

Workers' Breadnought



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PRICE TWOPENCE.

NO ROOM TO LIVE!

Husband and Wife Plead for Accommodation in the Workhouse—Four Months Without a Bed.

A quiet young working-class husband and wife were for five years, the whole of their married life, the sub-tenants of two rooms at Forest Gate.

When the two sons of the people who were tenants of the whole house were demobilised, the husband and wife were given notice to quit in order that the two sons might have rooms at home.

This was quite natural; the sub-tenants made no complaint; they merely pleaded for time, and promised to find other accommodation as early

as possible. Their search was in vain; they could not find rooms anywhere, and every day they felt more and more the impatience with which their departure was awaited.

At last someone told them that if they stored their furniture and applied to the West Ham Guardians, they might obtain two unfurnished rooms in the workhouse. Filled with new hope, they found a place where their furniture could be stored in Forest Lane, then set off at 10 o'clock one morning for the Poor Law Union Offices. There, with all urgency, but with confidence, they made their request to Mr. Smith, the Clerk to the Guardians.

Mr. Smith soon dashed their hopes to the ground. "Impossible!" he said, "If we made room for you, we should have to do it for others."

Homeless, now, they set out again on the quest they had already followed during several weeks of their spare time. They asked for rooms at every door and from every passer-by, till someone directed them to the house of a woman who was supposed to have a "small family," and who might, therefore, take them in.

Slept Four Months on a Kitchen Chair.

The woman's family turned out to number ten, and she had only a five-roomed house. Nevertheless, she took pity on their distress and said the wife might sit on a chair in her kitchen for a night or two till some other accommodation could be found. Eventually another woman with a family of eleven in a five-roomed house, agreed to do as much for the husband.

That was four months ago and the husband and wife have still no other home than those two kitchens where, night after night, each one sits alone and tries to sleep in a chair.

The husband is in poor health; he had a relapse after influenza and contracted septic poisoning and bronchial catarrh. For fifteen months

he was a patient at Queen Mary's Hospital, West Ham; when he ceased his attendances there, last October, he was told it would be two years before he would be quite well, and that he must only do open-air work. He has not been able to get continuous work of a kind he is able to do and is casually employed. The wife works at the Bovril factory and looks pale and poorly and broken in spirit.

When the hope of getting rooms in the workhouse proved a vain one, the husband wrote to Will Thorne, M.P., who is an Alderman of West Ham. The secretary of Thorne's election committee replied to the letter, promising to keep a look out for rooms, and to ask Thorne to raise the question in Parliament, but the homeless couple have heard nothing further from the secretary or from Will Thorne.

A letter to the Mayor of West Ham brought no answer.

Seeing it stated in the press that Mr. Trevelyan Thomson, a Liberal Member of Parliament, was interesting himself in the housing question, the husband wrote also to him, but received only a formal acknowledgement, and all the other public personages and social uplifters these people have approached have also proved broken reeds.

Empty Houses—But Rents Too High.

Yet, though houses are scarce, there are vacant houses in the neighbourhood. These homeless people have looked with longing eyes at an empty shop and house in the Romford Road, and at several houses on the Woodgrange Estate, and in other places which are far beyond their means.

They are quiet, careful people, who have hitherto taken no interest in political affairs; but now the husband writes: "It is an absolute disgrace for a respectable husband and wife of good character having to sleep in a kitchen, because the Government refuses to provide a shelter."

"I am, and have been for a long time, sorry to admit I am of English birth. Had I been living in Russia, Ireland, or Germany, my wife and I would not be placed as we are."

Why Not Seize the Empty Houses?

"There are several empty houses in this borough. I wish, if there are other people in the same plight as ours, they would come with their furniture and get into one of these empty houses during the night. We could do it by helping each other."

In Russia the Communists said: "Peasants, seize the land; workers, seize the industries; workers, seize the houses."

Why not do it here?

WHAT IS O'GRADY DOING?

Russians Who Want to Go Home.

The Russian Delegates Committee informs us that in spite of the fact that most of the British subjects who were in Russia have now left that country, not one Russian has been allowed to go from England to Russia.

Three Russian political emigrants, on whose behalf the Committee repeatedly applied for repatriation, have now been arrested and lodged in Brixton prison, whilst their wives and families have been taken to Holloway prison. These people are told that they will be deported; and deportation has hitherto meant being handed over, not to the Soviet Government, but to the Counter-Revolutionaries.

What has O'Grady, who was used as a tool by this Government, to say to the manner in which the pledges conveyed through him to Litvinoff have been carried out?

If you have trouble in getting this paper every week please give a standing order for it to your Newsagent.

The N.U.R. Betrayal

Instructions not to Send Aid to Counter-Revolutionaries Withdrawn.

RANK AND FILE SHOULD EXPEL THE REACTIONARIES.

When the dockers and coalies of the East India Dock refused to load the "Jolly George" with munitions for Poland, a wave of enthusiasm swept through the British Labour movement. In the swell of that wave the bi-ennial conference of the Dockers' Union declared for applying such action nationally, and the executive of the National Union of Railwaymen passed the following resolution:—

"The Executive Committee, being convinced that the policy of Poland is being carried out at the behest of the capitalist nations of Europe, feels compelled to recognise that, in order to render humane service to the nations, the action of the dockers in refusing to load the *Jolly George* is worthy of support. We therefore instruct our members to refuse to handle any material which is intended to assist Poland against the Russian people."

Bold words these, indeed, and highly justified; but how were they followed up?

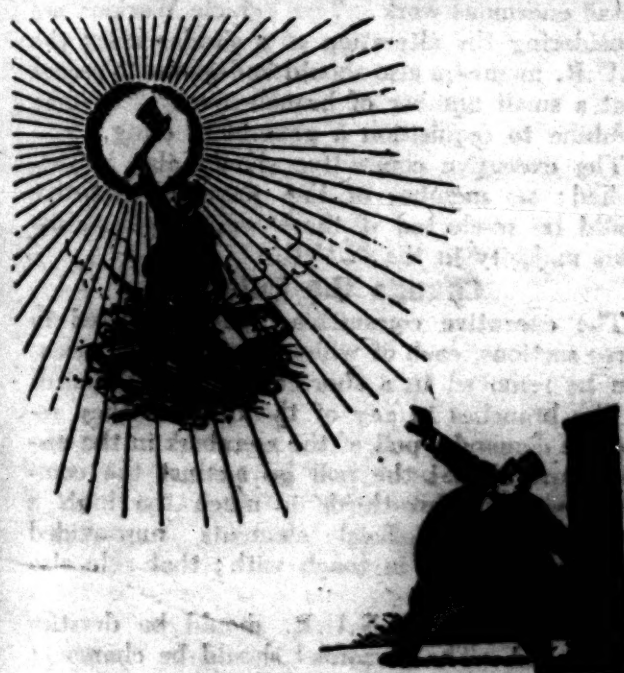
How the Executive Caved In.

Sir Frederick Banbury, the trusted old Conservative, who is a director of the Great Northern Railway, in a letter to the *Times*, was the first to tell the story. On Tuesday, June 1st, some workers refused to handle munitions for Poland at King's Cross Station and produced a letter from the N.U.R. instructing them to abstain.

The general manager of the Great Northern Railway informed the workers that they would be dismissed if they persisted in their refusal, but the men stood firm.

Not so their executive.

The general manager of the Railway Company had only to write, protesting, and threatening the dismissal of the men who obeyed the previous instruction for the officials of the great N.U.R. to cave in on the very same day.



Bolshevism: The Hope of the Workers



The Vicious Circle.

Here are copies of the actual letters, lest any worker has failed to read them:

Great Northern Railway, General Manager's Office, King's Cross Station, N.1. June 2nd.
The General Secretary,
National Union of Railwaymen,
Unity House, Euston Road, N.W.1.

Sir,—It was reported to me yesterday afternoon that some of our men at King's Cross Goods Station refused to handle certain packages addressed "War Supply Department, Reval," stating that this was done under instructions from Unity House. They have now been warned that if they persist in defying orders, and so hindering the company in the discharge of their legal obligations, the only course open to the company will be to dispense with their services.—Yours faithfully, C. Durr.

National Union of Railwaymen, Unity House,
Euston Road, N.W.1. June 2nd.
O.1648.—C. Dent, Esq.,
General Manager,
King's Cross Station.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 2nd inst., and note the contents. In reply I desire to say that the instructions under which the men acted have now been withdrawn.—Yours faithfully,
O. T. CRAMP, Industrial General Secretary.

What do the members of the N.U.R. say to this? Do they support their officials in this action?

Thomas Defends the Betrayal.

When heckled by a few members of the N.U.R. at Battersea Town Hall on June 5th (unfortunately the hecklers were very few) J. H. Thomas did his best to brazen the matter out, saying:—

"We found ourselves giving instructions to our members not to handle either man or munitions likely to be used against either Ireland or Russia. When the question of direct action or a sympathetic strike was introduced, I took my stand against it, because I believe it would be ruinous. . . . I refuse to subscribe to a policy which says to the worker: 'Here is a method by which you can obtain, by striking, something which you have not the intelligence to get through the ballot-box. Here is a method by which you can escape the responsibility which you have not the intelligence to obtain by using your vote at the ballot-box, a method that enables the working classes to determine the policy of the Government.'"

Thomas certainly puts the matter very baldly to his members. He is opposed to a method which could "enable the working-classes to decide the policy of the Government!" But what do the members say? What are they banded together for if not to compel the Government if they can; and, if they can, the entire capitalist class.

What folly to tell the workers that refusal to employ their labour against fellow workers is a method by which they can obtain what they had not the intelligence to obtain through the ballot box! If it were so, every sensible worker, every honest leader of the workers, must certainly say that a method which enables the workers to redress mistakes they made at the ballot box, a method that enables the workers to obtain what they need and desire, is a method they should adopt. But actually Thomas knows that the strike is the weapon by means of which, through sacrifice and endurance, the active, conscious minority can obtain what the apathetic and unconscious majority has failed to grasp.

The N.U.R. officials have not only ordered their members to aid with their labour the counter-revolutionaries who are attacking the Workers' Revolution in Russia, they have also ordered them to assist in the transport of munitions and troops to Ireland. They have even ordered the Irish members of their union to stop their withdrawal of such assistance and have refused to grant them the strike pay to which the weekly contributions of those Irish members have entitled them.

N.U.R. Interviews Lloyd George.

The N.U.R. executive sought an audience with the Prime Minister to discuss the action of the Irish railwaymen. In addressing the Prime Minister, J. H. Thomas dissociated himself from the Irish members of his union, and clearly declared his solidarity, not with the working-class, but with the capitalist Government. He said:—

"I believe the constitution of the country provides the maximum of opportunity for the workers without direct action."

"It was impossible for the N.U.R., faced with the fact that the movement might spread in Ireland, and involve more workers in England, to stand by and do nothing; in that way chaos and anarchy would result."

