

# AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION

## The General Council's Message to India.

By F. Roberts (London).

We never expected the General Council to help the heroic Indian strikers. It is true that at the Trades Union Congress in Scarborough the British trade union leaders solemnly pledged themselves to support the workers of the awakening East. But this was long ago. The Scarborough Congress took place immediately after Red Friday. Red Friday was followed by the betrayal of the General Strike and by the starving of the miners, which was organised by the reformist trade union leaders. Since then the General Council has become a Mondist organisation supporting reaction everywhere: in the Metropolis, in the Empire, and all over the world.

It would be particularly idle to expect help from the General Council for the Indian strikers at the present time, with a General Election in full swing and when all the Labour leaders are united in trying to persuade their masters that they are more devoted and less scrupulous defenders of the Empire than even the builders of that famous "commonwealth of nations". We thought, however, that the General Council would have kept silent before the workers, confining themselves to secret negotiations behind the scenes with the exploiters of the Indian workers.

We plead guilty. The General Council has spoken out. It has made a clear announcement on the struggle in India, for which they deserve the full recognition not only of Mond, but of the "Daily Mail" itself.

What is the situation now in India? Tens of thousands of workers are fighting for the reinstatement of victimised strikers. For decades — we say "decades", and not years — it was the sacred tradition of the British trade union movement to fight tooth and nail against any form of victimisation. The Mondists have given up this sacred tradition. Remember the Glading case. But now they have made an important step forward. Hear how the official organ of the General Council ("Industrial News") sneeringly speaks about a courageous struggle of working class solidarity:

"So far as can be judged the main cause of the present outburst — for that is what it really is — was a lightning strike by some members of the Girni Kamgar Union to which the millowners replied by turning them down. So tens of thousands were brought out to force the reinstatement of the few in circumstances which a little judgment could have avoided."

The General Council does not confine itself to arrogant sneers about the defence of the victimised workers. It goes further and declares:

“The whole affair” (that is the way they refer to the great struggle in India) “is a move in carrying out the drive to the East policy of the Communist International.”

The Moscow bogey has become the only one argument of all the reformists in their servile defence of the dominant classes. On its 40th anniversary May First became a Moscow device! The defence of workers victimised for their trade union activities is also a Moscow device!

This is the message of the General Council to the Indian workers. We need make only two observations on the contents of this message:

1. In the present circumstances it is quite superfluous for any reformist trade union organisation to declare that it has nothing to do with a strike movement. This is already perfectly well known all over the world. When there is a lockout, the reformists take part in organising it, but when there is a strike it is either led by the Red trade unions or it is conducted unofficially against the reformist leaders of the trade unions. Such is the present situation. Look at the new proselyte of the Mondists, **A. J. Cook**. He went to **Dawdon**, where the miners have been courageously striking for over 10 weeks. Yet in his rich vocabulary he did not find a single word to say against wage reductions, but he found many words to denounce the Reds and to praise Ramsay MacDonald.

2. It is not true that the strike movement in Bombay is part and parcel of the Communist drive to the East. Unfortunately there is not yet a Communist Party in India. This must be created and it will be. The present struggles in India are part and parcel of the great awakening of the East. Neither the editorials of the “Times” and the messages of the “Industrial News”, nor the repressions and oppression of the Indian workers will stop this awakening.