us the vast learning and the extraordinarily systematic spirit and capacity for work possessed by Marx. Engels was occupied, until the death of Marx, with chemistry, physics and the natural sciences.

The subsequently discovered letters of Marx and Engels finally form a considerable treasure of Marxian literature. The letters so far published have been edited without any respect for the memory of Marx and Engels. This could be illustrated by a long list of omissions. Ninety-five per cent. of Marx's letters are already in our hands. The case has been still worse with Engel's letters, but I was able to get many of these also from Bernstein and Kautsky.

These letters will reach the public within the next few weeks.

"JANUARY FIFTEENTH"

(A memorial booklet on Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Published by Y.C.L., 38, Gt. Ormond St., W.C.1. Price One Shilling.)

On the fourth anniversary of the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the British Parliament was opened in order to bring a British Labour Government into office. Apparently there is no connection between these two events. But in reality there are many threads leading from the one to the other. All the martyrs of the working class of other countries, all the big moral and intellectual personalities of the international labour movement, who fought and lost their lives in the fight of the working class for a new world, have contributed their part to the formation of that spirit within the toiling masses of Great Britain, which has now given the Labour

Party the government of this country.

There are many parallels and a big difference between the situation of Germany in 1918-19 and the situation of Great Britain at the present moment. Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg wished to take up towards the first socialist government of Germany much the same position as that which the British C.P. is taking now towards the first Labour Government.

The writer of these lines had an interview with Leo Jogisches, the organiser of the Spartacus union, in the last days of December, 1918. "Genosse Leo," as everybody called him, was very decidedly against the formation of a separate Communist Party. He scorned those impatient young students and other "intellectuals," who wished it. "No," he said, "we are going to organise ourselves *within* the Independent Socialist party, and we hope at the next conference to get the majority of the party with us." And that was the opinion of Liebknecht and Rosa as well. But the events ran much faster than they had foreseen. The impatience of the suffering masses was much greater than they believed. They did not, however, hesitate to take their stand, in spite of their personal wishes, *with* the masses, "to the bitter end." That was their martyrdom.

There is much wisdom for the British working class to be derived from studying the parallels between the German situation then, and the British situation now. The first British Labour Government will have to learn that without real courageous *actions* it will very soon—like the first German Socialist Government—get the working masses against it. History is running fast in our days, and the down-trodden masses, when they get the first taste of power, are quick to demand more of it. The consequence of a Labour Government vacillating or refusing to act in the interest of the working class will in-

evitably be the same in Great Britain as in Germany, viz. : interior fights between the workers, bloodshed and tragedy.

On the other hand, the position of the working class in Britain to-day, is a much more favourable one than the position was in Germany in 1918-19. The British workers are fighting on a united front. The extreme Left wing is the supreme guardian, even the initiator, of this united front. This fact gives the working class of Great Britain a much greater force. The impatience of the masses can here get an organised expression without breaking the unity of the working class. This fact gives the Labour Government too, a greater strength, if it only knows how to use it.

The conditions for a happier development of things in Britain in 1924 than the development in January, in 1919 are twofold; more courageous *actions* on the part of the government than was the case in Germany and greater, more intelligent vigilance on the part of the workers than was the case in Germany.

It is therefore, of the greatest importance for the whole Labour movement of Britain at the present moment to study the revolutionary development in Germany from 1918 up till to-day. Besides Price's book, the small book which the Young Communist League has just issued, "January 15th," is a very good contribution to this study. The book is a collection of articles on, and by, Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, most of them more of propagandist value, but nevertheless of very great interest. In reading them everybody will feel that there is somewhat of the same atmosphere in Britain to-day as the atmosphere which reigned in Germany in the last months of 1918. May the future development be a happier one!

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