"I recognise that to support the men at North Wall means a declaration of war on the Government."

"We recognise it is the Government's duty to protect and assist those called upon to discharge difficult and responsible duties."

The one complaint Thomas seems to have made against the Government is that they had not sent all munitions to Ireland in naval ships in order to avoid unrest in the industrial world and embarrassment to the officials of the N.U.R.

Thomas seems to forget that the men on two Government tugs the other day took the same action as the Irish railwaymen.

On June 5th, after the interview with Lloyd George, in which the Prime Minister made no concessions, J. H. Thomas telegraphed the Irish railwaymen asking them to return to work. He

added that the executive had decided to call a conference of Irish N.U.R. branches, and press for a meeting of the British and Irish Trade Union Congresses, "with a view to bridging the gulf between the Irish people and the Government." That means with a view to arranging a compromise. In such compromises it is the workers who are forced to concede all.

J. H. Thomas is a reactionary; but, reactionary as he is, he cannot be made to bear the entire blame for the N.U.R.'s betrayal of the working-class.

What is Cramp's Position?

The letter to the Great Northern Railway Company is signed by T. C. Cramp, the industrial general secretary of the Union, and there is nothing in the rules of the Union to place J. H. Thomas in authority over Cramp in this or any other matter; indeed, this question obviously lay rather in the province of Cramp, than in that of Thomas, the Parliamentary general secretary. Both secretaries are subject to the control of the executive committee. Was an executive meeting called to decide on withdrawing the embargo on Polish goods?

It is widely said that Cramp is a Left Wing man and that he obeys the reactionary executive against his will, but both he and Thomas remain in office "during the will and pleasure of a majority of the members." They cannot be dismissed or called upon to resign except by the annual or special general meeting; they may only be dismissed by the executive if found guilty of fraud. The executive may suspend the secretaries for "gross neglect of duty," but the secretaries have the right of appeal to the annual general meeting. In a democratic organisation the secretary must obey the dictates of the majority of the executive, but the dictates of principle on questions of such overwhelming importance as these should not be silenced. To an honourable man given the order to write the letter to the Great Northern, and disapproving the letter, two courses were open, either to resign, or to appeal to the members and agitate against the decision. What action will Cramp take at the forthcoming annual conference of the N.U.R.? What action will be taken by any members of the N.U.R. executive who dissent from the Union's present cowardly action? Are there any dissentient members? If so; let them make their voices heard.

What Will the N.U.R. Members Do?

What action will the members of the N.U.R. take, either at once, or at their annual delegate conference which meets in July?

When the Triple Alliance had decided to ballot the membership of the three organisations for a general strike to stop the War on Soviet Russia, the executive of the Alliance suddenly stopped the ballot. It was then stated that the N.U.R. executive had objected to the ballot. No protest was raised by any member of the Triple Alliance executive or any member of the N.U.R. executive, and delegate conferences of the Alliance and the N.U.R. met and dissolved without any censure being recorded. The excuse widely put forward by those who wished to whitewash the N.U.R. officials was that certain branches of the N.U.R. had sent in anti-strike resolutions and that the executive had merely obeyed those branches. If the anti-strike resolutions were actually sent in by some of the branches, that simply means that the supporters of J. H. Thomas were active; the supporters of Soviet Russia ought to have been still more active.

The same excuse that certain sections of the rank and file were opposed to the embargo on Polish war material is being made to-day. The rank and file should insist in being put in possession of the facts.

Wanted—an N.U.R. Rank and File Organisation.

Unfortunately there is no organised rank and file movement of railway workers covering the whole country. Too many of the N.U.R. members have been satisfied to belong to an industrial union instead of to a craft union, and have thought that in their Union a rank and file movement is unnecessary. This wonderful industrial Union has a rule framed with object of preventing rank and file propaganda: Rule X., Section 11 provides:—

"No officer, member or branch shall issue any circular relating to the Union in general (except it be a proposal to alter the rules) or any branch thereof, unless such circular is sanctioned by the Execu-

tive Committee or the Industrial General Secretary in writing. . . . Any officer or member violating this rule shall be fined 10s. each, and the members of any branch which sanctions such violation shall be suspended from all benefits for one month; for any persistent breach of this rule any member or officer may be expelled." There is the right of appeal to the general meeting.

The isolated rebels in the N.U.R. should now come together for concerted action. This rule should be disregarded.

If there is a strong body of opinion hostile to the present action of the officials and executive, that should be focussed with effect at the annual conference next month, and not allowed to fizzle out in mere incoherent grumbling.

Dismiss the N.U.R. Officials.]

The rules of the N.U.R. give to the annual meeting the power to remove from office the Parliamentary and industrial general secretaries and any other officer. It will probably be claimed that a motion to dismiss these officers cannot be moved at this year's conference because it was not tabled before April 14th. But the attempt to move for the dismissal would be a useful piece of propaganda, and would test the feeling of the delegates.

If discussion were ruled out, propaganda for a special general meeting to discuss the action of the officers should be carried on, though to secure the stipulated one-third of the branches to make the requisition for the meeting would entail enormous work. The Vehicle Workers are considering the alteration of a similar rule; the N.U.R. members also should endeavour to secure that a small number of branches—say six—may combine to requisition a general meeting.

The executive committee should also be attacked: no member of the present executive would be re-elected if there were a class-conscious majority in the N.U.R.

Change the Rules.

The executive committee, though elected in three sections, each of which sits for three years, can be removed in a shorter time if two-thirds of the branches in any of the districts they represent demand a poll of the members in the district, and should the poll go against the committeemen. Two-thirds is much too high a proportion for unofficial elements unprovided with funds to get in touch with; that rule also should be altered.

The rules of the N.U.R. should be drastically altered. The personnel should be changed; but whatever may be achieved in that direction, a permanent rank and file organisation should be built up to spur on the official body and to take action when the official body will not act.

Rank and File Should Act.

But meanwhile the rank and file workers, disregarding the cowardly orders of the executive, should continue steadfastly refusing to handle any goods intended to help the capitalist war on the workers, either in Europe or at home.

Bruce Glasier.

Bruce Glasier, a friend of William Morris and Keir Hardie, lived a long life of strenuous service in the Socialist cause. Even those who disagreed with him must recognise that he was an idealist who gave his all to the movement, and was content to live sparsely and precariously for its sake.

We tender our very deep sympathy to his bereaved family.

The German National Assembly was dissolved on May 21st, and new elections will be held on June 6th.

The electoral campaign was carried on under martial law throughout the greater part of Germany. In Bavaria one Communist candidate was forbidden to hold any election meetings. In the Rhineland many Communist meetings were forbidden. A Social-Democratic Government correspondence bureau and other agencies spread slanders about the Communists.

We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that the poll records only 328,912 votes for the Communists, a result which will turn large numbers of Communists away from Parliamentary action.

In wireless messages exchanged between Lenin and the Hindu revolutionaries, the Hindus express deep gratitude and admiration for the struggle which Soviet Russia is making for the purpose of freeing all peoples, especially Hindus.

Lenin replies:—"Russia is watching attentively the awakening of India. We greet the intimate union of Moslems and non-Moslems. Victory will be assured if the working classes of India, China, Korea, Japan, Persia, and Turkey join hands. Long live free Asia."

THE BOYCOTT OF PARLIAMENT.

By BELA KUN.

I.

Quite recently two sections of the Communist International were obliged to take up a definite attitude towards the question of participation in parliamentary action. The Communist Party of German-Austria decided to boycott the parliamentary elections; the Communist Party of Germany (Spartacists), on the contrary, decided to participate in the parliamentary elections.

In the German section of the Communist International this decision was preceded by a long detailed and confusing discussion, by a struggle which threatened to split the organisation. The Austrian decision regards the question of parliamentarism as settled in principle as far as every Communist is concerned. Quite rightly it only adopted a definite attitude towards the purely tactical question as to whether the Party should participate in the forthcoming parliamentary elections, or not.

What results the German policy of non-participation will achieve—not from the standpoint of the number of mandates to be obtained, but from the standpoint of positive gain to the Communist Party—remains to be seen. It can, however, be asserted in advance that the decision of the German-Austrian Communist Party will tend in the near future to increase the strength and solidarity of the organisation, and that the practice of the boycott in the Communist sense will be of considerable value in shattering the misguided faith of the Austrian working class in the delusion of parliamentary democracy, in fostering the revolutionary spirit of the worker, and in helping to swell the numerical strength of the Party.

II.

What do we mean by the practice of the boycott in the Communist sense?

The parliamentary boycott of the Syndicalist means the denial of parliamentary political action by the working classes on the ground of principle. Consequently the anti-parliamentarism of the Syndicalist is a purely negative policy, which makes positive activity during the parliamentary elections impossible. The Syndicalist can never carry on a successful fight during an election campaign. His non-parliamentarism constrains him to passivity. He is always preaching anti-parliamentarism, yet during the elections he can obtain only a slight degree of neutrality among a small section of the workers, and can never succeed in calling forth a mass demonstration against participation in the elections.

In brief, Syndicalist anti-parliamentarism—just because it is by nature a mere principle—must lead to passivity. It must remain negative and cannot become the mainspring of positive mass action.

Marxian Communism rejects parliamentarism solely because it is an historical and intrinsic part of the bourgeois State organisation, not adapted to become an organ of the proletarian State in a period of transition from Capitalism to Socialism. This does not imply absolute refusal to participate in parliamentary action. The boycott of the Communists is a mere question of revolutionary tactics, and when, during a given phase of revolutionary development, the question arises whether the Communist Party should reject the parliamentary weapon and strive to lead the masses away from the parliamentary sphere of the political struggle, the following questions also arise:

1. What means should be adopted so that the energy thus liberated should not be uselessly wasted?
2. What means should be adopted, under the given historical and political circumstances, in order to transform a merely negative boycott into positive mass action tending towards the emancipation of the proletariat?

The Communist parliamentary boycott will not be content with passivity. In opposition to the necessarily passive anti-parliamentarism of the Syndicalists, the Communist boycott is an active boycott, a boycott that must transfer itself into mass action.

Because the attitude adopted by the Communist Party towards the question of parliamentary action is not one of principle, but is rather the result of a tactical policy assumed under given political circumstances, in a definite period of the revolution, it cannot limit itself to the propaganda of anti-parliamentarism as an eternal truth, it cannot remain passive, it must manifest itself as an action of the masses adapted to the given circumstances.

III.

In the present period of the proletarian class war the answer to the first question mentioned above is to be found in the Workers' Councils as an alternative to Parliament. Having decided to boycott Parliament, it becomes the duty of the Communist Party to improve the Workers' Councils as fighting weapons and organisations of power. It must increase the power of the Workers' Councils at the cost of the democratic organs of the bourgeois State, and must place both in the sharpest and most violent opposition. The Workers' Councils are generally regarded as a subsidiary government; they must be transformed into an opposition government. What is to be done next is a question of revolutionary tactics, and does not concern the subject under discussion: the boycott of Parliament.

