

Workers' Breadnought

FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM.

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UNEMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING. By P. F. MEACHEM.

For some time past, the Coalition Government, the capitalist press, and the various capitalist propaganda organisations, have been very busy attacking the Unions catering for the building trade workers.

The just-mentioned bodies allege that it is due to the refusal of the Unions in not allowing a certain number of dilutees, that there is a shortage of houses at the present time.

To demonstrate the utter hollowness of this claim, it is only necessary to examine a few facts.

Building Expenditure.

Building is one of the necessities of civilisation. A brief examination shows that the means for satisfying the primary needs of man—food, clothing and shelter—have increased far in excess of the increase of population. The value of houses, in millions of pounds, has increased from 255 in 1812, to 414 in 1888, and since then has increased again.

In 1907, according to the Census of Production, the total expenditure upon the building trades, whether for new buildings or repairs, and taking account of all sorts of business and trade premises and private houses, amounted to no more than 73,000,000; of which £44,000,000 was spent on the construction of new buildings and the remainder upon the alteration and repairs of existing buildings.

As there were in 1907, over nine million private houses and trade premises, the average amount spent on repair and decoration for each building was about £8 per head.

Motor Car Expenditure.

According to Sir L. C. Money, in "Fifty Points About Capitalism," just before the war, the aggregate expenditure upon motor vehicles run for pleasure, was about £75,000,000 annually. "As the £44,000,000 spent upon the construction of new buildings included factories and warehouses," says Sir L. C. Money, "it is probable that the private dwelling houses erected were not worth more than about £25,000,000. Of this £25,000,000 again, only a portion was expenditure upon houses for the masses of the people. It is doubtful whether as much as £15,000,000 was spent on new houses for the poor."

What a contrast! A small section of the community spends £75,000,000 upon motor vehicles run for pleasure, while all the poorer classes, nearly all our people, had new houses provided for them worth about £15,000,000 per annum. This is not bad from people who are blaming the workers for the housing shortage!

Another Contrast.

Another item which makes an interesting contrast, is the amount of capital subscribed for publicly-issued securities in 1913. The capital subscribed for by British investors for publicly-issued securities was £245,000,000, of which, £196,000,000 was for overseas investments, and £49,000,000 for home investments. This £245,000,000 of profits which the capitalists had wrung from the sweat of the workers and invested in other things than houses, was sufficient to have built four hundred and ninety-nine thousand houses at a cost of £500 per house. This gives us further insight into the alleged concern of the propertied class to provide the workers with houses.

Housing Neglect.

Housing is a vital necessity which the capitalist system, because of the production for profit, scandalously neglects. A typical example is London. In London, 184,000 people are living in houses condemned as unfit for human habitation; 865,000 are living in houses injurious to

their health on account of age, delapidation, damp, decay or vermin; 200,000 are living under conditions of gross overcrowding, injurious both to health and morality; and over 24,000 houses are shamefully overcrowded.

At the last Census, it was shown that over 758,000 people were registered as living more than two in a room. The Local Government Board's definition of overcrowding is "more than two in a room."

The minimum standard of healthy housing is put at 55 persons to an acre. How many boroughs are there in London where this standard of healthy housing can be found. They want some finding!

Results of Overcrowding.

Human beings are like plants. They can no more be crowded together and attain their best than plants. We know that in order to obtain



"I must see the places where those dear boys died—the war meant so much to me."

healthy plants and trees, we must thin them out whilst they are young. They must have root room and space for air and sunlight.

Strange, is it not, that we always allow ample fresh air and space for plants, but always neglect this for human beings. How can we expect healthy human beings when we do not give them sufficient space, light and air. There are people complaining of the declining physical standard of the working-class of Britain, yet at the same time, want to abolish this physical decline and still have bad housing conditions—one of the main causes of the decline. In 1845, the height standard of recruits wanted for the British Army was five feet six inches; but in 1900, recruits as low as five feet were enlisted. Since the bulk of men joining the army are drawn from the ranks of the working class of this country, this gives us some idea of the declining physical standard of this country.

The disastrous effects of overcrowding and bad housing are brought home to us more vividly by examining a report of the elaborate investigations into the conditions of 78,857 Glasgow school children.

In a publication "The Wastage of Child Life" by Dr. J. Johnson, M.D., some interesting figures concerning the effects of overcrowding and bad housing are given:—

"That these effects are by no means slight, and that they are in direct proportion to the cause, is shown by the statistics of Dr. W. Leslie Mackenzie and Capt. A. Foster, who made elaborate investigations into the conditions of 72,857 school children in Glasgow, between the ages of five and eighteen, and the effect of housing upon them.

"Here are the tabulated net results as to the weights and heights, correlated with the number of rooms in the houses they lived in.

Boys from:	Average Weight	Average Height
One-roomed houses	52.6 lbs	46.6 ins
Two-roomed houses	56.1 lbs	48.1 ins
Three-roomed houses	60.0 lbs	50.0 ins
Four or more-roomed houses	64.3 lbs	51.3 ins
Girls from:		
One-roomed houses	51.5 lbs	46.3 ins
Two-roomed houses	54.8 lbs	47.8 ins
Three-roomed houses	59.9 lbs	49.6 ins
Four or more-roomed houses	65.5 lbs	51.6 ins

The Report says:—

"The numbers examined were so large, and the results were so uniform, that only one conclusion was possible; viz.: that the poorest child suffers most in nutrition and in growth. It cannot be accident that boys from two-roomed houses should be 11.7 lbs. lighter, on average, than boys from four-roomed houses, and 4.7 inches smaller. Neither is it an accident that girls from one-roomed houses are, on the average, 14 lbs. lighter and 5.3 inches shorter than the girls from the four-roomed houses. But not only are these few-roomed children smaller than the others, but they are 'absolutely' smaller than the average of all children at similar ages."

What do the people who say that the present system offers an equal chance for all, think of this. This is one of the supposed benefits of private ownership.

The facts just given, show the utter neglect of the capitalists, as a class, towards the housing of the workers, and also the falseness of the claim that the Building Unions are to blame for the housing shortage at the present time.

The Real Facts.

The Government claim that it is due to the shortage of bricklayers, and the refusal of the Unions to allow 50,000 ex-Service men to be trained as bricklayers, that there is a housing shortage to-day. This is false, as the following facts will show.

Before the war, seven out of ten bricklayers were engaged in erecting working-class houses, and three upon luxury building, etc. To-day, nine out of ten bricklayers are engaged in erecting luxury buildings and factory extensions; money, which is being spent on this kind of building is spent so as to avoid paying excess profits duty; thus drawing men away who, before the war, were engaged upon the erection of working-class houses. This is one reason for the house shortage. Sooner than pay towards the cost of the great war for Freedom (?), sooner than disgorge some of the £4,180,000 millions which they made during the five years of war, the capitalists prefer to spend it in having buildings erected, buildings not required, thus taking away men who were erecting houses vitally necessary.

Mr. G. Hicks, President of the National

Federation of Building Trade Operatives, in the *Daily Herald* of January 8th, said:—

"Within a month or two, there will be more than sufficient bricklayers to build many more than the 220,000 houses that the Government says it wants."

Asked what he meant by this statement, Mr. Hicks said:—

"Between 1914 and 1919, no fewer than 25,000 bricklayers left the industry, because they were unable to earn a living in it."

He calculated that somewhere about five thousand have been totally lost to the trade by death and the war, or by becoming too old, or by being permanently absorbed into other trades, which still left twenty thousand fully-trained men who had left the industry for economic reasons.

Nine thousand of this number have come back, making 64,000 bricklayers belonging to the organisation as compared with 53,000 last year.

He calculates that within the next few months, another nine or ten thousand fully-trained bricklayers will come back to building without the operation of any dilution at all.

He said:—

"Considering the effect of the disappearance of the Excess Profits' Duty, directly the E.P.D. goes, the orgy of luxury building that has been indulged in as a means of evading the tax, will cease, and more operatives will be released for house building."

"Before May, we can state quite confidently, that we shall have 70,000 fully-trained bricklayers in the industry."

"Each of these bricklayers can build six houses a year, and if only fifty per cent. of them are engaged on housing schemes, they will be able to build 210,000 houses; but, as I have stated, there will be more than fifty per cent. engaged on housing, with the result that more than 210,000 should be built. If the Government doubts this, let it give the Guilds and ourselves the contracts. If it is sincere in its desire to have houses, it will accept this."

This disposes of the claim, that it is due to the Building Unions that there is a house shortage. As to the training of the 50,000 ex-Servicemen as bricklayers and alleviating unemployment, this claim of the Government is shown to be false. All that the Government wants to do is to get these men trained so that they can compete with the fully-trained men and lower the wages of the bricklayers.

The Land Monopoly.

At the bottom of the housing problem is the land monopoly. Land being a commodity, its price is determined in the same way as the price of any other commodity.

The more land there is in excess of the amount required, the lower the price of it falls; and the lower the supply falls below the amount required, the higher the price becomes. It is for the latter reason, that the owners of land to-day hold up the land and only let it get on the market in small plots so as to get the highest of prices. The result is that there is a land shortage in the midst of plenty.

Thus the abolition of the land monopoly is the first task confronting the social revolutionists in their attempts to settle the housing problem.

