

# Workers' Dreadnought

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## Some Thoughts on Tactics

By NESS EDWARDS.

### Parliament a Dying Institution.

That which is near to us we generally fail to see, at least in its true perspective. What may appear to a superficial observer as a fluctuation of the importance of Parliament or the abuse of power by a coterie of ministers, may turn out to be the signs of a dying institution.

It is rather peculiar that our "evolutionary Socialist" friends, who boast of their "historic poise," have not seen the historical significance of this phenomena, and still only view it as an "abuse of power." It is not a compliment to the Macdonalds that they go no further than such bourgeois papers as the *Daily News* in their criticism of this phenomenon, and that they see nothing of a positive character in it. Whilst the form of power—the vote—is given to an ever-increasing number, the actual power is centred in the hands of a few "great men." But the attitude of these "great men" towards the House of Commons is the true measure of the impotence of it, and a sign we should not fail to notice.

### Legislation in the Hands of Industrial Magnates.

Legislation is in the hands of the industrial magnates behind the scenes. Bills are prepared by the Ministers in conjunction with city men, bankers, and the heads of the large industries. We know that all the forces of British politics are following the trail of oil in these days.

To the extent that industry becomes more centralised, and the new markets become fewer, the capitalists consider it necessary for the national politics to be controlled directly by the industrial magnates. To that extent also they consider it essential for Parliament to be more and more ignored and the Minister to become more autocratic. The more this tendency emphasises itself and crystallises, the more must the masses be bluffed by the pillars of democracy.

### Industrial Unions Assume More Power.

On the other hand, another tendency must be noted. The trade unions are assuming more power, and the trade union headquarters becomes the point of opposition to Government departments. The effective opposition, from the workers, toward new industrial and political movements of the capitalists, too, are arranged by the trade unions. Direct action becomes of greater importance than the Labour M.P. or the Labour Party. The acknowledgement of the necessity of direct action is a sign of the Parliamentary impotence of Labour. The capitalists and their puppets make Parliament conform to their desires, whilst the workers are compelled more and more to resort to direct action, and to rely less and less on Labour M.P. These are sure signs of the decay of the Parliamentary institution.

### Trade Unions versus the Capitalist State.

As the antagonisms in capitalist society develop more and more; as the capitalist class consolidates itself into more powerful groups on the one hand, and the workers strengthen and solidify their trade unions on the other, the possibilities of revolutionary crises become more numerous. The more the highly-concentrated capitalist executive has to rely on the use of the State forces, and the more brazenly they act in that respect, the more wide awake becomes the proletariat.

### Workers' Demands Exceed What Capitalist Industries Can Bear.

As the workers make demands upon the production of industry which the industry fails to bear under the present system (witness some of the Government subsidies), the State forces are brought in to check the workers.

### The State Intervenes.

This creates a new set of circumstances. Whereas the negotiations, of days gone by, for wage advances, etc., used to take place between craft unions and small sections of employers, we now find huge national industrial unions making demands upon national sections of capitalists. In many cases, the magnitude of the disputes has been such that, "for the safety of the public," the State has had to interfere. Now a break between the State and the Trades Unions in disputes creates an event of national importance, a revolutionary crisis. As each union comes to be a national industrial union, so will these crises increase in number.

The present financial position, which can hardly change for the better at least under five years, will compel the workers to increase their demands, whether the industries as at present controlled can bear them or not. Thus the number and magnitude of the crises will grow. The education of an increasing

minority of workers at the Labour colleges and classes will give this force direction. As this conscious direction comes to dominate these movements more and more, especially during this period of turbulence, the revolutionary possibilities become greater.

### Communist Party Must Be Moulded for Crisis.

As the periods of apathy tend to become shorter and crises appear more often, it is essential that the Communist policy should be moulded so as to cater for periods of crisis.



THE LEGITIMATE FORM OF HOLD-UP.

### Right Wing Policy Created for Apathetic Period.

The chief folly of our evolutionary friends is that their policy is outlined on a basis of apathy, leaving out of consideration the revolutionary possibilities of a crisis; in other words, satisfies only the conditions of periods from which we expect the least results.

Our policy should be one of making the most of the upheavals of a decaying society, not only to hasten its decay, but, by that very process, to encourage the growth of those institutions of the new society.

### Parliamentary Action Postpones the Revolution.

Now with Communists there is no question about the permanent use of the Parliamentary system, so the question is: "How can we best hasten the decay of Parliament and the growth of the Soviets?" One section of the Communists have for a good while advocated the entrance of their representatives into Parliament as destructive elements, using the floor of the House of Commons as a propaganda platform. This section also believed until recently that Parliamentary representation gives a chance to the peaceful solution of the great question at issue.

Let us take the last consideration first.

The impotence of Parliament is an undeniable fact and the tendency is for it to become more impotent. As the workers are forced to rely more and more on direct action, the "great question at issue" is taken away from the Parliamentary sphere, and so the solution of it cannot come from Parliament. But let us grant it that Parliament does offer a chance for the peaceable "solution of the question," this can only be materialised if the revolutionary possibilities of crises are rejected. To reject these chances is to betray the trust of the workers and to postpone indefinitely the social revolution.

Revolutionary action is the acts of a crisis, and, in a sense, is abnormal action.

The second reason, that of using the House of Commons as a propaganda platform, we can safely leave to the controllers of the newspapers of the country. The first reason, that Communist M.P. should use their position as destructive agents is, perhaps, the best reason.

### Communists in Parliament Bolster Up Dying Institution.

But the method of asking workers to give votes to Communist candidates, at the same time telling them that their votes are worthless, in asking them to send a representative to a worthless institution, is giving

them a contradiction which will not go down. All that it does is to give a representative character to a worthless, decaying institution. To waste the energy and enthusiasm of the workers in this would lead us nowhere.

The question of Parliamentary action is being settled under our noses. Democracy becomes a shadow, a cloak for the concealment of the rule of the capitalist executive, and as that executive has to ignore the institution and rob it of its power, the workers are forced to rely upon industrial power. The future fight, then, is not between the political party of the workers and the State, but between the great trade unions, including the workers' councils, and the State; it is in the struggle between these forces that the issue will be settled.

### Not Parliament but the Soviets.

At the same time the posture of the Soviets versus Parliament is not only a positive attitude, but will raise the whole status of the Soviet propaganda to the position of an institution of opposition. The active, positive boycott of Parliament, particularly during election times, drives the enthusiasm and attention of the workers into a constructive channel. A negative position only has been too long held.

In short, the policy of the Communist should conform and be moulded upon the increasing crises, and that during periods of apathy the process of education and organisation to be proceeded with. To accept this policy or capitulate to the Government must be the only choice left to the workers during crises.

This well-argued thesis should be studied by those of our readers who hesitate on the verge of Parliamentarism.

We draw the attention of Comrade Ness Edwards, and all our readers, to the Manifesto which has reached us from the Communist Labour Party of Germany. This deals with the Parliamentary question, and also with the part of the Industrial Unions in Revolution.

Comrade Edwards should carry further his discussion on that head.

He should consider two important factors:—

(1) The Trade and Industrial Unions have a vast machinery for and are steeped in the practice of palliative dealing with the employers. They have vast funds which the Government might attack if the Union took what is termed illegal action, and this fact tends to have a deterrent effect. The guardianship of friendly benefits also develops cautious tendencies, and participation in the administration of the State Insurance Acts and other Government concerns builds up ties between the Unions and the Capitalist system not easy to sever.

(2) The Trade and Industrial Unions admitting, as they must, every worker in the industry, necessarily approximate to the class-consciousness and political ripeness, not of the Left Wing but of the Majority, and the fear of splitting up the organisation forces the majority to allow its policy to be greatly modified by the Right Wing.

Before the revolutionary crisis arrives, therefore, it is necessary to build up a Left Wing of convinced Communists able to make the first step which will set in motion the events which will move the mass.

We should be glad to see the question of the development towards revolutionary action of the industrial workers, elaborated by Comrade Edwards in a further article. —[Editor, *Workers' Dreadnought*.]



## Dogmatism and Opportunism.

By HERMAN GORTER.

### The Example of Holland.

In the first article we showed why, theoretically, the use of Parliament in a country like Germany, where the revolution has broken out, is harmful to the proletariat. In the second article we proved the same, from a practical point of view. We will see how dangerous the use of Parliamentarism may be in a country where revolution has not yet broken out.

There is a country where a radical revolutionary Socialist movement has existed these five-and-twenty years, where a Communist Party has succeeded in getting seats in Parliament, and where, therefore, we can study the results of practical participation in Parliamentary action. This country is Holland.

A short survey of the history of the Dutch movement should precede.

### Birth of Dutch S.D. Party.

After a long struggle with Anarchists and Syndicalists, the old Social-Democratic Party was born in 1894. After a very few years of really Marxian revolutionary propaganda and practice, opportunism began to manifest itself. Immediately we took action against it. We tried to hold it back. We fought opportunism in nearly every question of internal politics, in the agrarian question, the educational problem, the suffrage, the colonies, in the problems of the workers' insurance, the eight hours' working day, of militarism, of imperialism. We never gave in, but we did not succeed. We gathered a minority around us, however. This fight was fought for the most part theoretically, in written and oral debates, at congresses, etc. Of this struggle Henriette Roland Holst and the writer of this present article were the "leaders."

Then a new generation came, who took up the fight on other, more practical lines. They began to organise the opposition in the groups of the party, and founded a weekly, the *Tribune*, of which the writer became a collaborator; and Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn were the leaders.

### Expelled from Party.

Our fight grew so fierce, that, in 1909, the leader of the opportunist party, Troelstra, caused us to be thrown out of the Party, an unprecedented proceeding in the International till then.

It proved to be a blessing to us. For this was the time of the growth of Imperialism, and now our fierce struggle for life against the almighty old Party constrained us to fight even more strongly, and to the utmost, for Marxian principles. We had to take all consequences, draw all issues—in the first place in the question of militarism, colonisation and imperialism. We numbered only a few hundred, so that we had to find our weapons in hard study, truth, and the keenest fighting.

And thus we succeeded in forming a very small, but very strong party; a party that fought on straight lines, theoretically as well as practically, and on every question. Two proofs will suffice here. In 1912, when a world-war threatened to break out (by the conflict in Bosnia), we proposed at the Basle Congress immediately to proclaim the general European strike against war, a course of action which, in 1914, proved to have been right. In July and August, 1914, when it was generally believed that Holland would be likewise involved in the war, the course of action taken by our Party was exemplary. And so it has been for many years since. Our Party was rightly called the Bolshevik Party of Western Europe.

Now all this has changed completely. Although much stronger externally, the party has weakened considerably internally. We are a strong party no longer.

Little united as we are, we no longer present one single front. We have grown opportunist, erring in many directions, on many questions of principle, uncertain, often, how to act. And through what reason? Through the use of Parliamentary action, and of the elections.

In showing how much the Dutch Party (since 1918 no longer the S.D.P., but the C.P.: Communist Party) has deteriorated through the use of Parliamentarism, I will have to be most careful. The English worker cannot read our Press, and cannot therefore verify what I am going to say. For that reason I will omit all cases that are in any way dubious, stating only such facts as I have brought forward a hundred times in Holland, and as have never been opposed or denied.

As I have said before, our fight had ever been clear and straight in every direction. Then in 1917 our electoral campaign began, and things became quite different.

### Dutch Workers During War.

In order to understand this, we should know the position of the Netherlands workers during the war. As everybody knows, Holland depended on Germany, economically and consequently politically also. For that very reason the old party, and its leader Troelstra, opportunist and nationalistic to the core, were pro-German. The Anarchists and Syndicalists, and many petty-bourgeois, were pro-Entente, in the first place on account of the invasion of Belgium. In the electoral fight against that old party, the votes of these petty-bourgeois, the Anarchists and Syndicalists would be obtained, by being pro-Entente.

