

After Hull—What?  
by J. R. Campbell

THE  
**COMMUNIST**  
**REVIEW**

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COLLECTION

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Volume V

*Monthly Organ of the Communist Party of Great Britain*

OCTOBER 1924

Number 6

IMPORTANT FEATURES of THIS ISSUE

**Should the Communist Party be  
Liquidated ?**

*REPLY TO M. PHILIPS PRICE*

By E. CHARTERIS

**The Swan Song of the I.L.P.**

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# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

*Editor: THOS. BELL*

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## THE EDITORIAL VIEW

**I**T was the unique method of Lenin to be continually reviewing the activities of the Bolshevik Party and its policy. The attitude of a political party towards its faults, he says, is the most important test of its seriousness, and its aptitude to acquit itself of its duty to its class. To recognise openly a mistake, to discover the causes, analyse the situation which has provoked it, examine well the means to repair it, that, says Lenin, is the index of a serious party.

Applying such a method the delegates to the Labour Party Conference this year have an excellent opportunity to make history. Is the Labour Party a serious party? Are its leaders pursuing a real working class policy? Has the first Labour Government proved faithful to the working class movement that put it in power? These are the fundamental questions the conference has to face.

\* \* \* \* \*

In a number of respects this conference is historical. Whatever its decisions it will mark a turning point in the political history of the British Labour movement. Thanks to the development of finance-capital, i.e., of modern imperialism, the one-time insularity of British capitalism is closed for Great Britain and the British Empire. No longer can its proletariat rely upon the slave colonies for its industrial prosperity. Capitalism in Britain has become part of the system of world imperialist economy, and can no longer remain aloof from international affairs. So long as there were unlimited facilities for colonial exploitation British labour could be bought over by economic concessions made, if not to the whole working class, at least to the more aristocratic layers of it. That period is closed for good. No longer can the proletariat rely upon the slave colonies of the its bourgeoisie for its prosperity. That is why a change has come over the mentality of the British working class, why, indeed, it has at last entered upon the path of definite political struggle.

It is this entrance upon the path of political struggle that makes it so important for this year's Labour Party conference to lay down clearly the lines of policy and tactics to be pursued by its parliamentary representatives—and to keep them under control.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the most outstanding questions which the conference cannot dodge is the all-important question of *control*. Are MacDonal, Snowden, Henderson, Webb and Co., the judges and rulers of the Labour Party, or are they its servants? Have these gentlemen the authority to arrogate to themselves the right to do as they please without let or hindrance by the Party? Do they hold their offices in trust for King George or for the Party? The conference must give a clear and unequivocal answer. For our part, we drew attention to this repudiation of the party control the day MacDonal decided to take over the government, and we have no hesitation in insisting that the conference emphatically declares that the Labour Cabinet must be under the control of the Party Conference, and the executive committee in the interim, and be responsible to the Party as a whole for its actions.

With regard to the policy the Cabinet has pursued during the last nine months, we may look for a spirited defence of its conduct from a number of quarters. And defence, either of the government's foreign and colonial policy, or of militarism will be bad enough, but worse still, signs are visible that the Labour leaders are not going to stop at justification. Definite steps are already initiated to revise policy and Liberalise the Party still more. This is foreshadowed by MacDonal's new preface to the latest edition of his book, *Socialism: Critical and Constructive*, where he fulminates against strikes for increased wages, Poplarism, and restriction of output. Similar Liberal views have been repeatedly expressed by other Cabinet ministers, particularly Snowden and Graham.

We have already had sufficient experience of MacDonal's attitude to trade unionism, as in the case of the Transport workers and the Locomotive men's disputes, to warn us what to expect in the event of strikes. *The conference must make it clear to MacDonal, that on no account can it tolerate any government interference with the right of the trade unions to struggle against the capitalists, least of all a Labour Government.* The business of a genuine Labour Government is to aid the trade unions to defeat the capitalists, and not to strangle the Labour organisations.

We look to the Conference to repudiate this Liberalism of MacDonal's without the slightest hesitation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Prior to MacDonal taking office, much was made of his *magic* influence on international policy as a means to world peace.

Peace in Europe was the solution to the domestic problem of unemployment at home. Once Europe was settled the problem of unemployment would be mitigated. Some I.L.P.'ers were even rash enough to quote a slight reduction in unemployed statistics, following upon the advent of the Labour Government, as proof of Mr. MacDonald's international pacific influence. To-day, unemployment is not only with us as before, but is rapidly overtaking the peak period of last year.

Instead of a pacific Europe, we get a vile form of economic slavery, fastened upon the workers and peasantry of Germany, such as might gladden the heart of the editor of the *Daily Mail*. The Experts' Plan to which MacDonald has given his blessing and support, is but a renewal of all the pernicious evils of the Versailles Treaty, with added penalties upon the whole working class of Europe. Here, we need only quote Mr. Frank Hodges, M.P., Civil Lord of the Admiralty in his speech at Tamworth, on Saturday, 20th September :

" Now that the Germans have succumbed, our own capitalists whine and squeal that the hours of the British worker must be lengthened, and his wages lowered in order that he may successfully compete with the German in the markets of the world.

" In a very short while from now we shall witness the launching of a great capitalist offensive in countries outside Germany against the established conditions of the working class. Already speeches and lectures are being delivered in favour of longer hours and low wages. The Trade Union movement of Europe must be prepared. Such is the implacable logic of reparations."

And this is the results of nine months of Mr. MacDonald's *moral* influence in international affairs !

\* \* \* \* \*

The whole foreign and colonial policy of the Labour Cabinet stands condemned. As we have already pointed out in these columns on several occasions, the governments of Europe to-day are in the grip of a small clique of international financiers. Messrs. MacDonald, Herriot, etc., are but the puppets of the London and New York bankers. This is apparent to all who care to study the Dawes Report. It is still more evident in the combined capitalist Press attack upon the Anglo-Russian Treaty, and the question of a loan. On this latter question, Mr. MacDonald is on his trial. The British working class movement is united in its determination to have an accord with Soviet Russia, not for mere purposes of diplomacy or for " more work." The British working class movement sees in the Soviet Republic a government of the Russian workers and peasants. That is the real reason why cordial relations should be established between Great Britain and Soviet Russia, and Mr. MacDonald must tell both Liberals and Conservatives so.

Another question which the Labour Party conference must be emphatic upon is the attempt of the bureaucracy of the Party to split the trade unions upon the question of Communists as parliamentary candidates. The interpretation of the Constitution by the bureaucracy of the Labour Party that no member of the Communist Party can be nominated as a parliamentary candidate is an unwarrantable interference with the rights of the trade unions to choose whom they like to be candidates. But this is not the real reason. What the bureaucracy and the middle class leaders of the Labour Party fear is the growing influence and power of the Communist Party inside the Labour movement. They realise that the growing opposition to the Liberalism of the Cabinet is crystallising itself around the clear working class programme of the Communist Party. The real reason for the opposition to the Communists and the devices to keep our Party outside the ranks of the Labour Party is the struggle of the bourgeois parliamentarians and carcerists against the proletarian revolution.

The Communist Party is a party of the working class. Whatever decision upon the question of affiliation is taken this year, our Party will refuse to go into the wilderness. A party of the masses we intend to be *the* mass party that will ceaselessly challenge the middle class leadership that is now seeking to turn aside the aspirations of the masses for the abolition of capitalist exploitation.

The delegates to the Labour Party conference this year have a unique opportunity to say once and for all, that not Liberalism is the goal of the Labour Party, but a real workers' government that will end capitalism.

Will they rise to the occasion?



# Should the Communist Party be Liquidated?

## A Reply to M. Phillips Price

### I.

**B**RITISH Labour has definitely entered a new era. The revival of the economic struggle, referred to in these columns some months ago, is now an accepted fact. In industry after industry, not only has the retreat stopped but the offensive has begun. Though treachery and cowardice are still widespread amongst the trade union bureaucracy; though still the masses are held back at the crucial moment when all energies should be bent to the attack; there is a new factor—the minority movements—which, week by week becomes more potent to counteract this dead hand. Born of the bitter experience of 1921-2, these are growing and winning successes daily.

The political consciousness of the workers is increasing as is proved by the fact that the bourgeoisie were forced to establish a sham Labour Government. The betrayal of the working class by the Government of Ramsay MacDonald has only helped to develop it still further. Our Party agitation on the persecution of the Indian workers; on the "Labour" Government's alliance with Scotland Yard; on the "Labour" Government's united front with the bondholders against the Soviet Union and on the Dawes' Report, is becoming comprehensible and accepted in wider and wider circles of the British working class.

This revival of fighting spirit combined with a growing political consciousness—a combination forgotten in Britain since the days of Chartism—is taking effect amongst the "upper strata" of Labour—the leaders of the trade unions, the members of Parliament, and the intellectuals on the fringes of the movement. On one issue after another, under mass pressure, these elements oppose the policy of the open traitors to the working class in the Labour Government, and join in the workers' attack on capitalism. None of them has any programme, any definite system of tactics, any fixed revolutionary ideas; activity on one issue is followed by inactivity and cowardice in another: their declarations contradict one another and themselves. Vague talk of a "Left-wing" has

taken place, vague and obscure attempts are beginning to be made here and there to bring it into being.

As every Marxist must know from the experience of the working class movement in other countries, these attempts will only become firmer, more determined, and more ambitious as the mass struggle that prompts them becomes more intense. In the course of that process, too, the so-called "Left-wingers" each in his turn, will be put to the test, and will either throw in their lot with the revolution or be thrown on one side with the reformists and the enemies of the working class. But no honest revolutionary can sit idle waiting for that day. Unfortunately the floundering and muddle-headedness and cowardice of the "Left-wingers" themselves become an obstacle to the further growth of revolutionary will amongst the masses. To-day, when the revolutionary education of the workers has only begun, when we still speak of their vanguard only as "becoming politically class conscious," it is particularly important that we realise the inner meaning and essence of these "Left-wingers" as a preliminary to calling them to account before the working masses.

## II.

One of the most significant figures in the "Left-wing" movement is Philips Price. He is not an old trade unionist, he is not even an old worker in the Labour movement, which he only entered after the war. Yet his appearance amongst the "Left-wing" is most significant, because his popularity amongst the workers is due to the success of the two most revolutionary slogans of modern times:—"Hands Off Soviet Russia," and "Hands Off Workers' Germany."

His popularity, in short, is due more than that of anybody to just that development of political class consciousness mentioned above.

Who is Philips Price? A Liberal journalist up to the Russian Revolution; drawn into its vortex, by the accident of circumstances, like Arthur Ransome, he became its sympathiser, and even in no unimportant way, its active participant, in agitation and propaganda. Unlike Arthur Ransome, however, he did not "lose interest" in the Revolution when it became a less sensational subject for newspaper articles. Drawn in turn into the German Revolution, he became no less a supporter and an active propagandist of its cause. He has done good work for the Russian and German proletariat. His pamphlet on "Capitalist Europe and Socialist Russia," was of far greater historical im-

portance than his later "Reminiscences," and it ranks with Ransome's "Six Weeks in Russia" at the head of anti-intervention working class propaganda. His book on the German Revolution stands alone. By this work he has not only defended the Russian and German revolutions, but he has helped materially in developing the class consciousness of the British workers.

This explains the respect with which Philips Price is regarded, not only amongst the honest, but also amongst the dishonest, Labour politicians. It explains why he, of all the intellectuals on the fringes of the movement, has taken the central place once occupied by Webb, and in later years by Cole. The difference is that instead of being politically a pedant or a charlatan, he has been in some measure through the fire, and in consequence has a halo round him.

Huge masses of workers have carried through a successful revolution in Russia: still greater masses are approaching ever closer to their goal in Germany: the age-long crust of material satisfaction and political apathy of the British proletariat itself is heaving and cracking in an alarming fashion. The reformists are experiencing an awe which has not yet changed into terror: and their awe at the greater is reflected in their respect for the lesser.

In this, also, we must seek the explanation of the fact that Philips Price is the central figure of an attempt which is being made at the present time, by a group of intellectuals to set up the nucleus of an organised left-wing. He is the oracle, too, from which have come the first planks of a "Left-wing" platform, on which one after another of the "unattached" Left-wingers" has hastened to take his stand. This is why his desertion of the Communist movement on which he made his political reputation; his espousal of opportunism; his attempt to foist upon the revolutionary workers the political "views" (or muddle-headedness and cowardice) of the lower middle class, must be exposed and combated before the eyes of the proletariat without consideration for his past work.

### III.

The most definite suggestions made by Philips Price have been in connection with the Dawes' Report (in the *Labour Monthly*, the *Plebs* and elsewhere). And here his complete retreat from the revolution, from his own experience, is most conspicuous and amazing. He retreats in three stages.

Stage I. April, 1924 (writing for the *May Labour Monthly*). First, a graphic description of the life and death struggle

German labour; a description of the rivalry between French imperialism on the one hand, and Anglo-American imperialism on the other, for the right to make Germany into a colony; a warning of the disastrous consequences for the British workers if the imperialist schemes succeed. Then Philips Price proceeds to declare his despair of the revolution as a way out of these circumstances. "The coming elections in Germany will decide not an issue between capitalism and Socialism (*German Labour is too crushed to make even a pretence of a fight*)" but "whether the French or the Anglo-American policy would succeed."