In reply to the second question, I will explain what I conceive to be an active boycott. An active boycott means that the Communist Party does not content itself with merely preaching non-participation in the elections; it must carry on just as intense a revolutionary propaganda as if it

had entered into the elections, and as if its activities were directed solely to winning the highest number of proletarian votes. This is the minimum condition for an active boycott that the Communist Party must fulfil, once it has decided that the revolutionary movement demands the boycott of Parliament. Should a favourable revolutionary situation arise through the further development of the revolutionary crisis—which during the course of the elections, especially if the Communist boycott is sufficiently active, may happen with startling suddenness—one may even go as far as a complete annulment of the elections by mass action.

It goes without saying that a parliamentary boycott undertaken in this sense requires just as many leaflets, posters, advertisements, public meetings and meetings of electors, as an ordinary election campaign. Therefore, temporary organisations and committees of action must be formed for the boycott agitation just as if the Party were preparing for the elections.

Following on all this it is natural that the slogans of the boycott agitation must not be purely negative, as, for example, "Don't waste a penny or a vote on the humbug of parliamentary democracy"; they must not be mere anti-parliamentary slogans. The bourgeois-democratic and sham-revolutionary cries of the opportunist-reformist Labour Parties must be countered by the positive slogans of the proletarian revolution. When the Communist Party has revealed the falsity of bourgeois democracy, it must oppose it by the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the bourgeois republic it must oppose the Soviet republic, to the "popular army" the proletarian class army, etc. Most important of all, the fraud of a "pure Socialist government" must be unmasked.

The question now arises as to what are the relative values of an active boycott and of a revolutionary election campaign.

Without entering here into a criticism either of the resolution of the German Communist Party (Spartacists), or the resolution of the German-Austrian Communist Party, without attempting even to estimate the historical position of these two resolutions, we will merely compare an election campaign, as implied in the resolution of the German Communist Party, with an active boycott carried out in accordance with the above exposition.

IV.

One of the prime motives for the decision of the German Communist Party is the desire to take advantage of the opportunities for revolutionary educational work offered by an election campaign. A second motive, of equal importance, is the desire to take advantage of the parliamentary tribunal as long as the bourgeois dictatorship endures. For the purpose of the comparison the second motive may be ignored.

"The election campaign must be utilised in the task of revolutionising the large mass of the workers, who are still blinded by the delusion of bourgeois democracy," says the resolution of the German Communist Party.

There is no doubt that this revolutionising work can be carried on far more easily and far more effectively by a boycott campaign than by an election campaign, in which the situation is complicated in the following way: the large mass of the workers, who "are still blinded by the delusion of bourgeois democracy" (and also of parliamentary democracy) must be enlightened at a time when the party, which is preaching the worthlessness of Parliament, is canvassing for votes, and thus openly—if, indeed, only apparently—contradicting itself in the eyes of the large mass of the workers.

But if, after estimating the revolutionary situation, a party dare arrive at the decision to reject parliamentary activity—and, in our opinion, it dare—the value of an active election campaign, however revolutionary the speeches are, and however emphatically, parliamentarism is deprecated.

The argument that, in order to utilise the opportunities for agitation offered by the elections, the Communist Parties should participate in the elections, and that nothing is to be achieved by the parliamentary boycott, does not, therefore, hold good. In fact, just the opposite is the case.

The argument which asserts that it is easier for the masses to pledge their vote for revolution, than to abstain from voting altogether, is just as false. The German Communist Party—as a revolutionary Marxian party—declares that it does not consider the number of votes or mandates obtained of great importance. The Communist parties who decide on a boycott, must try to obtain the maximum number of refusals to vote; nevertheless, the refusal to vote is no more of first-rate importance than the number of votes obtained.

It is certain that a revolutionary boycott campaign places the principles and tactics which distinguish the Communist parties from the revolutionary phrasemongering parties before the masses with far greater clarity than any mere vote-catching campaign. In estimating the value of the two methods, this is of great importance.

V.

The questions relating to parliamentarism, dealt with by the Berlin Bureau and the Amsterdam Bureau, may assume overwhelming importance in Yugoslavia and in Poland, where the elections for the National Assembly are imminent. They may also assume great importance in Czecho-Slovakia and

Bulgaria, also in Italy, where the activities of newly-elected parliament may soon be made impossible by the action of the masses outside Parliament, or by the revolutionary parliamentary tactics adopted by the Labour Parties, or certain sections of the Labour Parties—and also by the sabotage of the work of Parliament—so that the declaration of new elections may become inevitable. In many of these countries the strengthening of the revolution may lead to the boycott of the elections, and an active, revolutionary boycott carried on by action of the masses may, under certain circumstances, bring about the overthrow of the parliamentary system and the institution of the Soviets. The resolution of the German-Austrian Communist Party and the problems arising therefrom are of international significance.

THE PERSIAN.

By E. MALIK.

In the *Daily Herald* of June 2nd, Major Gillespie, D.S.O., reviewing Major-General Dunsterville's book, sees fit to say, "Had there been anything in Persian 'Nationalism' except talk, it (the Dunster force) would never have got out of Persia." This shows that the Major has no knowledge of the Persian character and psychology.

Every Persian is at heart a Nationalist—always, excepting the professional governing classes. He will go to any length in order to preserve his independence; he will fight, he will suffer, and he will die for it. He resents all encroachments on his independence, and hates the dictatorship of the foreigner. This has been proved time after time. In 1891, within twenty-four hours, he compelled Nasir-Din Shah to withdraw the Bobbaco Concession. From 1905-1909, a period of only four years, he shattered to pieces the most autocratic rule of the Qajar dynasty, backed as it was by the whole force—military and diplomatic—of the Czar's Government. In 1912 he rebelled against the Russian occupation.

But Major Gillespie might say, "Yes, all that is true, but Major-General Dunsterville records that 41 men and 12 officers invaded Persia, etc." That may be correct, but the Major forgets that at that time England was marching against Russia. Not the Russia of the Czar, it is true; but the Persian then could have had no knowledge of the fundamental change in the situation. Here was a power, who, in July, 1906 had opened the gates of its legation to him, and had thus been instrumental in getting him a constitution. This power was going against the power that had long oppressed him, directly or indirectly. I ask the British workers how would they have acted? I will go further. I challenge Major Gillespie to deny that, now that they are more fully aware of the sinister intention of Capitalist Britain, the Persians could not be kept down by a force a hundred times the size mentioned.

Then there is the contempt of Dunsterville, which he developed for the Persians on the ground of their military inefficiency. Indeed, it is not only contemptible to be militarily inefficient, in an age of militarism, but it is criminal. This fact (I am sure?) will be appreciated by C.O.'s and Absolutists. But whether it be appreciated or otherwise, it is not to the point. Military efficiency, like every other efficiency, can only be acquired in two stages, and improved in a third. First, it must be taught; secondly it must be practiced; out of thought, knowledge and experience, comes improvement. Now Major Gillespie cannot be ignorant of the fact that Britain's policy, for the last nine years, has been to frustrate any attempt by the Persians to form an efficient military force.

Let us forget Major Gillespie, and go on describing the Persian. He is a loving creature; he never kills, unless provoked. His religion to him is a living ideal—not a Sunday variety of life. He is very sensitive, and the continual betrayals he has experienced, make him very distrustful—hence his "double facedness," and his secret organisations. That he is courageous and brave I do not suppose his bitterest enemies will deny. That he is capable of deep thinking and quick learning is shown by the Persian literature, and by the fact that schools and colleges have grown, as it were, by hundreds in Persia during the last two decades.

The Persian, however, is rapidly being spoilt. He is beginning to look on European "civilisation" as something wonderful. He is being taught that Capitalism means "progress and wealth," and that to be Europeanised should be the ideal of the more "educated." Our European visitors and missionaries—who often are the precursors of concession-hunters, and not workers—forget all about one-roomed "homes," in which thousands of European working classes have to pass their existence—"live." They forget the misery, the poverty, the wage-slavery, the slums; the diseases, and the slow starvation of the masses in European communities; they only remember the millionaires—whose agents they are—the palaces, and the rest of it.

No, my friend, you are not superior to the Persian, or any other Easterner. In fact, I should doubt very much whether you are his equal. You have experienced nearly two centuries of Capitalism. You have seen the misery it causes. You have felt and still feel its deadly poison. You have witnessed its long-drawn-out tragedy of poverty, disease, and early death. Yet you do not rebel against this tyranny. Ah, my friend, you are fooled time after time—at times cajoled, and at times threatened. The tragedy goes on; the death-roll increases; the world goes spinning on; you are still a slave—a loyal slave! Will Persians bear that? We may be lucky enough to see that they do not.

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PEACE WITH RUSSIA?

Does Lloyd George Mean Business?

The *Daily Herald* is claiming Lloyd George as a "whole-hearted convert" to the policy of peace with Soviet Russia. We do not believe that is the case.

Nevertheless, Lloyd George seems at present to be prepared to advocate trade with Soviet Russia. We still believe that if he can he will trick the Soviets by accepting from them corn and other materials needed here, whilst refusing to supply Russia with the machinery that is needed there.

We also believe that the Capitalist governments will not cease to intrigue against the Soviet Government and to seek to undermine its Communism at every turn, and that they will await every opportunity to crush the Soviets by force.

The Transport Executive.

A sub-committee of the executive of the Transport Workers' Federation has sent to the *Daily Herald* a protest against the circulars urging a "down tools" policy which are being issued by the National "Hands Off Russia" Committee, and which, it says, are urging trade union members "to flout executive authority." A request to attach his name to one of these circulars seems to have been addressed to Ernest Bevin. Bevin evidently objected to the circular and seems to have handed it over to the executive committee of the Transport Workers' Federation. The sub-committee points out that certain prominent officials appear on the "Hands Off Russia" committee's note-paper as presidents and vice-presidents, and asks whether the organisations these men represent have officially instructed their members to refrain from making aeroplanes, munitions, tanks and so on for use in the Polish War against Soviet Russia. The letter is the letter of conceited autocrats, but it has probed the weak spot in the "Hands Off Russia" committee's propaganda, a weak spot for which the committee must rather be pitted than blamed. The president and vice-presidents of the "Hands Off Russia" committee are not taking its propaganda seriously. They are treating the "down tools" campaign as a mere affair of speeches and resolutions. They are taking no steps to bring about its concrete realisation. Has one of them seriously raised the question on the executive or at the annual conference of his organisation? We think one of them has, but only one. At the last Special Trade Union Congress, though the question of the Russian intervention had been postponed from the last conference, the subject found no place on the agenda. Humble unofficial delegates asked permission to raise it, but the standing orders committee refused permission. Had one of the officials whose names are on the "Hands Off Russia" paper added his weight to the request he would not have been denied. Had one of them made an attempt to broach the subject from the floor, he would not have been refused a hearing. But all of them were silent. They are silent now.