It is futile to expect the Government to solve the housing shortage, because the landlords are a part of the Government; and the fewer houses there are, and the more people wanting houses, the higher will rise the rents. Consequently, we cannot expect the landlords to be in a hurry to facilitate the erection of houses.

Secondly, there are the big combines who have cornered the manufacture and supply of building commodities. These are also part of the Government; and, if they can, say, for example, obtain £20 for five thousand bricks, they are not going to make ten thousand and only get the same price for them. By creating an artificial scarcity, they can obtain the same price for half the bricks they formerly made. Thus again is housing hindered under Capitalism.

Thirdly, we cannot expect people who get a

living to-day by investing their money, to invest it in Housing Bonds which offer six per cent. as compared with the seven, ten, and fifteen per cent. of other businesses. Thus does the Government cripple the possibilities of raising money under the present system, for housing.

To sum up, if the workers want to settle the housing shortage once and for all time, they must come along with the Communists and help them to take back the land which is the common heritage and birthright of all. When we have once taken possession of the land, pending the erection of suitable houses, no person shall have the use of two or more rooms until every person has one.

Pending this, we have got to put up with the slums and bug hutches under Capitalism.

A CONFESSION OF BELIEF.

By L. A. MOTLER.

I am an Anarchist-Communist. Being an Anarchist, I believe in the working-class. I believe that the workers can run their own country. I believe that Jack is not only as good as his master, but very often much better. And in running their own country, I believe that the workers could make no worse effort than their masters have done. I believe as much in the wisdom of the workers as in the wisdom of the wise.

Being a Communist, I believe in the Communist Revolution and all that it implies. I believe in the Communist Revolution as a cure for all the evils of the present system, as a solution for all the questions of poverty, unemployment, and the rest. And, being a revolutionary, I believe the business of a revolutionary is to make revolutionaries.

Being an Anarchist-Communist, I do not believe in the infallibility of parties. I do not believe in the sanctity of any revolutionary book. I believe solely and simply in the Revolution.

But, being a revolutionary, I believe that the best way to bring about a revolution is to unite into parties. I know that parties very often make mistakes, very often take the wrong road. But so long as a revolutionary party does not make a dogma of its own policy, so long as it does not condemn all other revolutionaries as heretics, spies or informers, so long as it does not persist in its mistakes of yesterday, then I am for that Party.

I believe that the first business of a revolutionary is not necessarily always to make members for his own party. His first business is simply to make revolutionaries. Then—if his work has been well done—he will see these newly-made revolutionaries join his own party of their free will.

A party with the most members is not always the strongest party, it is not always the most revolutionary party. It is very often the other way about. A small party may have only a few dues-paying members, but such members as it has will A.L. be working members. That is to say, it will not be, like the big parties, a party where all the work is done by the Executive and the branch secretaries, whilst the rest of the members sit in judgment upon them. A small, compact party where every member knows the other is a party of might and power. It is a party of friends where the work is shared by all, and where the results are more immediately seen.

A small party of such real workers has the more compelling power. Swallowed up in a big party, it merely becomes the working, driving force of that party, and the results of its work are turned and twisted by the controlling elements of that big party to suit the views of its executive.

A real revolutionary party has no business to compromise: its slogan is the revolution to-morrow. Its business is to make revolutionaries. And by making revolutionaries, it makes for the revolution.

It is not possible for even the largest party to herd the whole of the workers into its ranks. Nor is it necessary.

In Bolshevik Russia there are only 600,000 members in the Communist (Bolshevik) Party, out of the vast millions of Russians. Yet the Bolshevik Revolution still holds good because the Bolsheviks have created a revolutionary atmosphere. Every Russian is not a Bolshevik, but most of the Russians are revolutionaries. That is how Trotsky was able to forge an enormous Red Army in so short a time and with more technical obstacles in front of him than any strategist ever had.

As I said, it is not possible to make all the workers members of One Big Party. But it is necessary to make revolutionaries. A revolutionary is one who believes in a change and who is prepared to help in that change. By making revolutionaries, a revolutionary atmosphere is made. Without this atmosphere there can be no revolution.

The Revolution will benefit the workers mainly, the working-class being the largest class in any nation of the world. The Army, the Navy and the Police are all drawn from that class.

And, as the Revolution cannot succeed without the help of the workers, the first business of a revolutionary is therefore to make revolutionaries.

BETWEEN OURSELVES.

By L. A. MOTLER.

It is really sad, Henry, the way things are going on now. You might imagine from reading the papers that the working class was the worst off. But if you thought so, Henry, you would have to take away the first number and guess again.

Only the other day my Uncle Fitzarthur pointed out to me the following heartbreaking item of news:—

"U.S. Shipping Owners Ask Seafarers to Accept Revision of Wages.—The American Steamship Owners' Association has formally requested the Sailors' and Firemen's Unions of the Atlantic and Gulf Ports to accept a revision of wages and working agreements at the earliest practicable date in order to meet the unforeseen serious depression in the shipping trade, says Reuter."

So you see how hard-up the Brain-Waves who run the shipping industry are. The American marine workers were earning such high wages that British seamen were actually deserting their own flag to work under the Stars and Stripes at so much extra. Now this must cease.

The American workers must be prepared to accept low wages or the Uncle Fitzies over the Big Drink will regretfully have to do without their roof-garden parties, where each guest has to be dressed up in Poffar costumes and one eats with whalebone forks with ice-block igloos all over the landscape. You may not know what an igloo is, Henry, but it just shows how easily you get off. Think of the enormous amount of education needed to be a brainy capitalist—who cannot make profits unless the workers "accept a revision of wages and agreements."

You will observed that the Yankee Uncle Fitzarthur wants a revision of agreements. The workers have been on strike on a former occasion and wrung a beggarly agreement from an unwilling plunderer. And now, when that plunderer is beginning to find his chorus-girls are costing him too much, he wants that agreement to be put into the waste basket. In its place he will sign a brand new one, with terms which will enable him to go on smoking the same brand of cigars as before. And, of course, if the workers disagree about that agreement, he simply locks them out, calls out the police to protect his property, and goes off to Europe till the workers can tighten their belts no tighter and give in.

These capitalists mismanage industry so much that they want the workers to go on hard tack to save the dividends and profits. The workers, no matter how highly paid, have never been able to afford trips to Europe, climb up the Matterhorn, or even a night up the Boulevards. There is not one country in the world where the workers, saving out of their enormous wages, have emancipated themselves from the Daily Grind, built themselves lordly palaces, and gone off to the grouse moors for the shooting. There is not one yacht on the open sea, with its crew of well-dressed, roystering, riotous parasites, that is the property of a worker who only a year or two ago was working at the bench with an ill-tempered gaffer over him.

The vast mass of the workers never have enough. They do have a good square meal now and again, but for all they know they may be in an unemployed procession the week after. When a firm goes smash, the idle shareholders besiege the offices yelling for their dividends and shares. And the law sees that they get at least something to take home to mother. But the worker jerked out of his job into the Employment Exchange has no claim whatever on all the wealth he has piled up and which his kind master has gambled with and squandered.

That is the system. Will it ever change?

Yes, it will change, Henry. Neither you nor I, no matter how class-conscious, how revolutionary, how much prepared to do and to die, can make that change. The change must be the work of the vast mass of workers. It is only necessary for them to be conscious of the way the system is worked, to know how that system can be replaced by a more just, a more kindly system, then they will help overthrow this system which you have heard called capitalism.

A change means a revolution. But what a revolution means so very few know. Or rather it is how this revolution will come about. None of us know exactly how it will come. But you can help it come by making revolutionaries out of your work-mates. It is no good talking revolution yesterday, revolution to-morrow, but never revolution to-day.

If you know your business, you will know what part to take in the revolution. Have you thought what part your mates might take? And have you ascertained and made sure that they will take the right part? On the answer to that question depends the fate and the nearness of the revolution.

A MEETING

WILL BE HELD

Outside Holloway Gaol.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH, AT 4 P.M.

Come and hear the latest news of Comrade Pankhurst, and cheer her with revolutionary songs.

SOCIALISM IN DANGER.

By DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS.

(First appeared in LA SOCIETE NOUVELLE REVUE INTERNATIONALE, June, 1894.

(Continued from last issue).

Although our motion may have been rejected, we have the satisfaction of having forced the partisans of a reactionary tendency to play a far more revolutionary rôle than they ever intended. First, they have acknowledged that political action is only a means of obtaining the economic freedom of the workers. Secondly, they have accepted the principle of direct legislation by the people. They have thus left the ground they originally held, and have advanced nearer to our position. And when Liebknecht said: "What separates us, is not any difference of principle, but a mere revolutionary phraseology and we must get rid of the phraseology," we are, so far as his last words are concerned, entirely in agreement with him, but we ask, who is responsible for that phraseology: he and his party who lose themselves in intricate and redundant sentences, or we who use expressions that are clear, pithy, and correct?