German Labour's "pretence of a fight" was to give the Communist Party 4 million votes, which so scared even the Nationalists that they threw in their lot with the Dawes' Report, *i.e.*, they sought the protection of foreign capitalists against their own workers.

With these assumptions, Price propounds his remedy. The British Government should waive its share of reparations and cancel the French debt, on condition "that French and German Labour representatives be present at an international conference, and that a minimum standard of living be guaranteed to the German worker in the interest of all Europe." Did ever labouring mountain bring forth a more contemptible mouse? French and German trade unionists attend a robbers' conference, and are told to work hard and be good boys: the German worker gets "a 'minimum standard'" (it will be a minimum, an' all) out of the profits of the German capitalists: the French imperialistic clique is finally set free to suck Germany dry itself, or to do so more efficiently in conjunction with the British and American cliques: the British "Labour" Government "renounces" reparations in order that British capitalists and bankers can enter more freely into the Franco-American combination: and Philips Price's conscience is salved! This is what he calls "a working class reparations policy." In reality it is a policy of securing the workers' passive support of the robber Imperialists, with whom, he says frankly, the Labour Government cannot contend.

Stage II. May, 1924 (writing for the June *Labour Monthly*.) MacDonald has not been persuaded: he does not need to take shelter behind such a far-fetched scheme. MacDonald has no intention of renouncing reparations, of being a *passive* supporter of the British bankers: he wants to justify himself *actively* in their eyes, and has embraced the Dawes' Report. Our revolutionary accordingly changes his ground, and there is no more talk about renouncing reparations. He concentrates his attention instead upon

the Dawes' Scheme for "restoring the economic unity of the Reich, balancing the German Budget, and stabilising German currency." A detailed review of the Dawes' Report reveals to him the horrible truth that "the powers behind the experts—the Morgan Bank, Lloyds, Lazard and others—are really not concerned with these aims at all, but with using the reparations liabilities of the German Reich as a means to get hold of the German railway system, and to control the labour power of Germany in their own interests."

How does he meet this menace of "an international financial syndicate to control the economic life of Europe?" By rejecting the Experts' Report? By demanding that the Labour Government reject it, and take the corresponding revolutionary measures? By repeating even his demand for cancellation of reparations? No, this is his solution: "It should be insisted on that no international loan should be floated to Germany except under conditions of balancing the Budget by taxes and levies on German capital, of re-establishing the 8-hour day and setting up a minimum wage, laid down by the German Trade Union Central Commission. To that task our Labour Government ought to address itself."

Here is opportunism and renegacy, naked and unashamed. The Dawes' Report can stand: the squeezing of reparations out of the German workers can continue, and the British Government, supposed to represent the working class, can go on receiving its share: France can go on with a Budget "unbalanced" owing to the imperialist policy of her capitalist rulers: British and French bankers can reap the rich fruit they expect from the control of German railways, industries and customs: the only change of plan that MacDonalld is asked to make is one to ensure that the German workers get a minimum standard of living, at the expense of the German capitalists. The "Marxist revolutionary," erstwhile champion of the Russian and German revolutions, is revealed as the most ordinary peddler of little reforms, thrown to the workers to keep them quiet, while the capitalists are let off (with a caution) to go on doing as they please.

Stage III. July, 1924 (writing for the August *Plebs*). Once again Price describes the manifold cunning of the Experts, and puts his best Marxist foot forward in summarising their work. "Speaking generally, the effect of the Report will be to make Germany an area for the investment of bank capital . . . Germany is becoming what Marxist writers would call a colonial area." What should be our tactics, he asks, and replies: "We must realise that we may have to see this Report put into execution

owing to the relative strength of the classes throughout Europe not being in our favour at the present time. It is our business to see that the Labour Government, while being forced to accept it, does so under protest, just as Lenin accepted the conditions of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, being unable to summon up the strength in Russia to resist them."

Here Philips Price reaches the very lowest point of his degradation, the most brazen and sickening development of the opportunism we saw earlier. Not a phrase in this passage but stinks of opportunism, not an idea but is an insult to every Marxist, every revolutionary worker, whose phraseology Philips Price apes so well, in order to conceal his real intentions. "The relative strength of the classes. . .!"

Has Philips Price done anything to *alter* the "relative strength of the classes," of which he writes in this bland way? Has he at any stage attempted to mobilise the workers *against* the Dawes' Report, and against the treacherous Labour Government, which would be one step towards altering the "relative strength of classes" in *our* favour? Has he not, on the contrary, used every argument throughout which could *hide* from the workers what they ought to do, and has he not throughout suggested to them, as he is doing now, merely pious expressions of hope to satisfy their conscience? Or perhaps Philips Price thinks (alas for Marxism!) that Marxists think "the relative strength of the classes" is a natural phenomenon like the weather, on which we can have no influence? In that case, we should advise him to go back at least as far as Trotsky's "Terrorism and Communism," and re-read the chapter on "The Balance of Power!"

"The Labour Government is forced to accept the Dawes Report"! Has the Labour Government ever struggled against it? Has the Labour Government even attempted to strike at the bankers who stand behind it? Has the Labour Government ever attempted to tear away the veil from the Report (as it could with its unrivalled resources of publicity), and to mobilise the workers, not only against the Report, but against the imperialist gang who promoted it? Has Philips Price ever moved a finger to urge the Labour Government to such a course, or to call upon the workers to force the hand of the Government?

"Just as Lenin accepted the Brest-Litovsk Treaty"! Here Philips Price has surpassed himself. One scarcely knows which to admire most, the effrontery of the comparison or the audacity of the insult to Lenin's memory. In 1918, *after* the proletariat had seized power; *after* it had sent across the trenches a peace

call which produced a general strike in Austria, the stoppage of a million workers in Germany, an intensified peace campaign in Britain; *after* the Russian peasants' army had lost all its supplies, arms, equipment, while only the foundation of the Red Army had been laid—Lenin and the Soviet Republic, having exhausted every resource, consented to buy a breathing-space for themselves at the price of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

In Britain, in 1924, the Labour Government has not stirred a finger to rouse the workers to seize real power. On the contrary, it has done its utmost to reassure the bourgeoisie. The Labour Government has not said a word to expose the Dawes' Report, which is only a more finished edition of the Versailles Treaty. It has not stirred a muscle to expose the hideous reality of the capitalist system in the eyes of the proletariat, but has done its best to establish friendly relations with the bourgeoisie and to promote the Report. And Philips Price would have the workers seek consolation and excuse for MacDonal'd's treachery and his own renegacy in Lenin's sacrifice for the sake of the Revolution!

"If these tactics are adopted, the movement is not compromised," says Philips Price. No, the workers are not compromised by the fact that treacherous leaders and renegade intellectuals, taking advantage of their ignorance and inexperience, play the game of the capitalist class: but those leaders and advisers are compromised, and will be flung aside with contempt as the workers gain more experience in the fight against capitalism.

#### IV.

Even the brightest of political reputations cannot entirely rely on the laurels of the past. To create a Left-wing nucleus, even amongst intellectuals, it is not sufficient to put forward an opportunist programme of foreign policy. Accordingly, at the same time as Philips Price was advancing backwards in face of the Dawes Report, he wrote a series of articles in the *Labour Monthly* (February-July) on the subject of "The Labour Party and Power," giving his views on some other matters.

In his first article (February) on "Some Continental Comparisons," he draws an analogy between the position of the Mensheviks in Russia in the summer of 1917, the position of the German Social-Democrats after the Revolution of 1918, and the position of the Labour Government. Of the Mensheviks, he says: "Instead of leaving the coalition and forcing the bourgeois parties either to rule by a dictatorship or hand them the reins of powers, and rule *by a minority* relying on the broad masses, they stuck to their coalition." Is this a Marxist description? It is not.

The words we have italicised give him away. What was the position in Russia? It was what Lenin concisely called "dyarchy"—double power: the organised working class issuing its orders through the Soviets, the organised capitalist class issuing orders through the Provisional Government. The orders of the Provisional Government ran only in so far as the leaders of the Soviets—the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—gave way to them. The situation was rotten-ripe for the seizure of power by the Soviets, and only the Mensheviks held them back—not because the Soviets were "in a minority" (in what institution this "minority" existed is not stated, because there was no such institution), but because the Mensheviks were afraid of the masses (with whose support they would have been in an overwhelming majority). It was this state of things, and precisely this, which prompted and gave point to the continuous Bolshevik cry for "All Power to the Soviets," long before the Bolsheviks were more than a small minority in the Soviets.

Philips Price, in writing of "a minority relying on the broad masses," is writing a manifest absurdity: and the reason he does it is pure and simple "parliamentary cretinism"—forgetfulness of the fact that the struggle of the proletariat is a struggle for power and not for a "parliamentary majority." This is why he can continue to speak of the Mensheviks' "honest efforts" in the Kerensky Government, and to call them a "Socialist Party" which had set itself "aims"—instead of explaining that they were simple agents of the capitalist class in the workers' ranks.

This is why he can speak of the German Social-Democrats abandoning "an economic key position, the public control of industry," by their Parliamentary coalition with the bourgeois parties in 1919: as if they had ever occupied that position! As if they could have achieved public control of industry while refusing to lead the workers in an armed struggle for power—in that very struggle which they themselves crushed down by wholesale butcheries and bludgeonings when it was raised by the Communist Party. In Philips Price's description in this article, the actual struggle for power of the proletariat, and the Social-Democrats' part in smashing it, conveniently disappears, just as it did in the case of the Mensheviks. Instead, we get a picture of irresolute, short-sighted, misguided, but still Socialist and pitiable Hamlets, whose main fault is that they missed their opportunity when it came.

From this we can understand Philips Price's gentle reference to their failure at a later date to form "a united front with the

Communists, and initiate a big campaign both inside and outside of Parliament for winning the support of the masses for the pure and unadulterated programme of the old Social-Democratic Party." As if the masses had not been heart and soul in favour of that programme from November, 1918 onwards; as if it were not the Social-Democrats themselves who had turned craven, time after time; as if it were not the old, old well-known trick of the opportunist to throw the blame on the workers! What a fine phrase is "a big campaign both inside and outside of Parliament"—implying so much, and meaning so little—just as if the writer were an innocent little schoolgirl, ignorant of politics, and not Philips Price, who for four years has seen and written about this campaign which has been going on in Germany "outside Parliament"—not a "campaign" indeed, but the massacring of the proletariat.

The purpose of it all becomes clear, however, when Philips Price turns to England, and begins with the assertion: "As we take power now *we are dependent on Liberal votes*, and will have to modify our programme accordingly. This need not necessarily prove fatal to us. It all depends on what we get in return for our temporary postponement of the capital levy. We shall get the sole control over the administrative machine of the State." Now we see the need for his pseudo-Marxist and in reality pure opportunist comparisons with Russia and Germany. Let us reply point by point.

(1) "We" *i.e.*, the workers, do not "take power" now. The capitalist is still sweating us and shooting Indian peasants. It is the clique at the head of the Labour Party who have "taken power"—and they have not "taken it," they have been "given" it by the capitalists, as payment for betraying the rising tide of proletarian revolt. (2) "We" are not dependent on Liberal votes. If "we" means the workers, the statement is an obvious absurdity. If "we" means the Labour Government, the answer is that it was placed in power by Liberal votes, but it is not dependent on them. It still has the course open to it of throwing in its lot with the masses, not only "outside" Parliament (while inside it betrays them) but *against* Parliament. Only a sufferer from "Parliamentary cretinism" who forgets or does not know where the seat of power lies, could make such a statement. (3) "We" will *not* "have to modify our programme accordingly." The masses *want* our programme, and will want it more when it begins to be applied: if their more backward elements voted Liberal and Conservative, that was because they had no opportunity of realising what our programme is. The finest education they

could get is by a Labour Government, placed in office by capitalists, turning the tables on them and leading the workers in an assault on capitalism (as the Hungarians did, very badly, but with all their heart in 1919). (4) If "we" "modify our programme" this *will* be fatal to "us." Philips Price has just proved it to us, on the example of the Russian Mensheviks and the German Social-Democrats. "We" have been placed in power by a capitalist trick: but that trick had fear behind it—fear of the proletarian revolution. If we fall into the trap by giving up *the attempt* to realise the vital parts of our programme—not the vital parts themselves, for the simple reason that they exist as yet only on paper and in our promises—we are betraying the confidence of the workers, failing to do just what they have been intending us to do: and we shall be lost, just as the Mensheviks and Social-Democrats were. (5) What we get "in return for our temporary postponement of the capital levy" does not matter a straw. The capitalist class *and* the working class know that phrase very well. Reformists and opportunists used it long before the super-Marxian reformist Philips Price re-discovered it. If we have not the courage to apply the capital levy, and the other measures necessary to strike at the heart of capitalism at the very *outset* of our power, capitalism will know how to use the respite granted. It will give us the opportunity to "use the administrative apparatus of the State"—which being interpreted means a few small reforms here and there—abolition of the gap, extension of the Overseas Credits Scheme to Russia, lowering of the food taxes—which the exploiters by their hold on *the economic apparatus of capitalism* will take good care to nullify. Then, when "we" have sabotaged and bewildered and split the Labour movement; when "we" are thoroughly discredited; when it becomes necessary to find an excuse for breaking our promise about "temporary postponement" "we" shall be gracefully thrown out by the capitalist Parties. And then "we" shall be faced with the necessity of fighting an election on the issue of *abolishing capitalism and establishing working class control of production without having prepared the working class for civil war.*

Philips Price thinks that Ramsay MacDonald, unlike his friends the Mensheviks and the Social-Democrats of Germany, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, etc., is fool enough to fight such an election. We differ from him. But whoever proves right, the main result will be the same—capitalism will *not* be abolished, the capital levy will be postponed *indefinitely*, and the reformists will have done the work in Britain that they have done elsewhere.

