

International Press Correspondence

Supplement to No. 95

To the Working Men and Working Women of Great Britain!

Comrades,

Within the next few days you will be called upon to express your opinion through the ballot box, upon the policy conducted in Britain during the last four years by the dominant class as represented by the Government of Lloyd George. The elections in Britain are not only the concern of the workmen and working women of Britain, but *also that of the international proletariat*; for Britain is the strongest capitalist power in Europe. It exploits millions of workers and peasants all over the world, and upon the Party that is in power depends the fate of the workers and peasants in many countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. For that reason, the Communist International, the international organization of the advanced workers of all countries, considers it its duty to express its opinion on the domination of your capitalist class, and to say what the workers of other countries expect from you.

Homes Fit for Heroes.

When you were fighting in the war for the interests of your masters and when they were compelled, not only with the aid of the blood of the workers in the trenches, but also by the hard labor of your women and children, they assured you that when German militarism was defeated they would introduce democracy into Britain, build homes fit for heroes, and create for them conditions of life worthy of human beings. These promises were solemnly repeated during the general election of November 1918. But judge them by their deeds. In Britain at the present moment, *unemployment* is rife to a degree never before experienced in your industrial country. The capitalists are taking advantage of this unemployment to *force down your wages*, to deprive you of the gains won by the trade unions after a struggle of a century and a half. Throughout the whole period of the war were demanding the *nationalization of the mines*. You declared that you were prepared to toil in the bowels of the earth not for the benefit of a handful of coal kings, but for the benefit of the whole community. In 1919 your Government declared that if the Parliamentary Commission, appointed to enquire into the question, reported in favor of the nationalization of the mines, it would do so. The Sankey Commission did report in favor of the nationalization of the mines, but the government failed to carry out the proposal, and now the fight is no longer centered round the question of nationalization but for the *defence of your miserable standard of existence against the attacks of the capitalists*. And if the workers dare to demonstrate their existence in the streets, they are *baoned* by the government forces. The government which spent £20,000,000 in three days on the Near Eastern adventure declared that it had no money with which to aid the unemployed. The *housing crisis* is still as severe as ever. The workers are huddled together in slums, whilst the war profiteers are building themselves palaces. The general standard of life of the workers today is *lower than it was before the war*,—and this in spite of the hundreds of thousands of lives that were sacrificed in the fields of Flanders, Gallipoli, and Mesopotamia for the domination of the British bourgeoisie.

The "Last War", the Forerunner of Other Wars.

When you were called upon to sacrifice your lives upon the battle fields you were told that this will be the last war; that if the Allies were victorious they, led by Great Britain, would bring about *disarmament, the freedom of all nations, and the organization of the world in the interest of the whole of humanity*. You believed this, and shed your blood for the sake of the future happiness of your children. But, after they had won the war, the Allies resolved to *enslave half the world, Germany, Turkey, Austria, and Bulgaria* were compelled to pay heavy tribute that would enslave them for half a century. *Russia*, which lost 10,000,000 men in the war for the cause of the Allies, was sentenced to death because it was the first that dared to throw off the burden of the war, and raise its hand against the conclusion of

the world war, your government conducted a *war against Soviet Russia*, against the peasants and workers of Russia and spent tens and millions of pounds in order to destroy its railways and bridges, flood the mines, and to crush with the iron hand of famine the revolt of the Russian workers against the domination of capital. Turkey was dismembered, and when, with their last remaining strength, your government threw against them its Greek vassals, supplying them with money and munitions. All this was done by a handful of *irresponsible people*. Lloyd George and Lord Curzon always presented their Parliament in which they had an enormous majority, with an accomplished fact as if to demonstrate that *all the talk about democracy in Britain was mere deception*. Even during the recent danger of a fresh war in the Near East, Lloyd George, while spending millions of the people's money, *did not even call Parliament together*.

The policy of your government has roused the *burning hatred towards Britain of the toiling masses of Russia, Turkey and the whole of the Mohammedan East*. The Indian workers and peasants and the Egyptian workers and peasants have grown to hate British rule. Instead of disarmament, the policy of your government has led to *Anglo-American competition, and Franco-British contest* for supremacy. Britain is politically *isolated*. Its policy is leading to certain new *international wars*. The League of Nations, which was to have served as an instrument to prevent future wars, is a powerless puppet in the hands of your government, bereft of all power and even moral authority.

