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# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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## C O N T E N T S

The Editorial View - - - - -	197
The British Commonwealth Conference <i>A. McManus</i>	204
Mikhail Tomsky (A Biography)- - - - -	208
Nine Months' Truce <i>J. T. Murphy</i> - - - - -	211
Rescued! (A Play) <i>A. Irkutoff</i> - - - - -	217
Work Among Peasants - - - - -	221
Economics of Capitalist Production <i>J. McDougall</i> -	231
Party Training Notes - - - - -	237
"Our" Empire - - - - -	238

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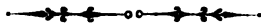
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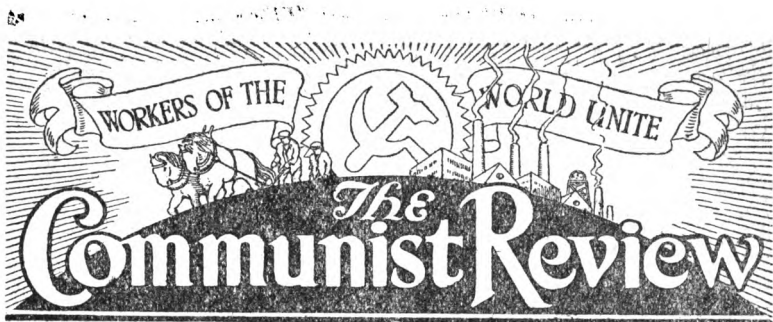
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## THE EDITORIAL VIEW

**T**HE success of the miners in withstanding the wage cuts—a truce though it be—has been like a tonic to the whole working class movement. At one stroke the pessimists in our ranks, “leftists” as well as moderates, have been confounded at the excellent display of labour solidarity. Here, surely, has been a demonstration of that power inherent in mass movements, a power which is greater than personal leadership and stretches beyond the frontiers of formal organisation. Just as experiences, registered in the individual consciousness, though unknown to the individual, come to the surface when excited by similar or analogous experiences, so does the mass memory recall the past under appropriate conditions. Undoubtedly the memory of 1921 has not been blotted out. It is still vivid and clear. In 1921, the employing class was able to take the miners, railwaymen, engineers and other workers in turn, and impose its will upon them to the loss of millions in wages. Almost analogous was the situation that presented itself last July. Defeat for the miners spelt defeat for the whole working class movement. Instinctively the whole movement felt it. Hence the unexampled display of trade union unity.

For our part a number of important features emerge from this recent crisis worth noting. Foremost amongst these is the complete eclipse of the pure and simple parliamentarians. Hitherto, it has been the tradition that the Labour Party was not only the shield and protector of the Trade Union movement, but what the trade unions could not get by industrial means the Labour politicians would get through parliamentary action. Isn't this the plea of our parliamentarians to-day—of right and left wings alike? Yet what have we seen? Actually, trade union M.P.'s led by no less a person than Stephen Walsh, the ex-War Minister, going to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald with the Communist proposal to hold up all parliamentary business until the miners' claims were granted. And, instead of the leader of the Labour Party

reading them a chapter from the Party Constitution, he blandly agrees to put their proposals before the Party Executive, and then betakes himself to the I.L.P. Summer School to lecture upon the evils of governments being intimidated by force, identifying the trade unionists for their display of labour solidarity as Communists, and branding their direct action as wicked bolshevism.

Now, more than ever, the whole working class movement must stand solid and united. Just as the capitalists are using the period of the "truce" to strengthen their position, so must the working class see to it that **their** position is strengthened. As the miners were enabled to withstand the attack of the mineowning capitalists because of the support given by the transport and other workers, so will the railwaymen, engineers and other workers, profit from a similar example of united direct action. All sectional interests must be co-ordinated under a unified direction.

But what every worker must realise—and it needs no royal commission to prove it—is the complete failure of capitalist enterprise. When a subsidy is necessary to ensure even the present miserable wages in the mining industry, surely we have a clear case for the elimination of private capitalist ownership. Coal is a vital social necessity. It is criminal and absurd to allow the mines to remain in the hands of people who are admittedly incapable of providing for social needs because of their greed for profit. Nationalisation of the mines is, therefore, no longer a platitude. It is an urgent political question, crying out for solution, and one which the coming Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party Conference must face in a different spirit from the usual hardy annuals.

If the miners are to escape from the clutching hand of the mine-owning profiteers, the mines must become social property. Nor should the Trades Union Congress be deterred by scruples about compensation. The arguments of the I.L.P.'ers such as Shinwell, and other would-be statesmen, for compensation, are too absurd for words. There isn't an enterprise to-day, but what has been paid for over and over again out of the surplus values withheld from generations of wage-workers. Let the T.U.C., therefore, decide upon nationalisation forthwith, and **instruct** the Labour Party accordingly. If it does, it will receive the wholehearted backing of the entire Labour movement.