Unless, of course, the British capitalist class is going to give up power and go out of existence as the result of a Parliamentary election. Possibly, Philips Price believes this. If he does, he has omitted to say so. It only requires this last detail to complete the picture of the perfect reformist and opportunist, style 1924.

Meanwhile, we have to be content with his final assertion that "we shall get the sole control over the administrative machine of the State." Has a single worker been allowed to poke his nose into the workings of the army, navy, air force, and police? Has a single worker been granted access to the records of capitalist diplomacy and Empire-grabbing in the Foreign Office and Colonial Office? Has MacDonal dared to appoint a single worker to any diplomatic post abroad? Has the Minister of Health dared to grant any protection to evicted workers or relief scales for unemployed without incurring the sabotage in most cases successful, of the administrative machine? Have not all the Labour Cabinet Ministers re-appointed the very private and confidential secretaries, bourgeois to a man, who served the capitalist Ministers before them? These are only a few of the questions the very asking of which is a refutation of Philips Price's "confidence trick."

## V.

There is no opportunity at present to dwell on the wonderful and "quite Marxian" analysis of the working and lower middle classes of to-day to which Price devotes the greater part of his article in the April *Labour Monthly*. Suffice it to say that in his analysis he comes to the conclusion that the most important social type "at the present political juncture in England consists of elements which have hitherto not been politically active, have taken no part in industrial disputes, have either not voted at all or have till quite recently voted Liberal or Conservative, but are now in a state of unstable political equilibrium." In other words, the lower middle class, although Price makes an effort to disguise the fact by speaking of "hand and head workers, shopkeepers, professional men, state and municipal officials, small employers, craftsmen, etc."

These elements to which he also adds some workers, are the class which, according to Price (1) have brought the Labour Party to its present position in Parliament, (2) will make it even stronger, (3) must be "brought into the contest" at the crucial moment. In other words, the "Marxian" spokesman of the proletariat has turned a kind of mental somersault, and found that the deciding class for him is the petty bourgeoisie. Although

this is quite in keeping with the opportunism he has revealed in the articles already discussed, the more sophisticated reformists with whom the Socialist proletariat has had to deal in the past have not been quite so engagingly frank. We fear Price is still only a "candidate" for their ranks, and has not as yet qualified for full membership.

We are the more confirmed in this opinion because he has the incredible bad taste to quote Marx as proving that "sections of the small middle classes. . . are always liable to alternating fits of wild elation and deep despair, and are treacherous political allies." Since our Marxian knows his authorities so well, let us add a little to his store of quotations on the subject of treacherous political allies—from a man who knew all there was to know about them. Lenin, at a moment (1911) when the Russian working class was beginning to get on to its feet again, after the reactionary years following 1905, said :

"The intellectuals, particularly those who have attached themselves to some 'legal' activity or other" (in this case, read "respectable and non-Party activity") "are developing a complete disbelief in our illegal Party, and refuse to waste their energies on work that is particularly difficult and particularly thankless at the present time. 'A friend in need is a friend indeed,' and the working class, passing through hard years of attack from both old and new counter-revolutionary forces" (both Lloyd George and MacDonald) "will inevitably see the falling away of many, many of his intellectual 'friends for an hour,' friends during the holiday, friends only during the revolution—*friends who were revolutionaries during the period of revolution, but give way in the period of decline*, and are ready to proclaim 'the struggle for legality' at the first successes of the counter-revolution."

Here is another quotation from an attack on an opportunist :

"You say that this means sitting between two stools. But this is just the essence of every opportunist. This is just the form in which the nature of the bourgeois intellectual of to-day—*playing at Marxism*—shows itself."

Armed with these further authorities, let us proceed to review rapidly Philips Price's final article, in the July *Labour Monthly*. It must be read to be credited, and should be read by every revolutionary worker, in order that he may see how many monstrous distortions of fact, in defence of the Labour Government, and samples of opportunism disguised as Marxism, can be crowded into a few pages. To some of them the Editor replied in his preface : to others the Party replies day by day in its agitation : others again only require mentioning.

"Just as the social revolution has gone a very different way in Russia to what it is going in Germany, so it may go a different way in England to what it went in either." "The Labour Government has done well to tackle seriously the problem of making a comprehensive economic treaty with the Soviet Republic." "It has a better record after 6 months than the German Social-Democrats had after four years" (!) "An immediately practical proposition at the present time would be, I submit, to assist the elements of the I.L.P. which are not saturated with sentimental pacifism to keep a straight course. . . . But if they are dubbed political bankrupts and agents of the

bourgeoisie from the first, the *psychological atmosphere necessary to impress the Labour Party Right-wing and the careerist element, which is among them, will be absent.*"

These are all pearls of great price, particularly the last, radiant with the Machiavellian strategy of the "revolutionary Left-winger" who intends to lead the workers to emancipation by creating a "psychological atmosphere" around the Right-wing and the careerists, *i.e.*, by letting them do what they want in the present "relations of the classes," while, of course, maintaining "objective criticism."

Nevertheless, the main object of the article is not all this, but the liquidation of the Communist Party. The bashful Philips Price does not quite muster up courage to say that little word openly. But he intimates that "Barkis is willin'." The first three pages of his 7-page article are occupied with the theme of why we should not be too rude to the Labour Government, and above all why we must be polite to the Right-wing, the careerists, and the I.L.P. Then follows the statement that the task would be much easier, "if there were not in existence already certain barriers of organisation between the Left-wing groups." Then a cunning emphasis is laid on the fact that the tide of revolution has ebbed since the years in which the Communist International was founded, although the little incidents of last autumn in Germany have to be left out of the picture for this purpose. A reference is made to the Party's failure "to capture the mind of the working class" in 1921, although the success of the minority movements, and the Party's campaign on India and Germany, in 1923, have again to be "forgotten." The Party is described as "abortive" and is said to be "left high and dry"; and then, for nearly two pages, he attempts to prove that Rosa Luxemburg opposed Lenin on the question of the necessity of a separate Communist Party, Lenin being guided by Russian conditions and Rosa by German. Referring to Rosa's advocacy in 1917, of a struggle "between two tendencies within one and the same Party" Price concludes: "If these words applied to Germany entering on a stage of acute revolutionary struggle, how much more so is it applicable to the present situation in England, where the Labour Party has not yet hopelessly compromised itself with reaction, and, if the Left-wing does its duty, probably never will."

What is the "psychological atmosphere" left by this argument? The answer is only one: that the Communist Party should be liquidated. He even says, "Their absence of fine fighting traditions and of a number of martyred leaders should make re-

absorption into the mass parties a matter of greater ease than in Germany!"

But, just as Price dare not openly state his belief in the efficacy of parliamentary action to abolish capitalism, but having got to this point in his argument, glossed it over with an ambiguous phrase about "the final struggle," so here, too, in an article which shouts from every line that the Party should be liquidated, he slips in the following: "The affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party should effect this" (re-absorption into mass parties), "and the opposition of the Labour Right-wing might be overcome if the Communist Party were to adopt the tactics towards the Labour Government which I have set down in the above lines."

At first we rub our eyes in amazement. Can it be that the article is directed not at us at all, but against the Right-wing? We begin to breathe freely once more: our prophet, the one Englishman who is closely familiar with the battles of the proletarian revolution in both Russia and Germany during recent years, and who has made his political reputation thereby, has granted our Party a new lease of life and is throwing the blame on the Party's enemies!

But then we see the postscript, which spoils the illusion. "The opposition might be overcome if the Communist Party were to adopt the tactics, etc." In other words, Philips Price has little doubt that we should be easily admitted into the Labour Party if we renounced the right to criticise, expose and fight traitors to the working class—the right on which every working class party worth its name must insist. In other words, if we liquidated our Party! Philips Price has just said the same thing here as he was saying throughout the other seven pages—only in a different way, for the sake of variety.

Let us say that for once we agree with Philips Price. We, too, have little doubt that we could under such conditions gain admission to the Labour Party very easily. We even have little doubt that under such conditions the German Social-Democrats would agree to a united front with the Communists, and the Mensheviks to supporting the Bolsheviks instead of the White generals. But we also doubt whether under such conditions there would be any Russian or German Revolution, let alone a British Revolution.

Being in doubt, and having our doubt fortified by our enquiry into the political views and tactics advocated by an "independent Marxian"—independent, that is to say, of Marx, of Socialism,

and of the working class—we shall keep our Party in being, strengthen and enlarge it, continue to win the increasing confidence of the working class, continue to work with friends who are honestly devoted to the proletarian cause, and to fight these same friends when they enter the camp of the workers' enemies.

It will be a struggle which grows not easier, but ever more difficult; a testing not delicate and ambiguous, but searching and decisive; a battle in the forefront of the working class, against capitalism, wherever a Party member or the Party literature goes; and here and now—not “temporarily postponed.” These remain the aims and tactics of the Communist International and of our Party, and they will bring victory to the working class and to us, and defeat to the capitalist class and to its agents.

\* \* \* \* \*

P.S.—The above lines were already in the Press when Philips Price, answering Comrade J. R. Campbell's criticisms, published an article in *Forward*, of August 30th, entitled “The Communists and the I.L.P.” In this article he makes rapid progress—downhill.

He furnishes the reply, in the first place to our question concerning his attitude to Parliament. The reply is none too clear, of course. As a true opportunist, he avoids committing himself to any definite views, and either puts them forward negatively, by explaining what the Communists do *not* think (that “the apparatus of Parliament is of the slightest use for assisting the working class in getting control over the Executive”), or else disguises them as something that the masses, “following historical precedent,” think (that Parliament can be used “for carrying out a social transformation”). Still better, he borrows arguments from both sides. Although he refuses “to regard Parliament merely as a soap-box for agitation,” he is ready to admit that the possessing class may smash their own State apparatus (*including* their army, navy and police force?) when it comes to be captured by their class opponents, and “set up a dictatorship in their own interests” (at present, of course, no such dictatorships exists). Probably some dim recollection of the fact that Marx, Engels and Lenin all explained that the capitalist State apparatus consists of something more than Parliament, namely, of armed forces which the worker, not the capitalist, is interested in smashing, prompts Philips Price to say that this is the view of “many who are not in the Communist Party, and many who are not even Marxists.” There, at any rate, we can agree with him.

The point is, says Price, should a Workers' Party be given a chance to gain insight into the executive of a capitalist State and to attempt to control it through Parliament, or should the rank and file be asked to declare that MacDonald's Ministers are agents of the bourgeoisie, and that "the very idea that Parliament could be used for altering the relation of class power in favour of the workers is a sin against the Holy Ghost?" The point is, we reply to Price, are you a muddle-headed opportunist or a conscious opportunist? Who wants to rob the poor Labour Party of its "insight?" On the contrary, as far as the Communists are concerned, we want the whole working class to gain "insight"; and none will be more delighted than the Communists if MacDonald throws open the files of the Foreign Office, War Office, and Home Office, and admits into the Army Council, the Embassies abroad and Scotland Yard, the elected delegates of the rank and file, thirsting for "insight." By all means attempt to control the capitalist State through Parliament! Defy the bankers and make a genuine working-class peace with Soviet Russia, renouncing capitalist claims: withdraw the troops from Cologne and from India, Egypt, Mesopotamia and China: grant political freedom to soldiers and sailors: requisition all empty houses. *Why* are MacDonald's ministers agents of the bourgeoisie? Because they are ministers? Or just because they do none of these very things, and prefer to go on doing the dirty work of capitalism?

*How* can "the relation of class power" be altered in favour of the workers? As Philips Price once again uses this most Marxian phrase, we may remind him of what Marx said on this subject: "The emancipation of the workers must be the act of the working class itself." In other words, the workers themselves must "alter the relation of class power"—and the task of the revolutionary vanguard is to help them to make up their minds, and this we are doing by agitation and propaganda. The use of Parliament for this purpose means nothing more nor less than using it "as a platform from which to send rousing appeals to the masses." But, once again, if Philips Price would have the patience to read a little book called "Left-wing Communism," by a man who knew Marx not merely as a source of phrases, but as a guide to political action, he would find a good deal of information on the Communist attitude to Parliamentary action.

After a long series of quotations from Comrades Radek and Brandler, purporting to show their solidarity with Price against the Communist Party—a delicate compliment which we feel sure Comrade Radek will appreciate in his own inimitable way—Price

returns once more to argument with Comrade Campbell. This time it is on the Dawes' Report: and he pours scorn on Campbell's demand for complete repudiation.

