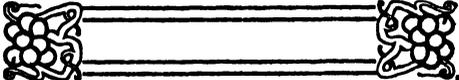


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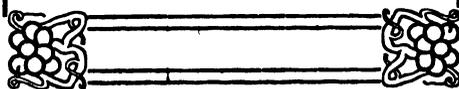
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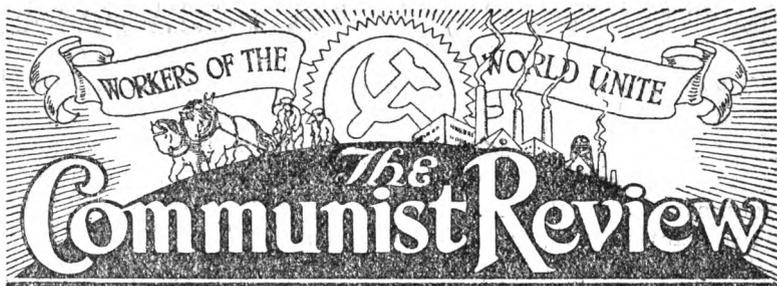
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THE EDITORIAL VIEW

THE month of October is enshrined to-day in the hearts of millions of the world's workers. It was in October, eight years ago, that the Communists (the Bolshevik Party) headed by Lenin, took power into their own hands and put an end to the age-long tyranny of Tsardom and autocracy. By this act, the workers and peasants of Russia not only struck the high road to economic, political and social freedom for themselves, but they sounded a clarion call, which has been heard and is being responded to by millions of the oppressed throughout the four corners of the globe. October, 1917 will live for ever in the annals of the enslaved masses.

Eight years ago, and still going strong. No wonder the financiers and imperialists hate the very name of Communism. For, notwithstanding the repeated predictions of collapse and fantastical stories of terrorism and murder, it remains for them to explain the statistical facts surrounding the economic and social reconstruction of an Empire once reduced to ruin and privation by hordes of enemies within and without. It also remains to be explained how 400 million people can be led by the nose by a party three-quarters of a million strong, without a kick in eight years. The truth is that the Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) enjoy the complete confidence of the great mass of the workers and peasants.

It could hardly be otherwise. From a state of comparative anarchy, the Russian working class and the peasantry, under the guidance of the Bolsheviks, have so far recovered in the short space of eight years, as to be the only section of the international proletariat whose labour conditions are on the up-grade. Steadily the process of economic resurrection goes on, and, as the capitalist world outside Soviet Russia keeps stumbling along, unable to bring peace or security for the great mass of the toilers, the eyes and thoughts of millions are turning towards Moscow with a yearning to follow the example of the Russian working class.

Foiled in their first attempts at armed intervention, frustrated in their policy of the economic blockade, the international imperialists, headed by the British capitalists, are now trying to organise a new intervention. Money, guns and technical aid of all kinds are being lavished upon the puppet Baltic States. Poland and the Balkan countries are equally enlisted into the service of British and French imperialism. It remains to detach Germany by means of the Pact, and the un-holy alliance is complete.

Fortunately, a new and powerful ally to Soviet Russia has arisen in the movement for an international trade union alliance, now growing by leaps and bounds. This is clearly shown in the brilliant analysis by comrade Campbell on another page in this issue, of the Scarborough Congress of the T.U.C., and the international movement from Minority to Majority.

* * * * *

October 1925 is marked by a simultaneous gathering of forces for supremacy and power. On the one hand, the possessors of wealth, conscious of their inability to maintain their rule with the dumb acquiescence of the masses, and fearful of the growing strength and power of the revolution and its vanguard the U.S.S.R., are being driven in their frenzy to overcome their differences and to unite all the forces of reaction.

On the other hand, a new orientation has arisen among the toilers of the world. There have been bitter experiences during the last eight years. They have had experiments in "constitutional," "democratic," and "gradualist" forms of government and policy. They have been able to test the leaders of the Second International, and paid dearly for the experiments. Soviet Russia alone shines out as a beacon light towards social emancipation. Hence we see an ever increasing army of workers gathering under the banner of the Communist International. It is the realisation of the inevitability of the last decisive struggle between the forces of capitalism and the working class. The Russian October of 1917 has certainly not been in vain.

* * * * *

The reference by President Swales at Scarborough to the "Workers' Government" of Mexico in the same breath as he referred to Soviet Russia, recalls some recent events in Mexico of considerable interest to the working class of Great Britain.

Since the discovery of rich oilfields in 1906, Mexico has become a cockpit of imperialist agents bent upon securing

concessions and privileges for exploitation. Subsidised bandits, armed and otherwise, in quest of loot on behalf of their Anglo-Saxon imperialist masters, have spread ruin and chaos throughout the land. Indeed, veritable civil war has raged since 1913, in which rival factions, financed by British and American capitalists, have sought to secure control of the oilfields.

Numerous presidents, especially Obregon, had tried with the support, more or less conscious, of the industrial and peasant masses to bring about national consolidation, and promote a policy of opposition to the influence of the foreign imperialists.

In 1917, under President Carranza, the "Socialist" laws were passed, as a reply to the Standard Oil Co. and the Mexican Eagle (British). By these laws the subsoil deposits (petroleum) were nationalised, and a tax of 25 per cent. placed on all petroleum produced. In addition, laws were directed towards the breaking-up of the big landed estates and for giving land to the peasants. (It should be understood that the country is well suited for agriculture. There are, for example, over 30 million acres cultivated lands, over 120 million acres pasture lands, and 44 million acres of forest land).

But Mexico was up against financial difficulties. These served the Yankee and British imperialists as a means of forcing concessions. With the advent of the acting President Calles in the early part of 1924, a new course was mapped out. Calles abandoned the national policy of his predecessors. Having secured power with the support of the working class, he is now hand and glove with the imperialists. With the aid of Edward Moneda, the General Secretary of the Mexican Federation of Labour (a Gompers outfit) Calles preaches the "virtues" of class collaboration.

Bound to the American imperialists, this pair (traitors to the working class and national policy) are now bent upon destroying the Federation of Mexican Peasants, who adhere to the Peasants' International, and who wage incessant war on all big landlords, foreign and Mexican. Calles is also bent on breaking up the independent trade unions and getting the workers to join the Mexican Federation of Labour, which stands upon the basis of class collaboration.

The intrigues of the British imperialists have been so far successful, that there are now, after a lapse of eight years, full diplomatic relations between the British Government and Mexico. Claims Commissions are being set up to settle the debts and claims for compensation.

It is therefore fantastic to speak of the Calles administration, based as it is on territorial lines, even with adult suffrage, as a Workers' Republic. Neither can the Mexican workers and peasants be compared, in freedom, to the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia. Mexico can only have a Workers' Republic when it is able to free itself from the clutches of the American and British imperialists and their lackeys of the Gompers Federation. And it is for this they need the support, and especially the alliance, of the British and American working class.

* * * * *

The Communist call to the Labour Party to begin a campaign of enlightenment amongst the fighting forces has been received with acclamation by thousands of workers all over the country, who welcome our policy as a new and stimulating direction for the whole working class movement.

The question as to where the army would stand in the event of a working class revolt is as old as the Socialist movement. Old Social-Democrats flirted with the notion of a "citizen" army. I.L.P.er's preached, and still preach, the parliamentary majority, as the power behind the guns, while the early industrial unionists relied upon the "integrally organised" industrial battalions as the "might" to beat the force of the bourgeoisie. Of the pure and simple pacifists we need not speak, since these found arguments for their pacifism in all camps.

In the absence of any open or direct appeal to the services to ally themselves with the organised Labour movement, the capitalists could always feel comfortable and safe. Such spasmodic appeals, as in the famous Tom Mann case some years ago, could never penetrate very deeply. Only a systematic and well-organised propaganda, as part of the political faith of Socialism, could prove effective. In the absence of that, the capitalists could afford to laugh at the dialectical debates that went on in Socialist study circles, or in an anæmic Labour Press.

But, to-day, it is far otherwise and to the contrary. The class struggle is becoming severe and acute. Large mass organisations of the workers are set in motion at the slightest change in labour and wage conditions. Gigantic trusts and rings of capitalists continually conspire to feed the greedy maws of their shareholders. So that a strike or a threatened cut in wages immediately becomes a serious political question—a struggle for power.

* * * * *

Now the question of political power, and which class shall wield the power, is the foremost question before workers

and capitalists alike, to-day. Unfortunately, all the evidence goes to show that there is much yet to be done to bring this proposition clearly before the wide masses of the working class. There are still illusions abroad about the "wisdom" of reformism, and gradual peaceful transformation through pure and simple parliamentary action into Socialism. On the other hand, we find here and there strong evidence of a lopsided industrialism, which taboos political parties, and which pins its faith to what used to pass for syndicalism. But with the capitalists there are no such illusions. For them an attack from either side, trade unions or the Labour Party, is a challenge of power, and they meet all attacks as such. That is why, every time there is a serious dispute, we have orders going out to the officers in command of the army, navy and air force to hold themselves in readiness; why we have "enlistment orders for railway workers," special police forces, and the subsidising of ugly fascist hooligans to act as strike breakers and *provocateurs*. It is for these reasons in particular that the Communist Party declares it treason to the working class for the Labour Party to neglect the "enlightenment" of the workers in the armed forces, as to their class obligations and duty.

* * * * *

The immediate issue before the Labour Party is not the arming of the workers against the trained forces of the fighting services. That is not the first step in the struggle for the power now held by the capitalists. The first step of any political party of the working class is to show to the workers in the army, the navy, and the air force, that there is a common identity of interest of all workers, and to win them over to the side of the working class.

How stupidly our call for workers' defence corps has been understood is painfully reflected in the discussion running through the "Daily Herald" on "Should the workers take up arms"? Thus, with his usual high-falutin sophistry and opportunism, Mr. John Wheatley, I.L.P., M.P., seizes upon the Communist slogan for Workers' Defence Corps to grandiloquently cry, "Give me ten millions who will suffer" and you can have the social revolution! (An old opportunist trick, Johnny, to *appear* more revolutionary than the revolutionaries, and, incidentally, to confuse the issue).

After this, it was only to be expected that the discussion would be diverted from the question at issue. The question is not, as put by Bevin to Wheatley, "Do you advise the establishment of Labour Military Corps with the definite objective of armed revolution"? or, as put by Wheatley, "to

million workers willing to suffer." The question is much simpler. It is, we repeat, "Should the Labour Party undertake a campaign for the enlightenment of the workers in the armed forces, as to their class obligations"? Not a single one of the writers to the "Herald" have answered that question. The Communist Party declares such a task to be an elementary obligation of every party of the working class genuinely striving against the power of capitalism. Where do Wheatley, Bevin, and other prominent working class leaders stand?

* * * * *

Incidentally, we take this opportunity to place on record the pacifist declarations of Bevin, Rhys Davies, and Thurtle, as evidence of the dangerous tendencies the working class must fight down.

BEVIN declares: "Pacifism is the strongest force in the world." "I object to it (arming the workers) on the grounds that it is wrong and unnecessary." ("Daily Herald", 24/8/25).

RHYS DAVIES, M.P.: "If the workers were ready to fight and attempt to kill the capitalist class, would they succeed? And, if they won, would they be better off? You cannot destroy capitalism by killing the capitalist; and, in any case, "Thou shalt not kill"! ("Daily Herald, 11/9/25).

ERNEST THURTLÉ, M.P.: "If the workers remained firm with folded arms, what could the fooling fascists and the other apostles of force do, but ignominiously surrender." ("Daily Herald," 10/9/25).