It is recognised that success, even a temporary success, may justify a little boasting, and at the Erfurt meeting of the Party, Liebknecht made use of the following language:—

"Our aims were invincible. In the end, brute force must ever retreat before the advance of ethical principles, before the logic of facts. Bismarck, to-day a beaten man, bites the dust, and the Social Democracy is the strongest party in Germany. Is that not a convincing proof that we have been right in the tactics we have pursued? Now what have the Anarchists done in Holland, in France, in Italy, in Spain, in Belgium? Nothing, absolutely nothing! They have failed in whatever they have undertaken, and everywhere wrought injury to the movement; and then the European workers have left them severely alone."

This is indeed "tall talk." We need only remark, by the way, that Liebknecht has a nasty habit of calling every Socialist who disagrees with him an Anarchist. The word "Anarchist" in his mouth is equivalent to "traitor." That is an abominable misuse of words against which in all seriousness, we must protest. If we asked in turn, what Germany has obtained for the workers, more than the above named countries, it would be difficult to answer. Liebknecht knows that perfectly well. Just a moment before he had done his "high-falutin'" we have quoted, he had said:—

"The fact that, up to the present time we have got nothing from Parliament, is not a valid objection to Parliamentarism, but is simply due to our comparative weakness in the country, among the people."

In what then consists the superlative success of the German tactics? According to Liebknecht, the Germans have done nothing, and the Socialists in the countries cited have achieved the same result. Well, 0 equals 0. Where are now the splendid advantages of the German system? Does not Liebknecht draw a most imposing picture of that Social Democracy which has done nothing

Remark how the prestige of success is claimed as an evidence that the right has prevailed. We are right because we have had some success. That was the reasoning of Napoleon III, and is the favourite argument of all tyrants; and such, also is the best justification that can be advanced to bolster up German tactics.

The success, too, of which so much is made, is, to put it mildly, slightly mixed. What is the German Party? Merely a large army of discontented citizens, not all Social Democrats.

Bebel said at Halle, in 1860: (*Protocoll Halle*, p. 102).

"If the lessening of the hours of labour, the stoppage of work by children, of Sunday work and of night work, are grounds of boasting, then nine-tenths of our work is wasted."

Every one now knows that these reforms are not Socialist, any Radical will support them. Bebel recognises that nine-tenths of the agitation identified with the movement is on behalf of reforms, not essentially Socialist; now, if the Party obtains a large number of votes at the elections, it is in a great measure due to the agitation undertaken to win these practical reforms, for which the Radicals are quite as enthusiastic. Consequently, nine-tenths of the elements which form the Party are satisfied with such palliatives, and the remaining tenth may be Social Democrats. What resolution, purely Socialist, has been brought forward in Parliament by the Socialist Members? Not one. Bebel said at Erfurt (*Protocoll Erfurt*, p. 174):

"The great aim of Parliamentary action is the education of the people with reference to the designs of our opponents, and not the immediate acquisition of a proposed reform. We have always regarded our measures from that standpoint."

That is not quite correct. If that were so, there would be no good reason for keeping the masses in ignorance of the final purpose of Social democracy. Why, for instance, propose that the ten-hour day should be inaugurated in 1890, the nine-hour day in 1894 and the eight-hour day in 1898, when in Paris, it was unanimously decided to agitate for a maximum eight-hour working day? No, the Party tactics do not suit a working-class movement; they are better adopted to the small shopkeeper spirit; but degeneration has gone so far, that Liebknecht cannot form an idea of any other method of waging the class-war. Here is what Le said at Halle (*Protocoll Halle*, pp. 56-57):—

"Is it not an Anarchist way of fighting, to look with suspicion upon all Parliamentarism, all legal agitation? If that be true, what other way remains open?"

So, to his mind, there can be no other agitation than legal agitation; a melancholy result of the fear of losing votes. That is unmistakably apparent from the report of the General Committee of the Party at Erfurt. (*See Protocoll Erfurt*, pp. 40-41).

Nor could the Parliamentary system yield other results. A large collection of men has no single interest in common, but it necessarily has many a diverse and opposite character, which cannot be regulated by the same individual or by the same assembly. Any authority which legislates on every subject and for everybody, must needs be arbitrary and despotic; and the voter who imagines himself free and independent because he drops a paper in the urn at election time, while at the same time, he tamely submits to any law that may be imposed upon him, is the victim of an illusion, and in reality, he is a slave in whose hand has been placed a toy sceptre.

These remarks on Parliamentarism presuppose that the vote of the citizen is unfettered and enlightened; but what shall we say of the franchise exercised by a mob steeped in poverty, utilised by ignorance and superstition, and at the mercy of a cunning minority in the exclusive possession of wealth and power, and which holds at its absolute disposal the means of existence indispensable to the majority? As a rule, the poor elector is neither capable of voting with intelligence, nor free to vote as he wishes.

Without Parliamentary education, and destitute of the means for self-instruction, obliged to place implicit faith in what he reads in some irresponsible newspaper (assuming that he has the ability and the time to read), knowing nothing of men and things apart from his own narrow life, how can the workman know what things to ask from Parliament, and through what channel to make his wants known? Is it possible for him to have any clear idea of the nature of a Parliament? "The Committee of the Party and the delegation in Parliament have not given effect to the wish expressed by the opposition that deputies instead of attending Parliament should do propagandist work throughout the

country. The non-fulfilment of duties that Members were elected to perform would have him favourably regarded by our enemies only; in the first place, because they would have him relieved of a persistent control in Parliament, and secondly, because such a conduct on the part of our deputies would have incurred the displeasure of the great mass of indifferent voters. To convert that mass to our opinion is one of the requirements of the movement. Besides, it is known that the sayings and doings of Parliament are closely studied by classes of people who are too indifferent, or who have not the opportunity to be present at Social Democratic meetings. The popular agitation called for by those opponents of Parliamentary action found in our ranks will be most efficiently carried on by an active and energetic advocacy in Parliament of the interests of the proletariat, and without supplying our enemies with an accusation that we have failed to do the work that we have voluntarily undertaken.

Dr. Muller in his very interesting pamphlet (*Der Klassenkampf in der Deutschensozialdemokratie*, p. 38), delivers the pertinent and just criticism on the question at issue:—

"We find then, that the fear of being accused by the mass of indifferent voters, of neglecting their Parliamentary duties (and thus of running a risk of not being elected), constitutes one of the reasons why Members must devote themselves constantly to practical work in Parliament. Evidently, when they have persuaded the electors that Parliament can bestow palliatives, it is their duty to do all they can to obtain such benefits. But that the proletariat can ever get from Parliament any considerable amelioration of their condition, the Social Democratic leaders themselves do not believe, and they have said so often enough. And yet they have the impudence to give the names of 'agitation' and 'development of the masses' to that fraud, that swindle of the workers. We contend that such agitation and development does harm, and instead of being useful to, it vitiates the whole movement. If Parliament be continually extolled as a possible beneficent agency, how can we expect to convert the indifferent masses into Social Democrats, who are the mortal foes of Parliamentarism, and see in Parliamentary social reform only a monster humbug of the ruling classes to defraud the workers. By such methods Social Democracy will never convert the workers, but the bourgeoisie will corrupt and defeat Social Democracy and its principles."

The Hammersmith Branch of the Communist Party (B.S.T.I.) passed the following resolution *nem. con.* at its last meeting:—

"That we, members of the Hammersmith Branch of the Communist Party (B.S.T.I.) send fraternal greetings and place full confidence in Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, and that we welcome the Unity Conference in the hope that it will eradicate certain elements who are in the movement for their own personal aggrandisement, and, we believe, retard the revolutionary development of the Party."

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COMMUNIST UNITY.

The Leeds Conference, as we desired and expected, has achieved Communist unity, grouping into one body revolutionary forces that, up to the present, were isolated, although not divided on any essential point of programme or tactics.

However important, this is but one of the steps in the right direction, and the work lies ahead and not behind.

For the time being, and probably for many months to come, the main business of the Communist Party will be that of doing propaganda and permeating the mass with those basic ideas that distinguish the Communist Party from other Socialist Groups.

Nevertheless, a heavy responsibility weighs on the members of the E.C., if they really desire to forge a revolutionary weapon.

As soon as the situation develops and the class-struggle increases in intensity and the Communists take a leading part in guiding forward the mass, the reactionary forces will come out into the open and engage in the fight.

Our comrades on the E.C. being in the first line, will be the first to suffer, and therefore from now on, they need all the support the Party can give them.

On the other hand, it would be folly to pretend that the hour is fully revolutionary. It would be misleading to our comrades at home and to the comrades of the Soviet Republics. For them, the revolution is the soul of life. They are not playing at Committees. The fight against Capitalism, for them, is really a fight for existence.

This simple statement of fact may be depressing to some of our readers; it is necessary that it should be made, even at the cost of partisan criticism.

The work for Unity of the last few months, fully justifies the course taken by the *Workers' Dreadnought*.

When, a few months back, the *Workers' Dreadnought* and Prisoner 9587 gathered round the W.S.F. the various Left elements in the country, and forged the policy of the "Left Wing," many comrades thought that a disrupting policy was being followed.

Unity, on the other hand, can only be achieved by steps—and that first, grouping of the "Left Wing-ers" was one of them.

In substance, all the points that formed the policy of the *Workers' Dreadnought*, from the days when Comrade Pankhurst wrote the articles "Towards a Communist Party" onwards, have been accepted.