Will the "Hands Off Russia" committee continue to keep these men as vice-presidents though they take no action and though one of them has signed the letter withdrawing the embargo on goods for the Polish War?

The subject is not so unimportant as it appears. These men are raised to place and power because they are popular with the rank and file who give of their scant spare time and hard-earned wages to build up the Workers' Movement. Will the "Hands Off Russia" committee assist in maintaining the popularity of these leaders by handing to them unearned laurels?

Japanese Socialists Protest Against the Japanese Occupation of Vladivostok.

Japanese Socialists in America, have issued a protest against the Japanese occupation of Vladivostok. They declare the act to be in opposition to the mass of Japanese public opinion. Public meetings and even the Press have declared against the occupation. In the last Diet, the Kensei Kai, the bourgeois Opposition Party demanded the withdrawal of Japanese troops and in February last, the Japanese Government under pressure of public opinion, announced that it would withdraw its troops from the Amur Province, as soon as the Czecho-Slovak Army should withdraw from the Baikal.

When the recent revolution in Vladivostok crushed the Reactionary Government of General Rozanoff, almost all the leaders of the Reactionary and Monarchist Parties in Vladivostok, with General Rozanoff himself and his immediate circle, flocked to Japan for refuge, where they became the allies of the Japanese militarists. They are reported to have brought much gold with them.

The Japanese Socialists in America say:—

"A little while the condemned army of Japan may hold in Vladivostok, but that will not last long, for our people will not support the evil doings, that will make the Russians our enemies. Then the Red Army of Soviet Russia will soon crush Japanese Imperialism. The victory for the Red Army of Russia, means the Social Revolution and Soviet Japan; just as the Japanese victory brought the Russian Constitution in 1904 and the Revolution of 1905!

"The present madness of the Japanese army and of the Government in Vladivostok, perpetrated in the name of the Mikado, will eventually cause the self-destruction of them all, before the mighty force of Bolshevism!

The Committee for the Japanese Socialist Group in America.

The International Federation of Trade Unions has decided to boycott Hungary from June 20th on account of the White Terror. Will the British sections do their part?

MILITARY EXECUTIONS.

On June 7th, detectives from Scotland Yard waited upon me and asked me to insert the following document, drawn up, as they informed me, by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

H. V. Clarke, who made the statement we published, told us that it took him five months to copy the records at the British Headquarters in Lille, from which he compiled the figures he supplied us with.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

"MILITARY EXECUTIONS.

"APOLOGY AND WITHDRAWAL.

"In our issue of May 15th, 1920, under the heading of 'Military Executions,' we published some 'information' supplied to us by H. V. Clark, who, we stated, had procured it from Army Routine and General Routine Orders, to the effect that between the years 1914 and 1918, 37,900 men, who were all privates in the Army, had been executed. We further stated that 'It is interesting to note that no Officer in the British Army was permitted to suffer such a fate; the Officers were merely cashiered.' We now desire to withdraw all such statements and to express our sincere regret for having published such seriously misleading and false statements in our pages, and for not having taken any steps to verify the accuracy of the information thus communicated to us. We also desire to express our sincere regret for having, in connection with the same issue of May 15th, published on posters of the *Workers' Dreadnought*, a similar false statement to the effect that 37,900 British soldiers had been executed. The above statements were more regrettable in view of the following statement made by the Under-Secretary of State for War on the 28th April last, in the House of Lords, 'That the total number of sentences in which the death penalty was carried out during the war was exceedingly small. I think it may be useful if I give the figures, if only for the reason that in certain quarters they have been improperly and wrongfully exaggerated. The total number of sentences carried out was 343. The total number of death sentences actually passed on officers and men was 3,076, and it will be evident therefrom that the proportion of death sentences actually carried out was 11.15 per cent of the whole. I must add that these figures embrace not only every theatre of hostilities throughout the war, but they cover the whole period from August 4th, 1914, to December 31st, 1919.' We are now informed by the Police Authorities that these figures given by the Under-Secretary of State for War, include all 'Military Executions' as well as all sentences of death passed but not carried out in relation to any officer or soldier of the Imperial Troops, Colonial Forces, Overseas Contingents and Native Labour Corps composing the whole of the Army or in relation to any camp-follower, and that all such sentences were carried out for offences committed on active service abroad. We are publishing this apology and withdrawal at the instance of the Authorities, who have pointed out that the above false statements were calculated to seriously prejudice the reputation for orderly and soldierly conduct on the part of officers and men in His Majesty's Forces in the war."

RUSSIA TO-DAY.

By Our Own Correspondent.
(Continued from last week.)

Have the Communists Dissolved Soviets?

Yes, they have done so. In 1918 it was found necessary to dissolve the Soviets and take new elections in a number of country districts. The reason was that in these districts the poor peasants, still under the influence of their old life, elected to represent them rich peasants who were exploiting them, who had induced the poor peasants to sell their produce and after parting with their crops to work as employees in order to get food, or were selling the produce back to those who had sold it at a much higher price. The poor peasants had voted for their exploiters through fear, lack of understanding, or because the exploiters belonged to the Left Wing Social Revolutionary Party, which the peasants had been accustomed to believe their champion. The Soviet officials therefore found it necessary to dissolve these Soviets, to point out to the poor peasants that persons who employ others for private gain and live without working are not eligible for election, and that the poor peasants should elect representatives from amongst themselves as their delegates. (Only in the early elections was it necessary to take the step of dissolving such improperly elected Soviets.)

Are Wages Equal?

There is a strong movement in Soviet Russia for equal wages, but at present the step is generally considered impracticable. If all workers were complete Communists, bonuses to induce greater output, monetary rewards for good work, higher pay for greater skill, would not be necessary, but at present, and under the present strain, it is thought impossible to abandon them.

Equality in Essentials.

But the real fact is that the inequalities in wages count little, for the workers have free food, free clothes, and free houses. Therefore in the main essentials they are placed on a footing of equality.

The Transport difficulty is the main cause of shortage, the main hindrance to the comfort of everyone in Russia. As the transport difficulties improve, the conditions of the workers will improve; for the present Soviet Russia provides the best she can for them.

Russian Communism Cannot be Overthrown.

Communism can never be overthrown in Russia. The real revolution was the ending of the right to own private property. That right can never be restored. Only now do the results of the Communist order begin gradually to appear, but the results are too precious to the people ever to be relinquished by them.

The Czarism had dammed up the natural development of Russia. The revolution let loose all progressive impulses. When Denikin was nearing Moscow and it was thought that he might take it, the old factory owners met together to discuss what should be done when he had taken the city. They recognised the value of the Communist organisation of industry, and actually decided that the Industrial Councils, called the *Glavci* and *Centri*, must be retained, though they declared that the personnel must be changed. It is admitted that the Communist work in connection with river transport was urgently required last century. Russian manufacturers had long been crying out for money to develop their industries. They thought that Kerensky would do it for them, but he failed. The Communists have used the resources of the nation to develop the industrial undertakings, but instead of helping the industrial capitalists, they have abolished them. Transport will now rapidly improve, because the Communists are in possession of the oil of Baku, which is needed, both for rail and river transport.

Nevertheless, locomotives are urgently required. Britain, with her great equipment, could supply them without difficulty.

The Labour Party Conference Agenda.

No Action This Year.

The Agenda for the Labour Party Conference, to be held at Scarborough on June 22nd-25th, is a hotch-potch of conflicting palliative proposals.

Nominations for Executive.

The Executive elected at Southport is bound to be highly reactionary, because in the main only reactionaries have been nominated. Thirteen seats are allotted to representatives of the affiliated societies; they are naturally orthodox trade union reformists. Hodgson, of the B.S.P., if he gets elected, which is improbable, would find it as easy to make an impression on Lloyd as on some of these men!

For the five representatives of the local constituency organisations there are no fewer than 42 nominations, which include a large number of local Labour Leaders. George Lansbury is one of the few nominees who is known beyond his locality. The women nominees are almost all strictly bourgeois in their political views. One of them, Muriel Countess De La Warr, is a new-comer to Labour politics. She is nominated by the Buckinghamshire Labour Party. Without intending any reflection on Lady De La Warr, who is doubtless quite genuine in her political convictions, we must say it seems that the old servile spirit which caused the labourers to put the Squire into Parliament, is causing them now to make the Lady their nominee on the local Labour Party. Mrs. Harriett Fawcett, of the York Labour Party, seems to us to be a good working-class propagandist fallen amongst bourgeois reformists.

The Constitution and the Communists.

An amendment seeks to make it compulsory for Labour Party candidates to be members also of a local Labour Party. Can the B.S.P.; could the proposed Communist Party, submit to this condition? There is a tendency to tighten up the discipline of the Labour Party, and to enforce adherence to the majority policy and programme. A resolution from the Leeds Labour Party calls for a new programme, embodying the capital levy and other reformist palliatives. The proposal will probably succeed; how could Communists accept that?

The B.S.P. has an amendment to the proposal directing that the programme should:

"aim at the realisation of Communism by establishing the undivided rule of the workers in place of that of the landlord and capitalist classes, and by organising the State on the basis of the transfer of all public powers to Workers' Councils directly elected by the rank and file and amenable to their direct control."

This is the best proposal on the Agenda; but it appears the B.S.P., like most of the other organisations, let the date for sending in resolutions go by and therefore had to content itself with amendments to other people's resolutions. If our surmise is correct, this fact may account in part for the scrappy character of the Agenda.

Soviets and Workers' Control.

Nowhere do we find a resolution setting forth a Communist programme of principles and tactics for the revolution and the Communist organisation of society; yet to justify their remaining in the Labour Party as Communists the B.S.P. should have secured the discussion of such a resolution for its educational value.

Though the Soviets only come up for discussion in the resolution we have quoted, yet the Soviet idea and the desire of the workers for control is beginning to show itself from many quarters, even on the agenda of the hide-bound Labour Party.

Stoke Newington Labour Party, for instance, demands that successful candidates for Parliament or local bodies shall report regularly to the local Labour Party or a committee appointed by it, and that he shall pledge himself to resign if a two-thirds majority of the members present at a special meeting of the Party, called for that purpose, holds that he has failed in his duty. The resolution gives him the right of appeal to a general meeting of the local Labour Party, and after that to the Labour Party Executive. The latter provision would ensure the retention of all Labour Members, unless they were too revolutionary!

Demands for workers' control, either originally or by amendment, are attached to all the nationalisation resolutions.

Marylebone Growing Revolutionary.

Marylebone Labour Party tables a resolution on Direct action, declaring that "the distinction between direct action for political and industrial purposes must become less and less clear as industries become nationalised" under the Capitalist state, and that "the time is approaching when the workers must be prepared for a conflict between themselves and the State, and that in case it is desirable that the issue should be one in which a great principle affecting all the workers is involved, rather than one affecting only a section."