And thus our "leaders," Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn, changed their tactics. To get seats in Parliament, to obtain "power" for the party and for themselves, these true and splendid fighters, these

true and sincere Marxists, became the enemies of German imperialism only, and turned into partisans of the Entente! In the opening speech of Wynkoop's electoral campaign, German imperialism was denounced, whilst there was a complete silence with regard to England and the Entente. And in our paper, the *Tribune*, it has been the same, for many years.

I will next give the mere facts.

In April, 1917, Lenin, Zinovieff and others went from Switzerland, through Germany, to Russia. The editors of our paper (Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn) wrote disapprovingly about that voyage. (It might possibly be harmful to the Entente!)

In July, 1917, Kerensky and Broessiloff made their last desperate offensive to save the cause of the Entente. This offensive, according to Trotsky, was the most terrible blow to the world-revolution and the Russian workers. Our daily paper, the *Tribune*, formerly the champion of Marxism and the revolution, approved openly of the Kerensky-Broessiloff offensive.

And they wrote their disapproval of the peace of Brest-Litovsk, by which Lenin weakened the cause of England!

An Amsterdam comrade and the present writer, in August, 1917, wrote against this attitude of Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn. Our opposition, however, was crushed. Two articles of mine against English Imperialism (in which I proved it to be as bad for the workers of the world as German Imperialism) were suppressed during nine months; the last of them, a keen attack against England, was not printed till after the elections, when it could do harm no longer! Thus the freedom of speech in our once so splendid party was done away with, only for the sake of some seats in Parliament!

### Celebrating Wilson.

Matters grew still worse, however. After the United States had joined in the war, van Ravesteijn and Wynkoop began to celebrate Wilson. When at the Amsterdam Conference I told this to Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and others they would not believe me. I will add here the words written by these editors of the *Tribune*:

"Indeed, for the United States it is not in the first, and not even in a foremost place, the direct, we might say the tangible, imperialistic interests which are at stake—interests, therefore, of a territorial, economic or financial nature."

According to the *Tribune*, therefore, the United States do not fight for power in China, on the Pacific, in Japan, in Siberia and in Russia. According to the *Tribune* the United States do not fight in order to obtain world-dominion! This is surely the most untrue utterance ever published by a Communist paper.

And the editors go still further. They say:—

"Wilson strives in the first place to defend the Union from a terrible danger he sees looming ahead, and to create a new world-order, in which that threatening danger, if it cannot be averted altogether, will at any rate be far more easily mastered, and it which it might even be possible for ever to avoid great collision between the powers. This is the material foundation for his 'idealism' and his war-madness. A capitalistic ideal, it is true, but an order of things which would undoubtedly mean a higher stage of development."

"This imperialistic ideal implies . . . nothing less than the possibility, the aim, to guard the capitalist world from a fearful catastrophe, such as it has been undergoing these last four years."

And, according to the editors, this war-aim of Wilson's has become "more and more the war-aim of radical political opinion in many European countries."

Here, therefore, we have approval for the aim of Entente Imperialism.

Here, after it has been said that the United States do not fight for material profit, it is said of the United States and of the entire Entente, nay of all pacifists in Europe, that they may very likely bring about a new capitalistic world-order, in which the great collisions are done away with, or for the most part prevented!

Here reformism is propagated in foreign politics, which can have the same outcome as reformism in home politics.

And in many other places this Imperialistic aim of America and England was defended.

The editors of the *Tribune* agree here with all reformists and Social-Patriots, with all false Marxists of the type of Kautsky, with all pacifists, with all bourgeois demagogues like Lloyd George and Wilson, and with all bourgeois parties that try to betray the workers with the possibility of a world-league and world-peace. This world-peace is the most gigantic fraud the world has ever seen, and the *Tribune* agrees with it.

This is opposed to all the teachings the Marxian theory gives us so far. This is the strongest sample of pro-Entente politics on the part of the *Tribune* editors.

As there was a possibility that the Zimmerwald Conference at Stockholm would strengthen the position of Germany, Wynkoop boycotted that Conference, and, by his manoeuvres and his position as president of the Executive of our Party, rendered it impossible for us to go there.

The leaders of the Communist Party (then the S.D.P.), however, have applied these tactics also to practical politics in Parliament.

### Food from America.

The most serious suspicions that Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn would be pro-Entente and pro-American also in Parliament, have come true. During the war, in the autumn of 1918, they have in Parliament proposed, "by every means," to obtain food from the United States. This means, therefore, also at the cost of having to give ships, etc., to the United States to help them in their fight against the Central Powers, Russia, etc. For everyone knew—and the term "by every means" proves that Wynkoop also understood—that in case the Netherlands acceded to their proposition, the United States would in their turn claim more ships for war purposes. In order to obtain white bread, therefore, the Parliamentary fraction supported the Entente. And it did so at a moment when the Entente was about to attack and suppress the Russian Revolution, and perhaps, also, the revolutions of Germany and Austria! As for that, the Members of Parliament had promised it already during the elections: "White bread for the people of the Netherlands, above all!"

Whether this proceeding was harmful to the Russian, the German, the Austrian, the International Revolution, was of no concern. Long live the National! This should come before the International! White bread by every means.

The S.D.P. claimed that the others, the German, English, French and American parties, should be international in the war, that they should not support it, that they should all suffer hunger, sorrow, the destruction of their land, the death of their children and women, and their own death, rather than support imperialism. And now, that the S.D.P. and the Netherlands proletariat were to suffer, but a thousand times less than that of the countries at war, now the S.D.P. and the Netherlands proletariat had no need to be international!

It was all make-believe, therefore. The abusing of the Social-Patriots as well as the glorifying of the Bolsheviks. As soon as their proper turn came to suffer for the international ideal, to place it above the national, they have failed. The S.P.D., in taking this course of action, has accepted the standpoint of Kautsky, Longuet, etc. Again, it has placed the small National Party interest over the International class interest. The great need of the present is to forget the party interest, and to place the international class interest above all. Or rather, to render the International interest the Party interest.

### Rotterdam an English Base.

And in practical politics Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn added to this that they did not protest against the making of Rotterdam into a base for England and America. Although this base was intended without a doubt against the German Communist revolution also, although England and America will doubtless try, when in the future the Communist Revolution again breaks out in Germany, to smother it from this base, as they did in Hungary and tried to do in Russia, although in ceding Rotterdam as a base the Netherlands Government for the first time joined the world's reaction, although this was the first opportunity for the Netherlands proletariat to join on the one front in the international struggle against world capital for the world revolution, the Communists in the Netherlands have not uttered a single word of opposition or protest.

And, lastly, the leaders of the Communist Party in Holland have refused to protest against the Peace of Versailles, only in order not to offend the Entente capitalists. This peace brings immense suffering to the entire European proletariat. It renders the Continent of Europe impotent, uniting the entire world capital, under the leadership of England and the United States, against the world proletariat. And yet the Communist Party refused to join in the protest!

Again the same tactics: Everything against Germany, nothing against Anglo-American Imperialism. So much where foreign politics are concerned.

It goes without saying that to carry on these tactics, and to obtain that end, the gaining and retaining of seats in Parliament, the greatest opportunism became inevitable also in internal politics.

Holland has a Social-Patriotic Trade Union movement of some 250,000 men; a Syndicalist movement of some 60,000. Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn wanted the votes of these latter. To that end the criticism on Syndicalism had either to cease completely, or to become totally insignificant (just as in England, when one needs the votes of the Labour Party, the sharp criticism of it will have to disappear). And thus it happened. The Syndicalists are constantly praised. And also the Anarchists. An article of mine, containing a sharp attack on the Syndicalists, was refused. There is a constant endeavour to win the good graces of these voters. Further, the old party gave money for the famished people of Vienna and Budapest. Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn consequently proposed to send one hundred thousand guilders out of the Amsterdam and Rotterdam municipal funds! This was actually done!

### Only on the Programme.

The Social-Patriotic Party has on its programme the socialisation of industry. To compete with these in the eyes of the voters Wynkoop and van Ravesteijn claimed in Parliament the nationalisation of the soil. No revolution, therefore, but socialisation by means of Parliament!

It likewise goes without saying that in order to carry on these tactics the leaders had to become tyrants, almighty leaders, usurping all the power,

\* Holland had more brown bread than any of the countries at war had.

(Continued next page, column 3.)



## BOOKS REVIEWED.

### \*CREATIVE REVOLUTION.

A Review. By HUGH HOPE.

The authors of this book tell us that *Creative Revolution* is an endeavour to clear much prevalent confusion away from the path of Socialist theory; but it is likewise a call to arms, and so on.

It would seem that the work was chiefly written for revolutionary leaders and propagandists, especially those of the artistic temperament. The writers think that "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" should be superseded by a newly-coined word, "Ergatocracy," and the first chapter is a definition of it and its underlying principles. "Ergates," it is explained, "is the Greek word for worker." The term seems so unfortunate; it savours of autocracy, and suggests a smile when one thinks of "ergo." But it might go into the language like ochlocracy—mob rule—without ever becoming popular like democracy.

The chapter on *Social Solidarity* is primarily addressed to bourgeois intellectuals. It deals principally with Bertrand Russell (who, by the way, puts Ethel Snowden in the shade in his polite attack on the Russian Communists in the *Nation* of the 10th inst.), Ramsay MacDonald, and the Fabians. One gathers from it that while this gang would endeavour to capture Parliament, and institute a reformist rule of labour, the workers should concentrate on the destruction of Parliament and the substitution of the "regional and occupational soviets."

In *The Class Struggle* the work of the Plebs League and Labour Colleges, the Syndicalists and the I.W.W. is lightly touched upon. Towards the end of the chapter we find this pronouncement: "We do not build too much on the possibilities of 'corrupting' the armed forces of the Crown. . . . There are other methods for ensuring the victory of the workers when the decisive moment comes." But somewhere else the authors hint at the perils and hardships that a revolution in England might bring to the workers from her utter dependence on foreign countries for food. Such suffering would become unbearable, if a loyalist Navy controlled the trade routes and America and the great Colonies remained reactionary, and would inevitably result in an abortive revolution which might lead to a subsequent period of inaction and reaction. It seems that, as was done in Russia, some efficient means must be devised to disseminate propaganda among the most highly-organised and trustworthy fighting forces of the world, unless the "other methods for ensuring the victory of the workers" are made known, tried, and deemed feasible by the revolutionary Communists.

In appraising the Shop Stewards' movement, the authors declare that "we have no Lenin here, nor need of one"; a rather odd thing to say when, as Communists and revolutionaries, we are always alating our official leaders for betrayal of the cause. Personally, I do not care from what class the English Lenin comes, but I am sure it will require an iron will to mould the efficient minority that must carry on the work of the revolution during the transition stage.

The book is well prepared, and it runs the gamut of modernistic literature from Whitman, Marx and Morris to Freud, Jung and Trotsky.

The quotations are copious. This, from Rosa Luxemburg's *Revolutionary Socialism in Action* is very fine:—

"To-day we can seriously set about destroying Capitalism once for all. . . . If the proletariat fails to fulfil its duty as a class, we shall crash down together in the common doom."

There is another, exceedingly good, from *Direct Action*, by Willie Gallacher and J. R. Campbell:—

"The workers have to create organisations to counter the State organisation of capitalism. The joint industrial and social committee should be the nucleus of working-class political power. As the industrial and social organisation grows strong enough it will be forced to fight the Capitalist State, not to take possession of, but to smash it." But there are also strangely-involved passages like this which is apparently meant to explain a principle:—

"As Communist ergatocracy realises itself in practice; as the Socialist mentality becomes generalised under Socialist institutions; when the ownership rule, which is the essential characteristic of bourgeois democracy, has been destroyed beyond all possibility of revival; when the government of men has been replaced by the administration of things—then, with the passing of the phase of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the connotation of the 'cracy' element in the term ergatocracy, will suffer a sea-change."