We might add just one more quotation to the above from the Right Hon. Ben Spoor, M.P. and Privy Councillor to King George, and complete the gallery. Writing in the "Sunday Express," Sept. 6, 1925, this former Chief Labour Whip tries to put the question of the revolution in a nutshell with the following brilliant idea! :

"Revolution! Yes—not with firearms, but in the *minds* of men . . . Citizens of Britain may sleep in their beds unafraid. The revolution is here now, and it is not hurting them. Indeed, it will give them a far finer chance than they ever had."

What we have here in this jumble of pacifist banalities is a confused misrepresentation of the issue raised by the Communist Party. Even at the recent Minority Conference, there was expressed a mistaken fear that we were setting out to organise forces to fight the soldiers, sailors and airmen, NOW, and instinctively the reply is: "If you do, you will get the worst of it."

But the Workers' Defence Corps is not a Labour military corps in open antagonism to the workers in the fighting forces. It is a defence force against hooligan fascist *provocateurs*, and an organised opposition to the diversity of powers called into action by the capitalists whenever a strike occurs.

Since Black Friday fascist *saboteurs*, kidnappers and thugs have been carefully nursed by the boss class. Responsible trade union and Labour leaders received all kinds of insulting and threatening letters, Labour meetings broken up and speakers man-handled.

Appeals to constitutional redress from the law courts is useless. The Pollitt case, the Gibson case, the O'Conner case, and the recent acquittal of the reactionary seamen's official in East London for revolver shooting among peaceful pickets, clearly proves that the judges cannot be relied upon.

The organised trade union and Labour movement must, therefore, protect itself. We say it ought to be a specific task imposed upon the Labour Party in the struggle against capitalism to *protect* its forces, as well as lead them into action. That is why we insist upon Defence Corps; that is why we declare for a policy of winning the armed forces over to the side of the workers.

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From Minority to Majority

THE SCARBOROUGH CONFERENCE AND AFTERWARDS

By J. R. CAMPBELL

NOTHING could better illustrate the growth of Left-wing opinion in the British trade union movement than the tremendously successful conference held by the Minority Movement on the eve of the British Trades Union Congress. At the inaugural conference of the Minority Movement held twelve months ago, 280 delegates were present. At this year's conference, 613 delegates were present, amongst them being delegates from fifty of the leading Trades Councils of the country.

The growth of the Minority Movement is due largely to its correct understanding of the situation through which the British trade union movement is passing.

While the Right-wing leaders were preaching about the blessing of industrial peace, the Minority Movement was warning the workers about the impending capitalist offensive. Moreover, long before the project of the industrial alliance took shape in the mind of any trade union leader, the Minority Movement was advocating the unity of the workers in the four main industries: metal, mining, railways and transport, in preparation for the struggle. Further, it has consistently advocated more power to the General Council since its formation.

When the employers put forward their demands for lower wages, when the miners were faced with the alternative of fighting or accepting starvation conditions, it was recognised that the only practical policy which the workers could adopt was that which had been consistently advocated by the Minority Movement. The fact that the victory of "Red Friday" was likely to stimulate the Minority Movement was instantly perceived by Mr. J. R. MacDonald. The success of the Minority Conference confirmed his opinion.

The Minority Demands.

It is worth while noting the principal decisions of the Minority Conference, and their subsequent effect on the Trades Union Congress.

The Minority Movement asked the Trades Union Congress

(1) To prepare for the united struggle of the workers by starting a campaign for factory committees.

(2) By allowing the Trades Councils to affiliate to the Trades Union Congress.

(3) By intensifying the struggle for amalgamation on industrial lines.

(4) Giving extended powers to the General Council.

On international questions, it asked the Trades Union Congress to stand for—

(1) International Unity.

(2) The annulment of the Dawes Plan.

(3) A joint movement with the colonial peoples against imperialism.

The Minority Movement undoubtedly was helped in getting consideration for its point of view for two reasons. First, as a result of its intensive effort prior to the conference it had many Minority resolutions on the agenda. Second, the presence of a somewhat larger Communist fraction at the conference and the general Leftward tendency of the workers. These two factors constituted the main advantages of the Left-wing.

On the other hand, the Right-wing were reinforced by the presence of several influential Right-wing leaders, who had been unable to be present at the previous Congress owing to their membership of the Labour Cabinet.

The Left Leaders' Attitude.

The conference opened well for the Left by a stirring speech from the chairman, A. B. Swales. The time for conceding reductions in wages, he urged, had gone; we must prepare to advance. The need for greater powers to the General Council, more effective union organisation, co-operation with the Trades Councils, International Trade Union Unity, and no class collaboration—all were touched upon.

It seemed as if the speech was a clarion call to the Left-wing to give battle to the Right. As a matter of fact, it was almost the sole contribution which any of the Left-wing leaders associated with the General Council made to the business of the Congress. The other Left-wing leaders were silent in face of a well organised Right-wing. As a consequence, the burden of upholding the Left-wing policy fell upon the Communist fraction and the Minority Movement sympathisers, and right well they fulfilled their task.

More Power to General Council.

The first big fight arose out of a Minority Movement resolution calling for extended power to the General Council of the T.U.C. This was moved by two delegates from

small unions, but was sharply opposed by the Compositors, whose arguments were of a purely craft character. Their spokesman, Mr. Naylor, failed to appreciate the fact that the position of his union was an exceptional one, and that no analogy could be drawn from it to the position of other unions.

We can understand Mr. Naylor's position. It is the frankly selfish one of "to hell with you, Jack, I'm all right." But what can we say of the position of Mr. Clynes (representing badly-paid unskilled labourers), of Mr. Brownlie (representing Metal Workers whose wages are below pre-war), and Mr. Thomas (representing large numbers of railwaymen with wages around 50s. per week? None of those gentlemen were in a position to argue that his union could win better conditions without the assistance of other unions. Yet they all pleaded for delay, for more consideration, etc.

Cook, alone of the prominent leaders in the union movement, supported the immediate granting of more power to the General Council. The other Left leaders remained silent. Finally, the matter was referred to the new General Council to report on to a subsequent meeting of the Executives of the Unions. It is delay, but not defeat, if the Party and Minority Movement rally the workers in favour of the proposal in the interval.

One Big Union.

The next big resolution which the Congress discussed, was one advocating One Big Union. The capitalist press described this as a "Red" resolution. It was nothing of the kind. It was a resolution typifying the sectionalism of the leaders of the unskilled workers.

The advocacy of One Big Union and the statement that the General Workers Unions are the nucleus of the One Big Union is the stock-in-trade of those leaders. It enables them to poach for members in every industry under the pretext that they are furthering working class progress towards a general consolidation of the ranks, and it gives them an excuse for preventing the unskilled workers in any industry from being absorbed through the amalgamation of existing unions on the lines of One Union for each industry.

The hypocritical character of the resolution was illustrated by the fact that it was moved by the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, whose leader, Mr. J. R. Clynes, opposed the day previously the more modest proposal of giving more power to the General Council. Mr. Naylor, of the Compositors, rehashed the old craft union arguments against this resolutions, which brought several Left-wingers in to defend the principle of unity. Finally,

both the resolution and the craft union amendment were defeated.

Factory Committees.

The resolution on More Power to the General Council which had been referred to the incoming General Council to report upon, was the first Minority resolution to be considered. The second Minority resolution was that on Shop Committees. This resolution declared that "the trade union movement must organise to prepare the trade unions in conjunction with the Party of the workers to struggle for the overthrow of capitalism." (The overthrow of capitalism, be it noted, not its transformation "by Parliamentary means, and in progressive stages," à la the crawling "gradualists" of the Labour Party E.C.)

It proceeds to warn the workers against class collaboration schemes and co-partnership, and considers that "strong, well organised shop committees are indispensable weapons in the struggle to force the capitalists to relinquish their grip on industry, and, therefore, pledges itself to do all in its power to develop and strengthen workshop organisation."

The resolution contains three essential ideas.

(1) That the trade unions are called upon to play a positive role in the struggle to overthrow capitalism. They are called upon to use their organised power to overthrow the capitalist class and set up a workers' government, and not merely to be the passive financial supporters of a reformist Labour Party.

(2) In this struggle of the unions, schemes of co-partnership, National Alliances of Employers and Employed are a trap for the workers.

(3) The workers must unite in the factories as the necessary basis of class unity, and the General Council must actively assist in the development of committees in the factories.

The Minority Movement supporters who spoke in favour of this resolution made no effort to conceal its revolutionary implications. The only Right-wing leader who spoke against it was Mr. Sexton. Most of the other Right-wing leaders were committed to vote for it by the decision of the delegates of their unions.

International Unity.

Equally significant was the carrying of the resolution in international unity which reads:

"This Congress records appreciation of the General Council's efforts to promote international unity, and urges the incoming General Council to do everything in their power to securing world-wide unity of the trade

union movement by an all-inclusive international federation of trade unions."

In this resolution it will be noted that it is no longer a question of securing the entry of the Russian unions into Amsterdam, but securing the unity of the trade union movement of the world. There is no restriction on the British unions going outside the Amsterdam machinery and using the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee as a unifying factor. This was made perfectly clear by comrade Sam Elsbury, who moved the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The Congress was equally emphatic in declaring for an international struggle against the Dawes Plan. It showed manifest impatience with those who tried to square the idea of reparations with the international interests of the working class. This decision was a blow at the Right-wing of the Labour Party, which, when in office, endorsed the Dawes Plan without the consent of the Labour Party and the trade unions.

This decision was defended at the time on the grounds of expediency, or, as the pseudo-Marxist whitewashers of the Labour Government put it, "the relation of class forces." The Labour Party E.C. is, however, endeavouring to carry the process a stage further by defending the Dawes Plan in principle, describing it in one of its resolutions to be submitted to the Labour Party Conference as "the application of continuous and impartial arbitration to the reparations problem." The Labour Party Conference, let us hope, will have followed the Trade Union Congress before these lines appear in repudiating this fatuous "statesmanship."

The last big fight of the Conference was around the Minority Movement resolution on Imperialism, in decisively carrying which the Congress delivered a smashing blow at the Labour Imperialists, both of the Left and Right variety. Some of the former have chosen to regard the resolution as differing from the "smash the Empire propaganda of the Minority Movement." If the granting of the right "of self-determination, including the right to chose independence" is not smashing the Empire, words have no meaning.

Congress Results.

Of the measures suggested by the Minority Movement to the Congress as a means of preparing the working class for the struggle, the Congress—

- (1) Carried Factory Committees.
- (2) Ruled the question of the affiliation of the Trades Councils out of order.
- (3) Did not discuss the question of amalgamation on industrial lines.

- (4) Referred back the question of extended powers to the General Council for fuller consideration, and agreed to,
- (5) International Unity.
- (6) The repudiation of the Dawes Plan, and
- (7) The fight against Imperialism.

The Congress on the whole trod the path of the class struggle, by adopting some of the leading aims of the Minority Movement. The really significant thing about the struggle waged around those aims was, that it was led, not by the Left-wing trade union leaders who are so much in the public eye at present, but by the lesser known leaders directly associated with the Minority Movement.

The result of the Congress imposes fresh tasks on the Minority Movement.

It must begin right now to carry on an intensive propaganda to ensure that the decisions which were taken by the Congress do not remain a dead letter.

It must define in clear organisational terms what it means by "more power" to the General Council. Many Left-wingers who believed in this slogan when it was merely an agitational slogan are beginning to manifest signs of uncertainty now that the time has come to translate it into workable proposals.