The non-affiliation to the Labour Party was but a clear anticipation of the respective position the two bodies, "Labour" and "Communism," would take of the inevitable conflict between the two.

The Second International Labour Party would never tolerate in its midst a section affiliated to the Third. It is in the logic of things. The democratic idea of permeation has been proved erroneous by the event.

On the question of Parliamentarism, even from the point of propaganda alone, destructive propaganda if you like, both the ex-C.P. of Great Britain and the new Party, appear luke-warm, and to be marking time. Comrade Malone is

still an M.P., elected on a Coalition ticket, and the Party has not availed itself yet of the propaganda that might result from a by-election. A by-election could be forced now, and the question of unemployment brought forward, also the rights of political prisoners, and of Communists generally.

By previously grouping together the Left Wing, and then going over in a body to the United Party, a new force has been brought into the Party, that whilst obeying the necessary discipline, will continue the necessary impulse to the Left.

In spite of its forming in a Communist Party, the old B.S.P. still retained, even under its new name, some of the Democratic spirit, that we might aptly call Hyndmanism.

The last lines that Comrade Pankhurst wrote before going to prison—printed, in fact, when she was already inside the prison—were an advocacy of Communist Unity.

The path of the Party will not be easy. There is the inevitable resistance of organised capital with all its present power; and the many internal questions that will need discussion.

Discipline is an absolute necessity; yet there is a danger of it being only formal. In Russia, discipline is the result of many years of revolutionary selection, and came after and not before, a period of intense propaganda. Discipline should be a natural product and not so imperative as to destroy initiative, by groups, both locally and by industrial organisation.

Centralisation is also useful, but it should not be made a fetish.

In Italy, for instance, where the situation verges on the revolutionary, and where already the White Guards have made their appearance,

URGENT!

COMRADES—

We make an urgent appeal to you to contribute towards the cost of Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst's Appeal, which we learn amounts to about £30. We have only collected £12 1s. 6d. of this amount and the balance has got to be raised at once, as we are not given any extension of time in which to pay. So please send along your subscriptions without delay to:

MISS NORA SMYTH, *Workers' Dreadnought*, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

and where a Communist Party has been formed, with a Parliamentary group of 17, there is a growth of some 70 local papers, all needful to resist the nefarious influence of the bourgeois press.

Propaganda must be intensified and done in a popular form.

It is but restating the truth, in saying that the day when Communist Unity was achieved, the great masses in field, factory and workshop hardly heard a word about it, and showed little concern about it. Yet it is from the attitude of the vast mass of the workers that the success of the Revolution will depend; for revolution is not the sacking of a few warehouses, but the organising of production on a scientific and rational basis for the producers, for the social welfare of all, under the control of the workers.

It is necessary that the best of the workers should become members of the Party; it is necessary that the masses should be made aware of its presence, and their hostility to it lessened, if not entirely done away with.

In order to obtain that, the new Party should be resonant to the demands and to the views of the Rank and File, and it should avoid the pit-fall of organisation where leaders only have a voice, to the detriment of full expression of the opinion by even the humblest members.

The real revolutionary work of the Party will only be beginning when these preliminary questions are solved.

Meanwhile, speed the day!

CLASSES IN SOCIETY.

The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production in former times. So long as the total social labour only yields a produce which but slightly exceeds that barely necessary for the existence of all; so long, therefore, as labour engages all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society—so long, of necessity, this society is divided into classes. Side by side with the great majority, exclusively bond-slaves to labour, arises a class freed from directly productive labour, which looks after the general affairs of society; the direction of labour, State business, law, science, art, etc. It is, therefore, the law of division of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes. But this does not prevent this division into classes from being carried out by means of violence and robbery, trickery and fraud. It does not prevent the ruling class, once having the upper hand, from consolidating its power at the expense of the working-class, from turning their social leadership into an intensified exploitation of the masses.—ENGELS.

PRISONER 9587.

Last Friday Comrade Pankhurst was visited by two friends at the Infirmary of Holloway Prison.

Prison Regulation 243a, which we reprinted in our last issue, and to which we strongly believe she is entitled, has been refused her by the Home Secretary (the Right Hon. E. Shortt, K.C.).

She was delighted to hear news of the movement. The puny vulgarity of petty quarrels—in which some who have a strong preference for the windy side of a prison seem to revel in—stops at the prison door.

Inside the prison, amongst the dogs of our capitalist society, amongst the poor victims of the lust and the violence of men, Comrade Pankhurst keeps her faith pure and serene.

The prison library is ill-furnished with books: Milton, Burns, Keats, Byron, Coleridge, Swinburne, Blake are all unrepresented. There is no book on philosophy, political economy, and very little history. G.B.S., too, is not available. Comrades having books at their disposal, including good French ones (not novels), are invited to send them to the Library, as a present, for no individual prisoner is allowed to receive books.

The demand for the rights of political prisoners, and the application of rule 243a has not been dropped, and Comrades desirous of joining in this rightful agitation are asked to communicate promptly with the *Workers' Dreadnought*.

THE LIBERATION OF THE EAST.

A comrade returning from a trip to the Caucasus, writes in the *Pravda*: "A Women's Club has been organised in Baku, which has already over 300 members; of whom one half are Moslems. The Club has a very ambitious programme and has a dramatic, musical and literary section. Addresses are given by men who are admitted to the Club. Several Mussulman young women occupy the posts of Club instructresses."

HEROES.

Where are the heroes now who fought and bled?
Where are the heroes now who are "not dead"?
They were but stainless heroes for a time
On statesmen's lips, and in the poet's rhyme.

Heroes they were, but heroes now no more,
For them the factory has unlocked its door;
And they who faced the cannon and the Hun,
Now creep and cringe, and from the bosses run.

Ah! woe is me, alas! alack-a-day,
The hero has become the bosses' prey—
A hero with the Hun, and men were carved;
A hero with the boss, and men are starved!

Where are the heroes who the flag unfurled?
Fair "freedom's" flag to liberate the world—
Some lost an arm, and others lost a leg,
But still they've freedom for a job to beg.

Freedom to starve, or freedom to be bound,
With chains of slavery firmer to the ground;
Such freedom is the heroes' great reward:
Freedom to eat less food, and work more hard.

Freedom to struggle with a heart dimayed,
Freedom to weep, and wish that they were dead.
The living heroes for a loaf now groan:
No loaf they give but give the dead a stone.

THOMAS SCOTT.

SHOULD COMMUNISTS PARTICIPATE IN REACTIONARY TRADE UNIONS?

By N. LENIN.

(Conclusion.)

These figures and facts bear out with the utmost clarity that which is being indicated by a thousand other manifestations, viz. the growth of consciousness and the intense desire for unity and organisation among the proletarian masses and the most backward elements of the workers. For the first time millions of workers in England, France and Germany, are passing from a condition under which there was an utter lack of organisation of any kind, to the elementary (and for those who are still imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices), the most accessible, lowest and simplest form of organisation, namely the trade unions. The revolutionary, but inconsistent, Left Communists stand alongside of this phenomenon shouting to the masses, at the same time refusing to work within the trade union, refusing under the pretence that these unions are reactionary; while at the same time organising or inventing brand-new, Simon-pure organisations, which, while free from bourgeois-democratic prejudices, are still burdened with the sins of trade and craft exclusiveness. (The Workers' Union will be broad (?) they say, and will admit everybody only upon ONE condition, i.e. the recognition of the Soviet System and the Dictatorship. Greater foolhardiness, greater detriment to the proletarian revolution, than this sort of activity on the part of the Left Communists of Germany is impossible to conceive. If we, in Russia, after two and a half years of unparalleled victories over the Russian bourgeoisie and those of the Entente, should now stipulate as a condition for admission to the Trade Unions the recognition of the Dictatorship, we should be committing a blunder and impair our influence with the masses and thereby play into the hands of the Mensheviks. For the

real task of the Communists is to be able to convince the most backward masses, to work among them, and not to isolate ourselves from them by fanciful and childish "Left" slogans.

Gompers, Henderson, Johaux, Legien, are without doubt grateful to these Left revolutionaries, who, like the German "opposition on principle" (save us from such principles!) or like some revolutionists in France, or the American Industrial Workers of the World, preach withdrawing from the reactionary trade unions, refusing to work within them.

There is no doubt but that the opportunist leaders of the unions will resort to all the dirty tricks of bourgeois diplomacy, invoking the help of the capitalist governments, priests, police, judges, etc., in order to prevent the Communists from penetrating into the Trade Unions, to make their work within the unions as dangerous as possible, aiding the police to persecute and run them down. But we must be able to withstand all that, to be ready for any and every sacrifice, and, even if necessary, to practice trickery, to employ cunning, and to resort to illegal methods, to sometimes even overlook or conceal the truth—all for the sake of penetrating into the Trade Unions, to stay there and by every and all means carry on the work of COMMUNISM.

Under the Czar's regime, prior to 1915, we had no legal status, but when Zubatov, of the Russian secret service police, undertook to organise the "Black Hundred Labour Assemblies" and Labour Societies for the purpose of trapping the revolutionists and combatting them, we dispatched to these meetings and organisations some of our best men, who got in touch with the masses and contrived to carry on a campaign of agitation within these organisa-

tions, with the result that we succeeded in turning the masses away from the influences of the Zubatovists.