This resolution contains some very sound points and shows a distinct development in thought; it has a genuine, practically revolutionary tendency, and it will be interesting to see how it will be received by the Conference. But it is only a resolution.

The War on Soviet Russia.

"Hands off Russia" is now a popular cry: therefore there are several resolutions on it.

The I.L.P. has, at last, a rather weak resolution for peace with Russia, and sends fraternal greetings to the Soviet Republic. The B.S.P. amends this by demanding a National Labour Conference to or-

ganise a general strike "that shall put an end once and for all to the open and covert participation of the British Government in attacks on the Soviet Republic."

We agree with Lenin that attacks on Soviet Russia, in some form or other, will never cease so long as capitalist governments continue; nevertheless, we are all for this national strike, and hope that every effort will be made to bring it about.

We believe, nevertheless, that the refusal to handle munitions or any supplies for the counter-revolution is the more practical method of dealing with the situation.

The Newport Labour Party resolution, as amended by the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council, recommends Unions to instruct their members to refuse to do work which will help the counter-revolution. Unfortunately the resolution is purely permissive and not mandatory.

The plain fact is that the Labour Party Conference will take no action this year. If anything is done, it must be by the unofficial action of the rank and file.

The International.

The B.S.P. has a resolution down calling for affiliation to the Third International, and there are several motions advocating an International of all parties.

Of course, the B.S.P. resolution will not be carried; but if it were carried the Labour Party is grossly unfit to attend the Third International. The Third International could not preserve its Communist character if parties such as the Labour Party were in attendance there. Nevertheless, the debate raised by the B.S.P. will have a propaganda value, if the Third International is vigorously championed. Unfortunately the Conference is so largely composed of permanent and semi-permanent officials that there is little chance of influencing it.

No short cut to the revolution is to be found through the Labour Party: the sooner that is fully realised, the better for the movement.

THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARY CONFERENCE.

For Parties and Groups Who Are Opposed to Parliamentaryism and Labour Party Affiliation.

It is important that the revolutionary Communists who are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party and to Parliamentary action should meet to consider the present Unity negotiations and to decide:

(1) Whether they shall take part in the Communist Unity Conference, the date of which has been provisionally fixed for August 1st, and which is to be held in London.

(2) Whether they shall take other action.

By a majority of 6 votes (representing the delegates of the B.S.P. and the split from the S.L.P., which is now called the Communist Unity Group) to 3 (representing the delegates from the W.S.F.), the Unity negotiators decided that only those organisations or groups may be represented at the August 1st Conference which are prepared to accept the findings of the Conference, and to merge themselves in the Party which will be formed by it, whether the basis of that Party is affiliation to the Labour Party, or whatever its programme, or basis, may turn out to be.

It is therefore imperative that the various Groups or Parties shall decide in advance, before sending delegates to the Conference, whether to join the Party which is to come out of the Conference, instead of waiting, as would have been possible if they had been able to send delegates to the Conference unbound, until after the Conference is held and its decisions known.

It is important that the revolutionary Communists shall be much more closely linked together than at present. Otherwise their efforts will be greatly handicapped: and the field will be left clear for the opportunists to side-track, and to send adrift in opportunist channels, the Communist impulse which is growing amongst the workers.

The Workers' Socialist Federation (Communist Party) is therefore inviting to a preliminary conference representatives from the various Communist Groups which have lately sprung into being, and from the Social Soviets and Workers' Committees, which accept the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Third International and the Soviet System, and which are definitely non-parliamentary, and opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party. This preliminary conference will be held at the International Club, 28, East Road, City Road, London, on Saturday (June 19th) at 7.45 p.m.

All organisations such as we have named are invited to send delegates, or if unable to send delegates to furnish a statement of their views on the position.

As it is not possible to get in touch with all the organisations concerned, we hope that they will respond to this invitation, even though we may not be able to invite some of them officially.

Comrades are asked to sell the "Dreadnought" on commission at meetings of all kinds in their districts.

Apply: THE MANAGER,

152, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

IRELAND.

A Night in Limerick.

The inquiry into the death of James Saunders, who was shot dead in Limerick City at 11 p.m. on May 19th, was held in that city on June 1st. Evidence was given that the police, on the night in question, appeared without warning in the public streets, and, although no provocation was given, opened fire on pedestrians. Frances Meehan swore that he saw James Saunders fall after the police had fired, and a few minutes later he saw two policemen bending over the dying man. These policemen passed on and made no effort to attend to him or bring him medical aid. The police allowed Saunders to bleed to death in the street of which they had complete control.

Henry Fitzgerald, a witness, was walking towards his home when fifteen police came round the corner and one of them caught him by the throat, and gave him three blows in the face. Another gave him the butt of his rifle in the ribs, breaking two.

Harry O'Brien, ex-soldier, said he saw the police coming up Bank Place in formation across the road. One of them ran at him, and he made for a hall-door. He got a blow from a rifle from behind, and was knocked down. A policeman stood over him, striking at his head with a rifle. He warded off strokes and arms, which were injured, and he got a piercing wound in the elbow. He was struck on the head, and turned over on his side. The policeman went down a step, turned back and again struck witness on the head. In the hall immediately afterwards a bullet went past him.

Burning a Bakery.

John Kennedy, Corporation night watchman, stated that after the shooting, the bakery owned by the Misses Daly (sisters of one of the executed leaders of the 1916 rising) was set on fire, and when the fire brigade were endeavouring to save the building, they were fired upon from the Police Barracks.

All the police witnesses, officers as well as men, refused to answer any questions put to them by the Coroner for the next-of-kin, although the Coroner declared the questions most relevant. They refused to state who was in charge of the patrol who killed Saunders, to submit the barrack diaries to the Court, or to state how many police were out of barracks when the firing occurred. They said they had "instructions" not to answer any questions, but they refused to give the source, or the date of these "instructions."

THE IRISH QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT.

Two Bold Amendments.

June 2nd.—Captain Colin Coote, Coalition Liberal Member for the Isle of Ely, and Captain Elliot, Coalition Unionist Member for Lanark, moved two bold and drastic amendments to the Irish Bill. The first amendment was to give the proposed Irish Parliament control of the military and naval forces in Ireland: that is to say, to give the Southern Parliament an army and navy and the Northern Parliament an army and navy. The second resolution was to give the Irish Parliament control of commercial treaties and other foreign relations. In these proposals lie the kernel of the question of Irish independence. If Ireland had its own army and navy and were free to make its own trade arrangements it would have or take as much freedom as possible to any small nation lying close beside a big aggressive capitalist neighbour. The mover and seconder of the amendments declared that only by some such means could continual warfare in Ireland be avoided. Captain Elliot said: "We are faced just now with the thing that smashed the empire of Napoleon; national resistance on national soil. When you have to deal with that situation you must come to terms with it or you must crush it by armed force. The crushing of it out by armed force is not a thing which at this moment we intend to embark on..."

Members shouted: "Why not?"

Captain Elliot: "All the old men sit round and say 'Why not?' Why did we suffer four years of war if it was not to have peace and liberty to embark on this great experiment? Why did we march up to Cambrai and see the whole sky flushed with the guns at dawn...? We have a right to talk on these things because we have bought the freedom of this House of Commons with our blood."

The only supporter of the two captains was Commander Kenworthy. The Labour Members, who profess friendship to the Irish, either spoke in the debate nor voted in the divisions.

Begin With the Child.

June 3rd.—Sir J. Butcher (C.U., York), that most aggressive of reactionaries, complained that an Irish history written by a certain Father Murphy, and edited by a certain Father Findlay, had been used in Irish schools. The Chief Secretary says, however, that the work has been withdrawn. Sir J. Butcher recognises the importance of teaching the young ideas how to shoot.

Colonel Ashley desires that the Irish police shall be rewarded with medals.

The Government is inquiring whether a Sinn Féin Court was held at Ballinasloe on May 27th, presided over by a barrister of the High Court and 8 or 10 solicitors. The Government is inquiring about other such Courts also, and considering whether to take criminal proceedings against anyone.

Forty Tanks in Ireland.

The British Government has 40 tanks and 28 aeroplanes in Ireland. The numbers are being increased, said Churchill.

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

The War on Soviet Russia.

Russian Ships Stolen by British.

June 1st.—The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Shipping said nineteen Russian merchant ships are under British control: they were "acquired by requisition."

We call that stealing.

"It has been decided to return all privately-owned ships to their owners, but no decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the others."

There are no longer any privately-owned ships in Russia: all the ships belong to the Workers' Soviets. The British Government has seized the workers' ships and given some of them back to the former capitalist owners. It is retaining the ships for which no owners can be found.

Captured British Officers.

June 2nd.—Viscount Curzon asked about five officers and 26 men of the British Navy, captured by the Bolsheviks at Baku. Sir J. Craig (Secretary to the Admiralty) replied that they are detained three miles outside Baku and have been seen playing football by three Italian commercial men.

These are some of the men about whom atrocity stories have been manufactured.

Viscount Curzon asked: "Is it still the intention of His Majesty's Government to continue negotiating with people who are keeping our men in prison?"

Negotiations with Krassin.

June 3rd.—Lloyd George said that in Paris, on January 10th, 1920, the Allied Supreme Council decided to permit trade with Russia.

But which Russia?

The decision was re-affirmed on February 24th. Following that at San Remo on April 26th, the Allied Supreme Council decided to authorise Allied representatives to meet Krassin and the Russian trade delegation then at Copenhagen, with a view to opening trade through the Russian Co-operatives' organisations and otherwise. [Otherwise refers, we suppose, to trade with the counter-revolutionaries!] It was also decided that Allied representatives should meet Krassin and other Russian delegates, but not Litvinoff. The Ministerial answers to Parliamentary questions may indeed be summed up as follows:

We are not at war with Soviet Russia.

We are assisting those who are fighting "Soviet Russia."

We are going to permit trade with Soviet Russia.

We will not negotiate with the Bolsheviks.

The Bolsheviks are barbarians.

Lloyd George added: "Krassin is heading a delegation representing the Russian Co-operative organisations, but he is also a Minister of the Soviet Government, and as such he is acting in the name and under the authority of the Soviet Government."

At this the jingo bloodhounds of the House began to give tongue: "The Russian Co-operatives form a Department of the Soviet Government." "Krassin was originally a German agent!"

Lloyd George, the wily, let them bay: "he is playing a deeper game than theirs. 'I do not think Krassin was a German agent,' he said. 'He was associated, I believe, with a German firm of electricians, or something of that sort; but he is a Russian.'"

He continued: "There are certain questions the British Government wants cleared out of the way before it could undertake negotiations at all. One is the question of prisoners. We shall also want some guarantees that there will be no attack upon British interests in the East, or at home, while we are negotiating."

That means that Soviet Russia must pledge itself to do nothing to protect the Eastern peoples from exploitation by the British Government: it must do nothing to aid the Workers' Revolution, either in the East, "or at home." After such guarantees have been given the negotiations as to trade will proceed, said Lloyd George, and representatives of the French and Italian governments are here to join in.