It must continue to fight for the Industrial Alliance, recognising the possibility that while all the unions may not be prepared to concede extended powers to the General Council (except in a special emergency) some of the big unions may be ripe for an alliance.

It must, on the basis of the resolution on factory committees passed at Congress, get the Trades Councils to carry on an agitation for the setting up of factory committees and a hundred per cent. trade unionism.

It should undertake a campaign for increasing its individual membership, especially in those districts and unions where it is yet weak.

Those tasks of the Minority Movement will be facilitated if the present effort of the Communist Party to increase its numbers brings concrete results.

Influence on International Labour.

The decision of the Congress on International Unity should strengthen the drift of the Social-Democratic workers on the Continent towards International Trade Union Unity, and a more favourable attitude to Soviet Russia. This drift has been especially pronounced of late as a result of the investigations of workers' delegations to Soviet Russia from Belgium, Germany, France and the Scandinavian countries.

Already, the Norwegian trade unions have taken a stand similar to that of the British unions. The Left-wing is growing and gaining influence in the trade union movement in Belgium and Germany.

But more significant still are the recent developments in France. The French trade union movement was split, as a result of reformist intrigues in 1922, into two trade union centres, the C.G.T.U. (which is under Communist influence) and the C.G.T. (which is under the influence of a particularly vicious set of reformist leaders led by the notorious Jouhaux). The C.G.T.U. is the larger organisation of the two, though matters have been evened up somewhat by the adhesion of the Teachers' Union to the reformist organisation.

The C.G.T.U. has been in favour of healing the division by calling an all-in conference of the affiliated organisations adhering to both organisations. This the C.G.T. has been always unwilling to do, fearing that it would be outnumbered. It has, therefore, advocated the policy of the membership of the C.G.T.U. coming into the reformist organisation.

Both organisations held their conference in Paris at the same time this year, and from the beginning of the C.G.T. conference it was clear that there was a keen Left-wing at the conference. After some discussion, the Congress decided to hear a delegation from the C.G.T.U. conference present their case for unity. The influence of the Right-wing leaders was strong enough to prevent the conference from breaking away from its previous attitude, but there is no doubt that the Left-wing in the French reformist unions is growing, and that in its struggle for unity it is inspired by the international attitude of the British trade union movement.

At a unity conference held subsequently in Paris, over a hundred branches belonging to the reformist unions associated themselves with the representatives of the C.G.T.U. and the independent unions in the planning of a campaign to realise Trade Union Unity in France.

Thus the Left-ward moving tendency of the British unions is having great influence for good not merely in Great Britain, but all over the world. It is for the rank and file trade unionists to ensure that this Left-ward tendency is not weakened by the Right-wingers who were elected to the General Council at the last Trade Union Congress. This they can best do by building the Communist Party and the Minority Movement.

Mosul and Irak

A GAMBLE FOR OIL

By A. McMANUS

THE extent of the territory whose overlordship is the subject of dispute between Britain and Turkey, is roughly indicated by the courses of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris and the area watered by those rivers. It was here that about 5,000 B.C., a beginning was made in the building up of a civilisation which almost rivalled that of Egypt. Babylonia was a rich country supporting what was in those days a large population, providing a surplus sufficient for the maintenance of huge armies necessary to defend it from the attacks of less fortunately situated peoples in Persia and Syria. The wealth of Babylonia, like that of Egypt, was never an unmixed blessing. Like Egypt it meant a succession of rulers. Britain is the latest candidate for the ownership of this area, and Turkey, **at the moment**, is the only rival to its claim.

Britain's only claim to this part of the world comes from the fact that, true to its tradition of plunder and spoliation, it took advantage of the war situation to occupy Irak. This the allied powers permitted. It was supposed to be part of a far-seeing strategy designed to withdraw the Turks from effectively interposing in the struggle in Europe.

The working class student of the situation learns nothing from the discussion going on in the press. Apparently Turkey has the best claim legally to the retention of the Mosul province. Britain claims that the inclusion of Mosul in the mandated territory is necessary if Irak is not to be saddled with the whole cost of maintaining an army in existence. On the face of it, that is equally a reason why Turkey should rule. The wishes of the inhabitants, of course, are not being consulted. King Feisul speaks for Irak—and King Feisul is in the employment of the British Government. Still, it is possible to put some little items together and from them to reason out the real position.

A Dirty Business.

There is oil in Mosul. How much no one knows, but Britain is still comparatively poor in oil supplies, and any opportunity to extend the source of supply already held in the neighbouring territory of Persia is too good to be lost.

This view is endorsed by the leader writer in the "Morn-

ing Post," most outspoken of the imperialist press, when he says :

"It has been alleged that the province contains oil, and the British Empire is accused of following a sordid policy in order further to enrich the 'oil kings.' It seems to us, on the other hand, that if there should be oil in those regions, it is one reason the more why we should stay there, since it is the poverty of the British Empire in oil that gives such dangerous power to the foreign combinations which now supply us with that necessity of modern life."

But, that the sordid gamble in Oil is behind all the platitudes of Amery and Chamberlain, the representatives of the "Forgers" Government at Geneva, may be put beyond doubt from a perusal of the following extract from the "Sunday Express" (6-9-25). This paper says :

"A battle is raging for possession of the very problematical oil supplies in Mosul. Two great groups are concerned.

"There is, in the first place, the syndicate with which Lord Inverforth's name is associated. They deal with the Turks.

"On the other side are the old firms banded together in what is known as the Turkish Petroleum Company. They deal with the British.

"The big figures in this group are Sir Henry Deterding, a Dutchman, the Napoleon of oil; Mr. Gulbenkian, an Armenian—vastly wealthy.

"The group includes the Anglo-Persian interests in which the British Government are heavily concerned. The Anglo-Persian chairman is Sir Charles Greenway, a British subject, with a good deal of the typical John Bull about him. Included with these interests are those of the French, which may be called the Sir Basil Zaharoff group. Sir Basil is called the European man of mystery. He was born in Turkey of poor Greek parents, became a naturalised French subject, and possesses a British title. He is a Grand Commander of the Order of the Bath.

"The situation has developed into one much like that of pre-war days, when British and German interests were fighting for the possession of the Mosul oilfields. This time it appears to make very little difference to the British oil interests whether Mosul goes to Turkey or to Irak under the suzerainty of Britain, for if Turkey wins then presumably the Inverforth group will get the oil. If Irak and Mr. Amery carry the day, then Sir Henry Deterding and the others will be able to inscribe 'Victory' on their banners."

To the writer in the "Express" we might say "Whoever wins, we don't lose."

Diplomacy and Trade Routes.

Banking is entirely in the hands of three British concerns. British contractors have the concession for irrigation works. The motor trade and many smaller concerns are British, and many of the governmental posts are held by British. The production of cotton is being developed; and it is said that it is possible to make Irak, before long, one of the most important granaries in the world.

With the British strongly entrenched in Mesopotamia, an alternative route to India is provided in the event of anything disturbing the possibility of utilising the Suez Canal. The valley of the Euphrates makes an overland route possible and comparatively easy through rich, fertile, and well-watered lands to the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Amery let slip a bit of information which may also be taken as adding to the explanation of an apparently confusing situation. He told the League Council that Britain wants a strategical, not a racial, frontier. British forces at present in the country consist of eight air squadrons (nearly 2 hundred aeroplanes), three Indian regiments, and about 8,000 of King Feisul's mercenaries. The cost of maintaining this army would be lessened if spread over Mosul as well as the Southern territory.

We have to remember that Britain rules over Moslem territories in India, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Persia, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Palestine and the Sudan. Its rule extends over about 110,000,000 Mohammedans, more than sixty millions of whom live in India, and over forty-five millions in Africa. The consolidation of the Moslem peoples is slowly being developed. **If Britain desires to maintain its hold, it must drive wedges between those sections of Islam likely to be dangerous.**

Soviet Alliance only Way Out for Islam.

In Europe, Islam's only friend is Soviet Russia, the only government whose policy makes for the liberation of subject races irrespective of colour and creed, and with no regard to selfish imperialistic motives. Islam proclaims the unity of "the faithful"—Russia the unity of the workers of all lands. Between these forces, in the struggle against imperialism, an alliance is possible which makes victory certain.

When one considers, further, the proximity of the Georgian Soviet Republic and the probable British ambition of undivided sway from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea, and the threat to Soviet Russia which the fulfilment of this ambition would involve, suspicion amounts to certainty that the rulers of Britain to-day have no intention of departing from the traditions of their predecessors.

A League decision in favour of continuing the British mandate for 25 years gives all the time required to allow British interests to acquire a hold, and, automatically, provide many more reasons why the mandate should be extended indefinitely—if the League still exists at that time. Once again history will repeat itself. The rich lands of Mesopotamia will be developed, not for the purpose of enriching the inhabitants of that area, but for the purpose of furnishing a base for the armies of imperialism operating against Islam and Soviet Russia. One of the richest granaries in the world will be utilised for maintaining forces destructive to everything making for progress, giving another illustration of the necessity to destroy capitalist imperialism throughout the world.

Bolshevising the C.P. of Germany

THE E.C.C.I. LETTER—A SUMMARY

By T. BELL

IT is one of the merits of the Communist International never to conceal its weaknesses, nor fail to acknowledge its errors, when errors have been made. A party which closes its eyes to obvious political blunders or defects in its organisational machinery can never be a real leader of the working class. A ruthless examination of experiences by the whole Party membership, ability to learn lessons and revise methods and tactics, such is the hall-mark of a true Bolshevik Party. It is this which distinguishes the Communists from the Social-Democrats or the Labourists.

A Communist Party is a living thing, one and indivisible. Unlike the Social-Democrats or the Labour Party, the leadership cannot be divorced from the membership. The leadership of a Communist Party must be bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the Party. A hierarchy, which looks down on the membership either as automatons to carry out its will without question, or, as in the case of the Social-Democrats or Labour Party, electoral cattle to vote the policy of the caste, is intolerable in a Communist Party. To permit any group the right of exclusive monopoly of theory and policy is to court stagnation, decay and death.

This basic principle of Bolshevism was well hammered out by comrade Lenin long before October, 1917. It has been consecrated since in the experiences derived from the revolution and its fluctuations, especially in Western Europe, but nowhere more so than in the revolutionary struggles of the German working class.

Our Party in Germany has had to pay the price time and again for its lack of cohesion, for its battalions and officers marching out of step with each other, and failing, as a party, to keep its proper place as the real vanguard of the revolutionary working class. It has swung from "Putschism" to opportunism à la Brandler, and alternated these with sectarianism and Social-Democracy with disastrous results, particularly to the working class in Germany, and in general to the revolutionary movement in Western Europe.

No Split.

It is in these circumstances, and for reasons such as these, that the Communist International is now faced with another "crisis" in the ranks of our brother party in Germany. Naturally, the capitalists of Europe and their lackeys (the sponsors of the Dawes Plan) of the Second International are exultant at the prospects of "another split." They wish for nothing better than a breach in the ranks of the militant Communist International, their most implacable and inveterate enemy. But if our enemies cherish such a delusion they are bound to be disappointed. There is going to be no split. Mistakes have undoubtedly been made in Germany, and are being made, in the interpretation of international events and the application of Communist policy to deal with them, but it is precisely for these reasons the E.C.C.I. has been obliged to exercise its prerogative and intervene. It would be criminal negligence and a betrayal of its authorised function if it did not intervene. That is the reason for the long letter sent by the International Executive to the Party in Germany.*

E.C.C.I. Policy.