Gompers, Henderson, Johaux, Legien and Co. are nothing but "Zubatovs," who are distinguished from the Russian Zubatov by their modish dress, their cultural polish, and by their more refined and dramatically developed technique, in carrying out their infamous policy.

It is certainly much more difficult to accomplish the kind of work carried on in Russia, by the Communists, in the countries of Western Europe and America, because the workers are so thoroughly permeated with legalistic, constitutional, bourgeois-democratic prejudices. Nevertheless, this kind of work not only can be done, but must be done, and done systematically.

The executive committee of the Third International should, in my opinion, straightway condemn and recommend that the Third International should issue a Thesis exposing in detail the stupidity of such tactics, as being inimical to the best interests of the proletarian revolution, and particularly denounce the line of conduct followed by the Dutch "Tribunists" who, directly or indirectly, openly or covertly, completely or partially, support this misguided policy.

The Third (Communist) International must repudiate the tactics of the Second International and settle burning questions, not in an ambiguous way but directly and clearly, hitting straight from the shoulder.

We told the German Independents (Independent Socialist Party) the whole truth, everything that we thought about them. We must tell the whole truth to the "Left" Communists as well, and right to their faces.

INDUSTRIAL JOTTINGS.

Unemployment and its "Alternative."

The workers in many industries, after a long campaign by Press, poster and platform, to induce them to increase output, are now being asked to decide among themselves whether they will accept short time as an alternative to the dismissal of a number of their fellow-workers. It is part of the policy of the capitalists, of course, to offer short time as an "alternative." The offer of an alternative has the appearance of being a generous restraint of their "right" to "give" the workers jobs, or to withhold them at their pleasure. The effect, however, and one much to be desired from the masters' point of view, is that it divides the workers. With many, a decision is easily arrived at. The old proverb, "Half a loaf is better than no bread," will immediately appeal to these, and point to short-time as a sound decision. But the "alternative" is by no means so acceptable to the thinking workers.

In the first place, the problem is complicated by the fact that the threat to issue notices if short-time is refused, does not hit all alike. Those workers who have been employed for years at an old establishment, especially foremen and their "under-studies," know very well that their names will not be included on the list of "notices," and unless they are men of exceptional character, they will be swayed between the desire to remain on full time and full wages and that of sacrificing part of their wages in order that some other "poor blighter" may keep his job. And there has been the amusing spectacle of men who are only moved by the appeal to their own immediate interests voting with the class-conscious worker who opposes short-time on principle.

To take a concrete case of which I have personal knowledge. During the very week in which the Government—through fear of the unemployed becoming altogether unmanageable in point of numbers—the firm I speak of informed their workers that 20 per cent. of the staff would be given notice immediately, unless the alternative of short-time were accepted. Now, there are in this firm, as in others, quite a number of men who have no immediate fear of dismissal. They have held their jobs

for years. They are specialists in their own departments, and many, even of those who are not foremen, feel they will be among the last to get notice, by reason of the unwritten rule which accords priority to those with the longest service. These men naturally look at the problem from a point of view quite different from that of the worker who has, comparatively speaking, only recently been taken on by the firm, or who is slightly less skilled in his trade. This last, and relatively less fortunate class of employee, has every reason to fear notice, and he is naturally inclined immediately to vote for short-time and "half a loaf."

In the particular case to which I refer short-time was accepted by a large majority, in an important department. A minority were in favour of refusing short time and imposing a levy of 5s. per week on those who escaped notice. The total unemployment benefit to workers in this department of the trade amounts to £3 per week, and a 5s. levy would have meant an extra £1 per week for dismissed workers. This would have left those still at work much better off than they now are on short time. It was stated, however, that the extra levy could not have been enforced, it not being a union decision, and apparently this was one of the reasons why the suggestion was defeated. Clearly this is a case in which the question ought to have been dealt with by the whole union and not left to be decided by the workers of one firm. But the advice from the union was that the workers must decide the question for themselves.

It will be seen that there are several ways of looking at the problem. From the union point of view the increase of unemployment means a heavy drain on their funds, and yet, on the other hand, short-time means a big reduction in the standard of living. Therefore, in voluntarily accepting short time, trade unionists are violating the very principle for which trade unions were established, namely, the maintenance of a high standard of living for the workers. After three months, say, on short-time, the masters can argue that the workers can live on less—the proof of the pudding in this case being the non-eating of it by the workers! And

the slightest fall in the cost of living strengthens the masters' argument. So that, if times should "improve," and full-time be again adopted after three months, any attempts to increase wages would be met with the argument: "It is ridiculous to ask for higher wages. You have voluntarily reduced your standard of living. We have readjusted it by putting you on full time again, and to ask for a still further increase is preposterous." This argument will prove the more difficult to reply to, seeing that it is the weak custom of unions to refer to the increased cost of living as the main reason why increased wages should be paid—as though it were an unalterable law of the Medes and Persians that the wages of a worker should be determined by the cost of bread and marg. When will trade unions as a whole rise to the dignity of asking for more because it is *they* who have produced the wealth? And when will they throw the cost-of-living argument back in their masters' teeth with a fierce "Et tu, Brute!"

If unemployment continues to grow, trade union funds will be heavily drawn upon, but co-operation and a united front may enable them to hold out until the turn of the tide. Whether they hold out or not, however, one thing remains clear, and that is that trade unionism alone can do very little more than keep the standard of living hovering now just below, now just above, the bare existence level. It is no solution of the problem, "Given a country and a people, find how the people may make the best of the country and of themselves," as R.B. put it. Some day the trade unions may make the solution of that problem their definite aim, and then things will happen. In that "good time that is coming," when the capitalists come along and ask their slaves to return from short time to full time, and request them to speed up production again, perhaps the unions will reply: "You told us six hours a day was enough for any man to work when you put us on short time, and if it was enough for us then, it is enough for us now. And we shall take our full share of what we produce, i.e. the lot." But this will never happen while trade unions are content with a mere bread-and-marg. standard of living!

WARD NEWTON.

REPORT OF THE UNITY CONVENTION.

On Saturday and Sunday was held in Leeds, behind closed doors, the Unity Conference of the three organisations of Communists in Great Britain—the Communist Party of Great Britain, the Communist Party (B.S.T.I.), and the Communist Labour Party, with various Communist Groups.

Some 150 delegates attended the Conference, which was promoted by the Executive of the Third International in Moscow.

The Saturday sessions were devoted to Party business, the only moments susceptible to enthusiasm being the passing of the resolution which fused the three bodies, when delegates rose to their feet and spontaneously broke into the "International." As Wm. Paul (lately returned from Russia) declared, there was from that moment on a "breath of Moscow—a breath from the East where there is wisdom," in the Conference.

Jack Tanner, voted to the chair, declared that the first duty of the Conference both to the British working-class and to the International movement, was to forge a weapon for use in the intensive and ruthless fight against capitalism. The Chairman and the speakers who followed him laid stress on the need for a rigid Party discipline; and this, indeed, may be taken as the predominant note of the Conference.

Leckie for the Communist Labour Party, Watkins for the Communist Party (B.S.T.I.), and MacManus for the Communist Party of Great Britain, presented reports. "To-day," said MacManus, "is different from yesterday or any other day. We are no longer servants of a section, but of a united movement. The Communist Parties are dead. Long live the Communist Party!"

The fusion resolution was carried unanimously, and in the afternoon the Conference proceeded to the election of officers. Arthur MacManus was elected Chairman, and the provisional Executive (including besides those elected for the various regions, the nominees of the executives of the defunct sections) was constituted as follows: R. Beach, W. J. Hewlett, J. F. Hodgson, F. L. Kerran, W. Kirker, J. V. Leckie, J. MacDonald, J. McLean, W. Mellor, Mrs. Montefiore, J. T. Murphy, W. Paul, J. J. Vaughan, T. J. Watkins, A. A. Watts, H. Webb, and E. T. Whitehead.

It was pointed out that Comrade Malone, M.P., who was nominated for election, would not be released from prison until the provisional Executive had ceased to function. "He can attend no meetings," said Mellor, "but prison chapel on Sundays."

A resolution of fraternal greeting and congratulation on their stand for Communism was addressed to Comrades Malone, Sylvia Pankhurst, Steele, Harvey, Taylor and Bell—members of the Party at present in prison.

J. T. Murphy addressed the Conference first as fraternal delegate from the Stop Steward and Workers' Committees, and again as the bearer of a mandate from the Red International of Trade Unions. Comrade Murphy recounted the causes that had led up to the formation of the Communist International, and then to the creation of a centre of affiliation for Trade Unions which were in opposition to the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions, officered by Thomas, Legion, and other social-patriots. Already something near twelve million Trade Unionists all over the world were affiliated, and he called upon the Communist Party to play its part in propaganda among British Trade Unionists in favour of British affiliation.

After the speaker had explained the reciprocal relations of the Communist and the Red Internationals, a resolution was moved by Bell and carried unanimously pledging the Party to support the Red International of Trade Unions.

Brown, of the I.L.P. Left Wing, speaking as a fraternal delegate, declared that there were thousands of Communist I.L.P.-ers who, after the Easter Conference of the I.L.P., would seek the advice of the Communist Party as to their position.