"Let him make the gesture," Price sneers, "and what then? At the sound of the trumpet, I suppose, he expects the barricades to rise. . . It is the duty of the Left not merely to go about mouthing "repudiation," but to use the various cracks in the armour of the Report, which will make it possible for Labour Governments, wherever they arise in Europe in coming years, to turn the machinery set up by that Report round to become an instrument of the workers."

And he quotes Radek's criticism of "commonplace revolutionary phrases."

No, Mr. Philistine, it is not the Communist Party that thinks it can summon the barricades by the magic of its own voice—nor is it the Communist Party which thinks that, having uttered a few "commonplace reformist phrases" about using "cracks in the armour," it has done its duty and can treat the Experts Report as an accomplished fact, and send the proletariat home to bed. Only a bourgeois intellectual can delude himself and the workers that the wicked capitalists will be defeated, not by mobilising every single ounce of energy in the working class to fight them, but by deft little amendments here and neat corrections there, all provided out of his own fertile imagination, and all destined to be put into force "wherever Labour Governments arise in Europe in coming years"—by the gracious will of the Anglo-American bankers who by that time will be the rulers of the world! Only a bourgeois intellectual could fail to see that, month by month since his first article on the Dawes Report, he has rolled down deeper and deeper into the swamp of opportunism.

The Communist Party has acted differently. It explained the meaning of the Dawes Report to the working class, and called the workers to fight against this new edition of the Versailles Treaty, weeks before the I.L.P. or the back-benchers or Philips Price dared to raise their voice. And the Communist Party has been amply justified by the resolutions and protests pouring in from more and more Labour organisations week by week. The masses are not daunted or paralysed by the knowledge that "an attempt will be made to put the Report into operation"; they do not console themselves for slavery to-day and to-morrow by the thought of "Labour Governments in coming years"; they *fight*. The Communist Party  *fights*. Honest, class conscious workers are gathering in greater numbers around its banner, tens of thousands are beginning to follow its lead, because it  *fights*. Philips Price does not fight, and sneers at fighting. Our united front will be with those who fight for the workers, and not with those who do the work of the bourgeoisie.

E. CHARTERIS.

# Canada, British Imperialism and Wall Street

The Colonial question occupies a position of tremendous importance to the Third Communist International. Bound up with the economic and political developments in the various colonies is the success or failure of the revolutionary movements of the old countries like Britain or France.

This was clearly recognised at the Second World Congress of the Third International. The famous thesis on the colonial question states that :

“ One of the main sources from which European capitalism draws its main strength is to be found in the colonial possessions and dependencies. Without the control of the extensive fields of exploitation in the colonies, the capitalist powers in Europe CANNOT MAINTAIN THEIR EXISTENCE EVEN FOR A SHORT TIME. England, the stronghold of Imperialism, has been suffering from over-production for more than a century. But for the extensive colonial possessions acquired for the sale of her surplus products and as a source of raw materials for her ever-growing industries, THE CAPITALISTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLAND WOULD HAVE BEEN CRUSHED UNDER ITS OWN WEIGHT LONG AGO.”

These considerations led the Second Congress to state that :

“ The breaking up of the colonial empire, together with the proletarian revolution in the home country, will overthrow the capitalist system in Europe.”

It will be seen, therefore, that the developments proceeding apace in the various colonies and possessions are matters of profound interest and importance to the various Communist Parties. Upon the correct analysis of tendencies depends the success or failure of revolutionary tactics the world over—and nowhere more so than when dealing with the important colonial question. We must subject the recent developments in the various colonies of the British Empire to the most searching analysis in order that our revolutionary strategy may be in keeping with the objective situation. The proper co-ordination of our forces depends upon the correct analysis of the developments of capitalist production. This article is written in order to assist in this necessary work. The author is a member of the Executive Committee of the C.P. of Canada.

## I.

### *GENESIS OF CANADIAN CAPITALISM.*

**T**HE lure of the Nor'West has cast its spell upon many generations of men. From time immemorable, many and wonderful have been the tales told of the hidden wealth—of mountains of gold and silver; of fabulous riches concealed in mountain pass and forest glen. Even the silver sheen of countless lakes seemed to mysteriously tell of the treasures concealed beneath.

To this lone land came traders and adventurers—seeking the treasures of the new El Dorado. Under the flag of Britain marched the “ merchant adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay.” They pushed their way into the frozen fastnesses of the north; explored the dark recesses of the Rockies; pushed down the swift rivers, accompanied by the gay songs of the voyagers; and established the forts of the fur traders. With musket, sword and

sacrament, these pioneers pushed back the native Indians. Dark-some deeds in mountain pass and forest glen bore testimony to the ruthless advance of the "paleface"—and the trail was cluttered with the bleaching bones of the countless victims of the onward sweep of the crusaders of commodities. 'Tis a record of ruthless exploitation; of red-blooded terrorism; of wholesale corruption without a peer in the annals of the history of capitalism.

In this way was the rule of the merchant princes of London and Manchester established in the Nor'West. The palisaded forts of the Hudson's Bay Company guarded the profits and enforced the rule of the "merchant adventurers" of the "City." Canada was a British "possession" in every sense of the word.

But this rich and growing tribute wrung from the fur trade made possible further and larger investments of merchant capital in Canada. The powerful Bank of Montreal and many another corporation came from the womb of British capitalism. Canoe and "prairie-schooner" gave place to the steel-highway of the Canadian Pacific Railway—thus making possible the development of the grain fields of the prairies, and paving the way for the establishment of factories, mines and mills. And just as the merchants of the "City" had invested in the fur trade, so now they poured forth their surplus-capital into railroads, mines, factories and workshops. The lure of the Nor'West was as potent as ever!

It could not be otherwise! The very development of capitalist production in Great Britain forced the capitalists to seek new fields of exploitation; larger markets for the disposal of their surplus of commodities, secured control of the sources of the raw materials needed in productive processes. And they saw, in Canada, the very country needed for the continuance of their exploitation. They saw fabulous supplies of oil, of coal, of iron-ore, of gold, of nickel, of lumber, of copper, of pulpwood. They saw the vast prairies beckoning to thousands of poughmen, and making possible the production of cheap grain in huge quantities. They saw a far-flung land, millions of square miles in extent, which could be used as a much-needed safety valve to the growing hordes of the workless cluttering the labour market of Great Britain.

Small wonder that the banking barons and steel kings of Great Britain invested their surplus capital in Canada—dumping hundreds of millions of dollars into railroads, steel mills, coal mines, lumber camps and grain elevators. And it was small wonder that hundreds of thousands of immigrants were shipped across

the Atlantic—lured by the promises of free land and a new-found freedom.

The birth of Canadian capitalism found the bankers of the "City" acting as mid-wife. And the youthful daughter was nourished with great care! The Dominion became not only the economic, but the political vassal of Britain. "The Round Table," July, 1921, correctly stated that:

"The handling of questions of real Imperial moment fell within the competence of the Government of Great Britain *alone*."

Thus the economic supremacy of Lombard Street resulted in the political supremacy of Downing Street. British Imperialists still regarded the Dominion of Canada as a British "possession"—and with every justification.

## II.

### **A NATIVE BOURGEOISIE.**

But the invasion of the British capitalists into Canada and the resultant birth of capitalist production produced consequences little calculated to tickle the fancy of the Cecils, the Baldwins and the Peases.

The growth of capitalist production in Canada, so carefully nourished by the parent across the seas, resulted in the rise of a native bourgeoisie. Upon the scene strode the leading spirits in the persons of Strathcona, Osler, Stephen, Mann, Walker, Angus and Van Horne. They were bent, like all capitalists, upon the exploitation of the working class for their own aggrandisement. Not unnaturally, their interests clashed with increasing intensity with the interests of the bankers of the "City," the coal kings of South Wales, and the steel masters of the Clyde. With growing insistence the Canadian Manufacturers' Association demanded tariff protection from the manufacturers of the "Mother Country." The cry went forth to protect "infant industries," to make Canada "self-supporting," to encourage "made in Canada" products. And a high tariff wall was erected by willing legislators—despite the wails of British Imperialists.

Moreover, the evolution of Canadian capitalism generally, proceeded at a terrific speed. In two short decades Canada was transformed from a land of voyagers and pioneers into a country with a highly centralised industrial system. And in Canada, as elsewhere, the concentration and centralisation of capital resulted in the dominance of finance capital—the rise to supremacy of a few banks. A mere handful of directors thus gathered to them-

selves 266 directorates of the largest and most powerful corporations in Canada. **Canadian capitalism was entering the phase of Imperialism.**

The growing surplus resulting from capitalist exploitation, enabled the investment of surplus capital through these banks in foreign countries. The native bourgeoisie penetrated into Cuba, into Brazil, into Mexico, into Spain. Sometimes this Canadian Imperialism acted in conjunction with the banking barons of London; sometimes as the avowed agents of Wall Street, but always for its own profit. We see, however, in this rise of a native bourgeoisie and Imperialism, the first rifts in the lute of British Imperialism on the North American continent.

### III.

#### **"PEACEFUL PENETRATION."**

We see, too, the beginnings of that process of "peaceful penetration" by American Imperialism—steadily gnawing at the very vitals of British supremacy in Canada.

As is generally known, British rule in Canada is a positive triumph over economic geography—and from the very nature of things could not withstand the onward sweep of economic development. The rise of American Imperialism threatened the existence of the political boundary line separating the Dominion from the dollar democracy. Not for long can the arbitrary decisions of diplomats upset the inexorable laws of capitalist economy.

Naturally the rising capitalist class of the United States looked with envious eyes upon the sources of oil, of coal and of pulpwood contained within the confines of Canada. They began the deadly process of "peaceful penetration." Yankee capital began to flow across the boundary-line, whilst Canadian branches of American corporations began to make their appearance. Canada was starting upon the slippery slope the end of which will be the complete economic and political supremacy of Wall Street.

Aiding this process was the geographical proximity of the two countries; the ease of inter-communication; the increasing interdependence of the one upon the other. Moreover, assisting in the process were to be found countless agencies of propaganda. There sprang into existence many fraternal societies such as the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs—binding the Canadian babbitts to the chariot of the dollar democracy with powerful psychological chains. A multitude of Yankee magazines, books and newspapers flooded Canadian homes—all bearing the unmistakable impress of "one hundred per cent. Americanism." The purchase of Canadian papers by American capitalists and the colouring of news followed

as logical consequences. And last, but not least, the Canadian trade union movement found itself hog-tied to the A.F. of L— with its bureaucracy ballyhooing the pet phrases of “one hundred per cent.”

The action and re-action of these various forces drew the Dominion of Canada closer to Wall Street. The “Mother Country” was still referred to in tones of affection; but the penetration of American Imperialism together with the rise of a native bourgeoisie tended to estrange in increasing measure the Dominion from the British Imperialists. This whole process only needed the impetus of the Great War to make the rupture open and avowed.

#### IV.

#### **EFFECTS OF THE GREAT WAR.**

The Great War revolutionised the financial geography of world capitalism. The banking barons of Lombard Street were forced to bow before the irresistible march of Wall Street. Behind the polished periods and fourteen points of Woodrow Wilson, could be noticed the sinister figures of Schwab, Rockefeller, Mellon and Morgan—the uncrowned kings of dollar democracy and diplomacy. In no country was the victorious march of Wall Street more pronounced than in the Dominion of Canada. The drying-up of the money market of London forced the native bourgeoisie to seek the assistance of the banking barons of New York. Hundreds of millions of dollars of Yankee capital were poured into the country as a consequence. British bonds and stocks were liquidated with speed. Government bonds, previously floated in London, were now floated in New York or at home. The choicest of Canadian investments were secured by the victorious American capitalists.

Before the war, American investments in Canada were less than \$600,000,000; but the signing of the Versailles Treaty by Canadian statesmen found these investments increased to \$1,250,000,000. To-day, at least fifty-six per cent. of the capital invested in Canada is in the hands of the Yankee capitalists. The “blue-ribbon” investment of the country—the famous C.P.R.—is slowly passing into their hands. In 1911, more than sixty-five per cent. of the stock in this corporation was owned by the “guinea-pig investors” of England. In 1916, this had dwindled to 49 per cent.; to-day it is less than forty per cent. On the other hand, American-owned shares have increased from a paltry nine per cent. in 1911 to a little less than thirty per cent. at the present moment. And as these lines are being written comes the announcement of the sale of ten million first debenture shares—

in the United States. Particularly heavy have been Yankee investments in such important industries as pulp and paper, oil, coal, steel and water power. The very cream of Canadian industry is passing into the hands of the capitalist class of the dollar democracy.

As we have pointed out above, it could not be otherwise. The inexorable laws of economics lay on one side the arbitrary enactments of diplomats. Political boundary lines not in accordance with economic development must vanish as does the darkness of night with the rising of the sun. And this very conquest of American Imperialism coupled with the growing antagonisms of a native bourgeoisie kicks many a prop from beneath the reeling structure of the proud British Empire—and taken in conjunction with the revolt in India and Egypt; the rising capitalisms of South Africa and Australia spells the inevitable downfall of the Empire “upon which the sun never sets and wages seldom rise.” It does more—it makes easier the revolutionary overthrow of “England, the stronghold of Imperialism” by making increasingly impossible the exploitation of colonial peoples.