The Labour Party Did Not Fight.

When we, the advanced workers of all countries, sum up the results of the four years of the politics of British capitalism, we ask ourselves,—how did the workers of Britain combat the criminal policy of their government? *We watched with pride how you in serried ranks attacked the fortress of British Capitalism*, the strike waves of 1919 and 1920, and the energy with which you fought against intervention in Russia. But we were saddened to observe how your struggle was retarded and defeated, not so much by the forces of the propertied classes as by the policy of your own leaders—the trade union leaders and the Parliamentary leaders of the Labour Party. We followed very closely the debates in Parliament, and waited expectantly to hear voices from the Labor benches expressing what you thought. When you took action against the attempts to suppress the Russian Revolution, when you sabotaged the shipment of arms against your Russian brothers and threatened your government with direct revolutionary action, your leaders could only give utterance to a pitiable lisp, and dared not even protest against the attempt to declare the Russians a plague-stricken people. When at Armritsar, General Dyer brought shame upon the English people by his atrocious murder of hundreds of unarmed and peaceful Indians, not one of your representatives dared to hurl from their places in Parliament the charge of executioner against this representative of the British dominant class.

Can it even be said that they defended your immediate every-day interests which the capitalists are now attacking? No, even that cannot be said. *The needs of the suffering unemployed found no ringing echo in Parliament*. Your representatives know how to beg but they dared not demand, for they could never resolve to take up the struggle outside of Parliament to support their demand. On the contrary, their work outside of Parliament consisted in restraining the workers and defeating the class struggle. The mere mention of "Black Friday" brings a blush of shame to the cheeks of all class-conscious workers. In reading the story of the betrayal of the Triple Alliance you must come to the conclusion that there is nothing your leaders fear so much as your struggles. That is because you have allowed your Parliamentary and trade union leaders always to put off the struggle, and when finally it broke out, they broke up the ranks of the fighting workers by secret negotiations with the employers' representatives. This is because you have tolerated their policy in Parliament of pitiful complaints and requests, and for this

reason you, *the most numerous and strongest detachment of the international working-class, must see you position growing worse, must look on helplessly at the exploiting adventurist policy of your government preparing for new wars right under your very nose.*

Down With the Capitalist Government—Long Live a Labor Government!

Working Men and Working Women of Great Britain,

We appeal to you on the eve of the elections. Surely there is no need for us to tell you not to vote for the bourgeois parties, irrespective of whether they call themselves, Conservatives, Coalition Liberals, or Independant Liberals. Who of you does not understand that you can have no confidence in butchers and profiteers, no matter under what title they may stand? Who of you does not understand that Bonar Law will conduct the same policy as was conducted by Lloyd George and that Asquith and Grey, whose hands are steeped in the imperialist policy which led to the war, if returned to power, would conduct exactly the same policy as the conservatives? Those who do not understand this will yet learn, in the school of their own poverty and inequality, these will only be convinced by the blow of the dominant class. *You politically organized workers of Great Britain believe that an improvement in your conditions can only come about when the Labor Party has secured a majority in Parliament and when a Labor Government has been established.*

In this connection we would say the following:

We, the Communist International, watch the policy of the Labor Party with deep regret. We too stand for securing a majority in Parliament, and for a Labor Government. *We call upon all Communist working men who have been fighting all the time against the betrayal of the interests of labor by the leaders of the Labor Party, to vote for the Labor Party candidates.* We say to the working-class of Great Britain, "Down with the capitalist government, long live a Labor Government!"