A letter was read from the Jewish Socialist Party (Poale Zion), requesting affiliation to the Communist Party.

The Conference adjourned until Sunday.

The Sunday session began with a reference from the Conference Chairman to the death of Peter Kropotkin. "Kropotkin," said Tanner, expressing the general sense of loss, "seemed younger last year when

"Rosta," the official Soviet Press agency, denies the German reports of the death of Prince Kropotkin.

I saw him in Russia than when I had last seen him in England eight years ago. He did a great work for the emancipation of the masses, and his death is a shock and a great loss to all of us." The Conference rose and stood silent for a moment in memory of the dead.

Tom Bell gave a report on the position and plans of the Party as regards organisation, and dwelt with special emphasis on the necessity of elaborating schemes to aid in the distribution of "The Communist," the official organ of the Party. It was (he said) necessary that every member of the Party should have a copy of the paper every week without fail. At the request of the Conference a statement as to the policy and position of the paper was made by the editor, Francis Meynell. Meynell declared that it would be the work of "The Communist" to preach the class-war and to engender class hatred and class contempt. Thousands of people outside the Communist Party, people who could be made to bring new strength into the Party, were now reading the paper. The sale of the last issue was just double the sale of the first number under his editorship.

After a comprehensive discussion, the question of the Party's relation to Communist papers other than its own organ was referred to the Executive for decision.

Fraternal greetings were conveyed to the Conference from the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow and from the Communist Party of France. These declarations were received with cheers and with the singing, twice repeated, of the "International."

The Conference proceeded to deal item by item with the provisional rules of the Party, the first of which declared that the organisation was to be known in conformity with the 21 points of the Third International as "the Communist Party of Great Britain."

Before the evening the work of the Conference, in which the spirit of unity and discipline had been constantly present, was concluded, and the scene of labour transferred to the divisional organisations and branches until the summoning within a few months of a further National Convention, at which the provisional rules will be ratified.

THE EXTREMITY OF CAPITALISM.

By FRED TYLER.

At a General Meeting of shareholders of the London Joint City and Midland Bank on Friday, January 28th, Mr. R. McKenna, at one time Home Secretary under the Asquith Liberal Government, gave an extremely exhaustive review of the economic situation of Europe, and of Britain in particular.

His statements reveal nakedly, that which revolutionaries have consistently pointed out, both in speech and writing, and it is a valuable piece of Communist propaganda.

Our ears have been dinned by the shrieks of Labour leaders, Trade Union functionaries, and the strange "Coalition" spokesmen, who have insisted that the practical method to ease unemployment and the problem of dear living laid alone in the direction of a reduction of the cost of production.

Britain has at the moment, over one and-a-half millions out of work, yet the exponents of the present social system maintain that unemployment, resulting from the fall of exports, due to the lower export prices of other countries, can only be effectively dealt with by:—

- 2.—Reduced wages;
- 2.—Increased production in the same time;
- 3.—Increased hours without an increase of wages.

Thus, by paying less for labour and obtaining more goods without extra cost, the supporters of the commercial system claim that exports will rise and unemployment diminish.

Further, reduced productive costs will bring down prices.

Thus, we see at a glance, the cards of Capitalism, and are comforted to observe the signs of capitalist extremity; for as sure as the buses run down Fleet Street, these three points must be faithfully accepted by Labour, or Capitalism must break up in disorder and fall to pieces.

Until Labour bows its battered head lower to the commercial classes, and resigns itself to the social evils of the age, works harder and starves itself more, the situation must get worse, till the casual employee and the fully employed starve, and the unemployed perish.

Out of this horrible, ghastly situation, only the beacon light of the coming Communist mode of

society shows a welcome road. Humanity can only choose between a new social system or the extinction of the whole social existence.

We are confronted with a serious unemployed situation.

Over a million and a half workers are on the streets. The remainder of the workers are faced with short time, and live in daily dread of discharge.

Press, Pulpit and Parliament resound with the cry that the workers themselves can remedy the evil, and with their tongues in their cheeks, repeat the three points to mend Capitalism.

Mr. R. McKenna, dealing with taxation, says:

"As we have reached the limit to which taxation can be imposed on trade and industry, economy in expenditure is the only means left of reducing the debt."

Further, any serious attempt to bring down prices must result in increasing the burden of the National Debt.

Thus, "the creditor would receive a huge premium at the expense of the debtor." The Debt figure remaining stationary and a fall in prices, resulting in reduced wages, the necessary taxation of the Government to pay interest or to reduce the Debt, must become proportionately heavy.

We are told that a return to pre-war prices would mean double the National Debt.

Further, Mr. McKenna states:—

"A penny on the Income Tax would produce only £3,000,000, and the interest on the National Debt and the total cost of war pensions was £470,000,000, demanding between them an impossible Income Tax of 13/- in the £, and all the remaining cost of Government would have to be defrayed otherwise." Such is the state of Rome.

The Problem of the European Markets.

Referring to peace problems, he says:—

"There can be no real commercial prosperity, until the European market is restored. If its economic restoration is ignored, our foreign trade would contract and decay, and the still solvent states would slip one by one into the general ruin."

Yet we hear the voice of "the Welsh wizard," speaking from Paris:—

"Austria needs financial aid, but we cannot afford to help her."

We hear his voice again, speaking at a dinner given by the Federation of British Industries:—

"We are suffering from a fall in exports, due to the inability of exhausted countries to buy, despite their need of these goods."

And then we turn again to McKenna; he says:—

"A high bank rate and a severe restriction of credit was a most effective check on speculative interests, but a grave impediment to legitimate business. This, however, was considered a desirable step."

Mr. McKenna's Limitations.

So we see the panic of finance exhibited by Mr. McKenna; the weakness of the new claims of solution for present-day evils exhibited by McKenna; the danger of falling exports and a perishing Europe. We get no inspiration from him; he insists on renewed trade with Europe, but is in favour of a severe "restriction of credit" to speculative interests, despite the obvious fact that such business is risky and decidedly speculative, and more important still, it needs the backing of the large banks.

Europe is slipping into Capitalist bankruptcy and must, unless helped by Britain, bring about the fall of the commercial system in all countries; yet the banks, to avert destruction themselves, must withhold that aid, which must be given to prevent the final end of the banking commercial system.

The Coming Ruin.

The former means ruin to-day, the latter, ruin to-morrow; and that's it. Therefore, let us tell everybody, and teach the workers. It does not matter what you think, these are the facts: you have two choices, and a short time in which to decide.

- 1.—Help the employers by tightening your belt, eating less, doing more work (when able), and work longer hours, even live in semi-starvation; or—

- 2.—Take Motter's advice: "Be your own master, get ready for the break-up of Capitalism, because of its inherent contradictions and extremity, and the

(Continued on page 8).

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

NOTES FROM HOLLAND

BY S. VAN DEN BERG

(Secretary Dutch Transport Workers' Federation, Rotterdam, Holland).

The Trade Union movement in Holland is split up into five different factions, which are fighting—and sometimes blacklegging—each other, instead of attacking, with one solid front, the employing class. Numerically, the Dutch Trade Union movement is rather strong, but owing to the present lack of unity, reaction reigns all over the economic and political fields. The five different factions are:—Roman Catholic, Protestant, Neutral, Social-Democratic and Syndicalist. The latter two factions—Social-Democratic and Syndicalist—adhere to the theory of the class-struggle, but only the Syndicalist organisation really applies this theory in the daily fight against capitalism.

The Roman Catholic and Protestant organisations are influenced and supported by the clergy and the possessing class, and are making headway as a reaction of propaganda of the Bolshevik doctrines and methods.

The neutral Trade Union centre is mainly composed of brain workers and the aristocrats of the Labour class. The Social-Democratic Trade Union centre is the most powerful, embracing all sorts of trades, with a total membership of 245,000.

The Syndicalist movement of Holland calls itself independent to distinguish itself from any other tendency; it is independent of any religious or political party, and has been fighting for more than 25 years for its emancipation. The Syndicalist labour secretariat, with headquarters in Amsterdam, represents an influential minority, consisting of the most important organisations. Affiliated with the Syndicalist centre are the Transport Workers' Federation, the Federation of Building Trades, the Municipal Workers' Federation, and the Federation of Metal Workers. The total fifteen national federations are affiliated, with a membership of 45,000.

The Syndicalist movement of this country is purely a Socialist economic movement, with a revolutionary tendency, which is using its own political tactics to gain its objective. It is an anti-parliamentary movement adhering to the policy of direct action to exercise power both on the economical and political field. The Syndicalist movement was founded by the Social-Democratic party, which split up into Anarchist and Reformist wings. For a long time the Trade Union movement was ruled by the Anarchists, who handicapped the practical daily work, but, on the other hand, saved it from corruption. In 1905 the Social-Democrats founded their own National Federation of Trade Unions, and on many occasions worked hand in hand with the capitalists to smash the Syndicalist movement.