## V.

### **NATIONAL STATUS.**

Political movements reflect economic developments. Not unnaturally the economic process summarised above resulted in political developments of the most far-reaching character to the British Empire. As long as Lombard Street was the supreme economic factor, just so long was Downing Street the political master. But the eclipse of the one meant the downfall of the power of the other. It is here that we witness the revolutionising of the political life of the Empire.

There arose a new constitutional school demanding far-reaching constitutional changes. This school demanded, with growing insistence, the complete national autonomy of the Dominion of Canada. And this demand, backed by economic development, resulted in the granting of that national status to the Dominion at the signing of the Versailles Treaty. Henceforth Canada was no longer bound hand and foot to the political manœuvres of Downing Street.

This became quickly apparent. In the recent Anglo-Japanese Treaty, Canadian diplomats opposed the policy of Great Britain—and favoured the policy of American Imperialism. And when Churchill and Lloyd George issued their appeal to arms on the thorny question of Angora, Canadian statesmen promptly repudiated the position of the political manikins of the “City.” And

the growing power of Wall Street found its proper fruition in the proposed appointment of a Canadian ambassador to Washington—and the election of McKenzie-King (of the Rockefeller Foundation) to be Premier of the Dominion.

Time after time, the leading statesmen of Canada have openly opposed the diplomacy of British Imperialism and taken sides with the banking barons of New York. Naturally, the Imperialists of old Albion have noted these decided tendencies with marked concern. Not without a struggle will they put up the shutters and relinquish their power and pelf. Feverishly they endeavour to arouse the dwindling patriotism by means of flag-waving and speeches. The Prince of Wales is despatched to visit his Alberta ranch—always as that “royal democrat” Lord Renfrew. A naval squadron visits the ports of the Dominion and the officers deliver the most jingoistic speeches—despite the government of the Rt. Hon. Ramsay MacDonald.\* The multitudinous connections of the powerful Federation of British Industries are extended; a Governor-General is appointed from the family of grain buyers (Ralli Bros.) in the person of Lord Byng of Vimy; vast schemes of English immigration are proposed by the Labour (?) Government. In a multitude of ways the Imperialists of Great Britain seek to cement the bursting bonds of Empire; to maintain their power and pelf; to resist the inroads of American Imperialism.

But they are fighting a losing battle—the economic laws of capitalist production work against them. The far-flung hegemony of Lombard Street is collapsing—thus enhancing the prospects of successful proletarian revolution in Great Britain. Beyond doubt the near future will witness an increasing difficulty of the British capitalist class to dispose of its surplus of commodities and population; to maintain its hold upon much-needed sources of oil, of coal, of pulpwood and of grain. And the feverish preparations for another and still more terrible war being carried on under the mask of a Labour Government of pacifists bear eloquent testimony to the injuries done to the once proud British Empire.

Thus economic development makes imperative the closest possible co-ordination of forces on the part of the workers of the dollar democracy, and of the Dominion of Canada. More and more is the political boundary line separating the two countries vanishing—thus strengthening the rule of Wall Street, and creating problems to be solved by the united action of the proletariat of the whole of the North American Continent. This the Communist movement of the North American Continent is alive to.

H. M. BARTHOLOMEW.

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\* We would prefer to say “just because of the MacDonald Government.”—Editor.

# After Hull—What ?

**T**HE Hull Trade Union Congress is, generally, admitted to be a great improvement on previous conferences. It took a number of decisions upon important questions, which, if applied, will improve the position of the Trade Union movement to some extent. Nevertheless, it shrank from taking decisions upon the many important questions a solution of which is of the utmost consequence to the Labour movement as a whole. Like the curate's egg, the Congress this year was only good in parts.

## *THE CONGRESS DECISIONS.*

Comrade Losovsky has pointed out repeatedly in articles upon the British Trade Union movement, that this movement combines a very muddled political outlook with a high degree of combativeness on purely economic questions. The decisions of the Hull Congress go far to confirm this view. Thus, the Congress took a step forward by granting increased powers to the General Council, by suggesting the need for closer union in the various industries, and by the decision which it arrived at after some vacillation to take steps to secure greater international Trade Union unity. All of these questions deal with the preparation of the unions for the economic struggle, and the need for pushing ahead those preparations was felt by the great majority of the delegates.

But on general political questions, the Congress was confused and indecisive. On the Russian question, for instance, it was sound, but on the question of the Dawes' Report and the Labour Government, it was afraid to take a strong stand. Almost every delegate present felt that the Dawes' Plan was a scheme, which, if put into operation, would hurt the workers of this country as well as the workers of Germany. Almost every delegate felt that the Labour Party had not used its opportunities on behalf of the workers as it might have done, but they shrank from taking practical action on those questions.

## *THE OFFICIAL LEFT-WING.*

In its way, the Congress was a good reflection of the left-wing tendency which is springing up amongst certain sections of the Trade Union leaders. Those leaders feel that the Trade Union movement in its present state is impotent. They are prepared to support, or partially support, advanced proposals designed to

remove specific weaknesses, but they have no comprehensive left outlook on working class problems. They support the need for greater unity, they support the treaty with Russia, but in the same breath they shield the Labour Government from vigorous, healthy criticism, and uphold the Dawes' Report while expressing grave doubts as to its economic effects.

In a way those left leaders have been assisted by the revival of the fighting spirit of the workers, which has been manifest since the end of 1923. It would be a complete mistake however, to imagine that they are merely right-wingers being pushed on from behind by the masses. There are genuine progressive elements amongst them, anxious to improve the union organisations, but afraid to move too far in advance of general working class opinion.

### **THE C.P., THE MINORITY MOVEMENT AND THE OFFICIAL LEFT.**

In view of that situation, what attitude should the Communist Party and the wider Minority Movement with which it is associated take up? In the first place, I think they must strive to convince the workers and the progressive leaders of the need for making the utmost possible use of the gains which have been registered. The Congress has given the General Council more power, not as much as is necessary it is true for the effective accomplishment of all its tasks, but, nevertheless, an increase in its existing power. The left leaders on the General Council who have sponsored this reform must realise that they can use their opportunities to help or hinder the movement towards greater unity.

Already the suggestion has been thrown out in the capitalist Press that the General Council should use its extended powers to secure the peaceful settlement of industrial disputes. If this is accepted the advance towards greater unity in the Trade Union movement will be imperilled. The General Council must not use its power to hamper struggle, but to make struggle more effective.

The General Council can also raise the prestige of the British Trade Union movement enormously if it energetically carries out Mr. Purcell's pledge to secure effective unity in the international Trade Union movement. An ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, and if the Minority movement and its supporters can induce the left-wing of the General Council to take those steps, and produce results, then the opposition to granting still greater power to the General Council will be broken down.

It would be a suicidal policy, however, for the Communist Party and the Minority Movement to place too much reliance on

what we have called the official left-wing. On problems of Trade Union organisation this element is fairly clear, on other problems it has not broken away from the "right" position. It is the duty of our Party and the Minority Movement to criticise its weaknesses relentlessly, to endeavour to change the muddled and incomplete left viewpoint of the more progressive leaders into a real revolutionary viewpoint. But the revolutionary workers must never forget that their main activity must be devoted to capturing the masses.

While the Hull Congress made changes in Trade Union policy, it said little on the all-important question of co-ordinating the workers' offensive, against capitalism. As a consequence of this, we may expect that sectional rushes at the strongly-organised capitalist enemy will continue to be the rule for some time. The Minority Movement must see that the idea of a common working class demand on wages and hours, and a co-ordinated struggle to realise that demand, is popularised amongst the widest circles of the workers. It must be emphasised by the Party members and the adherents of the Minority Movement, that the operation of the Dawes Report is not only going to make it impossible for the workers to advance, but it is going to stimulate a fresh employing class offensive against the workers. It is, therefore, essential that the workers' forces should be co-ordinated to get the maximum possible gains, and to prepare the workers' organisations to meet the employers' counter-blow.

The Minority Movement must especially in view of the sharp rise in unemployment, press the claims of the unemployed, both with regard to putting into operation the Six Point Charter, and with regard to a closer relationship of the unemployed and official Labour organisations. The unemployed movement has done much to prevent the unemployed workers being used against the employed workers. This service must be reciprocated by the employed workers bringing pressure to bear upon the Government to carry out their promises to the unemployed.

The Trade Union movement must be encouraged to force the hands of the Labour Government, *i.e.*, to force that Government to act not as a neutral body between Capital and Labour as it believes itself to be in theory, or as a body serving the interests of the capitalists, as it actually is in practice, but as a body consciously assisting in the development of the workers' offensive against capitalism. It must be forced to abandon its support, for example, on the infamous Dawes Plan, and to repeal all anti-Labour legislation such as the E.P.A. and other similar measures.

It must succour the unemployed, bring in a minimum wage bill, and make an attempt to nationalise the main industries.

The attitude of the General Council with relation to international unity will also be strengthened if the Minority Movement is able to show the masses of the British workers that they are more dependent upon international conditions than any other working class in the world, that the existing split in the Trade Union movement in Europe hurts them most, and that they ought to use the key position which they hold in the Amsterdam International to bring about real Trade Union unity. In order to accomplish those tasks the Communist Party and the Minority Movement must start an intensive campaign now. There must not be a powerful union in the country without having either a Party member or an adherent of the Minority Movement, running for the Trade Union Congress as a convinced supporter of the Minority Programme. The active workers in those movements must also contest every union position possible, not as isolated individuals, but as adherents of the Minority Programme.

### **TO THE MASSES.**

A definite attempt must be made not only to reach the active men in the union branches, but also to reach the great mass of the workers who do not take a continuous interest in union affairs. This necessary approach to the masses can only be undertaken through the workshop.

In this sphere the workers will encounter great difficulties. The employing class do not like militant workshop organisation, and will do their best to oppose it. Nevertheless, if we can get propaganda going which will lead up to the formation of workshop committees, we will be well on our way to overcoming many of the other problems with which we are confronted in other spheres of the Labour Movement. A strongly developed workshop movement uniting the workers in the shop will do much to speed up and simplify the problem of wiping out stupid sectionalism from the union movement in general. It will provide a ready and continuous approach to the masses, and will enable the adherents of the Party, and Minority Movement, not only to keep them informed as to the daily struggle in which they are engaged, but also to revolutionise their outlook.

The formation of workshop committees will also provide a necessary means of counteracting the bureaucracy which is such an unpleasant and dangerous feature of the Trade Union movement at the present moment. Not only so, but if the workers are going to continue to press forward, then we will be faced with the neces-

sity of taking mass action of a political character. The slow moving Trade Union apparatus is not well adapted for quick mass demonstrations and strikes, the factory committees are. Without factory committees a mass political struggle is almost impossible.

Special problems, however, are attached to the formation of factory committees in the various industries and it is useless to give very many general directions except to say, that, wherever possible, existing official shop stewards and shop delegates positions should be harmonised as far as possible with the development of all-embracing factory committees.

The campaign in the union branches and the workshops must not, of course, be merely a campaign for reaping organisational changes, but a campaign leading up to a united struggle. Closer activity in the union branches and in the workshops should enable us to organise the great mass of discontented Trade Unionists so that in all the large industries of the country the supporters of the Minority Movement, no matter what union they belong to will be able to meet together to hammer out the policy to pursue in their respective industries on the same lines as that which has been undertaken by the Miners' Minority Movement. This will also help to break down bureaucratic resistance to progress.

### ***DANGERS TO BE FACED.***

Certain dangers confront the Minority Movement, however, and it is as well that they should be faced at the outset. The chief danger is that it will develop into a purely industrialist movement concerned only with the Union problems unrelated to the general struggle of the workers. That is, as we have pointed out, a marked trait of the old left official leadership. It is no less marked amongst the active rank and file in many of the unions. So far has this artificial separation of the workers' struggle gone on in Great Britain that it is quite common to find workers who agree down to the minutest detail on industrial policy, disagreeing fundamentally on political questions.

When the General Council of the T.U.C. refused to express an opinion on the Labour Government in its report it was giving complete expression to this amazing dualism in outlook.

The theory underlying this may be stated as follows: "It is the duty of the unions to become as strong as possible on the economic field in order to fight the employers. It is the duty of the Labour Party (for which the unions subscribe most of the funds) to control the government. When the Labour Party gets strong enough in Parliament, it will gradually buy out the capitalists and give the workers a certain share of control in industry.

The unions must not, however, interfere in political questions meantime, for that is the affair of the Labour Party." Now we venture to claim that it is absolutely nonsensical. The unions must fight for the workers everywhere. If a capitalist government attacks the interests of the workers and they can rally the workers to resist, they must resist. If a Labour Government is not using its position to fight capitalism, then the Unions must free it to do so. The role of the unions in setting up a real workers' government is an active role, not one of benevolent passivity.