### THE WORLD OF THE LIVING DEAD.

The prison world is one little explored by those who are able to describe it, and such a work as that of Mr. Vance Marshall, "The World of the Living Dead," is a valuable addition to modern literature. He has contrived to enter the hearts of the inhabitants of that ghostly region and express for us their thoughts and feelings, their hopes and fears. Very wisely he has not dwelt much upon his own part in the tragedy of prison, for the

political prisoner undergoing a sentence of a few months is, properly speaking, only a traveller in those regions and not an inhabitant. Upheld by a sense of personal dignity, conscious that outside are warm friends and a kindly welcome, and a happy and prosperous life, the discomforts of the gaol are to such a person nothing but temporary inconveniences.

The value of Mr. Marshall's book is that he makes us live with the ordinary law-breaker under the torture of the prison system. There are around us overwhelming evidences of the strength of the social instinct in man which brought him from the isolation of the wilderness to found cities and nations and institutions that seem as stable as the universe. It is because our penal system outrages this strong and fundamental instinct that it is so cruel; more cruel probably than the tortures of older civilisations, where physical pain was inflicted or life taken, but where human companionship, love and pity, were not denied to the unhappy victims.

Take the case of the respectable man who falls under the penalty of the law: the terror that precedes his arrest, the shock of its occurrence, the agony of shame and terror through which he must go into the court, the torture of anxiety about loved ones on whom undeserved misery has fallen; for whose sake, in nine cases out of ten, the transgressor committed his offence; the loss of friends, the coldness of relatives; these are the elements of a terrible human tragedy. Mr. Marshall tells of the Mother, spectator, stricken with paralysis in the court, when her son was sentenced to a flogging. There is no exaggeration, and it is evident that he had in his mind's eye cases which he could not but have witnessed of the overwhelming pain which the harsh sentences upon young lads inflict upon their mothers. After the torture of the court, our penal system hands its victims over to a refinement of cruelty which could have been devised only by a class which regards its "inferiors" as mere insensate beasts. I remember seeing a dramatised version of Tolstoi's "Resurrection," and being struck with the mercifulness of the prison system which permits to its victims the solace of companionship, however serious has been the crime, and comparing it with the harshness of Holloway Gaol, where I had just spent some weeks. Here, as in England, the man with his spirit wounded beyond all healing, bearing not only his own pain, but that of wife and children, father and mother, all whose happiness is involved in his disgrace, broken with personal shame and remorse, burdened with carking anxiety for those outside, is shut up in a narrow cell with his griefs and guarded by those whose business it is to treat him as a creature without human feelings.

Even if the prison diet were not insufficient, and semi-starvation, overwork and cold, were not added to the miseries of the prisoners (and in spite of his proven statements, we are told that in making these assertions in his previous book, Mr. Marshall overstates his case), how wearily must the months and years drag by, in utter loneliness, without a friend, without one hour's human companionship or kindness—alone night and day with the wounded spirit, the angry, clouded mind. It is neither life with its passions, its hopes, its joys, nor death with its peace—but a place of torture—not of swift pain and the hope of its ending, but a hopeless, endless purgatory.

And behind all the horror of the ordinary prison discipline there lies the punishment of bread and water, dark cells and chains, floggings and hangings. It is almost incredible that in the Twentieth Century a man should be kept three or four weeks under sentence of death in a condemned cell, watched night and day, lest in his agony of hopeless fear he should cheat the gallows and spoil the solemnity of the hanging ceremony. Yet it happens! Who has not seen a mouse in a trap, the little fluttering heart beating so painfully as to be visible in the tiny breast, the pleading, terrified eyes. Think of a man in a trap—a man with a heart, with imagination and a deadly fear of death—who knows of the grim business of hanging—the rope round his neck—the opening of the earth beneath his feet—the sickening drop! A man to whom the hours fly by like lightning—and yet are leaden slow and full of agony. Think of that man lying at night with such a fear in his soul—and think again of those who stand with him at the fatal moment—the men who rush upon him, helpless and trapped, and pinion him—the Governor who murders in cold blood for a living—the Chaplain who watches and assists in God's name—the Hangman whose sole occupation is this: to slay his fellow-men—the Doctor who sees it is a proper job. What must be the degradation of all those human souls involved in the horrible business with the victim?

Mr. Marshall's description of the hanging of a poor half-witted lad (after awaiting his trial for months) brings the terrible reality home to the reader. His story of the flogging, too, shows up the cruelty of the official soul—the governor, the senior warder and the guard, the wretched half-naked man strapped to the triangle, the doctor holding his pulse throughout to make certain that the victim is not insensible and the blows wasted.

I think the presence of the doctor during the flogging, holding the flogged man's pulse, marks, more than anything, the hideousness of the punishments which are inflicted upon our fellow creatures—this prostitution of medical knowledge should not be tolerated by the profession. A doctor who lays

his hand upon a human wrist to feel the beating of the pulse should have but one motive, to assuage pain and restore health, not to aid in the infliction of suffering.

To my mind the prison Chaplain is not so far degraded, for at least the Church in the prison has nothing to do with its punishments; my experience has been that the Chaplains rarely even speak to the prisoners of their offences, but bring into that ghastly place the only breath of human kindness which ever enters it. Mr. Marshall, in his sketch, "Chapel Iron Barred," shows the prison church, with its music, as the only prison blessing. It points the road to prison reformation, if prisons have to be, where men and women, under some restraint for their own protection, can be brought under ameliorating influences through intercourse with one another and with the noblest minds educated and civilised in pleasant surroundings, with every attempt made to fill their lives with interest.

I have not dealt with Mr. Marshall's sketches in detail. They are all good, and present to the reader many types of humanity and many touching stories which bear the stamp of truth. The book breathes forth the longing of these prisoned souls for liberty, comfort and human companionship; it gives a vivid impression of the cruelty and stupidity of official doings on the bench and in the gaols—iron-soled and wooden-headed. It is a great text-book.

ADELA PANKHURST WALSH.

N.S.W., Australia.

### NEW FORMS OF ACTIVITY.

(1) *Activity on the Industrial Field.*—The Branch should endeavour to form revolutionary groups within every Trade Union Branch in their area. It should endeavour to attract to the Party the most advanced and class-conscious workers in every Trade Union Branch, so as to have a small nucleus largely dominating and moulding opinion therein. It is not necessary that the bulk of the members of the Unions know of these groups, which should ceaselessly work for Communist ideals within their branches, striving to alter the rules and structure of their Unions to serve revolutionary ends. They should always endeavour to weaken the power of the permanent Trade Union officials, and strengthen rank and file movements, so as to make the power to decide strikes rest with the workers themselves and not with official elements; stand out for democratic control of the Unions by the membership, and, more than these, prepare the way for the formation of revolutionary workers' councils for decisive action by the rank and file of the workers.

It cannot be too strongly impressed by Communists upon all workers that Trade Union officials, both by their secure position and their enhanced salaries, serve the maintenance of capitalism much more than they serve the cause of the emancipation of the workers. Only by controlling forces in the key industries will the weapon be forged that will give the death-blow to capitalism. Branches should place this first in their activities.

(2) The Council recommends that each branch endeavour to arrange for one of their number to have possession of a typewriter, to assist in Communist work. These can be got on hire purchase, usually 5s. per week or £1 per month, and is of the utmost assistance in organising rank and file movements with the Unions, establishing Social Soviets, working within the Shop Steward movement, and other fields where Communists will be busy. Anybody can learn to punch a typewriter by practice, and a branch becomes much more articulate and powerful by having one in its service. Whenever the crisis comes and the workers take over control, the presence of rapid, trusted, and efficient correspondents would enormously facilitate the thorough inter-relationship of groups necessary for uniform action.—B. T. WHITEHEAD, Secretary.

### DOGMATISM AND OPPORTUNISM. — Continued.

The opposition had to be crushed, and to that end the most infamous means were used. Just as in the old parties of the Second International. Once more the workers were betrayed, and left in ignorance of the real aims of the leaders.

This is what has become of our splendid party, of the Bolsheviks of Western Europe.

In the place of a party that was as clear as crystal, and as hard as steel, we have a turbid mass. In the place of a united, harmonious party, conscious in its every deed, we have a few leaders, who, on many questions, use the workers as their tools. In the place of a party that in the interior fights all parties alike, Anarchists as well as Syndicalists and Social-Patriots, we have a party that bends before the two former, and in many questions compromises with the latter for the good graces of the voters, and that is not very far off, consequently, from a compromise with either. In the place of a party fighting against world imperialism, we have a party that favours one form of imperialism—English Imperialism.

When the revolution comes, this party of ours will not be strong; it will stand powerless.

And what is the cause of all this? The use of Parliamentary action.

The English reader sees clearly that in countries where the revolution has not yet broken out, the use of Parliament involves a great risk. He sees it not only in theory, it has likewise been proved by us by daily experience.

\* Creative Revolution: A study in Communist Ergatocracy. By Eden and Cedar Paul. (8s. 6d. net.) George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.



## THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

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Saturday, July 24, 1920.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO COMRADE LENIN.

Dear Comrade Lenin,—It is reported in the Press that you have sent a wireless message from Moscow stating: "I consider the tactics of Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and of the W.S.F. are wrong" and "I am personally in favour of participation in Parliament and in favour of adhesion to the Labour Party. I will defend these tactics at the Second Congress of the Third International on July 15th, in Moscow."

My reply to you is that I also would desire to defend my tactics in the Moscow Congress, but I have been refused a visa by two intervening countries.

If you, through the influence of the Labour Party or your Parliamentary friends can obtain for me a passport, I shall gladly meet you in debate.—With Communist greetings, I remain, honoured Comrade, Yours, till the British Workers' Revolution,

B. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

## COMMUNIST UNITY.

Lenin is said to have cabled that he considers the W.S.F. has made a tactical mistake in not joining the party that is to be formed from the B.S.P. and S.L.P. in a unified party; but the S.L.P. has also withdrawn from the Unity negotiations, and if this message was actually written by Lenin, he is misinformed on that point.

Lenin is understood to urge British Communists to affiliate with the Labour Party and engage in Parliamentary action.

## If Lenin Were in Britain.

We believe that if Lenin were striving day by day with the actual situation in Britain that he would not give this advice. But, be that as it may, the Communist Party, which has repudiated Labourism and Parliamentarism, is confident that it has chosen the right course. We are convinced that the Party, whatever it may call itself, which is to be formed on July 31st, will have the virus of Second Internationalism in its arteries. We believe that the differences of tactics and of principles between the two parties which at present appear to be confined to the two questions of Parliamentary action and affiliation to the Labour Party will be found in practice to cover a very much wider field, and that they will drop up to hinder it in every decisive moment.

The Party of the Parliamentary Communists is determined at all costs to secure a large membership; it has its eyes on every active Socialist, whatever his or her views may be. Unfortunately in the effort to rope in as many people as possible, some of its prominent adherents are descending to personal attacks upon members of the Communist Party. They imagine that by crying down the membership of the Communist Party, they may induce those who agree with our programme and not with theirs to join their Party.

Such tactics must inevitably fail in the long run. Where they succeed for a time, they will either bring disruptive dissent into the Parliamentary Party's own ranks or will keep genuine Communists from joining any Party. Those who choose the method of personal attack rather than that of political argument display their lack of faith in their own cause.

For our part, we reject the muck-rake as a weapon in political controversy.