The Executive letter lays down that the most important question for the German Party is "the problem of raising the recruiting power of the Party." How to achieve this was the subject of a discussion at the last Enlarged Session of the E.C.C.I. in March of this year, and subsequent conferences; the general political lines laid down by the E.C.C.I. being as follows:

(1) Work in the trade unions and winning over of the Social-Democratic workers.

(2) Regularisation of the Party life, i.e., internal Party democracy, and the utilising of the services of the old opposition and the bringing into the leading organs of new leading forces, especially those familiar with trade union work.

(3) Liquidation of the underground struggle against the International, such as the practice of sending independent emissaries to other parties.

In the course of the several conferences, the **three** most important sets of questions discussed were:

First, the Executive's contention that some **Right** digressions (a too Parliamentary attitude, etc.) exist in the leading Ruth Fischer-Maslov group.

Secondly: It was decided **to make a real change in the**

* The full text of the letter will appear in the next number of the "Communist International," to be had from the Communist Bookshop, 16, King Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.

trade union question and to make a point of electing at the Party Congress a strong and capable trade union section (to instruct the new Central Committee of the Party to carry this out).

Thirdly: The representatives of the Executive insisted that new leading Labour forces be elected, especially comrades familiar with trade union work, including also a few comrades from the opposition. And this not to drag the Party to the "Right," as it is wrongly and consciously asserted, but to secure access to the vacillating members of the Party.

Not only, says the letter, were these decisions **not** carried out, but at the recent Party Congress the delegation from the E.C.C.I. was sabotaged by the Ruth Fischer group. Following the conference two delegations met the E.C.C.I. They both came hostile to the lines laid down at the Congress, but were eventually obliged to acknowledge their error and to declare that the criticism of the E.C.C.I. was correct.

Party Weakness.

The Party crisis, declares the Executive, cannot be separated from the big happenings in international capitalism. The world political situation is growing more acute. Arising out of the most important events is the new orientation of Germany to the West. With this goes a renewed sympathy for the Soviet Union on the part of big masses of Social-Democratic workers. Here the Party must learn to appreciate this at its true value.

On the other hand, the bourgeoisie are developing an "anti-Moscovite" attitude, expressing for the capitalists a new orientation. The C.P. of Germany is inoculated with this virus to a certain extent. This, the E.C. believes, is due to the circumstances arising out of the October defeat, illegality of the Party, MacDonald Government, Dawes Plan, and the reformist illusions flowing from these.

The Central Committee of the Party is charged with failing to react correctly to the new processes within the working class, viz., the decline in trade unions, the losses in political elections, and insufficient recruiting to the Party. The Ruth Fischer-Maslov group is especially criticised for its incapacity to win over the non-party workers and Social-Democratic workmen.

On the question of International Trade Union Unity, the German delegation under Ruth Fischer opposed the proposals at the Fifth Congress. There was talk of International Trade Union Unity being a "clever chess play of the Russian foreign policy" (a curious analogy to the ultra-Lefts' objections at the Third Congress to the NEP). Obviously, a Central Committee which cannot appreciate the international im-

plications of trade union unity, would be unable to take up a correct attitude on its own domestic ground.

Notwithstanding the renewed political activity of the workers, big strikes and mass demonstrations, the trade union section of the Party is dissolved. The result is a decline in Party influence in and representation of the trade unions.

Maslov and the Comintern.

The Executive letter recalls that

“Up till now every digression from the Communist policy began in Germany with an attack against Soviet Russia, the R.C.P. and the Comintern. The seven years’ experiences of the German revolution show that **all** such digressions, irrespective of their Right or “Left” disguise, either developed directly into Social-Democracy, or entered into an alliance with the latter. This applies to the K.A.P.D., to Levi, to Friesland, to some of the Brandlerites, to the Schumacher group, etc.

“The change in the political situation, the final transition of the German bourgeoisie to a Western orientation and the virulent attacks of the Social-Democrats on Soviet Russia, which have become excessive, add to the danger of anti-Bolshevik digression in the C.P.G. at the present juncture.”

It is here that comrade Maslov’s writings show anti-Leninist and anti-Bolshevik tendencies.

In his book “The Two Revolutions of 1917” (Vol. 1. 4th Edition, p. 45), comrade Maslov writes as follows about the Third World Congress of the C.I. :

“I am firmly convinced that such great mistakes were made at the Third World Congress that it did the European (!!) Parties more harm than good. **THIS MOST DECIDEDLY APPLIES TO THE C.P.G. . . .** At the Third World Congress a general attack was launched against the Lefts, which verged on the ridiculous: for did not comrade Trotsky discover very acute “Left perils” even in Frossard’s Party of the C.P.F.? **UNFORTUNATELY COMRADE LENIN MADE THE SAME MISTAKE.** As far as I (!) know that is the only mistake Lenin ever made with respect to the Party. **TO MISJUDGE TO SUCH AN EXTENT THE CHARACTER OF A PARTY SUCH AS THE C.P.G. with its strong Social-Democratic traditions, especially under properly recognised objective conditions WHICH DID NOT PROVIDE ANY OPPORTUNITY WHATEVER FOR LEFT EXCESSES . . .**

“The Third Congress in fact admitted Levi to be right. . . .

“The Congress drove the German Party (as well

as the French) to the Right. IT LET LOOSE A SERIOUS PROLONGED LIQUIDATION CRISIS

The Executive declares to the entire Communist International that this monstrous attack on Lenin and Leninism cannot be tolerated at any price.

Maslov and the United Front.

It is no mere chance, says the letter, that comrade Maslov makes to-day, in the year 1925, the Third World Congress the butt of his attack, and recalls that "the Third Congress elaborated the concrete policy of the Communist Parties in the present transition period between two revolutions. It made the centre of our policy the slogan: **"To the masses,"** namely, capture of an overwhelming majority of the working class. Thereby, it laid the beginning for the Bolshevik **United Front Tactics** which is the **pivot** of our present policy. Those who, like comrade Maslov, deny this most important turning point of our tactics, those who discredit it as a "veering round to the Right," and who ridicule it as a concession to Trotskyism or the renegade Levi, **attack the foundations of the Comintern."**

Comrade Maslov went further in the special number of the Berlin "Funken" given to the delegates at the Party Congress, and made "diplomatic" attacks on the Comintern.

In this article, headed, "A Few Remarks on Our Party Congresses," Maslov writes among other things as follows:

"The later Left of the C.P.G. brought forward previous to the Fourth World Congress in this sense the demand **"BACK TO THE SECOND WORLD CONGRESS,"** and it was right in so doing. In the book of reminiscences already mentioned, comrade Zetkin relates that Lenin ridiculed this "stupidity." I am ready to believe this, as I can well imagine in what form this slogan was presented and explained to him . . .

"It was not without cause that the Fourth Congress **IN SPITE OF LENIN'S SARCASM** very emphatically re-affirmed the 21 conditions. Neither is it without cause that the Fifth World Congress had to revert consciously and emphatically to the principles of the Second. . . ."

In his article Maslov follows up this incitement against the "Russian comrades" with the equally dangerous legend that "the Levites were justified in considering themselves victors at the Congress in Moscow" (!)

This is what Maslov says:

"The Third Congress prevented above all the C.P.G. from obtaining clarity for itself. Thus, the Third Congress produced on the C.P.G. an effect similar to the

Heidelberg Party Congress two years ago: A **PERNICIOUS EFFECT** . . . in spite of correct decisions. . .

“If the principles of the Second Congress had been brought forward, without brandishing before those present the **BUGBEAR OF “LEFT” PERILS**, one would have probably considerably shortened the crisis in the C.P.G. and also in the C.P.F.

“But neither the Executive nor the Russian comrades (!!) were agreed on this question. . .”

Maslov goes on to say that it was not his own group, but the Executive, which for a long time “prevented the German Party from establishing satisfactory relations with the Executive.”

To overcome the evils of over-centralism and mechanical pressure in administrative work, the E.C.C.I. urges forward the importance of Party education and guarantees for a better selection of Party officials. In other words, a “normal” Party life. During the Enlarged E.C., the German delegation accepted these proposals. They were discussed again before the Party Congress, and it was pressed upon the Central Committee the advisability of adding to its ranks a number of Party workers in close contact with the masses. But in spite of all the promises the Party Congress was organised and carried out in such a way as to leave things as they were. There was no political discussion, everything being decided beforehand in caucus. Such a system and structure, declares the E.C. letter, renders recruiting impossible and is detrimental to the Party.

The Tasks of the Party.

After severely criticising the dangers accruing from a lack of principles, the E.C. sets out the principle tasks, which it summarises as follows:

Let the best Party comrades of the Communist Party of Germany go into the factories and from there into the trade unions! Perseverance and readiness to carry on the most ordinary everyday work among the masses in order to gain influence for their Party is what the Germany Communists stand in need of!

Determined re-organisation of the Party in accordance with the decisions of the last Party Congress is necessary if trade union work is to be carried on properly. The statutes and organisational policy decided upon in Berlin must be put into practice **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. The organisational re-organisation of the Party is closely connected with its political re-organisation. **ITS COMMON POLICY CONSISTS IN THE TRANSFERENCE**

OF THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY OF THE ENTIRE POLITICAL ORGANISATIONAL WORK OF THE PARTY TO THE FACTORIES WITH THE OBJECT OF CAPTURING THE MAJORITY OF FACTORY WORKERS.

The foremost tasks connected with the organisational re-organisation are :

1. Reform of the internal policy of the Party, for the purpose of making the Party life normal and democratic, and of establishing a closer connection between Party leaders and rank and file members in and through all the organisations of the Party.

2. Earnest and complete re-organisation on the basis of factory nuclei.

3. Organisational co-ordination and consolidation of Communist influence in all non-Party workers' organisations, especially in the trade unions, but also in the new mass organisations of the proletariat which are coming into being.

A live connection between Party leaders and rank and file members should be established, over-centralisation must be done away with and new forces must be attracted not only into the Central Committee, but also into all the leading organs of the Party, especially into district leading organs. Collective work by the entire membership and close collaboration with the Comintern must be guaranteed.

Collaboration with the Comintern is all the more necessary as this will enable the Party to profit by the experiences of the entire International.

The letter finishes up with a note of confidence in its task of liquidating the crisis in the Party and says :

"The German Left must maintain and perpetuate the best traditions of the vanguard of the German industrial proletariat of the best and strongest Party organisations such as Berlin, Hamburg, the Ruhr Basin and the Rhineland. But it must, at the same time, be able to eliminate everything that is false, undeveloped and non-Bolshevik in its past and present, and then it will be not only the Left, but the really Bolshevik leading nucleus of the C.P.G.

"The main shortcomings should not be sought in the thoroughly healthy proletarian membership, but in the upper stratum of its leadership which has been found wanting. New and great tasks confront the Party. The situation is developing not against us but FOR US. The class struggle in Germany is for several months not on a downgrade, but on an UPGRADE COURSE.

It is only if the whole Party reads rightly the signs of the times, if it regains confidence in its own strength, in the Communist International and the unconquerable strength of the German working class, that it will overcome the crisis and lead the German proletariat to victory, and then victory will be ensured."

The open letter of the Executive Committee of the Comintern was signed by the whole Executive, and by the nine members of the German Party Executive who formed the delegation to Moscow—including Ruth Fischer. It was endorsed by the German Party Executive, with one member only voting against, and one member abstaining. It was also endorsed by a special conference of the political secretaries and editorial representatives of the Party held in Berlin.