During the war the Syndicalists' labour secretariat collaborated with different revolutionary groups and factions; even the revolutionary Marxians (S.P.D.), who had been expelled from the Social-Democrat (Reformist) party, the members of the S.D.F. (Marxians), gradually joined the Syndicalist organisations, because the latter had rejected the truce policy and did not change their revolutionary viewpoint. Theoretically, the Marxians do not agree with the decentralisation and anti-parliamentarism of the Syndicalist movement. After the Bolsheviks had seized power in Russia in 1917, the Dutch Marxians changed their party to the Communist party, and carried out vigorous propaganda for Bolshevik theories and methods. The vital question in the Syndicalist movement is the theses of the Third International of Moscow.

The great majority of the leaders and the rank and file approve of the heroic struggle of our Russian comrades against imperialistic and reactionary powers, but cannot adopt the Soviet regime and the Bolshevik methods as fit for other European countries; moreover, they absolutely decline to join the Third International, as they refuse to subordinate the Syndicalist movement to the international and national Communist political movement, and are going to create an international Syndicalist organisation in conjunction with the German and other Syndicalists. Preparatory arrangements have been made with the German Freie-Arbeiter Unionen to convene a conference for that purpose in Berlin. Our Syndicalist centre will be represented by two delegates.

I may mention that the Dutch Syndicalists attended the congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions in Amsterdam last year, but decided not to join. They refused to accept the rules formulated by Appleton, who, in the meantime, resigned, in company with the reactionary leader of the American Federation of Labour, Samuel Gompers.

As far as I have studied the state of affairs, the position of our Syndicalist movement will be very difficult in the near future. The Communist movement, energetically ruled by its champions in Moscow, will develop an enormous power to achieve

its aim—the world revolution; the decrees of the Third International to work from within in order to spread the Communist views and eventually "conquer" the industrial organisations of the proletariat will be carried out in most countries by the disciplined Communists who knew how to arouse the revolutionary class-conscious elements amongst the workers. The appeal to create an international of trade and industrial unions, as a section of the Third International, will find a good reception in those countries where the rank and file are tired of the bureaucratic conservative leaders, who only betrayed them.

I, for one, as a revolutionary Syndicalist, believe there is a middle course between Amsterdam and Moscow. I do not know whether the international Syndicalist movement will possess sufficient organising power to found a new international organisation apart from the International Federation of Trade Unions of Amsterdam and the Third International of Moscow. Amsterdam is the embodiment of the social-patriotic tactics, and is in alliance with the League of Nations. Moscow is the embodiment of the doctrines of the Marxian politicians.

The Syndicalist Trade Union movement represents the toiling masses destined by history to perform the greatest revolution the world has ever seen, the Social Revolution, by the overthrow of the capitalist society. The emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves as the non-possessing class, and not the work of the politicians. Let the proletariat unite regardless of colour and creed and political ideas: this is the principle of Syndicalism, and this principle will lead the workers to victory.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN NORWAY.

BY CHRISTIAN HILT.

CHRISTIANA, January 21.

The Norwegian Constituante of 1814 was in many directions a child of the great French Revolution. A parliament by the name of Storting has to be elected every third year. We have no House of Lords—the nobility was abolished by law a hundred years ago. Two-thirds of the members of the Storting are elected from the country places, the rest from the towns.

The leading classes about 1814 were the civil service class and the merchants. The majority of the people are peasants, fishermen, and workers. The first half of the nineteenth century is occupied by the peasants' political class struggles against the ruling classes and their privileges. The first labour uprising, about 1850, under the leadership of the eminent agitator, Marcus Thrane, a disciple of Saint Simon, was violently suppressed by the authorities.

Then follows the creation of the great Liberal Party under the leadership of Johan Sverdrup, and its campaign for bourgeois democracy in education and judicial proceedings and for power in the Storting against the regime of the Swedish kingdom. 1884 is regarded as the great break-through of Liberalism.

Meanwhile, industrialism began its development in the country; in 1887 the Norwegian Labour Party was formed by the initiative of Chr. H. Knudsen, still a member of the central executive committee of the party. The growth of Socialism in Norway appears from the following figures:—

Year.	Membership.	Votes.	Reps.
1894	11,500	732	0
1903	13,500	24526	4
1912	43,557	125,022	23
1918	94,165	209,580	18

Since 1915 the three great parties, Conservatives, Liberals, and Socialists, have been of approximately the same strength at the elections. But in the Storting there are 54 Conservatives, 54 Liberals, and only 18 Socialists. A just election Act should have given 43 Socialists mandates.

Especially after the German Revolution of 1918, even bourgeois circles claimed a new election Act and dissolution of the Parliament. The victory of reaction in Germany, however, calmed our own capitalists. The new election Act we got in 1920 is far from satisfactory.

Last summer a conservative government, headed by Otto B. Halvorsen, followed the Liberal regime which endured from 1913 to 1920. The time for the extortionate profiteering of shipowners, capitalists, and land-owners is now finished. Unemployment increases every day. Even reduction in wages has taken place. In the mining and fisheries industries there is a very serious crisis.

The vast majority of the organised labour class knows that Socialisation of the means of production is the only way to freedom. They have lost all confidence in capitalist democracy and wish to establish a new Constituante built on the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The

Norwegian Labour Party, numbering 110,000 members, is affiliated to the Third International. Our reformists (the so-called Social-Democratic opposition) have recently broken from the party and constituted a new anti-Bolshevik organisation under the name of The Social-Democratic Party of Norway. Consequently the parliamentary group will be divided into two parts, 10 members going to the Right and eight remaining as representatives of the old party.

In March next the Norwegian Labour Party, at an extraordinary congress, will decide the question of acceptance of the Moscow Theses with the insignificant reservations proposed by the central committee. A minority in the committee suggests non-acceptance on account of the special conditions in Norway, but recognises the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Behind this minority, headed by the president of the General Trade Union Federation, Ole O. Lian, is supposed to stand several Trade Unionists, but the congress will probably not result in a further split of the party.

The Norwegian labour class knows that the only way to deliverance from the present capitalist chaos is International Communist action. With the most burning interest we therefore follow the development of the Labour movement in Europe, preparing ourselves for the inevitable Social Revolution.

By the way, I use this opportunity to inform our comrades abroad that the stories of the Capitalist Press about Red plans to seize the Norwegian capital by setting fire to the great timber-yards are merely falsehoods. Until this day, no such scheme have been worked out. Hitherto we have limited our task to setting on fire the minds of the workers, spreading knowledge of Socialism, preparing the coming workers' rule in industry, and organising the soldiers' soviet.

BOLSHEVISM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

A correspondent sends the following letter from Western Australia:—

"After being in this place for a period of five weeks, I have decided to record my impressions of this particular part of the British Empire. My first impression on arrival was favourable; every one seemed pleased to see fresh arrivals from England, and the free and easy style displayed contrasted strikingly with the rough and churlish manner of the wage-slaves at home. This is no doubt due, in a great measure, to climatic conditions and elbow room. But under the surface of all this apparent light-heartedness the terrible effects of the war keep rising to the surface, expressing in a thousand different ways the sinister hand of capitalism. The discharged soldier problem is here, as at home, the difference being one of geographical magnitude. Promises made during the war have not been kept. As if capitalist promises ever were!

The farmer of this land—the Land of the Rising Sun—is thoroughly under the heel of the Banks. He is as much in bondage as the factory hand: the only apparent difference being, he acts as his own foreman. The majority of farms in this State (Western Australia) are mortgaged heavily, and the amount of liberty expressed by these "pioneers of liberty" can be demonstrated by the rules of the game. In the first place, very few farmers are free; that is, from the controlling influence of the Banks; and none are free from the protectionist policy of the Government. All wheat grown here must be pooled. Even wheat kept back for seed or to be milled for personal use has to be strictly accounted for.

The drought of 1914 brought into existence a body known as the Industrial Assistance Board: in reality, a branch or part of the Agriculture Bank—a State concern. This body exercises an authority over the farmers as autocratic as the Czar of Russia. Farmers cannot purchase stock, machinery or even employ a medical man for the accommodation of their wives without the sanction of the Industrial Assistance Board. The wheat pool when formed is manipulated for the farmers. Home prices are fixed, which, by the way, means 8s. per bushel; an advance of 1s. 6d. Bread is 1s. per 4lb. loaf. The remainder is sold at parity. After the disposal of the wheat, the various interests are adjusted, bankers, farmers, etc., receiving their respective shares according to the rules of the game. Interest on capital advanced comes first (private banks do not loan under 8 per cent; sometimes 10 per cent), then expenses of handling, followed by the salaries of the various officials, freightage, etc. Anything remaining may be retained as against outstanding loans. Thus the game goes on: more land, more interest. To give you some idea of this capitalist "Eldorado": the total Australian debt is some eight hundred millions; interest forty millions; population five millions; 48 per head per annum.

Here, there is a Parliament in every State; and, in addition, a Federal House. These Parliaments have a majority of Labour men—grafters of the first water, who submit to the leadership of Billy Hughes, who, by the way was presented with £27,000 last week for efforts in saving the Empire. This money has been principally subscribed by the capitalists in London. The type of Labour man evolved here is similar to those operating in advanced capitalist countries—lickspitters, fawning to the big guns of capital, denouncing disloyalty which they detect in every speech made by people who attempt to expose them. A few weeks ago a member of the Federal Government named Mahon denounced the British Government for its methods in Ireland. This led to a debate in the Federal House, and Mahon was expelled for disloyalty. He is now recontesting the seat he represented."