## The I.W.W.

It should be noticed that Lenin not only urges affiliation to the Labour Party, but also unity with the I.W.W. and the Shop Stewards' movement. The two proposals seem to us incompatible.

The I.W.W. and the Shop Stewards' movement are in bitter antagonism to the Trade Unions which form the industrial side of the Labour Party. The Labour Party would not accept their affiliation, nor would they apply to be affiliated with it.

The I.W.W. and the Shop Stewards' movement have sprung up in opposition to the Trade Unions in those industries where the Trade Unions are unfitted under present-day conditions to carry on the class-struggle, even the struggle for palliatives within the ambit of the Capitalist system. In the mining industry we scarcely find the Workers' Committee movement, because the structure of the miners' industrial Union, especially in South Wales, is capable of carrying on the class-struggle within the Capitalist system, though we believe that it is not officially fitted consciously to initiate a struggle to overthrow it. In the mining industry, and especially in South Wales we have a strong rank and file movement,

a rank and file movement which has a more powerful influence on the masses within the industry than any other British rank and file movement. The rank and file movement within the South Wales Miners' Federation does not call itself a Workers' Committee movement, as do the rank and file movements in industries where a number of craft Unions cater for the industry and where the workers are now organised industrially.

## The Workers' Committees.

The Workers' Committees have primarily the function of welding the workers in the Union into a united striking force; their political mission is secondary, and only certain Workers' Committees have reached the stage of realising that they have a political mission at all.

The rank and file movement in the South Wales coalfield has got beyond that stage, for the simple reason that the workers are welded together in the official Industrial Union with a united striking force. The mission of the rank and file movement is, therefore, growing more and more political, *not parliamentary*. The rank and file movement consciously aims at dictating the policy of the Miners' Federation and from making large demands for better conditions within the Capitalist system, it is now moving on towards the stage when it will set itself to precipitate the struggle for the final overthrow of Capitalism. When the decisive hour arises it is more than likely that this rank and file organisation will break out and take action unauthorised by the official conferences of the Union; but in any case it will be the deciding factor in any action leading towards revolution which the Union may take.

The South Wales rank and file movement is not officially represented at the official conferences of the Miners' Federation. It works with greater freedom because it is not.

The Communist Party should be in precisely the same position towards the Labour Party, the Trade Union Congress and every Trade and Industrial Union.

Organisations like the I.W.W. and the Workers' Committee movement are at war with the official unionism also on account of their bureaucratic structure and their various friendly benefits. The latter, helpful though they may be to the workers in the hardships of Capitalism, create within the Unions conservative tendencies. The rank and file organisations declare that what is wanted is a fighting organisation, not a Benefit Society.

## Trade Unions Will Oppose Soviets.

The Trade Unions, as we know them to-day in this country, will oppose, not foster, the growth of Soviets. It is significant that Lenin himself has recently been declaring that the Russian Industrial Unions, though their structure is much more adapted to rank and file control than the Unions of this country, must be merged in the general Soviet organisation of the community.

When the right moment comes we shall see them embrace the great masses in every industry.

When the right moment comes, we shall see the unofficial movement responding not to demands for mere reforms, for shorter working hours, higher wages, or the nationalisation of certain industries, but, led by any Communist Party capable of responding to the situation, driving onward to the revolutionary overthrow of Capitalism, and the setting up of the Soviets.

But that moment is not close at hand. It were folly to pretend that in the breasts of any very large section of Trade Unionists or I.L.P.ers is panting the desire for revolution and the determined intention to proceed to the immediate overthrow of Capitalism. If anyone has told Lenin this of the I.L.P. and the Labour Party they have lied.

If circumstances should presently bring a violent economic crisis upon us; if the foundations of Capitalist society were shaken, we should see the Labour leaders rallying to the support of the community, counselling patience and calling on the workers to display good will towards the governing class, or, as one would put it, towards "all sections of the community." The *Daily Herald* will lead the way in the appeal for national unity.

Then would be needed a coherent force of indomitables, ready to face any risks in accentuating the trouble and in giving the impetuous push which may overturn the tottering citadel of State.

## Patronisers of Revolution.

It is more than probable that, the indomitables having done their work, the Labour Leaders; the Hendersons, Thomases, Smillies, Lansburys, Snowdens, and Macdonalds (with perhaps even some of the Parliamentary Communists), would come in and patronise the revolution and thereby snatch the power; but since they one and all shrink from the acuter phases of class warfare, since they would not take the drastic step necessary to abolish Capitalism, since many of them have even opposed Communism, the reign of these men would mean, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the continued dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Thus the need for action by the indomitables would arise again, as soon as circumstances permit such action.

Now as to Parliamentarism and affiliation to the Labour Party. They make the running of Communist candidates a virtual impossibility. The B.S.P. at the last General Election ran its nominees under the befogging label of "Labour Candidate." None of the B.S.P.ers were elected, but even in their defeat they were hidden away amongst the Lib.-Labs. and Trade Union reactionaries of the Labour Party. The I.L.P. has hitherto boasted proudly of its own I.L.P. candidates, but though they have been exceedingly few, the cost of their elections has been a great

strain on the limited resources of the I.L.P. Now that the Labour Party is making plans to contest every seat, the I.L.P., which as an affiliated organisation, will not oppose the Labour Party candidates and will willingly assent to its own candidates being Labour candidates, if the Labour Party will but accept them.

Our friends who are convinced that the Labour Party and all the positions in it, will be swiftly captured by the Communists may perhaps say that they do not object to being run as Labour candidates, and that this essential concomitant of affiliation to the Labour Party, therefore, does not dismay them.

## Grounds of Our Opposition.

But we base our opposition to the entanglement with the Party of constitutional reform and with the Parliamentary institution on a broader ground. We declare that whilst the mind and the energies are engaged in Parliamentary contests and Parliamentary routine, and in the extensive palliative and conservative work of the Trade Unions, the revolutionary temperament and machinery will not be developed.

The Russians, who before the revolution, yet lived in a perpetual atmosphere of revolution, who, under the pressure of constant persecution, habitually employed conspirative methods and always hoped for insurrection, have difficulty perhaps in realising how much we, here in Britain, have to learn in these directions, how difficult it is for our people to adjust their minds to real belief in revolution and to genuine preparation for it.

Once we have cut ourselves adrift from constitutionalism, we must find other measures. It is only by taking this step that we shall create the indomitables.

And still one further word to Comrade Lenin. They tell you, Comrade, that the Labour Party is the Party of Trade Unions. Remember, however, the individual members introduced into the Party by the astute generalship of Henderson. These people joining will undoubtedly prove a force against the revolution.

## A LETTER FROM BELA KUN.

Very Honoured Comrade,—I have just received the *Dreadnought* for the first time. My knowledge of the English language is very slight, still I recognise with joy that your paper is very vigorous—a stirring Party organ; and I may say that these are the most important qualities.

I am following the English working-class movement with intense interest. I have the greatest confidence in the English working class, but I believe things could be so arranged that the "Hands off Russia" policy should be used for Bolshevik ends in the home movement.

We greatly appreciate your sympathy and comradely support.

With Party Greetings,

BELA KUN.

Steinhof Internment Camp,  
May 7th, 1920.

## THE LATEST BLOW.

Speech by Lenin at the Red Army Conference in Moscow.

[From the *Krasnaya Gazeta*.]

The Soviet Republic is again faced with a crisis. Having got rid of Kolchak and Denikin, the Russian proletariat intended to make use of all its spiritual and physical forces for the re-establishment of the economic life of the country.

Behind the Polish bourgeoisie are the French capitalists, who want to sell to Poland war material at a high price, and to recoup themselves for the losses incurred in the Kolchak and Denikin adventures. It is a remarkable fact that not a single one of the Entente powers dares to attack Soviet Russia openly, fearing to show themselves in their true colours to their workers.

Our most important task at the moment is to convince the politically backward section of our population that we have done everything in our power to avert further bloodshed, and that the Polish workers and peasants are not our enemies, but that if the Polish bourgeoisie, having allied itself with Petlura, wants war, we shall fight, and fight relentlessly.

The Czarist generals say that our Red soldiers are bearing hardships which no Czarist army would have submitted to. The reason for this is that every workman and peasant knows that he is willingly and consciously spilling his blood in order that justice should triumph.

Once more we are obliged to issue the call, "Everything and Everyone for the War." All professional and party organisations must forthwith use all their energies in helping and supporting the heroic Red army.

We shall soon convince the whole world that right is on our side.

Yesterday the Delegates of British trade unionists arrived in Petrograd, but only very few among them are in sympathy with us. However, we are convinced that on their return home they will be the best agitators in our favour. Even the former Czarist generals recognise the injustice of Polish claims and are coming to our assistance. "Everything and Everyone for War and Victory" is our call to Russian workers and peasants. Let us strain every nerve in order to secure victory.



# Democracy and the Proletarian Dictatorship.

By LENIN.

The resolution of the March Congress of the Soviets (1918) advocated, as the most important problem at present, the creation of "efficient organisation" and higher discipline. Such resolutions are now readily supported by everybody. But that their realisation requires compulsion, and compulsion in the form of a dictatorship, is ordinarily not comprehended. And yet, it would be the greatest stupidity and the most absurd opportunism to suppose that the transition from Capitalism to Socialism is possible without compulsion and dictatorship.

## Dictatorship is Necessary.

A dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons or in two main directions. In the first place, it is impossible to conquer and destroy Capitalism without the merciless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot be at once deprived of their wealth, or their advantages in organisation and knowledge, and who will, therefore, during a quite long period, inevitably attempt to overthrow the hateful (to them) authority of the poor. Secondly, every great revolution, and especially a Socialist revolution, even if there was no external war, is inconceivable without an internal war, thousands and millions of cases of wavering and of desertion from one side to the other, and a state of the greatest uncertainty, instability and chaos. And, of course, all the decadent elements of the old order, inevitably very numerous and connected largely with the petty bourgeoisie (for the petty bourgeoisie is the first victim of every war and every crisis) cannot fail to "show up" during such a profound transformation. And these elements of decay cannot "show up" otherwise than through the increase of crimes, hooliganism, bribery, speculation and other indecencies. It takes time and an iron hand to get rid of this.

## Thieves to be Shot.

There never was a great revolution in history in which the people did not instinctively feel this and did not display salutary firmness, shooting down thieves on the spot. The trouble with previous revolutions was this—that the revolutionary zeal of the masses, which kept them vigilant and gave them strength mercilessly to suppress the elements of decay, did not last long. The social, the class causes of such weakness of revolutionary zeal lay in the weakness of the proletariat, which is the only class capable (if sufficiently numerous, conscious and disciplined) of attracting the majority of the exploited toilers (the majority of the poor, if we should use a simpler and more popular expression) and of retaining power for a sufficiently long time completely to suppress both all exploiters and all elements of decay.

## Marx's Exact Formula.

The historical experience of all revolutions, this universal historical—economical and political—lesson was summed up by Marx in his brief, sharp, exact and vivid formula: the dictatorship of the proletariat. And that the Russian revolution correctly approached this universal historical problem has been proven by the victorious march of the Soviet organisation among all peoples and tongues of Russia. For the Soviet rule is nothing else than the organised form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the class-conscious proletariat, rousing to a new democracy, to independent participation in the administration of the State, tens and tens of millions of exploited toilers, who through their experience are discovering that the disciplined and class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat is their most reliable leader.