In the three weeks since its publication the letter has been discussed by all the main district committees of the Party at special meetings, to which, in most cases, the chief functionaries of the local committees were invited and given voting power.

The following district committees have voted unanimously for the full acceptance of the Executive's Open Letter: East Saxony, Lower Saxony, Lower Rhine, Renscheid, Middle Rhine, Ruhr, Solingen, Mecklenburg, Lübeck, Baden, Upper Silesia, Pomerania (one abstaining), Nuremberg.

Wasserkantz District Committee (Greater Hamburg and environs) has accepted the Letter with two dissentients; a general meeting of the Party functionaries of Greater Hamburg has adopted it unanimously. Rhine-Saar District Committee has accepted it by 11 votes to 6, Madgeburg by 14 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions, and West Saxony by 11 to 10.

The Letter has been unanimously endorsed by the Executive of the Y.C.L.

The District Executive of Berlin-Brandenburg, however, the largest Party district in Germany, has refused by 48 votes to 22 to endorse the Open Letter. Instead it has adopted a lengthy resolution which, while fully accepting the analysis of the present political situation put forward in the Letter, admitting the failures and mistakes of the Party there enumerated, and whole-heartedly adopting the new tasks laid down (united front, work in trade unions, Left-wing formations, democratisation of Party life, etc.), refuses to accept that portion of the Open Letter in which specific blame is attached to Ruth Fischer and her group.

According to the view of the Berlin District Executive, the faults were due to the "ideological, tactical and organisational confusion in what has hitherto been the Left," which prevented proper support being given to the voting groups of Ruth Fischer in carrying out the decisions of the International. This view is directly opposed to that of the International, which blames both the autocratic power of the Ruth Fischer group and also the use made of it to sabotage the decisions of the International. By a further vote of 58 to 27 the Berlin District Executive has declared that Ruth Fischer has borne the blame which should have been borne by the whole Party Executive.

The Open Letter is now being considered by the membership of the Party, and by the meetings of Party functionaries which are such a marked feature in the life of the German Party. So far as results are at present to hand, it appears that the general membership in Berlin will not altogether support its District Executive. Out of the 20 locals into which Berlin is divided, 8 have sent forward resolutions in favour of the Open Letter from meetings, either of the general membership, or of Party functionaries, or of smaller groups. Only one local has entirely endorsed the resolution of the District Executive and rejected the Open Letter; 2 locals have accepted the Letter—but with strong resolutions against its criticism of the "Left," and of Ruth Fischer.

The returns are not yet complete. Ruth Fischer voted with the minority against the resolution of the Berlin District Executive.

Felix Edmoundovitch (Dzerjinsky)

Dzerjinsky was born in 1877. On finishing his secondary schooling at the college of Vilna, in 1894, he became identified with the revolutionary movement, and took an active part in the work of a social-democratic club for education. In 1895 he joined the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party and began to lead the circles of artisans and working class appren-



tices. Deciding to consecrate himself entirely to revolutionary activity, he left the college in 1896 and took up agitational work amongst the masses.

At the beginning of the year 1897, the Party sent him, as an agitator and organiser, to Kovno, an industrial town then without any Social-Democratic organisation. Dzerjinsky successfully penetrated large masses of industrial workers, helping to organise and lead them in their strikes.

First Arrest.

In the second half of 1897, betrayed by an informer, Dzerjinsky was arrested in the street, and, to prevent the police from finding his house, he passed by the name of

Jambrovsky. After being imprisoned he was deported for three years to the government of Viatka, first to Nolinsk, and then for his "bad character" and his altercations with the police, 500 versts further north to Kapgorodsk. In 1899 he escaped and returned to Vilna, subsequently going to Moscow.

At Warsaw.

At Moscow, having purchased a passport for 10 roubles, Dzerjinsky left for Warsaw. There was not then any Social-Democratic organisations in this town, and he had to establish contacts with the workers and set up a section of the Social-Democratic Party. At first he had a hard struggle with the Polish Socialists, but eventually he met with success.

The workers began to gather round the Social-Democratic Party, but in February, 1900, Dzerjinsky was arrested at a meeting. He was detained at first in the citadel of Warsaw, and then thrust into the prison at Siedletz.

In 1902 he was deported for five years to Eastern Siberia, but on the road at Vilvisk he gave his guard the slip, and crossed the frontier.

Abroad.

He turned up in Berlin, where he took part, in August 1902, at the conference which the Social-Democratic Parties of Lithuania and Poland held in this town. Afterwards he went to settle in Cracow.

From Cracow, he made frequent excursions on propaganda work into Russian Poland, where, in January, 1905, he settled down definitely, and worked as an Executive member of the Polish and Lithuanian Social-Democratic Parties. In July he was arrested, and remanded in prison until October.

1906-1912.

In 1906, Dzerjinsky was delegated to the Unity Congress at Stockholm. The same year, he joined the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, as representative of the Polish and Lithuanian Parties. Towards the end of 1906, he was arrested at Warsaw, and in 1907 released on caution.

In 1908 he was arrested again and passed over for the second time to the tribunal. In 1909, he was exiled to Tasseievka, in Siberia, but he was only seven days there when he escaped again and went abroad.

Penal Servitude.

In 1912 he returned to Warsaw where, on September 1st., he was once more arrested, and condemned for his escape to three years' penal servitude. 1914 saw him transferred to Orel, where he served his sentence, and in 1916, the Moscow Tribunal sent him for six years' penal servitude for his party activities in 1910-12.

October, 1917.

When the February Revolution broke out, Dzerjinsky was in the Central Prison of Moscow. Liberated, he immediately began work amongst the Moscow workers.

In August, he was a delegate to the Party Congress, and elected a member of the Central Committee of the Russian Party. From then he worked at Petrograd (now Leningrad) until the October Revolution.

Dzerjinsky took part in the October Revolution as a member of the Military Revolutionary Council.

When, in December, 1917, the Extraordinary Commission for All-Russia was constituted to struggle against the Counter-Revolution, Dzerjinsky, as organiser of the famous *Tcheka*, was nominated President.

In 1919, he was nominated Commissar for the Interior, and, in 1921, Commissar for Ways and Means of Communication. After the election of Rykov to the Presidency of the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the U.S.S.R. at the Second Congress of the Soviets of the U.S.S.R., Dzerjinsky was elected President of the Superior Council for National Economy.

Since 1917, comrade Dzerjinsky has been a member of the Central Committee of the Party, President first of all of the *Tcheka*, and is now President of the G.P.U. (State police), which looks so well after the interests of the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia, to the hatred and disgust of the international bourgeoisie.

International Capitalism & its Apostle, K. Kautsky*

By N. BUKHARIN

A REVIEW, BY J.M.D.

IN the preparation of the recently projected attack on Soviet Russia by the European Counter-Revolution, Karl Kautsky took part by the publication of a book entitled *The International and Soviet Russia*. This once leading exponent of Marxism has now fallen to the level of the gutter press. He repeats with gusto every kind of slander against the Communist Party and invents all sorts of fearful and wonderful theories in which is predicted the imminent downfall of the Soviet Republic. Kautsky's bad faith is so evident, his accusations are so reckless and his record as a renegade is so well known, that there is little danger of his latest production making any impression on the proletariat of the world, however well it may please his bourgeois masters. Indeed the thing, in itself, is such an amazing collection of absurdities, that we can only assume that it has received the honour of a reply from Bukharin simply because, in this controversial form, a brief exposition can be most conveniently given of the present position of affairs in Russia.

The important point of Bukharin's essay is the interesting explanation it contains of the contradictions at work within Soviet economy. Continuing the tradition established by Lenin and Trotsky, Bukharin submits Kautsky's ponderous arguments to a critical analysis, in which he wittily exposes their utter foolishness, and ironically demonstrates to this grey-beard a few elemental principles of Marxism which he seems to have forgotten.

Soviet Russia and Asia.

The present crisis in China has fanned into flame capitalist hatred of Russia. The moral and material support given by the Workers' Republic to the Chinese Nationalists in their struggle against Imperialism, the knowledge that everywhere in the world, in Morocco, in Syria, in Egypt, in India, the oppressed nations look to Russia as their leader

* *La Bourgeoisie Internationale et son Apôtre Karl Kautsky*. By N. Bukharin (Librairie de l'Humanité, Paris, 1925). To be issued shortly in English by C.P.G.B. C

is gall and wormwood to the Chamberlains, Briands and Stresemanns, and explains their recent intrigues with the border states for renewed military action against that country. It is at such a moment that Kautsky issues to the Second International a call to action on the grounds that :

"During these years the Soviet Government has been chiefly engaged in enslaving, corrupting and swindling the proletariat, both in Russia and abroad. . . . It now represents the greatest hindrance in the whole world to the rise of the proletariat, a worse obstacle than the abominable regimes of Horthy in Hungary and Mussolini in Italy." (Karl Kautsky, *L'Internationale et la Russie des Soviets*, p. 11.)

Consequently, he contends, the Second International should adopt towards the Soviet Republic the same attitude as it took up in the early days towards Czarism, seeing that the former is nothing but "Russian Absolutism reconstituted." But, my dear Kautsky, says Bukharin, if Russia is an international policeman, deceiving and holding down the workers, why does capitalism not give loans to this valuable support of reaction? Evidently, there is a screw loose in Mr. Kautsky's reasoning. He used to be able to explain himself more clearly, but that was in the days when he rated at its true value the international and revolutionary importance of the Russian working class and referred only with scorn to the "practical" British Fabians and trade unionists, whom he now holds in such high honour.

Kautsky on Bolshevik Millionaires.

How does Kautsky account for this "reconstituted absolutism"? Here is his explanation :

"Certainly the Bolshevik despotism differs from those of which we have had experience up to the present in that the new despots were formerly our comrades. . . . Nevertheless, there are in America numerous millionaires who in their youth were extremely poor. But their proletarian origin in no way prevented them from becoming later on the most cynical and pitiless exploiters of the proletariat. The same is the case with the Bolsheviks. The fact that they have been raised from the depths of the proletariat to a position of unlimited power does not in any way guarantee that they will continue to think after the manner of proletarians and to respect the proletarian class; they are only distinguished from other dominant classes by a particular cruelty and shamelessness." (pp. 14 and 15.)

The statement is so ridiculous, that writers like Dan, who wish to preserve the right of Menshevism to be taken seriously, are compelled to repudiate it. Now, continues Bukharin, if the Soviet Government is, as Kautsky admits, not domination of the feudal landlords and if, as he affirms, it is not the power of the proletariat, what is this Government's class basis? Perhaps a basis is furnished by the *Nepmen*. As Bukharin says :

"Unluckily enough for him, Kautsky has chosen the Americans for his example. If there were now in Russia, taking the place of Czarism, that is to say, of the state power of the feudal proprietors,

a bourgeoisie like that of America, Kautsky would be enchanted. Actually, he does nothing else but lick the boots of the Americans, like all other German Social-Democrats, who, besides, were formerly continually engaged in flattering Wilson and now gaze admiringly at the pocket of Uncle Sam. It is true that the form of government in America is not entirely the same as with us, but at a time when its class character is identical with ours, it is unnecessary to trouble about the form. It is true Kautsky, who now says that the American *self-made men* are the most pitiless and cynical of exploiters, does not deduce from this that the government of the United States should be overthrown. Perhaps this inconsistency (or forgetfulness) can be pardoned in a dotard . . . but the reader will now be able to see how the ex-minister of the Socialist Republic, the faithful subject of Hindenburg, Kautsky, has damaged himself by the use of scientific arguments.