THE EXTREMITY OF CAPITALISM.—Contd. from page 6.

coming of the new mode of society, Communism based on the ashes of Capitalism.

The Madhouse.

We notice that the *Daily Herald* of Monday, January 31st, screams in loud and startling tones, "the Allied lunatics of Paris," and plaintively informs the British public that Europe is let loose to the wills and blunders of insane diplomats.

But steady a moment, Mr. Lansbury, this bold denunciation is refreshing, but yet it would be more worthy of Labour's daily to demonstrate to its readers, that method may lie beneath this seeming madness.

The spokesmen of Capitalism at Versailles, have in words, fixed an indemnity figure of £11,000,000,000 to be paid by Germany; £100,000,000 in the first year, the remainder, well—! History may repeat itself, and the Germans may say, in the words of Tsarist Russia: "If you want it, come and get it, if you can."

The Hidden Motive.

The most astute move, remarkable for lunatics, is the placing upon Germany of a liability to pay a 12 per cent. duty on export trade. A few old men, an apt expression of current intelligence in their respective countries, met in France to discuss the questions of International importance. The public conceived them harshly but wisely, fastening upon "wriggling, twisting Huns," a just penalty.

Bonar Law has coined the phrase "Germany can only pay in kind," so goods produced by sweated captive labour will consummate Germany's redemption, yet if goods (indemnity) are desired, why, in the name of common sense, impose an export duty of 12 per cent.?

"Lunaey," shrieks the *Herald*, "wisdom" I retaliate; because German industry has poured thousands of tons of vital necessities into Soviet Russia, and that, the world rulers must stop, by increasing the price of exchange of the bartered Russian goods.

But more important, and here we perceive the "lunatics' " sanity; this burden on German export trade, will boost the export trade of the smaller Allies, who, now on the verge of economic collapse, subsist on Anglo-American charity. But further help to materially mend the sickness of British export trade, cause a greater demand for home goods from world markets, resulting from increased German prices. Thus arresting the evolutionary desperate spirit of the unemployed in Britain, allow Italian masters to play with industrial developments by easing the bread problem there.

Capitalist administration, International and at home, is based upon the philosophy of putting off the fatal day; it cannot be otherwise. I have sympathy for the "lunatics of Paris"; they are dealing with a problem beyond solution.

They have an iron rule to follow, and endless difficulties to face:—

- 1.—They must exhaust German resources.
- 2.—They must lower the line of subsistence at home;
- 3.—Yet so arrange the indemnity terms to save colossal unemployment and revolution at home.

In other words, they must make Germany pay, to ease taxation at home, yet they must make Germany not pay, to boost Allied export trade and prevent a revolt following trade depression.

Lunatics! No, merely knaves who have played their last cards; seated upon a volcano of world unrest.

The need, therefore, is preparation and organisation of the thinking section of the workers to seize power.

Not find a trivial reform panacea à la *Daily Herald*; let the people who led the Allies to a military victory, cut their own throats; our business is to speed the cutting.

The last cards of world Capitalism are played; there remains now only Horthy's scaffold, and Stolypin's noose. Each week brings nearer the reign of Castlereagh; yet the spirit of Shelley again cries:—

"Rise like lions after slumber,
You are many, they are few."



OUR BOOKSHELF.

REPORT OF THE LABOUR COMMISSION TO IRELAND.

(The Labour Party, 33, Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1. 180 pp. Post free, 2s. 3d.)

The Labour Commission, with the Right Hon. A. Henderson, M.P., included six moderate Labour men, with Captain C. W. Kendall as legal adviser and Brigadier-General C. B. Thomson as military adviser. This publication is the plain statement of facts, as seen by a Commission that cannot be charged of having extremist views, nor Bolshevik leanings. On the contrary, its spirit is fully conciliatory, for, as stated in the daily Press, "the Commission occupied the difficult task of attempting to create a set of circumstances that would render probable a conference between the representatives of the British Government and those of Sinn Fein." Many photographs corroborates a tale that reads like one of pogroms in Poland. Under the chapter "Results of the Government's Policy," the Commission states: "Children naturally suffer from the effects of a terror-laden atmosphere, and we are informed that the number of cases of such diseases as St. Vitus' dance has considerably increased." Thus violence of to-day breeds ill for the generation of to-morrow. "The British Government's policy is calculated . . . more particularly to strangle the new developments of the Co-operative movement." "Things are being done in the name of Britain which must make her name stink in the nostrils of the whole world."

Confidence in the final rectitude by the Government, together with a race-pride, seems never to have left the Commission, even when collecting the tragic evidence. Firing was going on outside, and a member of the Commission went to the doorsteps. He was warned of the danger, but replied: "They will not fire at me because I am an Englishman." "Aye, sorr, they will, and find that out afterward," was the true Celtic reply.

The book is printed by the Caledonian Press, which has done on this occasion a signal service to the cause of truth and justice, and which does not lose the opportunity to inform us—on the back of the cover of this tale of murder, suffering and sorrow—that it is the "most up-to-date printing works connected with the Labour movement, and operated by the keenest, most efficient and enthusiastic band of eighty Labour workers ever organised under one roof."

A HANDBOOK FOR REBELS.

(A Guide to the successful defiance of the British Government. Compiled by Thomas Johnson. 3rd edition. Passed by the Censor. Irish Labour Party, Dublin. 36 pp. Sixpence.)

A compilation of "Rebel" speeches by Ulstermen in Parliament and in banquetting halls, before the war. It requires a good deal of political ingenuity to think that the law should deal evenly, on political questions, with Carson and the workers.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HELPFULNESS.

(By Prince Hopkins, Ph.B., M.A. Pioneer Printers, 420-422, Sixth Street South, Minneapolis, Minn. Two vols. 1.25 dollars net.)

The author, after having produced these volumes of some nine hundred pages, has discovered that the art of reading is the art of "skipping," and gives a list of the pages to be omitted by the reader. He is evidently a person of high ideals, for on the last page—the only one that bears out the title of the book, he says, in American spelling:—"Instead of cringing to the prejudices of the times and to the mob's cheap idea of honor, I endeavor to replace fear by forthright, to overcome passion thru mediation, and learn tolerance."

WHAT IS INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS EDUCATION?

(Plebs League, 11a, Penywern Road, London, S.W.2. 14 pp. 3d.)

The Plebs League was founded in 1908 "to further the interests of Independent Working Class Education." It is also pledged to assist the development of the Labour College (London) and Scottish Labour College (Glasgow). This booklet explains in simple language what kind of education is needed for an organised working-class movement. A useful pamphlet to break the ground and to begin propaganda in quarters where the tool-users have not yet learned to "do their own thinking," and still follow the tool-owners.

THE LIBERATOR.

(A journal of revolutionary progress. 138, West 13th Street, New York.)

The December and January issues of this excellent publication should be procured at the time, for they contain two good stories of Russia by John Reed, probably the last he wrote. Many of the cartoons of the "Liberator" manage to escape the oppressive sameness so noticeable in Labour publications.—With due acknowledgement, a few will be reproduced in our columns.

NEWS FROM SOVIET RUSSIA.

SCIENCE IN THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

Iscestia published the following article of Lunacharsky, under the title "Science in the Soviet Government": "In Petrograd, thanks to the support of the Commissariat of Education, one of the most interesting scientific institutions in Europe has come into existence, and is developing still more. This is the Institute for Research in Radiology. The Institute is in a large building that belonged formerly to the Homeopathic Society. Here Professors Nemenov and Joffe, a doctor and a physicist, have extended the territory of radio-research. Thanks to the energy of the directors, the Institute has become an extraordinary active centre for scientific research. Conferences and addresses are often held. There is a sick ward in the Institute, where Rontgen-therapeutics has been used with great success in the treatment of internal complaints, such as diseases of the stomach, etc. It is a small scientific world in itself. In spite of unfavourable circumstances, a thick volume with illustrations has been published, dealing with the work of the Institute.

All this must astonish the scientific circles of Western Europe. Professor Nemenov journeyed to Germany, on behalf of the Soviet Government, in order to learn what progress he had made in his branch, and to establish a connection with European science and enable him to buy the materials necessary for the continuation of his scientific work.

Professor Nemenov has sent a large number of articles from foreign newspapers and magazines to Russia, which expressed astonishment that it was possible, in starving Russia, to open an institute which has aroused the envy of Western European scientific circles.

CULTURE IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

Moscow, January 10, 1920.

In spite of the blockade, which prevented the arrival of instruments, many new scientific institutions are flourishing in Russia. The most abstract sciences are supported, but the technical sciences, naturally, receive the greatest attention. Great new laboratories with a proper staff, are in the closest touch with the Economic Administrative offices. In Moscow alone, 200 professors, 300 engineers, and 240 specialists are engaged in research.

Krasnaja Gazeta writes: The advance in culture in Russia can be seen from the fact that in 1911, out of every 100 inhabitants, 6.45 were studying; while today, the number is 13.47 or a total of 94,296.

The All-Russian Commission whose object is the abolition of illiteracy, spent 4,500,000 roubles during 1920. Out of 600 districts, 119 report that they now have no illiterate people. The Commission intends teaching 3,000,000 people to read and write during 1921.

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