## Dictatorship a Great Word.

But "dictatorship" is a great word. And great words must not be used lightly. A dictatorship is an iron rule, with revolutionary daring, and swift and merciless is the suppression of the exploiters as well as of the hooligans. And our rule is too mild, quite frequently resembling jam rather than iron. We must not for a moment forget that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois environment is offering resistance to the Soviet rule in two ways: on the one hand, by external pressure, by conspiracies and insurrections, by torrents of falsehood and calumny in the press of the Cadets, Right Social-Revolutionists and Mensheviks; and, on the other, this environment exerts internal pressure, taking advantage of every element of decay, of every weakness, to bribe, to increase the lack of discipline, dissoluteness, chaos. The nearer we get to the complete military suppression of the bourgeoisie, the more dangerous become for us the petty-bourgeois inclinations. And these inclinations cannot be combated only by propaganda and agitation, by the organisation of emulation, by the selection of organisers; they must also be met with force.

## Workers' Tribunals.

To the extent to which the principal problem of the Soviet Republic changes from military suppression to administration, suppression and compulsion will, as a rule, be manifested in trials, and not in shooting on the spot. And in this respect the revolutionary masses have taken, since November 7, 1917, the right road, and have proven the vitality of the Revolution, in starting to organise their own workmen's and peasants' tribunals, before any decrees were issued dismissing the bourgeois-democratic judicial apparatus. But our revolutionary and popular tribunals are excessively and incredibly weak. It is apparent that the masses' view of courts—inherited from the regime of the land-owners and the bourgeoisie—as not their own, has not yet been

completely destroyed. It is not sufficiently appreciated that the courts serve to attract all the poor to administration (for judicial activity is one of the functions of State administration); that the court is an organ of the rule of the proletariat and of the poorest peasantry; that the court is a means of training in discipline. There is a lack of appreciation of the simple and obvious fact that, if the chief misfortunes of Russia are famine and unemployment, these misfortunes cannot be overcome by any outbursts of enthusiasm, but only by thorough and universal organisation and discipline, in order to increase the production of bread for men and bread for industry (fuel), to transport it in time and to distribute it in the right way. That, therefore, responsibility for the tortures of famine and unemployment falls on everyone who violates labour discipline in any enterprise and in any business. That those who are responsible should be discovered, tried and punished without mercy. The petty-bourgeois environment, which we will now have persistently to combat, is reflected particularly in the lack of comprehension of the economic and political connection between famine and unemployment and the prevailing dissolution in organisation and discipline—in the firm hold of the view of the small proprietor: nothing matters, if only I gain as much as possible.

## The Railway Industry.

This struggle of the petty bourgeois environment against proletarian organisation is expressed with particular force in the railway industry, which embodies, probably most clearly, the economic ties created by large Capitalism. The "office" element furnishes saboteurs and grafters in large numbers; the proletarian element, its best part, is fighting for discipline. But between these two elements there are, of course, many who waver, who are "weak" and who are unable to resist the "temptation" of speculation, bribery and personal advantage, at the expense of the functioning apparatus, the uninterrupted work of which is necessary to overcome famine and unemployment.

## The Decree on Railway Management.

A characteristic struggle occurred on this basis in connection with the last decree on railway management, the decree which granted dictatorial (or "unlimited") power to individual directors. The conscious (and mostly, probably, unconscious) representatives of petty-bourgeois disintegration contended that the granting of "unlimited" (i.e., dictatorial) power to individuals was a defection from the principle of Commissariat administration, from the democratic and other principles of the Soviet Republic. Some of the Left Social Revolutionists carried on a plainly demagogic agitation against the decree on dictatorship, appealing to evil instincts and to the petty-bourgeois desire for personal gain. The question thus presented is of really great significance: first, the question of principle is, in general, the appointment of individuals, endowed with unlimited power, the appointment of dictators, in accord with the fundamental principles of the Soviet rule; secondly, in what relation does this action—this precedent, if you wish—stand to the special problems of the Soviet rule during the present concrete period? Both questions deserve serious consideration.

## Soviets Are Forms of Socialist Democracy.

That the dictatorship of individuals has very frequently in the history of the revolutionary movements served as an expression and a means of realisation of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes, is confirmed by the undisputed experience of history. With bourgeois democratic principles, the dictatorship of individuals has undoubtedly been compatible. But this point is always treated adroitly by the bourgeois critics of the Soviet Government and by their petty bourgeois allies. On the one hand, they declare Soviet rule to be simply something absurd and anarchically wild, carefully avoiding all our historical comparisons and theoretical proofs that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy; nay, more, they are the beginning of a Socialist form of democracy. On the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than the bourgeois democracy and argue: with your Bolshevik (i.e., Socialist, not bourgeois) democratic principles, with the Soviet democratic principles, individual dictatorship is absolutely incompatible.

## The Necessity of Force.

Extremely poor arguments, these. If we are not anarchists, we must admit the necessity of a State; that is, of force, for the transition from Capitalism to Socialism. The form of compulsion is determined by the degree of development of the particular revolutionary class, then by such special circumstances as, for instance, the heritage of a long and reactionary war, and finally by the forms of resistance of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie. There is therefore absolutely no contradiction in principle between the Soviet (Socialist) democracy and the use of dictatorial power of individuals. The distinction between a proletarian and a bourgeois dictatorship consists in this: that the first directs its attacks against the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority; and, further, in this—that the first is accomplished (also through individuals), not only by the masses of the exploited toilers, but also by organisations which are so constructed that they arouse these masses to historical creative work. The Soviets belong to this category of organisation.

(To be continued.)

# ELY VALLEY NOTES.

By "LEFT WING."

## Piece Work and the Double Shift.

The Ely Valley miners have long been groaning under two of the greatest evils of the Capitalist system of exploitation, viz., "Piece Work" and "Double Shift." As a result of the Marxian classes and lectures, a large number of the miners know these two evils to be nothing more than a means of exploitation for the men and increased profits for the boss class. At the colliers' half-yearly meeting, notice of motion was given to consider the abolition of check-weighers at the end of the present term. This is clearly a move in the right direction, and will materially assist in the abolition of piece work and the obnoxious double-shift system. But there are still a few "Cold Ely Colliers" of the same opinion as the poor, deluded individual who recently wrote to the capitalist press advocating piece-work as a just means of payment. Just fancy a man advocating a whip for his own back! These poor simpletons ought to carry a card on their breasts, "Pity the poor blind," for they certainly are blind to their own and their class's interests. These men are individualists, and selfish to the core, but happily their number is fast decreasing, and will soon reach the vanishing point. Let us make a united effort, boys, and we can succeed in stamping out both these evils in the Ely Valley collieries.

## Politicians and Industrialists.

The political Labourites have made another pitiful attempt to uphold the Capitalist constitution, which is enslaving them. They have been forced to admit that they are powerless on the local administrative bodies, to bring about any measure of reform, without the consent of the Capitalist masters in the Government. They have fallen back on the plea that they have been the means of doing some good for individuals in the matter of pensions and relief to disabled civilians. This was readily granted, but this is not an individual question, it is a class question, and we shall never achieve anything for the class, so long as we are satisfied with palliatives for a few individuals.

What have the Ex-Servicemen gained by political action? Practically nothing! Like the poor man in the Bible, they have had a few crumbs thrown to them from the rich man's table, whilst their masters have feasted sumptuously and fattened themselves on the blood and labour of the men who fought and died for them. They fought for liberty, and what have they got in return? The chains of poverty and disablement are bound more tightly than ever around them. Some of them have had a pension—miserably inadequate!—granted by their political masters, and these same masters have made it impossible for disabled men to live by raising the price of food, clothing, house rent, rates, and the cost of living generally. What is the value of a few shillings increase to an individual, when the whole class is suffering want and persecution at the hands of their Capitalist masters. The political leaders of the M.F.G.B. admitted their failure in regard to the new Mines Bill, and called for industrial action. Why not use industrial action on behalf of our Ex-Servicemen, and the workers in general, to oppose the Rent Act, the high cost of living, and all the other forms of exploitation inaugurated by the Capitalist constitution, which the political Labour fakirs are so pitifully trying to defend and uphold. Why not use direct action against the Capitalist system itself?

## Poisonous Propaganda.

The M.F.G.B. has nursed and reared a deadly poisonous snake in its midst, which is now doing its best to destroy the whole fabric of industrial unionism. Proof of this fact can be seen in the Bills now passing through the Capitalist Parliament. This poisonous snake is the capitalist political propaganda carried on by the political Labourites, and must be ruthlessly crushed out.

## AMALGAMATED TAILORS AND GARMENT WORKERS' UNION.

West London No. 5 Branch.

The members of the above Union have been on strike now for six weeks against the introduction of a sweated piece rate, and are determined to see that they win. Clothing workers, before accepting employment in the West End of London, should call round to the strike quarters at The Green Man, Union Street, W.1.

## COMMUNIST PARTY.

## TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEMONSTRATION.

On Sunday 25th July, 1920, at 3 p.m.

To Welcome the Marchers from Bristol of The International Union of Ex-Service Men

## SPEAKERS:

COMRADES: E. PAUL, S. E. PANKHURST, M. WALKER, R. BISHOP, G. W. AIRD, M. BIRCH and F. SANDERS (Chairman).

COMRADE CEDAR PAUL will Sing Revolutionary Songs.

Ex-Service Men Specially Invited to Attend!



## PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

### Russian and English Prisoners.

"There are still Russian prisoners in this country," says Bonar Law, "and the military and naval English prisoners in Russia number 55."

Telling the Tale to the Russians.  
"The Government is considering whether it would be advisable to lay Papers on Siberia" that means to open to Parliament, as an act of special grace, what the Executive did with regard to Siberia. Our Parliamentary friends will note with a certain amount of satisfaction that their ignorance of the doings of Government is equally shared by their elected members. Colonel Wedgwood desires to know "whether in May the Secretary of State for War cabled to General Knox, in Siberia, instructing him to tell Admiral Koltchak that the Prime Minister, who is all-powerful, is a convinced democrat" (the Land Taxes abandoned, notwithstanding) "and particularly devoted to advanced views on the Land question, and suggesting, consequently, that Admiral Koltchak should issue a broad and stirring appeal promising land to the peasants and a Constituent Assembly, in order to strengthen his hands in urging the Prime Minister and the Cabinet in recognising Koltchak's government."

Bonar Law does not think it would be right to give answers in regard to isolated telegrams.

### Less than Forty M.P.'s interested in New War.

On Monday, 12th July, Colonel Wedgwood asked to move the adjournment of the House, in order to obtain an answer to his question dealing with the Peace between Russia and Poland: "Whether a note has been sent to the Soviet Government threatening that if Russia declines the armistice with Poland, the Allies will defend Poland with all their resources."

Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy said: "If it means a new war, we ought to know."

Evidently party solidarity is not extended to Mr. Wedgwood by other members of the Labour Party, for they were not there to produce the forty members required to support the motion of adjournment, and have the matter discussed.

Mr. Wedgwood had had given a "private" notice of his question to the Speaker, in the name of the Labour Party.

In the workshop, if a man does not do his day's work, he loses his pay. Why not apply the same principle to the M.P.'s.

### Polish Offensive.

Captain O'Grady has seen in the Press that "a large staff of French military experts, numbering 900 officers, with 2,000 orderlies, were specially selected for service with the Polish Army with a view to rendering the Polish offensive against Soviet forces more effective."

"The French have always had a military mission in Poland, to advise the Poles on the organisation of their Army, but we have no detailed information as to numbers," says Bonar Law.

### Profiteering Act.

Nobody could expect that a Parliament chiefly composed of persons living on "profits" would take effective measures to stop profiteering. Sir R. Horne tells us that seventeen reports have been made by the Central Committee or by Sub-Committees. The administration of this Act up to the 30th of June has been £18,615 14s. 1d., exclusive of rent, lighting, and stationery. No Bill dealing with Trusts is to be brought in this Session, as time is already mortgaged.