If this were generally realised, then it would be quite impossible for a body like the Trade Union Congress to take up the attitude which it did to the Dawes Report. The Dawes Report is as definite an attack upon the workers' standard as any wage offensive ever launched by the capitalists. It is true that the Labour Government supported it instead of opposing it. It is true that the Trade Unions are the basis of the Labour Party and must support the Labour Government—when it fights for the workers. That does not mean, however, that when a servile Labour Government supports a measure which is likely to hurt the workers that the Trade Unions should support it out of loyalty to the Labour Party. The first loyalty of the Trade Unions should be to the working class. If they are really concerned with the Labour Party, which is largely their creation, then, instead of covering up its weaknesses, they must fight against these weaknesses by all means in their power.

The unions must be prepared to play an active part in the struggle which will lead up to a real workers' government as well as taking part in the control of industry after such a government has been set up. The Minority Movement recognised this at its first conference. It must continue in all its work to popularise the revolutionary position as to the role of the unions in the social struggle, so that the dangerous dualism, which has hitherto been a feature not only of the official unions, but of the unofficial movements within them, will be eliminated.

### **THE PARTY'S TASK.**

In this struggle of the Minority Movement to build its influence in the workshop and in the union branches the Communist Party has a unique opportunity. It is the only party which has a clear industrial programme, it is the only party which has concerned itself with the organisation of the left elements in the Trade Union movement. If our members work wisely and energetically they can reap a great harvest.

The strong position of the Communist Party may be illus-

trated by contrast. During the Hull Congress, Mr. E. E. Hunter wrote an article in the *New Leader*, the official I.L.P. organ, in which he accused the Congress of being rather a futile assembly. The Congress was highly annoyed, and passed a vote of censure on Mr. Hunter. The correct reply to Mr. Hunter, however, was to point out that many of the delegates present were members of the I.L.P., probably a majority, and if the Congress was rather a futile body, it was because the I.L.P. delegates had not reached a common policy amongst themselves, were incapable of acting as a team and were pulling in different ways all the time. In marked contrast to this futility of the big group of I.L.P.ers who were present was that of the smaller Communist group. Possessed of a common viewpoint and working as a team, they were able to bring an influence to bear upon the Congress which was out of all proportion to its numerical strength.

The Communist Party having a united policy is in an exceptionally good position for playing a part not only in the Minority Movement, but in the larger Trade Union movement. Our weakness in this sphere is rather technical than ideological. Many locals and districts have not kept their industrial committees up to the scratch with the result that the necessary contact and co-ordination is lacking. If we can but remedy this, we can gain an influence over the union movement such as no political party has ever had in the past. We can take a big step forward towards getting that Mass Party.

J. R. CAMPBELL.



# How Lenin Worked

[In these few notes readers of the *Communist Review* are provided with some sidelights upon Comrade Lenin's character from an authentic source. Comrade Gorbunoff, as Secretary to the Peoples' Commissaries has had exceptional opportunities for watching Lenin at work. This translation into English, we believe for the first time, by our Comrade E. Verney, will we feel sure, prove interesting to our readers, as is everything associated with the name of Lenin.—Editor]

**A**LTHOUGH only a young member of the Party, I have had the great happiness to work, during the years of the Revolution under the direct guidance of Vladimir Ilyitch; in 1917-1918 as Secretary of the Council of People's Commissaries, and from the end of 1920 as business manager of that body. In executing the hundred and one commissions that Vladimir Ilyitch gave me, I had exceptional opportunities to closely observe how he worked from day to day.

One of the most astonishing qualities of Lenin's many-sided genius was his capacity for keeping the pace within his Cabinet, not only with the throbbing of Russia's life, but with events throughout the whole world. In a manner unaccountable for other eyes, he could seize and define—exactly and unmistakably—the smallest change in the inter-relations of strength of the classes. He obtained this by means of a tremendous number of connections with organisations, and with individual persons. Even with the simplest of questions, he would verify the seriousness of his interviewer's data, analyse them critically, quickly seize the essentials, and sort out those facts which were needed and which, perhaps at first had seemed insignificant and unimportant; with these facts he built up his ingenious deductions and prognoses.

Sometimes Vladimir Ilyitch's questions landed even the most thoroughly prepared interviewer into a *cul-de-sac*. More than once comrades have said that after a talk with Lenin they began to see clearly what had before been incomprehensible. It often happened that comrades who considered themselves specialists on a given question, discovered, after an interview with Vladimir Ilyitch, that they had not grasped the essentials of their subject at all. Everyone who managed to secure an interview acquired something new and valuable, new horizons, assurance, and a solid basis for their work. By these interviews, and by means of some kind of peculiar intuition, a quality that seemed to be only his, Lenin absorbed the collective thought and experiences of the masses worked them out in his extraordinary mind, and transformed them into great watchwords, which like the rays of a mighty lamp light up the path to the Revolution.

He was unusually exacting in his work, and with the most surprising insistence, would see that even the most trivial affairs were brought to a close. Hundreds of times he would verify the execution of some work or other, himself ringing up on the 'phone for instance, to confirm whether a packet sent by him had been received. He pursued without mercy all inaccuracies and carelessness, which he dispelled as with a bucket of clean water. He never left off pointing out for the thousandth time our specifically Russian slovenliness, incapability for systematic work, disorder, and lack of culture. But Lenin himself was able to clothe his criticism in such a manner that never did anyone feel offended, no matter what punishment was brought down on his head—be it even arrest.

Even when he was occupied with the most important of political questions, often of a world-wide significance, Lenin never lost track of current matters. He was extraordinarily approachable, and applied himself vigorously to hundreds and thousands of comparatively minor questions. This made it possible for him to be always well-informed on every-day affairs. The achievement of some little job or other would sometimes be given more significance by Lenin than a dozen decisions of the Council of Peoples' Commissaries or the Council of Labour and Defence.

The following are a few examples of commissions, which he showered upon us daily by the score. The examples given refer to the period January-February, 1921, and are reproduced almost word for word:—

"Take steps to ensure that the requests of the peasants of Gorki and Siyanova villages to aid them in the installation of electric light, be executed without delay."

"Take up the matter of "Hydro-Turf" and set things moving, as the specialists working there up to now have not been able to adapt themselves to Soviet work, and are quite helpless enough. This matter is very important."

"Follow up and apply pressure in the matter of freeing Moscow from superfluous organs and institutions. Curtail those extended and increased expenditure estimates. Take steps that energetic people be put on the committee for this purpose, including a couple of old Muscovites who know Moscow affairs well."

"Organise preparatory work for forming a Council of Experts (now the State Planning Commission—Trans.) at the disposition of the Council of Labour and Defence. In the first place, mark out a group of engineers and agronomists who know their business well—strong specialists with a wide education, and capable of fruitful work under Soviet conditions."

"Strengthen the work in the department of Legislative Plans, so that all decrees and regulations are presented to the Council of People's Commissaries in a better worked out and more suitable form, and are not decided on hastily."

"Carry on propaganda for introducing real workers into the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, this being the only method of approaching our aim in the fight against bureaucracy. Establish close contact with the Commissariats, and use their apparatus in this work. Above all learn and study how to use the apparatus of the Peoples' Commissariat for the Interior, and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection."

"Specially follow up and help in every way possible, the development of radio-telegraphic communications."

"Find out why the Board of the Central Petroleum Directorate only allotted the workers 8 arshins of cloth, when they were entitled to 30 arshins."

"Write to America, Germany and England for literature on Taylorism, and the scientific organisation of labour. Get well down to this question."

"Arrange that the group of American workers (Tchizhoff, Gladun, etc.) all be transferred to the "Amo" factory to organise ample production of auto parts."

"Look into the question of using wind vanes in connection with lighting the villages."

I purposely included in the above list various kinds of orders so as to show how many-sided and varied was Lenin's every-day work. It must be borne in mind that there were hundreds and thousands of such commissions. The great number of orders and tasks of a much more important nature, Lenin sent direct to the comrades responsible.

In conclusion I want to present one curious document relating to the commencement of 1918, which characterises the surprising unassumingness of the man. In connection with the depreciation in currency Lenin's salary was increased from 500 roubles to 800, without his permission. In reply to this, he sent me the following note:—

"Secretary of the Council of People's Commissaries, N. P. Gorbunoff:

"In view of your not having acceded to my repeated request to indicate the authority for increasing my salary from March 1st, 1918 from 500R. to 800R. per month—and in view of the obvious illegality of such an increase granted by you independently, after agreement with the Business Manager, V. D. Bonch-Bruyevitch—in open violation of the decree of the Council of People's Commissaries, dated 23rd November, 1917, I hereby administer you a severe reprimand.

V. I. ULIANOFF (LENIN)."

I might mention that a few days before this, he gave me an order to take steps for increasing the salaries of the various Commissariats, particularly the Finance Commissariat, Comrade Gukovsky, to 2,000 doubles.

This modesty was one of Lenin's basic characteristics.

I think it will be extremely useful to take up a special study of how our great master worked, and how he gradually elaborated out of disconnected facts and from the different measures he had taken the most important of political decisions—often representing turning points in our policy. It is necessary that all the notes and remarks characterising his work, and often made by him on little scraps of paper—be collected, put in order, and studied in the Lenin Institute, as also all material from people who somehow or other have come into contact with Lenin's work, and received from his various direct orders.

N. GORBUNOFF.

# The Swan Song of the I.L.P.

**F**OR some time it has been recognised that the leaders of the I.L.P. were fast leaving behind them the traditions of Keir Hardie. This much was maintained by the more fiery-tempered members of the I.L.P. themselves, and as a result there has occurred a succession of attempts to rally a left-wing inside the Party to counter the reactionary tendencies of the N.A.C. In 1919, there was a bold beginning in numerous meetings and intrigues and overtures to find some "formula" on which might be united at the annual conference a majority against the official gang. Persons like Messrs. G. D. H. Cole, Emile Burns, Clifford Allen, C. H. Norman, Langdon-Davies, Walton Newbold, argued and fenced to find whether support of "extra-constitutional action," support of workers' industrial control, approval of the Soviet system or other such issues was most likely to gain the support of a majority to the left-wing view. But, as frequently happens in academic discussions, there proved to be as many viewpoints as there were persons, and the attempt on the whole dismally failed. The rank and file of the party were still tied by sentimental attachments to the personalities of Snowden and MacDonald, and several of the left-wing elements, including the writer of this article, left the I.L.P. in disgust.

## ***MACDONALD, SNOWDEN AND LIBERALISM.***

Since then, the MacDonald-Snowden hegemony has gone from power to power. The places of the fiery-mouthed left-wing were soon filled by the new Liberal recruits from the U.D.C., who had been MacDonald's colleagues during the war, and now saw in the I.L.P. the most promising instrument for pacifism. As the influence of these "big names" increased, the party assumed more and more the character of a pacifist organisation, whose main interest lay in international affairs; and the rank and file came to see in this internationalism the acme of advanced thought, in contrast with reactionary Fabians and trade union officials, whom they chided for their national outlook. As a result, the fine sheen of international phrases dazzled the eyes of sincerely working class elements to the real reactionary character of the leaders whom they were acclaiming.

Many, however, of those who were not dazzled in this way to the liberal character of the official leaders continued to have faith in the I.L.P. as a Socialist Party. While deploring the attitude

of the leaders in secret—they would point triumphantly to the existence of the I.L.P. “left-wing.” Were not the Socialists of the Clyde with their admirable organ *Forward*, carrying on the tradition of Keir Hardie days? Certainly this Clyde element had many differences from their chiefs in London; and in excess of progressive zeal many of them began to react against the internationalism that was so fashionable, and to preach instead that “charity begins at home.” Rent strikes in Glasgow, housing and unemployment were of greater moment than happenings at Geneva, the Hague, Lausanne, Washington, Versailles. They even flirted with Scottish nationalism. The outcome was the formulation of a programme of “working class reforms” as an antidote to the obsession of the official leaders in London with affairs abroad.

### **DEMORALISING THE LEFT OPPOSITION.**

When the Labour Party took office, there was a distinct tendency to look to this left-wing as the saviours of revolutionary Socialism. The Clyde group, it was hoped, would come more and more into opposition to the policy of the Government, which would inevitably “toe the line” to the demands of the big interests. Then there would rally to this group all the genuinely working class elements in the Labour Party. Tom Johnson, Wheatley, Maxton, Shinwell, Buchanan, and with them, Lansbury, Smillie, Scurr, Thurtle, Jewson, and so forth, were hailed as the leaders of the new movement which would advance on the rising wave of disillusionment among the rank and file with the Webb-MacDonald-Snowden policy. This hope so influenced many comrades—even some who before had been good Communists—as to lead them to criticise the policy of the Communist Party. Communists, they declared, must temper their criticism with moderation. In attacking the I.L.P., they must differentiate clearly between the official element and the left-wing. If a rallying to the left-wing was to be facilitated, the rank and file of the I.L.P. must be coaxed gently and not frightened by too vigorous denunciation of men who had hitherto been their gods. In other words, the immediate duty of the Communist Party was not to stress its own position and to press its own extreme demands in an impossible manner; its duty was to temporise for the moment and to ally itself with this I.L.P. minority in the formation of a strong political left-wing. Some even went so far as to talk of a new Workers’ Party, or a left-wing League.