Again the jingoes bayed: "British prisoners held by the Soviet Government at Baku and in Moscow" and "Will the Prime Minister take steps to see that Krassin is detained here under similar conditions?"

Lloyd George: "An undertaking to release British prisoners is an indispensable preliminary of the renewal of trading relations with Russia."

But what about Russian prisoners and the wives and children of Russian Soviet citizens detained here against their will, their husbands and fathers having been deported? The pledges made on behalf of the British Government by O'Grady have been broken—the Soviet pledges alone have been kept.

Japan in Siberia.

Asked whether the Government would ask for a statement as to Japan's intentions in Eastern Siberia, before renewing the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the Prime Minister said no.

Naturally he said no, since the Government is fully aware of Japan's intentions and approves them so far as they may injure Soviet Russia.

British Capitalists Demanding Their "Pound of Flesh."

Sir A. Fell asked whether before any trade negotiations are entered into with Soviet Russia, the Soviets will be required to restore to British and French capitalists the properties of which they were dispossessed by the Workers' Revolution with "due compensation for such unlawful seizure."

The Prime Minister: "I do not think it would be desirable, whilst negotiations are proceeding, to publish details of the questions discussed, and demands put forward."

Sir A. Fell: "May I take it that this will be clearly provided for, as it is a matter of such vital importance to shareholders in this country and France?"

Lloyd George: "I can assure my hon. friend that this has not been lost sight of. I am only deprecating a discussion taking place at this moment. To go into details now will not help negotiations, but I realise fully the importance of the matter, which has been, and is, the subject of careful consideration."

The situation is quite clear: Britain is fighting Russia in the interests of the capitalists.

Polish Legation Demonstrations.

Lieut.-Colonel Archer Shee complained that "a mob" had assembled outside the Polish Legation nearly every night. The Home Secretary said the police arrangements had been adequate to keep the mob away from the legation.

Newer Ships Being Constructed with Oil-Consuming Boilers Instead of Coal.

June 1st.—£5,200,000 was voted for works, buildings, and repairs. This included the cost of oil fuel depots; £51,000 for Gibraltar; £50,000 for Hong Kong; £33,000 for Jamaica; £84,000 for Malta; £132,000 for Plymouth; £132,000 for Portland; £25,000 for Port Said; £18,500 for Rosyth; £36,850 for Port Edgar; and £118,000 for Glasgow.

On behalf of the Government it was stated:

"The oil fuel depots are consequent, of course, upon the policy of constructing our newer ships with oil-consuming boilers instead of coal. . . . When one takes the whole scheme of the oiling of the Navy in some future year, when the construction of new shipping has brought us into the position of having more ships under oil than under coal, it is absolutely necessary to have these large reservoirs and to have them in such positions that they are easily accessible even in peace time."

The South Wales miners should notice this development.

Coastguards.

Sir J. Craig, Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, said the Coast Guard Service, "which in reality is a reserve for coastal defence," must be placed in a better position "in case of further trouble." Three thousand coast guards are to be employed.

Kenworthy (Lib.) moved to reduce the vote for proposed buildings of £5,250,000 by £1,000,000. He pointed out that in the pre-war years, as he put it, "in the times of very great naval expansion to meet the German menace," and when some of the great naval training establishments were yet to be completed, the votes for buildings were:—1911-12, three millions; 1912-13, under three millions; and 1913-14, £3,500,000. Now after the war to end war it is £5,250,000.

Hogge (Lib.) also complained of the great expenditure "when we have reached a stage in the Peace negotiations when there is no possible conflict between our fleet and any hostile fleet that one knows about."

Evidently he fails to recognise that Britain's naval supremacy is challenged by America, and to notice that now we are passing in naval matters from the coal to the oil fuel period. America is better supplied than Britain with the means of driving battle ships.

The International Civil War.

The International Civil War in which the navy is taking part was almost entirely ignored. No Labour Member's voice was raised against the use of the navy in the Black Sea, the Baltic, at Archangel, Vladivostok, and so on.

Kenworthy alone raised the question of the policy that dictates the use of the navy. He complained of the "unnecessary" naval missions the Government sends about Europe, especially the missions to advise the Poles in navigating the river Vistula, to the Crimea, the ninety officers and men, to Baku, and so on.

War Pensions: Scandalous Corruption.

June 1st.—3,500,000 persons are receiving British War Pensions. The Ministry of Pensions employed on May 1 24,892 people to administer these pensions. That is only about 140 cases per administrator per annum. These figures reveal scandalous mismanagement, waste and jobbery. Whilst the 24,892 officials are loafing about with little or nothing to do, the pensioners they are supposed to be looking after are subjected to endless delays and official mistakes!

When the Revolution comes, there will certainly be a raid on the corrupt Pensions Ministry by righteously indignant war sufferers.

Overseas Settlement.

June 1st.—Mr. C. Palmer (Independent) said that an ex-serviceman, W. H. Crawford, was promised by the Overseas Settlement Department a free allotment of land in Queensland, an advance of capital at low interest from the Dominion savings bank, and free training at Government expense; also that his passage money would be refunded on his arrival at Brisbane.

He paid £85 for his passage money, but on reaching Brisbane nothing appeared to be known of the settlement scheme; £35 only was refunded to him, he was advised to return to England, and promised £2 2s. a week by way of relief till a vessel could be found. Although no vessel had been found, he was afterwards told that the £2 2s. might be stopped.

Owing to the disappointment and hardship she endured, Crawford's wife died in child-birth.

The Duke and His Land.

Questions were asked as to how much the Government is paying to the Duke of Bedford for the land behind the British Museum, which the Government is buying for the London University. The Minister of Education refused to tell. Mr. Palmer (Ind.) asked whether the Duke might possibly give the site to the University. That was considered quite an insult to the Duke.

HOUSING.

June 1st.—The Housing (Additional Powers) Act was passed in 1919 with much boast and bombast. At the end of April, 1920, this Act had only produced 2,054 houses, which were not even completed. It was expected that the housing subsidy would "shortly be paid" in respect of four houses; and the plans of 217 houses had been approved. Of the 2,054 houses, 1.5 per cent. are to be let under 6s. a week, 41.5 between 6s. and 12s., 55.5 between 12s. and 20s., and 1.5 over 20s. These rents are exclusive of rates. The average rent, exclusive of rates, is 12s. 3d. per week.

Keeping Peace (?) in the East.

June 3rd.—Mr. Palmer reported that the Foreign Office is supporting the King of the Hedjaz and supplying him with money, guns, and ammunition for his war against Ibn Saoud, the Emir of Nejde. Meanwhile the India Office is paying the Emir of Nejde a monthly subsidy of £10,000, which assists him in his war with the King of Hedjaz.

This is how the British Imperial Government maintains its own power.

Increase of Rent Bill.

June 4th.—The Minister of Health moved the Second Reading of the Bill to increase rent and the interest payable on mortgages. He said that some people have suggested that this Bill might be drafted so that anyone could "readily read and understand" it. But that he declared "is a dream and must remain a dream."

Indeed, it would never do to make Acts of Parliament so simple that anyone could understand them. The lawyers would protest if that were done!

Dr. Addison defended the Bill on the score that unless rents and interest were increased, people would not consider it profitable to build or repair houses, or lend money to those wishing to build houses for themselves unless a bigger profit could be made out of doing so.

Precisely: this plainly shows the failure of the Capitalist system. If it does not pay the capitalists to provide houses, the people must be homeless. Dr. Addison spoke of people who own only one or two houses, the rent of which is all they have to maintain them in their old age, and who cannot afford to keep these houses in repair. It would be better for the community to give a pension to such people and take over the houses.

Labour Party Fails to Oppose Increased Rent.

The Labour Party, instead of taking up an attitude of firm opposition to any increase of rent, moved a feeble amendment declaring that the increase of rent could not be assented to unless tenants were provided with "adequate security of tenure."

W. Graham (Lab., Hamilton), who introduced the amendment, said that Labour Party opinion is divided on the rent question; and that the small house-owners in the movement emphatically state the increased rent is necessary—some other people declare that no increase of any kind can be permitted; whilst others, he said, "would probably subscribe to many of" what he called "the undoubtedly excellent provisions of this bill."

Graham appears to be qualifying for a post in or under a Capitalist Cabinet. Graham suggested a Rent Court where the increase of rent should be made conditional on the circumstances of the house-owner. J. E. Davison (Lab., Smethwick) seconded the amendment, and suggested that the increased rent should be made conditional on the circumstances of the tenant and the accommodation provided. These were only vague suggestions, thrown out as padding to the speeches of these Labour Members. Being mutually contradictory, they illustrated the fact that the Labour Party is without a policy. Since the Labour Party accepts capitalism as a permanency which must be maintained, nothing is left to it but the advocacy of pettifogging reforms. The Labour Members do not oppose the increase of rents because they believe that landlords are entitled to let houses at a profit and that the right of landlords to do that comes before the right of other human beings to proper house accommodation.

In Soviet Russia the rent and the landlord have been abolished.

J. E. Davison pointed out that there are 3,250,000 tenements of one to three rooms in the United Kingdom, in which live 12,250,000 people.

Neil Maclean recalled the fact that a fortnight before a Scottish Labour and Co-operative Conference, at which there were over 1,000 delegates, had met in Glasgow and had carried a resolution that no increase in rent be permitted. An amendment to allow a ten per cent increase had only received eight votes. Fifty thousand Scottish people have signed a statement that they will pay no rent if this Act passes. There are 409,355 two-roomed tenements in Glasgow inhabited by 1,881,529 people. Eleven thousand houses occupied by 47,000 persons in Glasgow are certified unfit for human habitation by the Medical Officer of Health.

The Labour Party amendment was defeated by 146 votes to 30. Those renegade Labour Party men, George Roberts and James Parker, voted for the Bill. Only 17 Labour Members turned up to vote for their own amendment, feeble as it was!

SOUTH WALES NOTES. By R. P.

South Wales Rejects M.F.G.B. Proposition.

At a special conference of the M.F.G.B., held in London on March 10th, it was decided that the contributions to that body should be increased from 6d. to 1s. per week per man.

A South Wales delegate conference has emphatically rejected this proposition, and decided to take a ballot of all members of the S.W.M.F. upon the question. The result is an overwhelming rejection of the M.F.G.B. propositions, by a majority of about 57,000.

Brace Demands Fewer Conferences, More Ballots.

A few weeks ago W. Brace, M.P., attacked the Left Wing element in the S.W.M.F. in the columns of one of the local papers, declaring that as these men were generally selected to represent the Lodges at Cardiff, it was imperative that there should be fewer conferences and more ballot votes.

Will South Wales Leave M.F.G.B.?