### Man v. Woman.

Under Capitalism there is a keen competition, a fight for employment and wages between the sexes: a thing that would never occur in a Society organised for the common welfare. Thus we have Mr. Hurd desirous of knowing if more disabled ex-servicemen are to be taken on the temporary staff in place of women.

The Assistant Postmaster-General says that already there has been "an appreciable reduction in the number of temporary women, and steps are being taken to effect a further reduction."

### A Man who has been Shot.

On Monday and Wednesday, Mr. T. P. O'Connor asked to move the adjournment of the House "to discuss" the incidents in the Listowel Police Office and the remark attributed to Commissioner Smyth.

These charges had been "subscribed to by fourteen policemen," said Mr. MacVeagh.

The Speaker did not think he would be "justified in accepting the motion." He said that the head of the police force had denied the newspapers' reports.

### Indian Women said to have been Stripped Naked.

Asked by Sir W. Joynson-Hicks, Mr. Montagu said: "I have ascertained that Mrs. Naidu" [in a speech at the Kingsway Hall] "based her charge that women had been stripped naked, flogged and outraged" [after the Amritsar disturbances] "on allegations made by witnesses to the Congress Committee. I am having inquiries made as to an allegation which might justify the charge against certain Indian subordinate police. If this is proved, they will, of course, be suitably punished."

### The "Daily Herald" Not Read in Rhine Area.

For the simple reason that the *Daily Herald* has been prohibited in the German districts under British military occupation. Mr. Bonar Law said, when questioned: "I am informed that the sale of the *Daily Herald* is not, and never has been, prohibited in that territory." A literal-minded fellow of our acquaintance suggests that Mr. Bonar Law is right, sure; the sale is allowed, but the dispatch thither forbidden!

### Vaccination.

Asked by Mr. R. Young the number of small-pox cases in Glasgow to 12th July, 1920, Mr. Munro gave the following figures:—Unvaccinated, 88 cases, 21 deaths; vaccinated, 264 cases, 31 deaths.

Five or six Departments have been bothered, we take it, to get these figures, for Parliament, but they are worthless to prove a case either for or against vaccination, for the essential figure—the proportion of unvaccinated to vaccinated—is not given. Why is it that through Parliament you can't even get at the truth of simple public health questions. Mr. R. Young is a Labour member, therefore why trouble to give him a reasoned reply?

### These Lovely Blacks.

Although popular enough on the music-hall stage, negroes are objected to when they do some shooting in Europe. Yet it is the white man that has brought them over here and put them on the battlefield. Lieut.-Com. Kenworthy asked the Prime Minister whether he is in a position to state that no black soldiers have been sent to the assistance of Poland?

Bonar Law is kindness itself, but, for once, "he is not aware of the source of the information" and "is not going to inquire into every rumour."

### Deportation of Nuorteva.

For the Home Secretary, Sir J. Baird replies to Mr. J. Davison that "he had all the facts of this case under consideration." "Sir Basil Thompson did not express any opinions respecting the Soviet Government."

Mr. Nuorteva, under a deportation order, will embark on the first available vessel for Russia.

According to the American Labour Year-Book, Mr. Santeri Nuorteva is the head of the Diplomatic Department of the Russian Soviet Government Bureau in the United States (World Tower Building, 110, West 40th Street, New York), and also of the Information Bureau, conducted for the purpose of acquainting the American people with the facts concerning Soviet Russia. This Department publishes *Soviet Russia* weekly, five dollars per year.

## P.R.I.B.

Dear Editor,—We desire to call your attention to the "People's Russian Information Bureau," a most valuable institution which circulates, collects and tabulates reliable information concerning Russia, and is a most useful aid to all who are interested in the Russian situation.

We appeal for your assistance in building up a sum of £500 to cover outstanding liabilities and the estimated deficit on the forthcoming year's working of the Bureau, a deficit which is inevitable owing to the necessarily low rate at which the Bureau issues information to affiliated organisations and the large amount of gratuitous information supplied by the Bureau to enquirers.

We feel confident that we shall not appeal in vain for a generous donation from you.—Yours faithfully, C. Despard, Robert Dell, and Harold Grenfell. Address for donations: Donors' Committee, P.R.I.B., 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

## ROTHERHAM UNITY GROUP.

Sarah Turner writes on behalf of the Rotherham Communist Unity Group to say that at a Conference on July 11th, W. Paul was the principal speaker. He said: "The W.S.F. delegates had left the last Communist Unity Conference pledged to wait until after the Rank and File Conference was held before taking any action." We hope that Comrade Turner has here misunderstood Comrade Paul, because the statement is false.

The W.S.F. delegates were in no way pledged when they left the Unity negotiations: they had explicitly refused to pledge themselves.

They had stated when the Conference assembled that they would not pledge the W.S.F. to attend the August Conference, since they were awaiting a ballot of W.S.F. members. Some of the B.S.P. and Communist Unity Group delegates then said that the W.S.F. delegates ought to withdraw until its action had been decided. The W.S.F. delegates expressed willingness to withdraw should the other parties desire it, but said that they were willing to remain and give their views on the other points on the agenda, on the understanding that they were in no way pledging their organisation to proceed further. The B.S.P. and ex-S.L.P. then retired to consider whether the W.S.F. delegates should remain and after returning they agreed to that course.

A resolution was afterwards proposed that all organisations or groups sending delegates to the 1st August Unity Conference must pledge themselves in advance to abide by its decisions, whatever those decisions might be, and to join the Party formed on August 1st.

When the W.S.F. delegates reported this decision to their committee, it was decided to call the June 19th Conference, in order to confer with other groups whose principles and tactics are the same as those of the W.S.F., to discuss whether to attend the August 1st Conference, and, if not, what course to pursue. This decision was made known to the Unity Committee, and published in the Press.

The June 19th Conference decided to form an independent Party.

## THE POLISH SITUATION.

### The Polish Communist Party.

Since the disappearance of the Soviets the Communist Party has been definitely forced into subterranean action, all legal action having become impossible, although we are supposed to be living in a democratic Republic.

We now work once more with the old methods of secret organisation, the utility of which we proved under the Czarist regime. We have neither press nor legal organisation, and you must know that here in Poland, the simple fact of professing Communist opinions is sufficient excuse for throwing a person into prison, there to remain "confined by administrative orders," without any form of trial during long months.

In the Polish gaols lie thousands of our comrades. Most of them are untried and even uncharged with any offence.

### The Death Penalty for Striking and Propaganda.

The Diet is about to pass a new law allowing sentence of death to be passed by Court-Martial upon any person guilty of undermining the security of the State by deed, word, or strike. Henceforth every strike will become a criminal attack upon the State.

We do not recriminate, knowing that the bourgeoisie will defend its privileges by every means in its power, and that it will care very little as to whether its actions are legal.

Yet we may say with pride that in these difficult circumstances we are holding high our Communist flag. Against us we have a legal Socialist party, able to act in broad daylight, with a big Press, and many members of Parliament. Yet we, the proscribed, the hunted, are not outdone by them in our influence upon the masses, and from our underground depths we hold the opportunists constantly in check.

Being obliged to take refuge in our industrial unions, we have made them our strongholds. The bourgeoisie is obliged to tolerate the industrial organisations, whilst it protects the "yellow" clericals and Socialists. We are working to strengthen industrial organisations by the creation of great industrial unions. Some of the most active unions and even the Central Commission itself are under our control. In response to our advice, the Polish Trade Unions refused to send delegates to Washington, though the renegade Polish Socialist Party sent representatives there. We are holding out against repression, and when the economic circumstances allow of it our final victory is mathematically certain.

### The Economic Situation.

What was once Austria Poland has suffered terribly from military operations. Russian Poland (called "The Kingdom") has also been devastated by the war and shamelessly exploited by the German occupiers. Posen alone, thanks to its agricultural production, has come out of the war intact, and even enriched. But, like a rich relation, this province separates itself from the rest of the country, especially in the economic and financial fields.

The following explanation does not apply to Posen, which is a purely agricultural country, where the industrial proletariat does not count, and the rural workers are under the exclusive tutelage of the clergy. If the two other parts of Poland made a social revolution, Posen would doubtless be our Vendée, or, to be more modern, our "Koltchakia."

Posen excepted, the country is in ruins. Austrian Poland (Galicia) possesses enormous mineral riches. Russian Poland—industrial and agricultural—exported, before the war, the products of her industry and might be almost self-sufficient by her agriculture. But her industry is now null, and famine is raging. When the Germans took their departure a rapid reconstruction, with the efficacious aid of the Allies, was hoped for. America would send food! It was with American bacon and flour that our electoral campaign was made. The disappointment has been cruel. A year and a half has slipped away, and things are going from bad to worse. The balance-sheet: prices increased tenfold, numbers out of work, undiminished, industry drowsing, public works at a standstill, sickness and disease raging. The death-rate is so high that bodies wait over a week for their turn at the cemetery. No work, no bread, no coal, no hope! In the face of all this is the unbridled luxury of the bourgeoisie.

Strangers who come to Warsaw, after a walk through the smart quarters, are generally impressed by the abundance reigning there. The shops are loaded with all the eatables of the universe. Everything is to be found. Visitors are astonished. And since a pound is worth 550 marks in Poland, they find that everything is very cheap!

### Pleasure-loving Bourgeoisie.

The members of the bourgeoisie have become pleasure-loving and dissipated. They do not work, even in the bourgeois sense of the word. Capital turns away from industry, since speculation gives rapid and easy profits. Of what use economy and saving, when money loses its value from day to day?

The rich believe themselves in safety, for are they not surrounded by the bayonets of their soldiers. But capitalism, as a solid structure, is already dead, and its fall becomes daily more certain. There is no more creative capital. Speculation reigns and triumphs in its orgies. Pre-war stocks of goods are continually circulating. They are sold, and re-sold, at ever-increasing prices. To buy, to monopolise, to sell, that is the *leit motif* of this dance upon the mouth of a volcano.

The bourgeoisie still possesses all the means of production, but it deliberately leaves them idle. The bourgeois has no more interest in production, since production reduces the price of monopolised stocks.



At this point capitalist production has become impossible. Only the masses have an interest in the resumption of production, and only a socialised industry can live. Little by little that certitude is penetrating the masses.

In spite of the lack of work, the strikes do not cease, for the cost of living increases by leaps and bounds. Every month the workmen demand an increase of 100 to 200 per cent., but the prices of food, clothing, shoes, etc.; rise still more rapidly. The sterility of that race to ruin begins to be understood. The masses are beginning to rise, to ask for peace more than ever. All eyes are turned upon Moscow. There is yet another important fact: British Capitalism is lying in wait for the downfall of our bourgeoisie. The Polish mark has fallen to three Swiss centimes and seven French centimes; the dollar costs 140 marks, the pound 550 marks. The moment is propitious for the purchase of Polish merchandise by foreigners.

#### Poland Becoming a Colony.

If this state of things continue, our country will become a colony, and the fate of the Congo negroes will be reserved for our proletariat. This fact gives matter for reflection, even to the patriots. And there is only one solution—Socialisation.

The agricultural proletariat, which includes several millions, and whose strike was brutally strangled last autumn, will get into the movement also in the spring. The Communist programme of the socialisation of the great land estates is the only one that can satisfy this numerous class. The parceling out of these domains by the Socialist buffoons of the P.S.P. would benefit only the rich peasants, but would deprive the field labourer of his workshop.

The decisive struggle is approaching. All the parties being comprised in the present regime, the official Socialists included, the Communist Party (the Polish Section of the Third International), in collaboration with the great syndical organisations, is alone capable of placing itself at the head of this movement, which may be of the greatest consequence to all Europe.