Many things could be and have been said about this particular interpretation of the united front tactic. But what seems

to stand out clearest of all is that it was based on an entirely false diagnosis of the political importance and revolutionary value of this I.L.P. left-wing. The hope that they would form the leader to whom the rank and file would rally in a revolutionary political movement, was disappointed for several reasons.

First, the heads of the Labour Party, whose sense of political strategy one can envy, included in their government two leading members of the Clyde group—Messrs. Wheatley and Shinwell. They also favoured the formation of an industrial group under Smillie and a Scottish group under Neil MacLean, to keep the Government in touch with the non-official elements of the Parliamentary Party. In the I.L.P. itself, the executive had astutely entrusted its organ *The New Leader* to Mr. H. N. Brailsford, whose sympathies had hitherto been considered to belong to the left. A similar move was taken in the case of *The Socialist Review*, the editorship of which has been recently entrusted to M. John Scurr.

Second, the mass of the members of the I.L.P. retained their sentimental attachment to the personalities of MacDonald and Snowden. This attachment the left-wing leaders did not break. They made no attempt to expose the reactionary character of the gods of the I.L.P., refraining out of personal regard and past association or through "loyalty" to the Labour Government. While the Labour Government was being attacked by Liberals and Conservatives, they regarded it as their duty not to embarrass ministers by criticisms of their own.

Third, these left-wing leaders, though genuinely working class in sentiment and militant in temper, were apparently devoid of any clear understanding of the class situation, and lacked any clearly defined alternative position of their own. They wanted to go a little faster than the right-wing, and they felt that the Labour Ministers were too tradition-bound, were too timid and cautious and polite, and needed some "drive" and "ginger." But that was all! There was no clearly defined difference of policy: it was merely a difference of degree. It was the difference between the "go-fasts" and the "go-slows," between the fiery temperaments and the cautious, between those who stuck obstinately to principle and those who were willing to temper principle with expediency. Any clear differences that emerged were quite incomplete and unreal ones; for instance, that between I.L.P. internationalism on the one hand, and the obsession of reactionary elements with national affairs on the other hand; and later, by a great swing of the pendulum, between the demand for working

class reforms at home, in contrast with the too-fashionable internationalism which had become scarcely distinguishable from that of the Keynes-Liberals.

### **THE SUMMER-SCHOOL POT-POURRI.**

This complete bankruptcy of the I.L.P., not only of its official leaders, but also of its left-wing, was abundantly shown by the proceedings of the I.L.P. summer school, which was held during August at Cloughton, in Yorkshire. This school assembled with the praiseworthy aim to formulate a constructive policy, which a Labour Government could be induced to adopt. To this end a programme of lectures and discussions of policy on agriculture, nationalisation, finance, disarmament, etc., was arranged. Each of these was taken as a Problem, with a capital "P," in a separate watertight compartment of its own. To each department the panacea of Socialism was sought to be adapted as the sovereign remedy. Now, such a method of approach inevitably involves opportunism and reformism. For, in the discussion of each separate problem what does it assume? It assumes that other things remain unchanged elsewhere; and consequently the test of a "practical" remedy is that it is in harmony with these conditions elsewhere. In other words, it is assumed that capitalism remains substantially unaltered, and the search for a "practical" remedy becomes a search for a remedy which is compatible with the needs of capitalist society. When Mr. E. F. Wise argued against nationalisation without compensation, because it would involve the "disorganisation of a highly complicated and delicate society," it seems clearly to have been this that he had in mind.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the I.L.P. Summer School should have forgotten the class struggle—the struggle for power. In their absorption with the parts in details, the conception of the whole was lost. If the problem of power was thought of at all, it was conceived either as something away in the future, or else as a mere matter of votes—of control of Parliament. Moreover, this method of approach involved another fatal assumption. In focussing attention on each separate problem, the State obtruded itself into the picture as a third party from outside; and the State was consequently regarded as the benevolent impartial body, whose help could be sought as a divine agency for every ill.

On the question of agriculture, nationalisation of land, wages boards, and State control of marketing were propounded as remedies. But the view was stoutly maintained by two experienced landlords that mere nationalisation would do little to solve

the rural problem. The settling of a number of small owners on the other hand, would create "a race of men, self-reliant, resourceful and full of enterprise," while improved marketing conditions would do the rest. On unemployment, Mr. H. N. Brailsford could propound little more than the remedies which Mr. Keynes and the *Liberal Nation* have been proclaiming, namely, credit control to "iron out" the trade cycle, combined with the stimulation of home and foreign markets. Here again, the magic influence of State agency was summoned to charm away the difficulties. Mr. E. F. Wise on the subject of socialisation, argued for a policy of compensation of existing owners, instead of confiscation, on the grounds of expediency. On the crucial question of the prevention of war, the monopoly of logical argument seems to have lain with the Liberal right-wing, as personified in Mr. Philip Baker, who argued for the use of the existing machinery of the League of Nations. War could be best prevented, he declared, by the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, whereby "if any nation became an unjust aggressor the others should combine—to prevent that aggression." Our safety from war to rest on "a scrap of paper!" In opposition to this, Mr. Scurr could only propose "a great moral gesture," by the disarming of Britain as completely as Denmark. Mr. Wallhead distrusted the League, and looked instead to the Socialist International—a body which is even more reactionary than that which broke down so ignominiously in 1914! Mr. Lowes Dickinson thought that "war had its foundation in the chaotic condition of our minds," and thought on the whole that the use of the League to promote disarmament was the least likely of any method to be unsuccessful. In addition, the chairman of Cammell Lairds, Ltd., gave the employers' point of view—which amounted to a demand for wage-reductions; Mr. Michael Farbman gave the kind of information about Russia which he writes for the readers of *The Observer*, and Mrs. Bertrand Russell stressed the importance of birth-control.

In all this *pot-pourri*, the class struggle seems to have been completely forgotten. Mr. Brailsford, indeed, used the term, and thereby retained his reputation for "leftness"; but he used it solely in the sense of a battle for higher wages, and as if to show that his use of the term was nothing more than a polite concession to Marx's memory, he followed it by explaining the advantages of his plan for eliminating trade booms and depressions. It would shorten the days of capitalism and equip the workers the better for the struggle. Not a bit! It would render many strikes "unnecessary" and enable us "without fear to throw all our creative powers into the task of increasing production and adding

to the nation's wealth!" (*New Leader*, Aug. 29th). Both Mr. Wise and Mr. Brailsford also drew much applause by referring to the oligarchical power of the bankers. But as remedy they proposed merely the nationalisation of the banks. And that was the most revolutionary proposal of the Summer School! The change, indeed, would be almost negligible if the State continued to be an instrument of the capitalist class, and the proposal neglects the fact that the greatest financial power rests not with the ordinary deposit banks—the "Big Five"—but with the financial houses of the City, who do not do ordinary deposit business—the various agencies of the money market which will supply the money for the Dawes Loan and which take up Government Treasury Bills. Does anyone seriously maintain that the existence of a State Bank in France makes any considerable difference to the power and policy of French capitalism? The policy of the Bank of England is already governed fairly closely in consultation with the Treasury; yet the most revolutionary proposal that the I.L.P. can make is for Mr. McKenna, Mr. Goodenough, Sir Charles Addis and Sir Montagu Norman to change their labels from that of "banker" to that of "civil servant!"

### **POLITICAL BANKRUPTCY OF LEFT-WING.**

But what of the left-wing in whose favour the C.P. is bidden to moderate its pretensions? Did they not in opposition stress the fact of the class struggle, and show what it involved? Did they not point out that the first task before the workers was the struggle for power, and that to accept capitalism "for the time being" and to "make the best of it," with patchwork practical proposals was to surrender the bid for power, etc., follow inevitably the road of Kerensky and of Noske and Ebert? Did they not expose the reactionary role of the I.L.P. leaders in the present Government—their support of armaments and bombing expeditions, their pro-capitalist attitude to strikes, their Imperialist colonial policy, the Dawes Scheme with its splendid example of I.L.P. "internationalism" (accepted by the *New Leader* because it is "a gain to European peace!")? What an opportunity in this way to frame a militant left-wing policy! But no, the I.L.P. left leaders did none of these things! They failed as miserably as the left Social-Democrat leaders in Saxony, whose weakness in the crisis of last autumn "sabotaged" a German workers' revolution.

Against war, as we have seen, Mr. Scurr could propose only a "moral gesture." Mr. Wallhead could only produce the rabbit of the Second International. To the proposal to nationalise with

compensation, Mr. Dollan could only retort with the conventional argument that this would create a new *rentier* class, to which the conventional reply was able to be made that this could be dealt with by progressive taxation to reduce inequality. Mr. W. L. Hichens, of Cammell Lairds, in his plea for stabilisation through wage-reduction, took as his assumption that, since the engineering industry could not at the moment be socialised, it was necessary to make the best of things as they were. But it did not seem to occur to Mr. Maxton, who took up the cudgels in reply, to question this assumption as *the* vital dividing issue. By tacit consent, he seems to have accepted the assumption—to be “practical” in the acceptance of capitalism until such time in the future as the situation should be “ripe” for a change. At any rate, all that he was able to adduce in opposition to Mr. Hichens were the arguments: (a) that the workers would not accept wage reductions, (b) that it would still further depress the home market, (c) that there seemed no limit to this international competition in low wage-levels—all of which was very neat debating, but was merely borrowing capitalist arguments for his own purpose. On the Dawes Report, this party of internationalism seems to have had little to say. On colonial policy, a prominent figure of the left—Mr. Tom Johnston—had already hoisted the white flag in the matter of the Sudan. The most severe criticism of the Government seems to have come from Mrs. Russell, who chided the Minister of Health for not making accessible to mothers the knowledge of birth control. Indeed, this lack of lead from the left was not for want of opportunity. Mr. Maxton was specially selected to voice the Clyde criticism of Government policy; and the chief fault that he could find was that the members of the Government had become infected with snobbery, a personal failing which he exhorted his listeners henceforth to abjure.

### **THE I.L.P. IS DEAD.**

The conclusion seems quite clear: as a Party of the workers, the I.L.P. is dead. To give the views of capitalism, the chairman of Cammell Lairds was invited; to give information about the first workers' revolution—the correspondent of a Conservative newspaper was thought sufficient. The influences which were in the ascendancy at Cloughton were academic Liberals like Mr. Baker and Mr. Lowes Dickinson, landowners like Mr. Turnor and Colonel Hall, mild Fabians like Mr. Pethick Lawrence, Principal Furniss, and Mr. E. M. H. Lloyd. The opposition element, the famed left-wing, had scarcely anything worth saying at all—nothing at all that could act as a rallying cry to the British workers in a new mass movement.

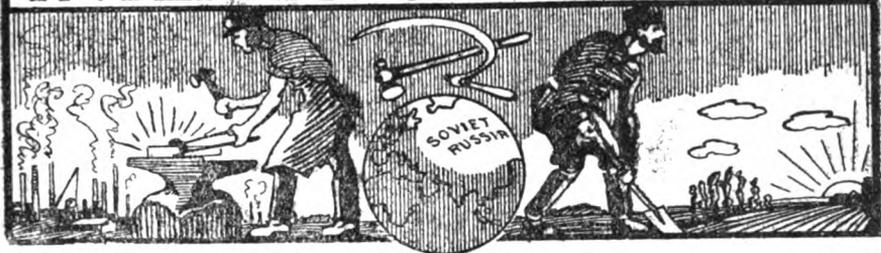
The lesson of this is not far to seek. To accept capitalism for the time being is to follow inevitably in the path of the Social-Democrats in Germany and the Mensheviks in Russia, however revolutionary may be the intention at the outset. The hard facts of capitalism soon cool the hottest temper, and the need to keep the system working, and to rely mainly on electoral success compels one to discourage and to obstruct the disturbing force of militant working class struggle. From this dangerous attitude, to which the I.L.P. left-wing has shown itself still to be tethered, we must unmistakably sever ourselves. Until the helm is grasped in other hands, attempts to turn the course of the ship of society in another direction are likely to be of small avail. The imperative need is, therefore, to rally the workers in the struggle for power, and then to organise them in the final contest for the seizure of power. To rally the workers to this struggle, a fighting programme of "immediate demands" is necessary—a programme not of theoretical subtleties or of utopian aspirations, but of concrete measures. To organise this struggle and to carry it through to success, a workers' political party is necessary, disciplined, led from the centre, and closely in touch everywhere with the masses.

### **BUILD UP THE C.P.**

The I.L.P. left-wing has shown itself incapable of formulating such a fighting programme. The Communist Party alone has attempted to do so, and to become a revolutionary party of the masses. To argue as some comrades have done, that to build a left-wing, not to build the C.P. as the first requisite, is to misunderstand the whole position. For without the influence of the C.P. there seems no likelihood of a strong left-wing. The most urgent of our duties, therefore, is to build up the C.P. and to strengthen its influence and to rally the rank and file to its fighting programme. The United Front must be formed on the basis of that programme, not by watering it down as concession to other groups and leaders. If the I.L.P. left-wing will join in supporting such a programme they will be welcomed as allies in a common struggle; and since many of them are noble fighters, let us hope that they will do so. But at present they seem incapable of giving any lead to such a struggle; and a union with them which postponed the creation of a Communist mass party, which kept alive the existing opportunist tendencies in the I.L.P., and which left the faith of the masses in the old leaders and old phrases unshaken, would be to weaken the workers in their struggle. It would be nothing else than the ghost of the now defunct Two and a Half International.