No longer can we tolerate palaver, discussing whether this or that question is a political or an industrial issue, and whether it comes under the purview of the Labour Party or the Trades Union Congress. The preparations for the en-

listment of railway men in the Army, the declaration of the government to speed up the Special Police Corps, the encouragement given to fascist attacks upon the workers' organisations, and the general revival in military recruiting makes it clear that the government, i.e., the capitalists, are treating every working class demand to-day as a distinct challenge to their political power. The working class movement must accept the challenge, prepare and move forward to the definite conquest of all political power, that is to say, the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. There is no other way of escape from the slavery of these times.

\* \* \* \* \*

Amongst the several special questions to come before the Trades Union Congress at Scarborough this month is the problem of how to maintain and extend the unity of the trade union ranks, nationally and internationally. The mining crisis was not without its lessons. It revealed a great power in the masses. There is no reason why this power should not be increased. One effective means of securing this objective—a means which the Communist Party has repeatedly drawn attention to—is to extend the authority of the General Council. In this connection we inevitably come up against organisational barriers. As every one knows, the trade union leaders too often regard themselves as the custodians of the special interests of **their** members. For that reason they are often the biggest obstacles to unity. On the other hand, it is equally well known, that the capitalist policy of creating antagonisms amongst the workers intensifies the differences created by a sectional craft outlook.

Without minimising the responsibility of the leaders, in advancing or retarding solidarity, unity in the working class ranks can best be promoted in the shop, the factory, the pit, on the footplate, and generally, on the spot where the workers face the employers. Organisational barriers must give way to the higher class interests for which the labour unions, however inadequate, are designed to serve. That is why the Communist Party urges as the supreme task before our national movement, the formation of shop or pit committees, and factory councils; the extension of the functions and powers of Trades Councils; the co-ordination of all these under the General Council for a vigorous fighting **class** policy.

\* \* \* \* \*

But of equal importance to a strong united trade union movement at home is the consolidation of our movement with the workers' movement in every country, into a single international. Last year at Hull, Congress took a great step forward in fraternising with the powerful labour unions of

Soviet Russia. The fraternal visit of the Congress delegation confirmed the wisdom of the steps then taken. The delegation was able to report favourably upon establishing a closer relationship between the workers of the Soviet Republic, and the workers of this country. It remains for the Congress at Scarborough this year to declare for the definite organic alliance of the British Trades Union Congress with the All-Russian Trade Union Congress, and thus lay the foundations of the new Trade Union International.

Meanwhile, the bourgeoisie is active. Behind the discussion of the Pact, and the question of the international debts, sinister forces are at work preparing for the dual purpose of regulating debts, and creating an imperialist united front against Soviet Russia as the vanguard of the proletarian revolution. True, the differences between the bankers and diplomats of the leading powers are radical and deep-seated. But it is not beyond their wit to devise formulæ that will provide a working arrangement. Such an arrangement may be for a time, of longer or shorter duration, but, nevertheless, sufficient to enable them to combine for an organised attack upon the conditions of labour, but, above all, upon the Soviet Republics, as the greatest menace to their continued power of capitalism.

**Those who encourage discussion in the Labour movement on the merits of the Pact versus the Protocol, and thus waste the valuable time afforded by the present breathing space to organise a workers' offensive perform a distinct dis-service to the working class movement, bordering on open treachery.**

\* \* \* \* \*

To appreciate the seriousness of the position, let us review one or two recent happenings which go to show how the imperialists are working for an international understanding amongst themselves preparatory to launching an open offensive against the U.S.S.R.

The Pact aims at an alliance in particular, between France, Britain and Germany. France since 1918 has persistently furnished money, and arms to Poland and the Balkan States as part of her policy of European expansion. Great Britain, has, as persistently adopted a policy of supporting Germany to weaken France. It is also part of British policy to detach Germany from Russia and thus isolate the latter. Moreover, the French policy of supporting Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, etc., has its complement in the British policy of detaching Germany from Russia, and supporting with money and arms the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and Finland. Once the Pact is sealed the



blockade on the western front of the U.S.S.R. will be advanced a stage further.

Again, it is necessary to recall that under pressure of the British agents and diplomats, towards the end of 1923, the Finnish Government decided to invite the British Government to send a mission of officers of the army, navy and air forces to give their advice on the technicalities of defence. On the 28th March, 1924, a formal request was made, and on July 21st, 1924, under the MacDonald Government, be it noted, a British mission arrived at Helsingfors.

In the plan of naval defence, the Finns wanted the participation of Esthonia and Latvia, and the neutrality of Sweden. The British mission, on the contrary, urged the active participation of the Scandinavians, particularly Sweden. In other words, a naval bloc of all the Baltic States against the U.S.S.R. In the British plan Sweden would participate with her fleet, while Finland would use her army and air fleet, which could be supported by her naval fleet. Esthonia and Latvia were considered of secondary importance.