Experience seems quickly to have altered our friend Brace's opinion, as on Saturday, 5th June, a conference was called to discuss among other matters the result of the ballot. Should South Wales continue refusing to pay the increased contributions; then, in accordance with the M.F.G.B. decisions, South Wales will automatically secede from the national body on July 1st.

Influenced, no doubt, by this, and fearing to see a break-up of the M.F.G.B., the Left Wing representatives on the South Wales Executive were the most eloquent in appealing to conference to decide in favour of the increased contribution. A resolution to this effect was therefore carried, and another ballot is to be taken.

This result indicates the apathy of the unofficial movement of South Wales, because this opportunity should have been exploited by the rank and file, but, unfortunately, no unofficial conference was called to obtain unanimity of action upon the matter.

The present constitution of the M.F.G.B. is most unsatisfactory, and, as I have pointed out, the progressive instincts of the Welsh miner have been curbed by the reactionary fat men from the other coalfields.

It is useless to build up a huge organisation that cannot be used effectively, and it is far better for South Wales to carry on its own work until such time as the M.F.G.B. is remodelled.

Again, take the question of wages. At present the M.F.G.B. is pledged to fight for uniform advances, and seeing that the cost of living is far higher in some districts than in others, this system is obviously unfair.

Had an unofficial conference been convened, therefore, previous to the official one, it is quite possible that this point of view would have prevailed, and the M.F.G.B. would have been requested to make the two following concessions:—

1. That in all cases the representatives of the Districts affiliated to the M.F.G.B. shall make every effort to obtain the opinions of the rank and file (either by summoning of conferences or taking of ballot votes) upon the questions to be discussed at the M.F.G.B. conference, prior to the holding of such conference.

2. That each district affiliated to the M.F.G.B. shall have local autonomy to decide what increases of wages are necessary for each particular district, and that national action shall then be taken to enforce the granting of the required increases.

Until these necessary concessions are granted, we cannot believe that the South Wales miners will reverse the decisions they have arrived at in the recent ballot vote.

The Housing Bonds Controversy.

A deputation from the Rhondda Urban District Council waited upon the monthly meeting of the Rhondda No. 1 District of the S.W.M.F., held at Porth on the 31st May, with the object of enlisting the support of the District for the Council's scheme of Housing Bonds. The whole fate of the scheme, they stated, hung upon the decision arrived at by the District Meeting. In the event of the District deciding to support them, they hoped the influence would be brought to bear upon the South Wales' Miners' Executive to persuade them to rescind their previous resolution, and to sink their funds in Housing Bonds.

£6,000,000 Required for the Rhondda.

Great play was made with the coal-owners' offer to invest a quarter of a million pounds subject to the Miners' Federation participating in the investment.

Questions elicited the information that to build the absolute minimum number of houses required in the Rhondda over £6,000,000 would be required. Therefore any scheme that did not provide for the raising of this amount could not be regarded as a serious effort to meet the demand for housing.

Playing With the Housing Question.

As the Council apparently is not prepared to endeavour to borrow the required amount it is clear that it is merely playing with the whole question.

In the discussion that followed the withdrawal of the deputation, the Left Wing opinion of the scheme (which was explained in these columns a fortnight ago) was not clearly expressed, and it was finally decided to refer the question back to the lodges for discussion. This can be safely regarded as the end of the scheme so far as the Rhondda miners are concerned.

Miners' Own Inspectors.

Several months ago the Rhondda District decided to appoint six permanent colliery inspectors, and it was decided to ballot for the positions of inspectors. The scheme was not put into operation owing to certain misunderstandings that arose. An attempt is

now being made by the Mardy Lodge to revive the whole scheme, and its delegate was instructed to move a resolution to this effect at the District meeting.

Mine Examiners Grow Thorough.

When the scheme was last discussed the men in a large number of pits were rather reactionary, and, in consequence, the examinations that were periodically conducted locally were merely cursory and served no useful purpose.

Since then there has been a remarkable growth of revolutionary feeling, and the examination of the mines that now take place are as perfect as the experience and technical knowledge of the examining workmen will allow.

In place of the old report "everything satisfactory," which was partly due to fear of the management, there is to-day almost a competition amongst the workmen appointed to examine the mine as to who can report the most defects. Further, the method of conducting the examination has changed.

The Old Method.

The old method was to appoint two men from each district as examiners. Examinations took place every three months, and the night before the examinations took place the secretary of the responsible committee would go to each appointed examiners' house and inform him that he was required to examine his district next day. In this way the management was warned of the impending examination, and any defect in the mine was removed. Accumulations of gas were removed, bad top was propped, roads were dusted and watered, and everything made to appear in good condition, in so far as it could be done in the time.

The New Method.

The new method is to appoint one trustworthy man who shall be individually responsible for seeing that the colliery is regularly examined. As before, men from each district are appointed to carry out the examination, and the responsible official can call upon any two men he desires to examine a district, whether they work in that particular district or pit. The general method is to send one man who works in the district with one from another district.

Pit committeemen, noticing in their district anything that is likely to prejudice the safety of the men, are required to report to the man we will call the Safety Secretary.

Then the matter rests with him and he uses his own discretion as to when he will send examiners around. The men who are to conduct the examination are not informed of the fact until they are ready to descend the pit.

In this way secrecy is maintained, a fair report of the general condition of the pit is given, and the management is debarred from camouflaging the true conditions under which work is carried on. This is an excellent method, as it tends to foster the growth of that essential fighting spirit amongst the rank and file. In view of this change, it is doubtful if any great benefit would be derived from a change of system. The Mardy resolution has been shelved for four months, and it seems likely to be dropped entirely.

"Increased Production."

Judging from a competition just started by the South Wales *Evening Express*, the editor of that journal must be a rather dry humourist. Competitors are asked to state how production in all the Welsh industries can be speeded up, and how labour troubles cannot be avoided. Yet the rules of the competition state that attacks upon men, organisations, capital or labour cannot be accepted.

Further comment would be superfluous.

OGMORE VALLEY NOTES.

By "A WAGE SLAVE"

(Too late for publication last week.)

As was anticipated, an attempt is being made to retard the progress made by the Wyndham workmen and the workers at other collieries who are supporting them in their Medical Aid Scheme. The object of the opponents is to divide the workmen and check the extension of the scheme. Their first attempt, on the face of it, seems a huge success; but as their opposition is based on the distortion of facts, its success will be short-lived.

The Facts.

In order that the workmen may clearly understand the nature of the opposition, and its self-justification of the steps taken, we will recapitulate the essentials. First of all Wyndham workmen received from their doctor three months notice to terminate the contract. They then decided to launch a scheme whereby they would have full control over their institution, including the surgery, surgical appliances, medicines, drugs, etc., and to pay the doctor a salary. In order to popularise the scheme, they held two public meetings, addressed by men from other districts where such schemes have been established, and those present were fully convinced of the benefits of same. In the meantime Wyndham workmen took steps to ascertain individually the opinion of the men and took the names and addresses of those supporting the scheme, who turned out to be 90 per cent. of the men employed.

Delegates from other lodges were invited to meetings on the medical scheme, and the delegates promised to report to their lodges. Later on a joint meeting representing other lodges was held. The result was overwhelmingly favourable to extending the scheme.

Two or three delegates, however, while not against the principle of the scheme, were anxious that the doctors of other collieries should be consulted upon it. Instead of approaching the Medical Committee of those collieries to discuss the matter jointly with their doctor, these people went to the doctor the very day of the meeting and told him an attempt was being made by a clique to drive him out of the Valley. As a result of that, the doctor that night sent in his resignation.

The lodges, in consequence of the decision of their joint meeting, instructed the Secretary of the Medical Committee to call upon that body to discuss the situation and to draw up a scheme which would comply with suggestions thrown out at the meeting and to put it to the doctor for his consideration.

The opposition got busy and organised a public meeting, in which the doctor was the principal speaker. This meeting was held at the same time as the Medical Committee. The Doctor first attended the Committee and, after a thorough discussion, went to the meeting while the Committee was still sitting deliberating upon the situation.

The policy of the doctor in submitting himself to the wishes of these servile adulators has not in any way enhanced his position; it has simply exhibited his lack of tact and sound judgment under delicate circumstances. The principal feature of the meeting was that a jerry-builder revealed his genius by stating it's the "Bolshies' game." Another, a discharged soldier, stated it was an attempt by some "conchies" to control the discharged soldiers; it required almost the genius of a Stanton to have thought of this.

The agitation over the scheme is only in its initial stage, but it is already bearing fruit, because the Ogmere Medical Committee has already met three times in a week, whereas it usually met once a year.

The Socialist Conference.

Efforts are being made to organise a conference of all Socialists in the Valley, to be addressed by some South Wales organisers of the I.L.P. While we have no objection to a meeting of all Socialists, we are rather suspicious as to the real motive behind it. We should prefer the organisers to be frank and call it an I.L.P. meeting, because we have no hesitation in saying that it is simply an effort to revive what is now dead and buried, the old, sentimental I.L.P. propaganda branch. We advise them to call it an I.L.P. Conference, open, not to all Socialists, but to I.L.P. sympathisers. The organisers should carry out Macdonald's appeal to confine themselves to I.L.P. speakers, and the I.L.P. point of view, not to think for themselves except in accordance with the spirit and ethics which the I.L.P. has evolved specifically for itself; and not in any way to allow themselves to be contaminated by those materialists of the Marxian School. The prospects of an I.L.P. Branch of reviving here are very remote. Those who formed the old branch have gone different ways: some to the right, others to the left. The difference between us is of such a nature that it cannot be reconciled; it is social reform versus social revolution; in other words, to use all our powers to modify capitalism in its most glaring and hurtful part, in order to give it a further lease of life, as against concentrating all our energies upon ways and means of uprooting it once and for all. We have no objection to reform, subject to it giving us a further hold upon capitalism, but to the view that our objective can be gained by reform alone, would be a contradiction of our experience of Modern Capitalism.

TOM KINSEY.

MAY DAY IN CAPE TOWN.

Dear Comrade,—For the first time in the history of this city, Labour has celebrated this eventful day. Organised Labour marched in procession through the principle streets; the procession extended over a mile.

Among those who celebrated Labour Day was the Industrial Socialist League. This revolutionary league was quite at the end of the procession, and one of the daily rags reported that the sting of the procession was at the tail-end.

After the procession, organised Labour assembled on the Grand Parade, where eight platforms were erected. A resolution was carried unanimously declaring that the present system of society, based on private ownership, has long shown signs of dissolution, and pledging the meeting, in view of "the near approach of the decisive hour when the system must inevitably collapse," "to prepare by organisation of industries to be in a position to carry on production and distribution in the time of capitalist dissolution, through the dictatorship of the working class in the Co-operative Commonwealth."

No doubt our Labour M.P. objected to the terms of the first resolution, for they did not turn up to speak as advertised. However, their absence could well be spared—revolutionary speakers filled their places.