M.H.D.

# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



## VERSAILLES AND THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES.

Comrade Manoulsky in his report to the Fifth Congress of the Comintern gave some interesting statistics which are of interest to readers of the *Review*, and deserve the widest publicity.

### JUGO-SLAVIA.

Serbia before the war had three million Serbs; at present Jugo-Slavia has 11,850,000 inhabitants, of which 5 million are Serbs, or 42.4 per cent.; 2,800,000 Croates, or 23.7 per cent.; 950,000 Slovenes, or 8 per cent.; about 750,000 Serbo-Croatian Mussulmen, or 6.3 per cent.; 600,000 Macedonians, or 5 per cent.; 600,000 Germans or 5 per cent.; 500,000 Hungarians, or 4 per cent.; and 650,000 miscellaneous, or 5.6 per cent.

### CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

There are 13.5 million inhabitants of which 44 per cent. are Czechs. It has annexed important industrial regions, e.g., textiles, mines, etc., the population of which are exclusively German, and total 3,700,000 or 27.4 per cent. of the Czecho-Slovakian State. Other nationalities are Slovaks, 2 million (14.8 per cent.), Hungarians, 700,000 (5.9 per cent.), Ukrainians of the Russian lower Carpathians, 400,000 or 2.9 per cent., Jews, 360,000 (2.7 per cent.), miscellaneous 1.9 per cent.

### POLAND.

Poland is another product of Versailles, and counts 30 million inhabitants. There are 15,800,000 Poles, or 52.7 per cent. The remainder of the population oppressed by Polish landlords and bourgeoisie are Ukrainians, 6,300,000 (21 per cent.), Jews, 3,300,000, (11 per cent.), White Russians, 2,200,000 (7.3 per cent.), Germans, 2,100,000 (7 per cent.), miscellaneous, 300,000 (1 per cent.).

### COLONIES.

The typical colonial slave holder is Great Britain, the area of which is 314,000 square kilometres, while the

colonies comprise 40 million square kilometres, or 130 times greater in area. Great Britain has 46 million population, the colonies 429 millions. For each Britisher 9 colonial slaves.

France counts 39 millions French, and 54 millions subject peoples. Little Belgium with an area of 0.03 million kilometres has a colonial surface of 2.42 million kilometres. The number of Belgians are 7 millions, its colonial population is 17.5 millions. Holland has 7 million inhabitants, and counts 49.5 colonials.

We get a picture of the slavery of mankind from the following: of the 134 million kilometres comprising the habitable continents, 90 millions are colonials. Of the 1,750,000,000 inhabitants of the universe, 1,250,000,000 are the enslaved of imperialism.

## THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL.

Comrade J. Carlos Rates, editor of *O Comunista*, of Lisbon, and one of the most intelligent and advanced members of the C.P. of Portugal, has just published a long, interesting study of the political and economic situation in Portugal, and of the various working class forces in that country, which may to-morrow be numbered among the proletarian republics of Europe. From this work we have extracted the following paragraphs.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN PORTUGAL.

We live in a country in which the State is all or almost all. Capitalism in the full sense of the word does not exist among us. No large industrial development has taken place in the towns, nor in agriculture. Industry is only of a fragmentary nature, and just sufficient to fulfil domestic requirements.

A grand total of 900,000 workers in factories, offices and transport, of both sexes, and all ages, distributed among 65,000 establishments, of which

hardly fifteen employ more than 1,000 workers, and 50,000 employ no more than ten, constitutes our whole town proletariat.

The same or worse obtains in agriculture. There are no less than eleven million country holdings, a good number of which do not cover more than a hectare (about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres). All these holdings are divided among about 600,000 owners,

Such a distribution of the productive forces does not allow of the existence of a capitalist class, and at the same time prevents the formation of a true and militant proletariat.

The enumeration of the above factors serves to demonstrate the peculiar character of the class struggle in Portugal and how different it is from that of Germany, Belgium or England, though conditions having something in common with those of Russia and Hungary.

It is clear that we cannot hope for a crisis in capitalism in Portugal for the simple reason that it does not exist. One or two industries apart, the remainder depend on the favour or patronage of the State—and a State crisis it is that will inevitably produce a transformation in the social life of Portugal.

#### THE POLITICAL CRISIS.

As for the reasons already stated, there does not exist an organisation of capitalist forces of which the State could be the reflex, the latter has to lean exclusively on political governmental forces derived from the middle class, and on public force.

Now, nothing is more precarious in Portugal than the solidarity of these forces. Parliament is composed of six political groups, two of which, more-

over—the Democrats and Independents—are not homogenous. Further, outside Parliament, there are various other groups. Too many groups altogether for such a small country.

With such a parcelling out of its forces, it is impossible for a stable government to exist, which would administer the country profitably as such a task requires time, and one Republic during its fourteen years of life (or vegetation) has indulged in almost half a hundred Ministries.

#### THE FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS.

There is an economic crisis in Portugal; the country consumes more than it produces. But independent of this economic crisis, which, more or less, influences the financial crisis, there is a financial crisis existing on its own, apart from the one before the war.

The financial crisis prior to the war arose exclusively from the continued existence of State deficits, which necessitated several issues of Treasury Notes with the consequent fall in the currency. Later on this situation became aggravated to fantastic proportions, and has so persisted up to the present time.

What are the consequences of this state of affairs? The dispersion or liquidation of the weaker enterprises, of the middle bourgeoisie, of small industry, of small businesses, etc. The classes of people thus dispossessed by this crisis of their means of existence, without passing immediately into the ranks of the proletariat, are not interested in upholding the present state of affairs, and tolerate, if they do not actually support, the revolutionary movement, In this sense, they constitute a new element of perturbation and upheaval in the existing order.

## The Forum

### THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND COMMUNISM.

Dear Comrade,

It would be easier to discuss our attitude to religion with Comrades Baldwin and Riley if they themselves would first decide whether they believe in religion.

Comrade Riley defines religion as "reverence for the unknown." But this is mere confusionism. One can think of many things that are unknown; green pigs, for example. The object of reverence (or at any rate, the object of belief) is in all religions, a god or gods.

To uphold religion, the same comrade then appeals to "scientific methods of research." This when scientific research has pointed consistently away from the idea of a god; when it has, by bringing more and more of the "unknown" within the field of logic, forced our supernatural being to take refuge in a policy of suppression and perversion of the findings of science. It is true that scientists who must remain "in" with the ruling class find it expedient to give lip-service to religion.

Also a few scientists have, like other men, in the stress of great emotional conflict thrown reason overboard in order to obtain mental peace by avoiding the facts. But science itself forms an ever developing and unifying network of reason, to the exclusion of supernatural explanations.

The same correspondent limits Communism to "an economic ideal." But Communism is much more than this. It is a scientific method for understanding history, and as such *does* provide a key to the variations in man's "intellectual and emotional strivings" (see recent volumes of the *Plebs* for some instances).

Linked up with physical and the rest of biological science, it is a tool for understanding *everything*, though a tool that we have only yet begun to use.

I agree that we must consider carefully how to combat religion before we attack it. The drink habit requires careful and tactful treatment, more especially if the patient works in a public house. But it is impossible to cure the disease if the doctors themselves have a decided objection to temperance. As with other questions, so in the matter of atheism, we should suit our propaganda to conditions of time and place. But muddle-headedness inside the Party itself has no excuse.

Yours fraternally,  
E. T. HARRIS.

Dear Comrade,

In Comrade Baldwin's reply to my indictment of religion, in which I said that religion was irreconcilable with Communism, she states that she did not wish to introduce religion into the Party, but that her whole point was "that we, as a Party should leave the subject alone, letting every member be free to believe and propagate whatever religion or anti-religion seemed good to him, *provided, of course, that he did not propagate anything contrary to Communism.*" This reduces the problem to its simplest form:—

1. Is religion contrary to Communism?
2. In the fight for Communism do we find religion helping or impeding our progress?
3. Should "we go out of our way to attack religion," instead of confining ourselves to propagating economics and politics?

In connection with the first point,

I thought that I had advanced sufficient proof to establish my contention that no one could consistently believe both in religion and Communism, in supernaturalism and materialism, but apparently without success. Taking Christianity as the most rational of existing religions, let us try a few comparisons.

A true Christian believes that history and, therefore, the existing world is controlled and directed by Divine influence, that it is a part of God's plan, to be accounted for only through God, and modified at God's pleasure. He regards anyone who seeks the explanation of the existing inequalities of life in purely natural causes as one who denies the omnipotence, and, therefore, the existence of God.

A true Communist knows that the fundamental basis of the Communist theory is the "materialistic conception of history," which, according to Engels, will *inevitably* destroy all belief in religion:—

"In every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch. This materialist concept is the Socialist key to history. It is the first principle of a science of society and, being directly antagonistic to all religious philosophy, it is destined to drive this "philosophy" and all its superstitions from their last ditch."

The true Christian preaches that the workers must look to a God for emancipation. The true Communist that the workers must emancipate themselves. It would be impossible for a Communist to believe and advocate such ridiculous nonsense as the former.

If he does, then he ceases to be a Communist, and is an enemy of Communism, while if he does not he ceases to be a Christian, and is an enemy of religion. It is impossible to be both.

I could go on to quote instances from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Bukharin, Trotsky, etc., to prove that Communism is the avowed enemy of religion, but I think the foregoing is sufficient to prove that anyone who endeavours to advocate both religion and Communism is either a knave or a fool.

Now to come to the second point. In the fight for Communism, do we

find religion helping or impeding our progress?

The answer to this should be obvious to a true Communist, but for the sake of Comrade Baldwin, who apparently thinks it helps, we shall have to prove the contrary.

Let us look at it first from an individual point of view.

In his article in the "*Communist Review*" of September, 1923, entitled "The Tasks of Communist Education," Comrade Trotsky, says:—

"The revolutionist knows only external obstacles to his activity; no internal ones. That is: he has to develop within himself the capacity of estimating the arena of his activity in all its concreteness with its positive and negative aspects, and to strike a correct political balance. But if he is internally hampered by subjective hindrances to action, if he is lacking in understanding, or will power, if he is paralysed by internal discord, by religious, national or craft prejudices, then he is at best only half a revolutionist."

So much for the individual point of view.

Having seen that religion impedes the education of the individual, let us see whether it impedes and frustrates the work of educating the masses.

We find that religion, especially Christianity, reconciles the people to their misery and slavery, that is, to an earthly hell, by preaching of the joy and recompense to be obtained in a celestial paradise after death, and that the greater their suffering now, the greater their reward and happiness in the hereafter. It detaches them from the material things, the objects of sense, and thwarts them from the struggle to get the good things of this life. It, therefore, frustrates any effort to realise the ideal of Communism, that is, the immediate realisation of an earthly Paradise. To the Communist, religion, as Marx said, is the opium of the people, and is, therefore, an enemy to be wiped out of existence.

Comrade Baldwin may here argue from "Christ and Labour," that true Christianity is different from Churchianity. I agree. But true Christianity is pacifism, and that is also the enemy of Communism. Judging from the words of George Lansbury, whom I consider to be the best example of a true Christian that I know, I find that he rejects the idea of emancipating the workers by the

only way possible, that is by force. We Communists know from the lessons of past history that the only way to overthrow the capitalist class is by force. It is impossible for a Communist to be a pacifist.

Therefore, anyone who advocates pacifism (which is necessary and indispensable to wishing to follow Christ's teachings) is an enemy of the working class and Communism. Having seen that religion impedes or frustrates our progress this brings us to the third point.

Should we "go out of our way to attack religion," instead of confining ourselves to propagating economics and politics?

I wish here to deal more particularly with the other correspondent defending religion, Comrade Riley. He says, "Let us not waste strength on the negative task of destruction, but concentrate on the positive constructive work of enlightenment."

For a confused method of thinking this is indeed difficult to beat. However can we build the new without first of all destroying the old? How can we enlighten the people without first of all destroying their old superstition and beliefs? Every Communist knows that before we can make true Communists, we must teach them to rely solely on themselves, and not on a God, and until we destroy their belief in religion, this is impossible. We do not "go out of our way to attack religion"—we attack it because it is in our way. We are working for Communism when we are attacking that which is hindering Communism, namely, religion. Religion is used by the master class against the Communists in every country, and is one of the most powerful means at the disposal of the oppressors for the maintenance of inequality, exploitation and slavish obedience on the part of the toilers. Therefore, it is not *optional*, but *necessary*, and indispensable that every true Communist should assist in the task of freeing the people from the chains of superstition and slavery thereby enabling them to realise fully that which man has throughout history been continually striving for—freedom—the greatest ideal in the world's history—freedom from slavery, superstition and economic want. Our duty is clear. Religion stands in our way. It must be destroyed.

Yours fraternally,

LESLIE MASON.

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