Nobody will deny that the *Nepmen* are a bourgeoisie of precisely the American type, of mushroom growth, with neither ancestry nor tradition, a bourgeoisie of *self-made men*. Yet we Bolsheviki do not allow them any political rights, such as Kautsky desires them to have. How is the difference between what is done in this respect in the United States and the practice of the U.S.S.R. to be explained?" (*La Bourgeoisie Internationale*, etc. p. 23).

Bukharin then proceeds to show the absurdity of the idea that the *Nepmen* are the basis of the Soviet Republic, in view of the fact that the government conducts a bitter struggle against them (and with success) on the economic front. Kautsky speaks of the "degeneration" of the Party, but says never a word about the "Lenin Enrolment," the recent admission of tens of thousands of workers at the bench to its ranks, nor makes the slightest reference to the marvellous growth of the Young Communist League, Young Pioneers, and other auxiliary organisations, especially in the villages, during the period from 1921. Indeed Kautsky gets into a complete muddle about the class basis of the Soviet State, revives the "force" theory and other similar fallacies which Marx and Engels had exposed fifty years ago, and finally informs us that :

"The Bolsheviki have managed to establish their domination over the proletariat and their power to exploit the latter. But they have not the slightest desire to yield this position to the capitalist class. And this is how they come to stand at present above both proletariat and capitalists, and try to make use of these two classes as their instruments." (*L'Internationale*, Kautsky).

Then, venerable sir, insinuates Bukharin, if the Bolsheviki are to be considered exploiters of the proletariat, would you include in this category those members of the Communist Party, who happen to form the majority of the organisation, engaged every day working at the lathe, the loom, the forge, or the coal face, with their hands? Possibly, he observes, Kautsky wants to assert that the members of the Political Bureau, with the inclusion of Bukharin, own the factories of Russia and annex the surplus value. "Has Kautsky not confused us with Barmat? Has he not been the victim of an optical illusion"?

And so on, for a good many pages, which there is no space here to summarize, Bukharin follows the old grey-whiskered rat with terrier-like tenacity in all his windings and turnings, and finally pins him down at the last.

The Economic Revival of Russia and the Struggle against Private Capital.

What Bukharin has to say under this head is of the utmost value. He describes plainly the variety of economic types at present existing in Russia, and shows how the workers' government is manœuvring to keep in check the private capitalism necessary to the country at its present stage. Of course, he has no difficulty in refuting Kautsky's erroneous statements and pessimistic forecasts regarding Soviet industry. Bukharin's statistical material is particularly good. For agriculture he furnishes the following figures :

Surface extent as shown from 1916 to 1924 in the U.S.S.R.
(In thousands of dessiatins.)

Year.						Total
1916	...	...	...	...	...	87,382
1923	...	...	...	...	...	70,861
1924	...	...	...	...	...	77,241

How rapidly the loss of cattle, etc. during the famine, has been made good is shown by another table :

Number of Farm Animals in the U.S.S.R.
(In 1,000 Heads).

Year.	Horses.	Cattle	Sheep.	Pigs.
1916	... 31,542	... 50,074	... 84,353	... 19,527
1923	... 21,408	... 41,268	... 58,258	... 9,394
1924	... 22,878	... 47,596	... 69,959	... 17,202

The revival in industry has taken place much more quickly :

Value of the Products of Industry.
(In 1,000 of pre-war roubles).

Year.	Industries functioning Uninterruptedly.	Seasonal Industries.	Total.	Percentage of 1921-22.	
				Ind. func. unint.	Total
1921-22	..... 833,284	... 16,996	... 850,280	... 100	... 100
1922-23	..... 1,199,359	... 39,497	... 1,238,856	... 144	... 146
1923-24	..... 1,553,367	... 64,468	... 1,617,835	... 187	... 190
First half-year 1924-25	..... 1,174,235	—	—	—	—

As will be seen, the figure for the first six months of 1924-25 almost reaches that for the whole of 1923-24, although the advance made during the year was already very great. When the above figures are presented as a percentage of the pre-war production we get the following :

1921-22	.....	23 per cent.
1922-23	.....	31 per cent.
1923-24	.....	40 per cent.
1924-25 (middle)	... ..	70 per cent.

The level of real wages has risen in the same degree. For the whole of industry the average (inclusive of gratuitous services) is 85 per cent. of the pre-war sum. In several branches of industry real wages are even higher than those of 1913. As evidence of the growth in the circulation of commodities, take this table:

Average number of cars loaded daily on the Railways.	
Year.	Number.
1921-22	9,590
1922-23	11,744
1923-24	13,517
1924-25	16,300 (approx.)

With the expansion of trade there has taken place a corresponding growth in the credit system, as is shown by the turnover of the State Bank:

Balance of the Soviet State Bank.
(In 1,000,000 roubles).

1st. January, 1922	53
1st. January, 1923	131
1st. January, 1924	1,099
1st. January, 1925	2,051
23rd June, 1925	2,849

When it is further remembered that the State Budget, by means of drastic economies, has been balanced, that Soviet currency is now one of the soundest in the world, and that there has been a steady progress in the yield of taxation since the introduction of N.E.P., we have all the data needed in order to pass judgment on Kautsky's lugubrious prognostications.

Kautsky makes great play with the comparative failure of Soviet industry and the alleged rapid increase of private capitalist enterprise at the expense of the former. Bukharin's statistical reply to this contention is eloquent:

Distribution of the Employment of Trade Unionists.				
Year.	State.	Cooperative.	Private	Capitalist
1st. Jan., 1924	1,846,744 (90.7)	74,122 (3.6)	116,247 (5.7)	
1st. Oct., 1924	2,024,796 (89.8)	96,940 (4.3)	130,068 (5.8)	
1st. Jan., 1925	2,044,928 (89.5)	115,583 (5.1)	124,014 (5.4)	

Note: The figures in parenthesis are percentages.

Then we have:

Comparative Table of the Number and Importance of Enterprises.				
	1922-23	Turnover		P. cent.
		(In 1,000 gold roubles)		
State Enterprises	3,630	783,293	64.4	p.c.
Cooperative Enterprises	2,315	29,317	2.4	p.c.
Private Enterprises	97,812	403,848	33.2	p.c.
Total	104,357	1,216,458	100	p.c.

	Second-half		Turnover	P. cent.	
	1923-24		(In 1,000 gold roubles)		
State Enterprises	5,834	...	1,280,806	...	71.3 p.c.
Co-operative Enterprises	3,819	...	36,634	...	2.1 p.c.
Private Enterprises	246,797	...	476,819	...	26.6 p.c.
Total	256,450		1,794,259		100 p.c.

Here the rapid advance of state industry and the comparative decline of private enterprise is well brought out. The same thing has happened in the wholesale and retail trade, where after a spectacular battle in Moscow and the other large cities between the State shops and Co-operative stores on the one hand and the N.E.P. shops on the other, in which every kind of commercial manœuvre, price-cutting, display, advertisements, etc., were used, the victory has also been won by the State organisations. When N.E.P. was first introduced in 1921 and trading on a money basis was re-established, the State had no proper organisation for trade, particularly trade in the villages, which was therefore largely in the hands of smugglers and *kulaks*. But even in the towns at that time there were serious defects in the business methods of the State trusts and shops which made the N.E.P. firms relatively necessary for the proper provisioning of the articles needed by the populace. Now, however, these hindrances are being overcome, with the result that the State is steadily driving back N.E.P. in the sphere of wholesale and retail trade.

The following statistics, compiled by the Commissariat of Finance, are enlightening:

Internal Trade of the U.S.S.R.							
(In 1,000,000's of roubles).							
I. Before 1923-24.							
	State.	Co-operative.	Capitalist.	Total.			
Absolute Figures	3,203	...	1,123	...	3,392	...	7,719
Per cent. of Total	41.5	...	14.6	...	43.9	...	100 p.c.
II. 1923-24.							
	State.	Co-operative.	Capitalist.	Total.			
Absolute Figures	6,021	...	2,845	...	4,965	...	13,832
Per cent. of Total	43.5	...	20.6	...	35.9	...	100 p.c.

The remainder of Bukharin's work is taken up with the explanation of the problems and dangers of the present transition period in Russia, particularly with regard to bureaucracy, relations towards the peasantry and the limits of possible concession to the new bourgeoisie. The final chapters deal with the political meaning of Kautsky's book as part of the counter-revolutionary campaign now being carried on both inside Soviet Russia and outside for the restoration of landlordism and capitalism.

A Bible for Bolsheviks

(“What Is To Be Done?” by N. LENIN)*

A REVIEW, BY JAMES MCDUGALL,

THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK.

At several of the great turning points of the development of the Russian revolutionary movement Lenin intervened to give it a direction which proved decisive for its future course. In this particular work he combated, on the one hand, the passivity of the reformists, who were later to become the Menshevik Party, and, on the other, the anarchism of the terrorists, who were afterwards the founders of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. The positive proposal put forward in this book was the organisation of professional revolutionaries, without which, he claimed, no continuous, planned and systematic revolutionary work was possible in Russia. As is well known, this proposal was brilliantly justified by events. It is indisputable that the success with which the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party met the great test in 1905, and the victory won after long and persistent labour by the Bolshevik Party in 1917, were largely due to the existence of that kernel of tried and experienced revolutionaries, welded together in a material and moral unity, which resulted from the advocacy of Lenin and the famous journal, “Iskra.” The essence of this book, as, indeed, of all Lenin’s writings, is the idea that we must guide and control events by means of planned activity, and not simply wait with folded hands on what history will bring forth. Lenin was implacably hostile to the reformist policy, generally cloaked in sonorous pseudo-Marxian phrases, (which it was his delight to tear to pieces) which contended that we must wait for the spontaneous movement of the masses and bring our political action down to the level of their narrow intelligence. Away with such rubbish! he shouted; we lead the masses, because we are educated while they are ignorant, and we do so by raising them to our level, not by coming down to theirs.

DOGMATISM AND “LIBERTY OF CRITICISM.”

In this work Lenin criticises, first of all, the reformist slogan, “Liberty of Criticism.” He shows that there are two currents in international socialism: a reformist current and a revolutionary one. He then enquires, what is the nature of this “new” tendency which “criticises” the “old,” “dogmatic” Marxism? and finds the answer in the words of Bernstein and the deeds of Millerand. The evolution of revolutionary social democracy towards bourgeois social reformism has been accompanied by a substitution of the ideas of bourgeois criticism for the fundamental concep-

* “Que faire?” By N. Lenin. Libraire De L’Humanité, Paris. 1925. To be obtained from the Communist Bookshop, 16, King Street, W.C.1, price 2s. 4d.; postage extra.

tions of Marxism. There are people who come to us, says Lenin, and invite us to walk into the bog. And when we reproach them with this infamy they answer, "What kind of backward folk are you, afraid to give us the opportunity of showing you an easier way?" And we reply, "Yes! Yes! Messieurs! You are quite free not only to invite us but even to walk yourselves into the bog, which, indeed, is your proper place and one to which we will gladly assist in transferring your belongings." "But be good enough to leave go our hands, do not hang on to us, refrain from taking in vain the grand word 'liberty,' for we, too, are free to go where we will to avoid the dangers of the swamp and the fatal clutch of those who are sinking in it."