In the event of a victory at the elections, however, we warn you against the policy of the Labor Party and of that Labor Government. We ask you, will Carson and Curzon submit to the will of a Parliamentary majority if the interests of the money-bags are affected, or would they not commence civil war against the Labor Government? Every one who knows the blood-stained policy of the dominant class of England, everyone who knows the means by which it has maintained power in India and in Egypt, and the means by which they established their power in England, those who recall the days of Peterloo and the ruthless struggle against the glorious Labor Party, the Chartist, will not doubt for a moment that the British capitalists, landlords and militarists, *will declare war against an Labor Government that dares to protect the interests of the working-class.* If you seriously desire to have a labor Government an seriously wish to use it as an instrument in your struggle against exploitation, then you must understand that you must be prepared either to support this Labor Government with all your revolutionary strength and direct action, or that government will be merely a puppet in the hands of your dominant classes, not daring to raise a finger against the privileges of the capitalists, mine-owners and colonial pirates. — For that reason we think that the primary task of the Communists is to prove to the broad masses of the workers of Britain that it is impossible to restrain the beasts of prey of capitalism by means of ballot papers, and that the only means of putting an end to its policy is the powerful organization of the working-class, united by an iron will to fight for its interests. When the Labor Party, in its election contest, tells you that it stands for the costs of the war being imposed upon the capitalists and the abolition of unemployment, ask the leaders of the Labor Party how they propose to bring this about. The most shameless and reactionary capitalist "Morning Post", the organ of the Right Wing of the Conservative Party, openly laughs at the Labor Party's election address and calls it a "Pastoral". We ask you, workers of Great Britain, do you hope to convert the wolves into lambs by means of a parson's sermon?

If the Labor Party, on coming into power, will conduct a policy of sermon peaching, you will be defeated, the Labor Party and its Government will be the cause of another great disaster. appointment to the working-class, and the days of such a government will be days of treachery to your interests. We are convinced from the Labor Party's past that if it secures a majority its policy will be a policy of deception and the betrayal of your interests. Nevertheless we say to the Communist working man—vote for the Labor Party. Since the majority of British workers still believe in the Labor Party and are not convinced that only by ruthless struggle against exploitation can the working-class secure its rights. Communist workmen must not prevent the majority of the working-class from learning from the experiences of the Labor Party, what a working-class policy should not be and what it should be. We are convinced that only this practical experience will put you workers who still believe in the Labor Party on the right path. We call upon Communists to vote for the Labor Party candidates, but at the same time to speak the whole truth about its past and future policy.

You Will Be Compelled To Fight.

Working Men and Working Women of Great Britain,

The class conscious workers of other countries watch your policy with deep concern and ask—how much longer will it be before the great British working-class, that giant snatched in the chains of capitalist ideas and capitalist falsehoods, abstain from taking up the fight for its interests? *We, knowing the glorious past of the British working class, which at one time was the pioneer of the world labor movement, and which was the first to put forward the motto that only those who labour have the right to rule the State,* we are convinced that you will enter the fighting ranks of the international working-class. Exploiting the whole world, the British capitalist have thrown you crumbs from their bounteous table. The ruling class in Britain succeeded in holding up your victorious march onwards during the last 70 years. But that period has now ended. The British bourgeoisie is surrounded by enemies. It is menaced by the powerful competition of America and also of Japan, and industry is developing in its colonies. *Surrounded by a ring of other capitalist States, will no longer be able to feed you with scraps from its table.* Your exploitation will become more intensified and not less. The British bourgeoisie is no longer the first sea power. It is suffering defeat in the Near East. It will strive to intensify your exploitation and increase pressure upon you, and you, who today hope to restrain your increasing impoverishments by the petitions and good conduct of your leaders, will be compelled to fight and the British Communists, who today represent a small minority of the British working-class, will more and more become the voice of your desperation and the organizers of your struggle. Today they forewarn you, to-morrow, however, you will be convinced of the correctness of their policy, and you will take your place in the serried ranks of the Proletarian Communist International for joint struggle and joint victory. Let the forthcoming elections hasten the day of your awakening, hasten the day when you, in fighting formation, will advance, to the fight against the dominant classes of Britain and your exploiters in the whole world.

Down with the capitalist government of Britain! Down with the exploiters of the British and International Proletariat!

Long live a Labor Government, determined to fight capitalism!

Long live the conscious fighting working-class of Britain!

Long live the Revolutionary Unity of the International Proletariat!

The Executive Committee of the Communist International.

The Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

31 October 1922.