I have overstepped the limits which I had traced without having said many essential things. The subject is too vast and too complex. I think that at the moment when the Polish army—the instrument of your government—is almost alone in the presence of the Red wave, it is not superfluous for you to know what is happening in the immediate neighbourhood of the front.

#### Appeal for One Thousand Guarantors.

Comrades,—Our aim is to weld all revolutionary Communist elements in the country into one solidly-knit organisation, to forge a revolutionary core for the coming crisis.

This work is vital for the triumph of Communism. Our need for funds in this task is large. District Conferences have to be held, Communist Organisers sent to the provinces, and full preparations made for the conference of the party in September.

In order therefore to relieve the organisation of financial difficulty during this vital period, we appeal for ONE THOUSAND COMRADES to give a weekly sum of ONE SHILLING for a period of THREE MONTHS. Contributions should be sent to the Treasurer, PERCY WALLIS, 18, Angel Road; Hammersmith, London, W.6.

#### THE LABOUR PARTY: CAN IT BE CAPTURED?

The view of those Communists who desire affiliation to the Labour Party is that it can be captured for Communism. Our view is that it cannot.

(1) It is largely formed of Trade Unions with ancient constitutions, which it would take many years to change in order that the rank and file membership might gain control of their political policy.

Those who desire the rank and file to gain control should move at every opportunity within their Union that a special conference be called to adopt a new constitution. This would be a useful thing to do, quite apart from affiliation to the Labour Party.

(2) The Labour Party also consists of individual members, whose number and influence is growing. These members come in on a reformist programme. Josiah Wedgwood, M.P., stated in the House of Commons the other day that he had joined the Labour Party because, as a Liberal, he found that the principles of the Liberal Party were not put into practice by Liberal Governments. Wedgwood, in this respect, is typical of a host of others who are now joining the Labour Party.

We would ask those Comrades who desire the affiliation of a Communist Party to the Labour Party whether they are prepared to await a ballot of all the Trade Unions before taking action in the revolutionary crisis.

#### TRUTH ABOUT RUSSIA.

Jack Tanner, Editor of *Solidarity*, now in Russia, will shortly return to this country.

Socialist Societies, Trade Union Branches, and Workers' Committees desiring to book him for speaking engagements, should write at once to *Solidarity* Press, 10, Tudor Street, E.C.4.

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUES:—

Capitalism and the Rapids of Revolution, by J. P. M. Millar.

Rustic Revolt, by C. B. Warwick.

Constitution of the Russian Metal Workers' Industrial Union.

One of the Left-Overs, by C. E. Edwards.

### THE VALUE OF THE MINERS' ORGANISATIONS.

"Comrade" Cook, the Miners' Agent, who wrote the article on "The Miner's Tanner" in a recent number of the *Dreadnought*, is apparently a very different person to "Comrade" Cook, the rabid extremist, we used to know and delight to hear on the platform at our lodge meetings. The present Cook is a rigid constitutionalist, and cannot by any means be persuaded to oppose the bureaucracy of the M.F.G.B., since he has become a unit of that officialdom. We all know that a change in conditions has a great effect on the psychology of any man, and we feel disposed to let "Comrade" Cook down lightly, and excuse him somewhat for his present reactionary attitude, but he must expect a little mild criticism from some of his old pupils and present friends, if they are not still his comrades.

Cook says "No man can value the miners' organisation." But what is the value of a workers' organisation? Can we measure it? If we can, then let us appraise it and see if it is worthy of the high estimate accorded by "Comrade" Cook. A workers' organisation is formed for the purpose of improving the general conditions in the life of the worker, to keep the standard of wages at such an altitude as to ensure for the worker and his family a continual progress towards better conditions of labour and home-life. If the organisation has not done this then it has failed in its most important function, and it is not worthy of the high estimate placed upon it by "Comrade" Cook. If he suggests that conditions in the mining industry are as good to-day as they were in 1913, then he must deny all the speeches of Cook the extremist, and close his eyes to facts as they really are. Instead of progress in home-life and conditions, they have, and are experiencing retrogression, and have had to put up with a lower standard of life, because the organisation failed in its most important function. The power of the organisation is great, but as long as the officials of the M.F.G.B. retain their fondness for political conciliatory measures, just so long will they refuse to make use of the real power of the organisation, and fail to report progress of the miners' standard of life.

Cook says the organisation cannot exist without 100 per cent. increase in contributions. Is this correct? We do not think so, and beg to offer one or two suggestions to enable the organisation, not only to exist on its present rate of contribution, but at the same time to be more effective in attaining that real progress so much desired by the miners, and which up to the present the organisation has failed to obtain.

First, we suggest that Cook should again become an extremist, and advocate the expulsion of all political propaganda from the organisation. How much of the miners' money is wasted every year in this useless business, doing nothing but raising a few place-seekers above the level of the workers, and thus making them immune from the sufferings of their class, and clogging their brains with the clouds of conciliation, to the neglect of the fighting power of the organisation. Stop this waste, "Comrade" Cook, before asking for increased contributions.

Another suggestion we make, which would greatly reduce the cost of the organisation, is a uniform rate of pay for all agents and officials of the Federation. Why should "Comrade" Cook receive £10 a week whilst the labourer gets £4? Do not think for a moment, "Comrade," that we wish to reduce your salary or the salary of "Comrade" Brace to £4 a week. Oh! no. But what we do suggest is that no official of the Federation should receive more than the average wage of the highest grade in the organisation. Perhaps that would make the officials more eager to increase the general standard of living and thereby fulfil the most important function of the organisation, and, incidentally, greatly reduce the cost.

Carry out these measures of reconstruction; let the organisation fulfil its proper function; and then, on a better standard of living, the miners will not object to increased contributions.

Lastly, we would remind "Comrade" Cook that the last balance-sheet of the M.F.G.B. recorded a balance of £7,000 on the year's working, after paying all these abnormal salaries, and after bearing the costs of all this wasteful political propaganda.

It is no use saying it cannot be done, Cook; it can; and you and all real comrades should advocate uniformity, efficiency, and progress, even should that entail the sacrifice of personal interests.

"LEFT WING."

### COMMUNIST PARTY.

#### A LECTURE

On the Aims, Tactics, and Methods of the Communist Party (British Section of the Third International).

In the Large Hall of the International Socialist Club, 28, East Road, City Road, N. 1. (Near Old Street Tube Station).

On WEDNESDAY, JULY 28th at 8 p.m.

Lecturer: EDGAR T. WHITEHEAD.

(Secretary of the Communist Party).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

### SOLIDARITY.

By ROSA BLOCH, of Zurich.

Several hundred Swiss people have lately returned from Russia, and some of them have calumniated the Russian Communists. The Swiss capitalist press has been only too pleased to publish their lies, even though they are obviously false.

Others who have returned from Russia fortunately give a true, and quite opposite, account of affairs there. Some whom I interviewed told me that they had lived in Russia a long time, and intend returning there soon. They worked happily under the Soviets. One of them, a leading engineer in a Soviet factory, was also the head of an evening school for workers. In his laboratory, courses of experimental physics and chemistry were organised, and the young workers studied with great interest, making remarkable progress.

Every precaution is taken against the spread of epidemics and the people were never before enlightened on such questions as they are in Russia to-day. The streets of Petrograd are kept absolutely clean.

But there are great hardships. There is a terrible scarcity of fuel and next winter people may die of cold on this account. The old wooden buildings were burned last year. Russia has vast forests, but the wood perishes there for lack of transport. For this the prolonged war is responsible. There is a lack also of tools, nails, files, and all sorts of raw material.

This information made me feel that we must not leave Soviet Russia to the mercy of Capitalist governments and their diplomats, but must take what action we can to help.

What will the Allied workers do to help their Russian comrades? You have repeatedly protested against the policy of your governments, and have shouted "Hands off Russia," but now the time has come for a display of practical solidarity.

Even if your governments have the honest intention to send materials to Soviet Russia, it is the workers who must supply them. Workers ought to be ready to work as volunteers for Russia. Engineers, miners, transport workers and others should be prepared to work daily an hour of overtime for the Soviets.

You can compel your employers to supply the necessary materials at cost price. The goods manufactured during overtime should be stored in a central place specially for Russia.

Seamen should commandeer ships for which the miners could supply coal produced by overtime work. Shiploads of coal got in overtime should at once be sent to Petrograd. Food producers, chemical workers and all others engaged in the production of necessities should also work for Soviet Russia.

The Russian comrades have long waited for the help of Western workers. British workers especially through their great Trade Unions have the power to carry out such plans.

The case is urgent. The winter is near when the Russian ports will be frozen over. Comrades, help Russia whilst there is time.

#### A REPLY.

The proposal here outlined by Rosa Bloch is a splendid one; but unfortunately she makes it failing to realise our situation. As yet, the British Government is still blockading Soviet Russia by means of British warships, still refusing to allow goods to be exchanged between this country and Russia.

The British Government is still behind the actual fighting that is going on against Soviet Russia.

If British workers were to work overtime, as Rosa Bloch suggests, without first stopping the blockade of Russia by the British Navy and without preventing the British aid to the counter-revolution, the products of their overtime work, if they ever were sent to Russia, would undoubtedly be sent to the counter-revolutionaries; the voluntary labour of British workers would only go to increase the profits of their employers.

If the blockade of Soviet Russia were lifted, the organisation which could most easily supply Soviet Russia, the organisation which might be looked to to do so would be the Co-operative Wholesale Society, but, as a matter of fact, the C.W.S., without waiting for the possibility of trading with Soviet Russia, has been trading in the meantime with counter-revolutionary Russia.

When British workers are strong enough to compel the Government and the Capitalists to allow them to supply the needs of our Russian comrades, as Rosa Bloch suggests, British workers will be able to achieve many things that seem beyond them at this moment.

By all means let us work as Comrade Rosa suggests for Soviet Russia, but let us first be sure that we have the power to see that the goods shall reach the destination we desire.

#### TROTSKY ON POLAND.

"For us the question of a united and independent Poland is on a par with the question of a united and independent Serbia. We cannot and we will not permit the Polish question to be solved by methods which will perpetuate the chaos at present prevailing in South-Eastern Europe; in fact, through the whole of Europe. For us Socialists the independence of Poland means its independence on both fronts, on the Romanoff front and on the Hapsburg front. We not only wish the Polish people to be free from the oppression of Czarism; we wish also that the fate of the Serbian people shall not be dependent upon the Polish nobility in Galicia."—*The Bolsheviks and the World Peace*, by Leon Trotsky. (published in New York, 1918).



## BETWEEN OURSELVES.

By L. A. MOTLER.

We were in the usual place where we ordinarily have our arguments—the Plate Room; and the other half of us that were not talking were having what intelligent professors call a cold collation. This consisted mostly of the by now stale bread and vanished jam left over from the morning's lunch. The failure of the Limerick Soviets drove us back to Mulberry Bush margarine, although some of us can sport butter up till Tuesday. However, Limerick wasn't the topic.

We had waded through the details of an alleged bookmaker and his alleged five telephones and two tape machines, and numberless theories were evolved as to how five telephones and two tape machines came to be installed in a loft over a garage. It was the opinion of some of the strong Union men that it had been done by scab labour; and some hinted at "foreigners." By this term is not meant those who have not had the happy choice of being born in this free country. In a workshop a "foreigner" is something you make in the boss's own time, out of his own material, and with his own tools. Needless to say the boss does not stand by while it is done—nor the gaffer, either—although gaffers themselves not only do "foreigners," but often have them done by their favourites.