The author then proceeds to deal with the "Rabotché Diélo," which had assumed the defence of "liberty of criticism" in the Russian Social Democratic movement and of opportunism in the International. This organ was at special pains to refute the prediction made by the "Iskra" of a rupture between the Girondin and the Mountain in the international movement. It affirmed that the historical analogy was false; seeing that while in the French Revolution the conflict had been a class struggle, the differences in the international were merely temperamental. [How often we have heard the same thing from the I.L.P. in Britain]. But the answer comes immediately from Lenin that it is precisely the influx of the intellectuals into the labour movement that has led to the rapid diffusion of Revisionism. The writer of the article in "Rabotché Diélo" talks about the liberty of thought in the German Party and the intolerance displayed in France. Lenin castigates this "national" explanation and shows that the different treatment adopted for dealing with the disease in the two countries is due to the difference in their social and political conditions. He further demonstrates the absurdity of applying resolutions emanating from other countries to Revisionism in Russia without first studying the special form it has taken there. Then follows a brief sketch of that extraordinary phenomenon, the "legal" Marxism, which sprang into being during the "nineties" in Russia. He demonstrates the need for combating the "liberty of criticism" of the "legal" Marxists as well as the practical debasement of Social Democracy in the activities of the "Economists." Naturally "Rabotché Diélo" was opposed to Marxian "dogmatism," to which criticism Lenin gave answer in the following memorable words :

"WITHOUT REVOLUTIONARY THEORY THERE CAN BE NO REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. ONE CANNOT EMPHASISE THIS TRUTH TOO MUCH AT A PERIOD WHEN INFATUATION WITH THE MOST PETTY FORMS OF PRACTICAL ACTIVITY GOES PARALLEL WITH THE PROPAGANDA OF OPPORTUNISM."

And so long as capitalism continues such periods will

recur in all countries, but if our movement bears in mind the warning of Lenin, it need suffer little degeneration of its revolutionary fibre even in the most stagnant conditions. This section of the book closes with the quotation of a famous passage on the importance of theory, from the preface to Engel's "Peasants' War." Perhaps I may be allowed this extract from the citation, which has a point for us in Britain of which we are only too keenly conscious :

"Without the German philosophy which preceded it, especially that of Hegel, German scientific socialism, the sole scientific socialism which has ever existed [written in 1874] would never have been constituted. Without the theoretical sense which is inherent in them, the workers would never have assimilated scientific socialism to such a degree. How great has been this advantage is shown on the one hand by the indifference to all theory, which is one of the principal reasons why the English labour movement makes such slow progress despite the magnificent organisation of certain trades. . . ."

THE SPONTANEITY OF THE MASSES AND THE CONSCIOUS ACTIVITY OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

Lenin opens on this question by observing that it had been generally accepted that the great expansion of the movement of the masses during the first years of the century made necessary an increased initiative and energy on the part of the revolutionary leaders. Nevertheless, an astonishing discovery had been made by the "Rabotché Diélo," in the course of its controversy with the "Iskra," to the effect that the latter had under-estimated the importance of the spontaneous or objective element in the development. The author then traces the rise of the mass movement in Russia. He places its beginning in the great industrial struggles of 1886 in St. Petersburg. But "elemental" revolts, accompanied by machine-breaking, had taken place sporadically in Russia from 1850-1870, and even before that period. The strikes from 1885 to 1890, on the other hand, proceeded far more regularly, with all the normal features of trade union action, presentation of definite demands, etc., and to that extent there had been an increase of consciousness as compared with spontaneity. But this trade union struggle did not and could not turn the workers into socialists. Socialism always comes to the workers from the outside, from beyond the frontiers of their elementary class action.

Lenin then demonstrates that the first Russian social democrats did not limit their activities to the economic agitation among the workers, but placed before themselves great historical aims, and, in particular, the overthrow of autocracy. The first issue of a paper which they published did not confine itself merely to giving accounts of factory conditions and wages demands, but also included articles on the police prosecutions of committees for elementary education, on a massacre of workers in the Jaroslavl government, etc. Thus they dealt with the State, political power, the grievances of classes other

than the workers, and in that way endeavoured to unify under the leadership of the social democracy the struggle against autocracy of all who were oppressed by obscurantism and reaction. It is true that these pioneers of 1895-1898 did not have much success; want of training, lack of numbers and resources, as well as defects in their organisation, hindered them. But, says Lenin, this was only a small evil which, if the correct theory had been adhered to, would have cured itself; when, however, political passivity, servile submission to spontaneity, comes to be theoretically justified, here is a very great evil, against which the most energetic protest must be made.

In dealing with the literary defenders of this "waiting" attitude, Lenin draws attention to a significant discussion that took place at St. Petersburg in 1897, on questions of organisation, between the "old" comrades and the "young" ones. The rules governing a strike fund had been published. The "young" comrades defended this step, while the "old" ones were of opinion that the political "Union for the Fight" should first have been strengthened, and then the minor forms of activity, such as strike funds, propaganda circles, etc., subordinated to this organisation. Here was to be seen that exaggeration of industrial action which was to lead to the excesses of full-fledged "Economism." The position of this tendency was expressed by the reformist organ, "Rabotchaia Mysl" when it said: "The labour movement is indebted for its vitality to the fact that the worker himself has finally taken charge of his fate and broken away from the control of his leaders." Then followed the glorification of mere trade union activity. "The economic basis of the movement is obscured by the desire to keep constantly in mind the political ideal." That the slogan of the labour movement is: "The fight for better conditions," or, better still, "The workers for the workers' cause"; while it is declared that the strike funds "are of more value to the [social democratic] movement than a hundred revolutionary organisations." Formulæ such as: "It is necessary to take as the basis of action not the 'cream' of the workers, but the 'average' worker"; and "Politics always obediently follows economics," acquired a great vogue among the young revolutionaries who had only been able to glean fragments of the theory from "legal" Marxism.

Lenin pours ridicule on this abnegation of consciousness in face of spontaneity, the spontaneity of workers who consider a penny gained for themselves of more importance than the whole of socialism. He expresses contempt for the phrases, such as that "the workers struggle not for future generations, but for themselves and their children," in which the "Rabotché Diélo" passively inclines itself before the initiative of the masses, and echoes the marvellous wisdom of the bourgeois patrons of trade unionism. He points out that this degeneration of Russian Social Democracy did not take place as a result of an openly-fought-out controversy, but unconsciously through the removal from the field by police action of a whole generation of the "old," better instructed comrades.

(To be concluded)



PARTY TRAINING NOTES

We have asked each Local to send us particulars of (1) Total number of members undergoing training, (2) the number of Training Groups in the Local, and (3) the name of the Training Group Leader. We hope every Local Party Committee will see that we get these particulars. Especially do we want Group Leaders to write regularly to us. There must be something to report to us every month, either on organisational or political matters.

We are asking for this information and contact with the Group Leaders, not for the purpose of merely having a well filled report sheet. We want to have a picture before us of what's going on in the Party, so that we can help in a practical way to extend our Training activities.

Last month we said that "Party Training is not a winter pastime." At the same time, we know that the seasons play a certain part in our studies, and that the winter months are more conducive to intensive study. There is not the same outdoor allurements as in the summer. Our Party Training Groups are no exception to the experience of other educational movements in this respect. That is why we look forward to a more intense activity in Party Training during the weeks that are immediately ahead of us.

We suggest that it would be a good plan if the District Training Dept., or, in the case of unattached Locals, the L.P.C., could call a meeting of all the Training Group Leaders to discuss the plan of work ahead, and, by this means, ensure co-ordination. Not only would there be co-ordination, but everyone would profit from the exchange of experiences.

PARTY DISCIPLINE.

Last month we touched on Party discipline and the necessity for an understanding of Party programme and policy to ensure strict discipline. We have been asked for a concrete

example of a breach of discipline. We give the following: The Factory Group has discussed the necessity for a campaign to secure an increase of wages, and it is decided to begin an agitation amongst the workers for this purpose. Only two members of the Group considered the time not ripe and voted against. Have these two members the right to agitate amongst the workers against the campaign? Clearly not, for their opposition would be considered by the workers as coming from the Party, and not a mere personal opinion.

All members have the right to take part in discussion upon a given question, and express themselves freely. But once a decision is reached it is the duty of those in the minority to submit and work wholeheartedly for the speediest realisation of the task before the Group. To oppose, or obstruct, is a breach of Party discipline.

DEFINITION OF THE TERM "CLASS."

"The main difference between classes is their place in social production, and, consequently, their relation to the means of production. The acquisition of this or that part of social means of production and its utilisation for private enterprise—enterprise for the sale of the produce—such is the fundamental difference between one class of modern society (the bourgeoisie) and the proletariat, which is deprived of the means of production and sells its labour power.

"Exploitation of hired labour is the basis of the entire modern predatory order. It is this exploitation which causes society to be divided into irreconcilably opposite classes, and it is only from the view-point of THIS class struggle that one can rightly appreciate all other manifestations of exploitation." (V.I. Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. IV., p. 190).

"Class is the term used to designate large groups of people differing from one another, according to their

place in the historically defined system of social production, according to their relation (to a great extent laid down in the legislature) to the means of production, to their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, according to the means by which they acquire that part of the social wealth which is at their disposal, and to the dimensions of the latter. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another group because of the different place occupied in the established social order. . . .

"For a complete abolition of classes not only must the exploiters, landowners and capitalists be overthrown, not only must their property rights be abrogated, but all private ownership of the means of production must be done away with, and, furthermore, not only must the distinction between the town and country-side be abolished, but so also, must be the distinction among manual and brain workers.

"But this is a very long process. In order to accomplish this an enormous step forward in the development of productive forces is necessary. We must overcome the resistance (and this is very often a passive resistance which stubbornly and with particular difficulty responds to this action) of numerous relics of petty production. We must overcome the force of habit and inertia, connected with these relics.

"To suppose that all "toilers" are equally capable of this work would be the most empty phrase-mongering of the illusion of an antediluvian pre-Marxist Socialist, for this capacity is not a gift, but grows historically and develops only from the material condition of large-scale capitalist production. At the commencement of the transition from capitalism to Socialism it is ONLY the proletariat which possesses this capacity. It is able to achieve the gigantic task facing it, first because it is the strongest and most advanced class of civilised society, secondly, because it represents the largest proportion of the population in the most developed countries, and, thirdly, because in the backward capitalist countries such as Russia the majority of the population belongs to the proletariat or semi-proletariat, that is, to people who are continually spending a part of the year in a proletarian manner, and perman-

ently acquire their livelihood by a definite amount of labour hired in capitalist enterprises." (V. Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI., p. 249. Russian edition.)

FACTORY PAPERS.

On reference from the Organising Bureau of the C.P.G.B., the Central Training Committee examined a number of the Factory Papers, which have sprung up recently, with a view to a consideration of their make-up and political contents.

A survey was made of 20 papers, most of which, however, were first numbers. A report was presented to the meeting of the Central Executive in July 18, and the following represents the general observations of the Committee arising out of the discussion.

1. Only some of them have adopted the small advertisement of the "Workers' Weekly," and an appeal to support and write to the Party press. This feature should be strengthened and made general in all papers.

2. In view of the fact that many industrial concerns organise workers' sport, for example, football clubs, cricket clubs, etc., every opportunity should be taken, we think, through the Works' Committee, of urging the workers to organise and control their own sports. If, on the other hand, the employers have organised sports clubs for their employees and largely dominate them, such ought to be the subject for a running fire of criticism. Only two of the factory papers examined mention workers' sport in any way.

3. Several of the papers are enlivened with striking cartoons, some of them crude and others very good indeed. This feature should be certainly developed.