For the great occasion the Industrial Socialist League of South Africa published a double number of the *May Bolshevik*. Among other contributions there was one from Comrade Tom Mann, and one from the Editor of the "Workers' Dreadnought."

The same League also carried banners in the procession, inscribed: "Follow the Lead of Free Russia," "Peace with Soviet Russia." The Young Socialist League banner read: "Prepare the Young Generation for Socialism."

We exchange to all Comrades hearty May Day greetings.—Yours for the Revolution,

M. WALT.

118, Hatfield Road, Capetown, South Africa.

BETWEEN OURSELVES. By L. A. MOTLER.

The band is about to strike up with "Peace with the Bolsheviks," but there is some discord in the Government orchestra. You see, Henry, our friend the kind-hearted capitalist wants to make peace with one hand and swipe the Bolsheviks with the other. He would rather prefer, however, to dip both hands into the bags full of Bolsh gold: so we have Krassin here. The capitalists are giving him the "once-over" just to see if he is the sort of man they can count on in a "hold-up" of the Russian people.

Of course it is quite possible that Lenin may be prepared to give our profiteers certain "concessions" to exploit the minerals and other raw material in Russia. But what good is a concession to a capitalist unless he has willing slaves? How is he to make a profit if Russian workers demand £5 a day wages—or even more? He will probably demand the right of cheap labour and to dump British Henry Dubbs in Russia.

In the meantime, our militarist, our junkers are getting dissatisfied. They imagine they are being cheated out of a nice little war. And so we have in Parliament Colonel Archer-Shee blethering to this effect:—

"Is it not desirable that our officers and men should be seen over the Russian frontier before we open up negotiations with these torturers, murderers and scoundrels?"

The gallant Colonel has really a quaint view of what war amounts to. I don't pretend to know on what front he served in the Great War, but it must have been Dublin. How is it we have officers and men in the hands of the Bolsheviks?

One would suppose that some of our brave and gallant troops went to Russia on a picnic. They took tanks, Lewis guns, bayonets, mustard gas, trench mortars and tin helmets just to sort of keep them company and to remind them of home and mother. But it was just like the wicked Bolsheviks to take them prisoners, wasn't it, Henry? Almost any sensible man, after being bombed from the air and had a barrage put over him, would simply hug a British soldier who came to him with a bayonet, business and first. But a Bolshevik, ah!

Colonel Archer-Shee has a queer kind of machinery under his brass hat. Why at all open up negotiations with torturers, murderers and scoundrels? Even if they do hand over our meek and mild officers and privates, they will still be torturers, etc. Lenin will still be eating his £60,000 of fruit monthly and have fried babies for breakfast. So the only thing to do seems to be to get on with the war.

And you know, Henry, how we got on with it, in quite a different fashion to these torturers, murderers and scoundrels. In *Military Discipline and Democracy*, Ernest Thurtle says:—

"Another case may be cited to show how hard upon an unfortunate individual the application of the penal code of military law may be. A corporal was going out at daybreak with a Lewis gun team to man a post in No Man's Land held only during the day. The enemy was lying in wait in this post, having occupied it during the night. The Lewis gun team was surprised and attacked, suffered some casualties, and the corporal and a few of his men came back to the front line. Here the team was reorganised and the same corporal was ordered to take it out to the post again. He pleaded that his nerves were shattered, and he did not feel equal to it. Pressed to carry out the order, he refused, and was placed under arrest. This corporal had previously been decorated with the Military Medal for gallantry, and this fact saved him from suffering the supreme penalty, but it did not save him from a lengthy term of penal servitude."

And I guess, Henry, the Archer-Shee family are a cut above common corporals—and sergeants. Here's more:—

"A battalion was in the line near Arras. It had seen eighteen months of heavy service and had suffered severe casualties on more than one occasion. The enemy was somewhat active in his night-raiding operations at this time, and had met with some success. Divisional Headquarters issued instructions that next time the enemy made a successful raid on our line, somebody would suffer. Soon after this, aided by darkness and a drizzle, the enemy made a raid on the battalion already mentioned, and succeeded in inflicting casualties and taking prisoners. An enquiry took place, and several N.C.O.'s and men were arrested. As a result, a sergeant and two corporals were convicted and shot."

No colonel shot, you notice, Henry. Officers are merely given the bird as politely as possible—it is called being "cashiered"—and sent home. But the common truck of N.C.O.'s and privates get it in the neck. That's not torture or murder. As for scoundrelism, well—

Major-General Swinton says, "the final form of human warfare, as I regard it, is *germ warfare*. I think it will come to that, and so far as I see, there is no reason why it should not, if we mean to fight."

Are they going to try this on Russia—or Ireland?

UNITED VEHICLE WORKERS.

Points from the Nottingham Conference Agenda. (Continued from last week.)

The resolutions dealing with annual delegate meetings and special meetings are very numerous. At present special delegate meetings are very difficult to call. The rule is hedged round with such conditions as that which requires that a majority of the branches shall desire it to be held. These conditions make the power over the Executive by the members, through the channel of special delegate meetings, difficult to operate. An amendment calls for a special delegate meeting to be held on receipt of 400 signatures of financial members. Much work is necessary for obtaining 400 signatures. It is therefore improbable that members will attempt to requisition a delegate meeting unless they are convinced it is absolutely necessary. This amendment is very desirable. The work of getting "a majority of 300 branches" to demand a special delegate meeting is so immense that no body of members would ever be able to secure such a mandate. Another amendment substitutes "six lodges" instead of a majority. Possibly this amendment errs on the side of giving too much power to small minorities, but such a rule for twelve lodges would be just and equitable.

Many amendments desire to tighten up and extend the powers of delegate meetings, in particular making it the body to inaugurate new policies and movements in the interests of the members, and giving it the fullest powers over the officials of the Society. It is very necessary that the members should possess the fullest powers through this means. At present rules may only be altered once every three years, a most extraordinary state of affairs, and *two-thirds of the membership must be in favour of any alteration in order that the same can become law*, a condition that should be radically altered.

Another item that will call for much discussion is on the question of remuneration of officials and staff, and the attempt to prevent the Executive Councilors from voting increases of salary to themselves and the Officials' increases, and to see that but only an annual delegate meeting or special delegate meeting shall do this. Executive Councilors should be like Caesar's wife, above suspicion, and should hold the scale impartially in the interests of the members; they should not themselves benefit pecuniarily by virtue of their office. They should not have the power to pack Joint Industrial Councils with themselves, as it is alleged has been done, and they certainly should not have the power to vote themselves into jobs. As delegates their duty should be to reflect accurately the wishes of the membership and not their own personal inclinations, and as they are infected with the aspirations and feelings of the rank and file, so are they truly Executive *Delegates*.

As regards salaries of staffs, it is to be hoped that some move may be initiated so that the staffs of all the Trade Unions may be placed on a standard basis with a Joint Board consisting of representatives from the Guild of Trade Union Clerks and representatives of the employers' side appointed by the Trade Union Congress to reach conditions of standardisation. As matters stand at present fierce attacks are threatened on those Union Officials who run for Parliament as champions of the workers on the ground of the miserable pittance they pay their own employees. How on earth a man can be a champion of the workers and a believer in Economic Democracy when he is drawing £1,400 himself from the Labour Movement, and pays adult clerks miserable pittance, is beyond conception. I am glad to say that this Union has never been one of the worst in its treatment of its clerical staff, though too much prone to make use of the capitalist argument about the law of supply and demand in fixing clerical wages.

"The best clerk cannot possibly be so valuable or worth such a standard of living as the worst 'bus-driver,' sums up their views on the question pretty accurately.

It is a disgraceful negation of the principles of Brotherhood.

Resolution Passed by Executive.

"This Executive Council emphatically protests against Poland's wanton attack on Russia, and calls on the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress to convene immediately a special National Conference in order to declare a national strike to force the British Government to insist on Poland making peace with Russia; and further calls upon the Polish masses to take drastic action to frustrate the Imperialist designs of their Government."

This E.C. represents approximately 120,000 workers.

E.T.W.

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LONDON MEETINGS: OUTDOOR.

Thursday, June 10th. Outside Pentonville Prison, 8 p.m. Melvina Walker and others. Urgent appeal to members of the W.S.F. and supporters of communism to attend this meeting.

Friday, June 11th. Manor Park Road, near Willesden Junction Station, 7.30 p.m. David Maguire and others.

St. Michael's Church, St. Leonard's Rd., Poplar, 7.30 p.m. M. Barnett, Melvina Walker.

Saturday, June 12th. Stockwell Street, Greenwich, 3 p.m. M. Barnett, Minnie Birch, Melvina Walker.

Stockwell Street, Greenwich, 7 p.m. Janet Grove, Melvina Walker and others.

Sunday, June 13th. Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.45 a.m. Melvina Walker and others.

Dock Gates, Poplar, 7.30 p.m. David Maguire, Melvina Walker, E. J. Stewart.

Friday, June 18th. Manor Park Road, near Willesden Junction Station, 7.30 p.m. Pyzer and others.

St. Michael's Church, St. Leonard's Rd., Poplar, 7.30 p.m. Janet Grove, Melvina Walker.

INDOOR.

Monday, June 14th. 20, Failand Street, Poplar, 8 p.m. W.S.F. Business Meeting.

Thursday, June 17th. 20, Railway Street, Poplar, 8 p.m. Speakers' Class. Melvina Walker.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

EAST LONDON WORKERS' COMMITTEE.

Sunday, June 13th. Victoria Park, 12 (noon). Walter Ponder and others.

Thursday, June 17th. International Socialist Club, 28, East Road, City Road, 7.30 p.m. Business Meeting.

WALTHAMSTOW LEAGUE OF RIGHTS.

Tuesday, June 15th. William Morris Hall, Somers Road, 3 p.m. Jim Cant.

HANDS OFF GERMANY COMMITTEE.

Saturday, June 12th and 19th. Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 7.30 p.m. Cohen, Rosenberg and others.

LENIN'S PORTRAIT.

Splendid portraits of LENIN on card, 7½ inches by 11 inches. Price 1s. 6d. each; 15s. 6d. a dozen.

USEFUL FOR 'HANDS OFF RUSSIA' PROPAGANDA.

New Pamphlet.

"Lloyd George Takes the Mask Off" by SYLVIA PANKHURST. Price 1½d., from W.S.F., 400 Old Ford Rd., London, E.3.

"An Appeal to the Young." By JAMES STEWART. For the Sunday Schools and Young Peoples Organisations. From the W.S.F. Price 2d.

"Ireland: the Achilles Heel of England." By HERMAN GORTER. From the W.S.F. Price 1d.

The "BOLSHEVIK" Post Card Series, 6 for 4½d., and Photographs of KARL LIEBNECHT and ROSA LUXEMBURG, 2d. each, from W.S.F., 400, Old Ford Road.

Comrades are asked to send second-hand clothes and other goods to LUCY BUGGIS, 438, Old Ford Road, to sell for our funds.