After the alleged five telephones and two tape machines, we drifted to the police-court items again, and someone dug up the case of an alleged actress allegedly robbing an alleged officer of an alleged thirty thousand roubles. Nobody, said young Bert, would be such a fool as to carry about that lot of splosh; but Henry successfully pointed out that Bert was only a kid and knew no better. This led to what is called Words betwixt Henry and Bert, and finally wound up by Bert being chased for a skilful bull's eye at Henry's ear with a piece of pulp rolled up hard. This also led to a vendetta lasting two days, during which young Bert showed Henry both the follies and the advantages of agile youth.

But to return to the topic. We wended through a maze of argument as to the exact value of a rouble, and of course Lenin and Trotsky wandered in and out; but, with the strange way workshop debates have, in ten minutes we were in the thick of money matters dealing nearer home.

"I read about Lenin eating twelve hundred pounds worth of fruit a month," said Casey. "Now, Mac., how much did you say a rouble was to the pound?"

Mac. disowned any connection with the rouble question. As a matter of fact, he said, it was Henry who said there were ten thousand to the pound. What he, Mac., had asked was whether Henry meant Troy or avoirdupois. Henry thought Mac. had said Trotsky when he had actually said Troy, and if Henry wasn't such a fool as to encourage young Bert by chasing him all over the shop, he would be there to hear him out. What he, Mac., was more interested in was not roubles, but the Ten Bob Rise we were going to have in the trade.

"Well," said Casey, "I don't see how we are going to get it till the Union allows us to work overtime same as before, and then the negotiations will proceed."

Mac., who was given to fluent sarcasm at times, asked Casey what he meant by "negations," and to this Casey replied with sounds like a sore nose, which were meant to be a cross between a sneer and a sniff. However, the argument developed with further diversions. Mac. wanted to know what we should work overtime for?

"Chaps like you," said Casey, who was still sore in the nose and in the mind over "negations," and who believed in accepting any overtime that offered, so he could add to the capital for the milliner's shop his wife wanted, "Chaps like you would never do a stroke of work unless you had to, and yet you are always gassing about a two-hour day after the revolution. My idea is that there won't be a two-hour day then; there'll be a no-hour day."

It is quite easy to raise a laugh in a workshop with a witticism that would be howled off the music hall "boards" by the same men, so Casey was held to have scored one. Mac. then proceeded—figuratively—to take his coat off.

"Now, look here, I'll explain this to you once and for all, so you can knock your wooden head against it, and then perhaps some sparks of wisdom may fly out. [One to Mac.] Now, there are forty-five millions odd of people in these blessed islands, and only fifteen millions are working. That amounts to one-third. Supposing they work twelve hours a day—"

"Eight hours, you mean," put in Casey.

"Eight hours, then," accepted Mac. "Well, don't it follow that if it takes fifteen millions to do all the work in eight hours, then it will take thirty millions only four hours a day?"

"I suppose so," admitted Casey.

"Then," went on Mac., "that is all supposing all the work done now is necessary, which I don't admit it is. For instance there won't be so much printing of tram tickets and forms for this and forms for that, and Mike knows what. And," he added rapidly, as Casey almost opened his mouth, "as to throwing men out of work, well they will all help to shorten the hours in other jobs, and—"

But just then young Bert broke through our ranks with Henry hot-foot after him.

The "DREADNOUGHT" OFFICE has a few back numbers of the paper. Comrades willing to distribute these in the workshop, etc., should apply to the Dreadnought Office, 152, Fleet Street.

## COMMUNIST PARTY

British Section of the Third International.

**CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP.**—The acceptance of the following points: (1) The complete overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Communism. (2) The Class struggle. (3) The Dictatorship of the Proletariat. (4) The Soviet or Revolutionary Workers' Council system. (5) Affiliation to the Third International. (6) Refusal to engage in Parliamentary Action. (7) Non-affiliation to the Labour Party.

**MINIMUM WEEKLY SUBSCRIPTION:** Threepence.

**Provisional Secretary:** EDGAR T. WHITEHEAD, 8, Sinclair Gardens, West Kensington, London, W.14.

Branches' notes and list of meetings, sent in for publication, should reach the Secretary not later than first post Monday morning. All articles and news matter (other than Branches' notes) to be sent to: 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, London, E.3. and marked: "The Editor, The Workers' Dreadnought."

The "WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT" may be obtained for sale at 3/- per quire (26 copies). Usual Trade rates for wholesale and retail newsagents.

All Members should make a special effort to see that our paper is on sale and posters displayed at local newsagents, trade union branches, in the workshop and at all public meetings in their districts.

### LONDON MEETINGS: OUTDOOR.

Friday, July 23rd. Manor Park Road, near Willesden Junction Station, 7.30 p.m. Fred Tyler and others.

Saturday, July 24th. Stockwell Street, Greenwich 7.30 p.m. Minnie Birch, R. Bishop, Janet Grove and others.

Sunday, July 25th, Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.45 a.m. Louis Solomon, Jack Sullivan.

Dock Gates, Poplar, 7 p.m. G. Deacon, J. Sullivan and others.

3 p.m. Meeting in Trafalgar Square, to welcome the Ex-Service men marching from Bristol. (See advertisement.)

Wednesday, July 28th. Grove Lane, Camberwell, 7.45 p.m. Geo. Aird, May Edmunds.

Friday, July 30th. Manor Park Road, near Willesden Junction Station, 7.30 p.m. Louis Solomon and others.

### INDOOR.

Monday, July 26th. 20, Railway Street, Poplar, 8 p.m. Communist Party Business Meeting.

16, Peckham Road, Camberwell, 7.30 p.m., Communist Party Business Meeting.

Thursday, July 29th. 20, Railway Street, Poplar, 8 p.m. Speakers' Class.

### OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

**EAST LONDON WORKERS' COMMITTEE.**

Sunday, July 25th. Victoria Park, 12 (noon). Walter Ponder and others.

Thursday, July 22nd, International Socialist Club, 28, East Road, City Road, 7.30 p.m. Business Meeting.

**WALTHAMSTOW LEAGUE OF RIGHTS.**

Tuesday, July 27th, William Morris Hall, Somers Road, 3 p.m. Jennie Simpson and others.

**GORTON, MANCHESTER:**—Sunday, July 25th. Moun. Rd. Corner Lake Entrance at 11 a.m. Peacock's Croft at 3 p.m. Near Olympia at 7.30 p.m.

### COMMUNIST PARTY NOTES.

Applications for membership were very numerous last week, and members have been accepted from Waterfoot, Pontadawe, Swansea, Coventry, Portsmouth, Colden (Yorks), Mirfield (Yorks), Newport, Staines, Hanwell, Bucks, Plymouth, Sheffield, Oxford, Ashford (Mid.), and all parts of the Metropolis.

Enquiries as to joining the Party as a group have been received from Norwich and Oldham Communist Groups.

The Provisional Organising Council have issued their third circular dealing with the propagation of Sovietism and activity on the anti-Parliamentary field, and Branches are reaching a higher state of internal organisation in work for Communism.

Gorton Branch.—On Sunday, July 25th, G. W. Aird, of London, addresses three open-air meetings for Communism.

Speakers for Communism.—The Secretary will be glad to have the names of speakers and literature sellers for the Metropolis, so that the work for Communism can be effectively co-ordinated. Party members volunteering for this work are asked to state whether they are indoor or outdoor speakers, or both.

### CAMBERWELL.

Branch meetings to be held 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 16, Peckham Road. Next meeting July 26th, at 7.45 p.m. Outdoor meetings every Wednesday at Grove Lane, at 7.30 p.m. Communist Saturdays, sewing party at 85, Camberwell Grove, 3 to 5.30 p.m. All comrades welcomed. A small folding table for literature is needed.

### GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

Gorton Comrades, £5; North Woolwich Sympathiser, 1s.; H. Mitchell, 2s. 6d.; G. W. Aird, 7s.; Portsmouth Comrades, 9s.; Chelsea Communist, 2s. 6d.; Peckham Comrades, 3s. 8d.

## COMRADES IN COUNCIL. — AN OPEN TRIBUNE.

[Correspondence is invited on the Programme of the Communist Party preparatory to the National Conference, to be held in Manchester in September. We hope that correspondents will devote themselves as far as possible to make constructive suggestions, all of which will be passed on to the Agenda Committee.]

### Lenin and the British Communists.

Dear Comrade,—We write concerning the sixth and seventh cardinal principles on which the Communist Party (British Section of the Third International) has been formed, namely, "Refusal to engage in Parliamentary action" and "Non-affiliation to the Labour Party."

Much play has recently been made, and more play will certainly be made in the immediate future, with Lenin's disapproval of the step taken on June 19th in founding the Communist Party by those who differed from other British Communists on the points above specified. Those who participated in the initial conference, or most of them, were well aware of the view Lenin was likely to take of the action they considered expedient. They ventured to think that they were able to form sounder views of the best policy for British Communists than could possibly be formed, even by such a master mind as Lenin's, in circumstances which it is not necessary to detail. Two, at least, of the participants in the conference had a shrewd suspicion that Lenin's advocacy for Britain of Parliamentary tactics and affiliation to the Labour Party was the outcome of an opportunism hardly consistent with the uncompromising methods which have led to the success of Bolshevism, and the overthrow of Menshevism in Russia. That suspicion has been signally confirmed by a passage in an article by Bertrand Russell, published in *The Nation* of July 17th, 1920, and entitled, "Lenin, Trotsky, and Gorky." Russell, it will be remembered, travelled with the Labour delegation, but as an independent observer. He had a personal interview with Lenin, the conversation being almost entirely in English. Bertrand Russell's good faith is not likely to be challenged by anyone who reads this letter. He writes of Lenin:

"He admitted that there is little chance of revolution in England now, and that the working man is not yet disgusted with Parliamentary government. But he hopes that this result may be brought about by a Labour Ministry. He thinks that if Mr. Henderson, for instance, were to become Prime Minister, nothing of importance would be done; organised Labour would then, so he hopes and believes, turn to revolution. On this ground, he wishes his sup-

porters in this country to do everything in their power to secure a Labour majority in Parliament; he does not advocate abstention from Parliamentary contests, but participation with a view to making Parliament obviously contemptible."

We do not propose to discuss whether Lenin is right or wrong as to the existence of widespread discontent with Parliamentary government. But those who have founded the Communist Party are convinced that there is in this country a considerable and growing body of revolutionary workers who will rally to the support of a Communist Party formed on the basis of uncompromising anti-Parliamentarism, and who will not support any other Communist Party. Time will show whether that expectation is justified. Meanwhile the writers of this letter wish to express a personal opinion. They consider that Lenin's chief error arises from a misunderstanding of the British temperament. The average Briton is a very direct person. He likes those who are attacking an institution to do it openly, and not to attempt the overthrow of that institution by a simulated approval. Lenin himself has told us that it is not for Russia to dictate to Communists in other lands. We remind him of this with all respect, and we assure him that a Machiavellianism which is perhaps the natural outcome of Russian historical evolution can lead to nothing but disaster in Britain. The Briton is dogged, whether he is right or whether he is wrong. The War was a signal instance. Those of us who were consistent class-war internationalists went on doggedly kicking against the pricks, throughout the Great War, while knowing that those we were opposing would no less doggedly use their majority power and stifle us, and their massed forces to win the war they had made up their minds to win, and which (heaven help them!) in the end they did win! We of the Communist Party, a dogged minority, are going to fight the class-war, as Cromwell's Ironsides fought it in their day, along our own chosen line, whether Lenin, our good comrade, approve or disapprove. "I find the Englishman" [thus wrote Emerson, and of course he meant the Scotsman and the Welshman as well, but we dare not speak of the Sinn Féiner] "to be him of all men who stands firmest in his shoes."—Yours fraternally,

EDEN AND CEDAR PAUL.

Correspondence held over: From J. Penfold, H. M. Emery, E. T. Harris, and Madeleine Steinert-Wertheim.

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