4. In a general way, we think the best procedure for the factory papers is to avoid long articles or long letters, to keep to paragraphs, small news items, cartoons, bits of information concerning the bosses and their profits and shareholding, short letters from the workers on the job, and tidbits from the "Workers' Weekly," the "Worker," the "Young Worker," and the "Communist Review" and Party press generally. This latter, we think, would give tone to policy. The greatest latitude should be

given for individual initiative, asking the workers to send notes, news or complaints, and make the maximum use of available space for expressing the heart and soul of the workers in the given concern, having in mind that these will be closely related to the Party policy and the class struggle.

5. The Committee are of the opinion, however, that the main feature of the paper should endeavour to present:

(a) The demands of the workers, or the programme of the union in the particular industry. (Since those workers who do not give detailed attention to union affairs are often at a loss to know thoroughly what the programme of the union is).

Side by side with the aims of the union, the programme of the Minority Movement, if one exists, for the particular industry, should be set, thus expounding the views of the Left Wing tendencies, but in pronouncing any programme of demands it should always be made clear why the Party is backing this as part of the revolutionary struggle. The degree of criticism will be tempered by the special conditions obtaining in the shop, and the ability of our Party members to apply it without isolating the Communists from the rest of the workers.

(b) In case of Shop Disputes, or local struggles, these should be featured on similar lines to (a).

(c) The paper should have for its aim the creation of a Works' Committee embracing all the workers in the factory, workshop, pit, etc., and urging at all times the common struggle and 100 per cent. trade union membership.

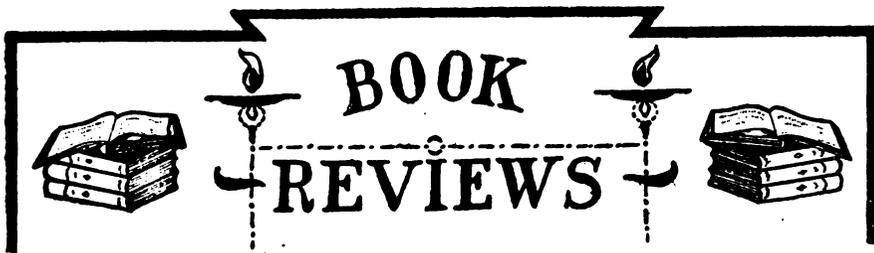
(d) The leading slogans of the Party should be emphasised without any lengthy explanations. To these a small panel should be inserted asking the workers to report their grievances and difficulties to the Party Group. This would enable the Party members to sense the feeling of the workers in the shop, and encourage them to come closer to the Party. In some cases where we have factory papers, there already exist Works' Committees; in other places there are no Works' Committees. In these latter places, the papers should lead the campaign for the establishment of all-embracing Works' Committees.

In those concerns where they already exist, the factory papers should be continually gingering them up, putting life into them, calling for meetings of all employed, no matter what their age, sex or craft, and if need be, re-organising them on an all-embracing basis.

The general aim of the Factory Committee should be to draw every worker into the struggle, and make him, or her, assume a definite share of responsibility for waging the common fight against the boss.

A CORRECTION.

In the article on "Economics of Capitalist Production," by James McDougall last month, the sentence on page 232, line 23, should read, "Say that the labourer needs ten commodities, each taking, say *one-half-hour's* labour to produce to maintain himself and his family for one day." When this correction is made, the "1/- per hour" is not necessary.



Our Contemporary the "Communist International."

The current number of the "Communist International" (No. 13) contains several important articles worthy of serious attention. The first article, "China Awakened," is one of the most arresting and informative articles yet written on the Chinese situation. It gives the history of the recent developments from the strikes in Shanghai right on to the nation-wide revolt against the imperialist powers.

The extracts from government reports provided by the consuls of the various governments concerning the conditions of Chinese labour must be read. But still more important is the sober analysis there given of the various political forces that are struggling for mastery.

Comrade Martynov has two articles dealing with widely different subjects, one on "The Provocation of Karl Kautsky," and the other on the problems of Russian Economic Life in the Villages.

The political degeneracy of Kautsky is as familiar to some of us as the decline and demoralisation of the Snowdens in the "Sunday Pictorial." If you require proof, then, Martynov's analysis of the latest provocation of Kautsky for civil war in Russia need only be compared with the maniacal hatred of Snowden manifest in the Sunday gutter press every week.

Martynov's article showing how the Mensheviks also turn their face to the villages, is worth reading, so, also, is the article of Sorge on the Economic Depression in Germany.

Those who think that the Dawes Plan is all beer and skittles, even for capitalism, had better read this article, and get to grips with the inescapable contradictions that are

even now threatening to plunge capitalism into deeper chaos.

Besides these interesting contributions, the discussion on the coming of the mass Communist Party in Britain is still going on in this number, and no active worker can afford to miss it.

J.

Mr. Keynes' Economy of Despair

By E. N. Armitage.

Mr. J. M. Keynes, economist of progressive Liberalism, belongs to that select minority of economic journalists who have the courage to break away from orthodox economic journalism, as dictated by our financial rulers, and ally themselves to industrial capitalism; thus consciously—but lacking in courage to admit the truth—showing the contradictions manifest inside the structures of capitalist economy. Mr. Keynes' recently published pamphlet, "The Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill,"* followed by a letter to the "Times," gives a clear and simple criticism of the orthodox economy.

AN INFLATIONIST.

That Mr. Keynes' alternative is calculated to be of any permanent benefit to the working class he would, no doubt, be the last to admit; indeed, that is not the concern of Mr. Keynes. The argument used in this pamphlet is that a return to the gold standard, necessitating a raising of purchasing power of sterling abroad by 10 per cent. before the purchasing power at home had reached a similar level, is the cause of the unemployment problem, the depressed state of trade in general, and the coal trade in particular.

If two parties (say the workers and the industrialists) are having a game of cards and a third party (say the

* Published by Leonard Woolf, Hogarth Press. 1/-.

banks) comes along and walks off with half the counters, naturally the game must be restricted. Mr. Keynes would solve the problem by making the third party supply more counters, and so let the game proceed with renewed energy. But Mr. Keynes is far too subtle an economist to state his case in so crude a manner; to do so would be an open advocacy of inflation, and even he shrinks from advocating a policy that sends cold shivers down the backs of Lombard Street.

However, we have no hesitation in describing Mr. Keynes as an "inflationist," just as we have no hesitation in describing existing orthodox economy as "deflationist." Indeed, we cannot do otherwise, because, as there is no half-way line in capitalist economy, a capitalist economist must, if he makes any pretension of advocacy at all, advocate the one or the other.

For the moment, Mr. Keynes contents himself with a heartless and devastating criticism of the "deflation" policy; a criticism which remains unmoved, even by a direct attack from no less a person than Dr. Walter Leaf, Chairman of the Westminster Bank. Dr. Leaf is at great pains to show that all Mr. Keynes' conclusions are already proved to be fallacious; to do so he gives us, in the "Westminster Bank Review" for August, comparative, but unconvincing, index figures for the United States and Great Britain. It is not the first time that Dr. Leaf has attempted to erect a truism from a hypothetical basis. If Dr. Leaf fails in a battle of wits, with one more astute than his own, let him console himself with the knowledge that the philosophy of a banker and the economics of a bank clerk are but poor ingredients for the pie of current economic and political problems.

WANTS CUT IN WAGES.

Mr. Keynes replies with index figures, in proof of the fallaciousness of those of Dr. Leaf, and with the retort that, "It would seem that Dr. Leaf does not know what the controversy is about." If Dr. Leaf does not know what the controversy is about, Mr. Keynes is in no such difficulty, as this pretty little extract will show: "Our problem is to reduce money wages and, through them, the cost of living, with the idea that, when the circle is complete,

real wages will be as high, or nearly as high as before. By what *modus operandi* does credit restriction attain this result? *In no other way than by the deliberate intensification of unemployment.*"

The first italics are our own. Had Mr. Keynes said "by what *modus operandi* can real wages be reduced to enable British industry and British finance to regain their once dominating position," he would have laid bare not only the nefarious scheme of his temporary opponents, but also that of his own side.

As the method of Mr. Keynes would be to reverse completely the existing orthodoxy, we will examine the *modus operandi* by which he would gain domination for the particular section for whom he acts as spokesman. First, he would have the banks extend their credits to industry; this would have the effect of an immediate stimulus to trade. The direct effect of this would be that higher profits could be made in industry, thus causing the withdrawal of investments from all Government, "safe," and gilt-edge securities, and their re-investment into industry. Almost before this could have taken place there would be a weakening of Sterling on the international exchanges. Here we get an immediate stimulus to all the exporting trades, which again must necessitate a further extension of credits by the banks.

By this time a considerable rise in prices has begun to take place, with consequent lowering of purchasing power of Sterling and a further weakening of exchange. Trade is booming, profits are increasing, unemployment rapidly decreases, wages are, as yet, stationary. Industrial unrest at the high cost of living now compels an advance in wages. As prices have now risen, say 10 per cent. and profits possibly more, an advance of, say 5 per cent. in wages can do little harm. This in turn means a further increase in prices.

An exceedingly awkward situation is now arrived at. The Gold Standard, having long since gone by the board, the gold reserves having gone out of the country in part payment for necessary imports, the paper money in circulation not being sufficient to cope with the increase in prices and wages, a crisis is pending. One way and one way only can hold off the crisis—more money must be printed.

A further lowering of purchasing

power of currency and increase of prices once more compels some advance in wages. Yes, under the scheme of Mr. Keynes money wages would advance, but as prices would always advance first, and, in greater proportion, *real wages would decrease*. Mr. Keynes can speak glibly of the deception that is practised on the "working classes" by the existing methods, but he is silent of the more cunning deception that is the basis of his own nefarious schemes.

PUZZLE FOR MR. KEYNES.

In his thirst for industrial domination, Mr. Keynes overlooks one little fact—that so long as gold is the recognised basis of values between capitalist nations, so long as the gold reserves held by the United States of America are of sufficient import, just so long will the States be able to call the tune to which the other nations must dance. In their practice of possessing a "managed currency" the States have also learnt the trick of managing that of their competitors. To solve the problem of an ever-increasing surplus the States have but one course open to them, *to force down internal prices in competing nations, thus making external prices prohibitive to the external buyer*. This fundamental contradiction of contemporary capitalist economy is a

problem that even Mr. Keynes must find insoluble.

To blame—or give credit to—Mr. Churchill for the "return to gold" is sophistry in the highest degree. Mr. Churchill, and the present Government, are as able to control British monetary policy about as much as is Mr. Churchill's hatter.

The Dawes Plan for Germany, attempted stabilisation of the franc, Gold Standard for Britain, have all the one object in view—the increasing of internal purchasing power to the embarrassment of export in the nations concerned.

The insistence on payment of the Allied debts, which must be made in dollars, again is a direct incentive for the debtor nations to keep their currency within measurable distance of dollar parity. All are steps in the one direction—world hegemony by the United States of America, and a clash between the old and the new; a clash that will not be settled by hypocritical diplomatic notes, but by war.

The uncouth diplomacy of Mr. Churchill and M. Caillaux and the presence of Japanese military attaches at the British Army manoeuvres, amongst other significant features, are among the straws which show which way the war-wind is blowing.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Now is the Time*, by A. PONSONBY, M.P. Price 5/- net.
Social Struggles and Socialist Forerunners, by M. BEER. Price 6/- net.
Social Struggles and Thought, by M. BEER. Price 6/- net.
The Austrian Revolution, by OTTO BAUR. Price 5/- net. Published by Leonard Parsons, Ltd., 24, Devonshire Street, London, W.C.1.
My Life's Battles, by WILL THORNE, M.P. Price 3/6. Published by George Newnes, Ltd., Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.