The British mission returned in September, 1924 with a detailed report of Finland's defences, and in October, 1924, two British officers were sent to Helsingfors to help in organising the Finnish Army. Needless to say, during 1924 the Finnish Army was greatly increased. After the information came out in the Finnish press, the Esthonian and Latvian governments took up the question of foreign aid in their defences. The Esthonian Government following the insurrection at Reval, turned to the British Government for help, but was told "the time was not ripe." We need only recall the fact that in December last, in reply to a formal enquiry from the Latvian Government, the British Government declared that in the event of Latvia being menaced by Russia she would receive the support of the Baltic Fleet.

During the year 1924—under the government of Ramsay MacDonald—secret negotiations were entered into between the Latvian and British Governments for the furnishing of arms to the Latvian government. This, of course, is denied, but the fact remains that the Latvians are equipped to-day exclusively with British arms and munitions. The Latvian artillery being provisioned with 18-pounder guns and 4.5 howitzers. In actual practice, instructions have just been issued here to cease dismantling the out of date 18-pounder guns, and to repair these for the Latvian government.

Then again, we have to note the grand military manœuvres of Poland last month, to which nearly all the foreign powers of Europe sent representatives. The Don, of course,

was the French General Gouraud, with Major General Ironside lending the "moral" support of the British Government. It is significant that these manœuvres were carried out on the South-East territory of Poland. After Poland, Gouraud is due to visit Czecho-Slovakia on a similar mission. The meaning of these happenings is quite clear. Intervention in Soviet affairs is only deferred. It is by no means abandoned.

\* \* \* \* \*

But not only is Soviet Russia menaced. To secure a successful campaign against the Workers' Republic, particularly in this country where solidarity with the workers of Russia is widespread and wholehearted, it is necessary to spread confusion and disunity in the working class army everywhere. This is the meaning of the systematic attempt now being made by the press to raise the bogey of "bolshevism" and divide the workers by branding their leaders as revolutionary Communists seeking violence and disorder for the sake of making mischief. Once the ranks are divided it will not only be the Russian workers who will be attacked; there will be an attack along the whole line, every section of the workers being crushed without mercy. **It is for these reasons the Communist Party urges upon the Trades Union Congress the speediest realisation of International Trade Union Unity, beginning with an organic alliance between the Russian and British workers.**

\* \* \* \* \*

The appeal which the Communist Party has addressed to the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and to the E.C. of the Labour Party to begin a campaign to win over the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the armed forces to the side of the workers, has not been without important results. For one thing, it has brought to the front of the whole working class movement, the very practical question of the relation of the workers in the fighting forces to the workers in the railroads, mines and factories, and of the uses to which the armed forces are put during periods of dispute. It is idle and folly to allow the workers in the army, navy and air force to drift apart from their comrades in civil life, and become a prey to the nefarious anti-Labour propaganda of the capitalists, who monopolise the officer caste, and expect them to refrain from acting as blacklegs in labour disputes, or, worse still, engage in the business of murder for the glorification of capitalism. We hold it, therefore, to be the primary task of the leaders of the working class army in its warfare to win over the fighting forces to the side of the workers.

This year we found, from our very successful anti-war campaigns, that thousands of workers are with us in doing

all we can to make capitalist wars impossible. We are certain the time is ripe for the Labour Party and the General Council to go ahead with a campaign to win over the fighting forces from the influence of the capitalists. The apathy and indifference of the workers to the "recruiting" appeals, notwithstanding the terrors and experiences of unemployment, is the best evidence that we are right. When, as is stated by the military correspondent to an important Sunday paper, that of 125,000 lads attaining the age of 18 years, only 6,555 were recruited during the first four months of this year; further, that the peace strength of the Territorials is nearly 40,000 below the requirements, surely there is ample evidence here that the workers are ready for an anti-imperialist call, and for a rally to the side of organised labour.

The best brains in the pay of the imperialists are at work trying to solve this (for them) disquieting problem of apathy. Lord Raglan blames women, trade unions, and motor-bicycles for it, and the employers are urged, **as the cheapest form of national insurance**, to encourage men to join up with the territorials. Either the fighting forces are at the disposal of the capitalists and financiers (in which case it is puerile to chatter about constitutional means to redress working class grievances) or they are to be won over to the side of the organised working class movement to help in the class struggle of the workers against capitalism (in which case half the battle of the workers is won). But this much is patent: **the workers in the army, the navy, and air force cannot be left any longer for the capitalists to keep them a caste apart from the working class movement.**

\* \* \* \* \*

The Communist Party has made a modest beginning itself in this all-important activity. We repeat, we shall not be deflected from our course by threats of intimidation or silly misrepresentation from either Tory Ministers or kept Labour lieutenants. The army of the working class must be one and indivisible. Its ranks must include all the disinherited, whether working for wages in the army, the railroads, the navy, the mines, the air force or the factories and workshops. It is in this way, and fired with the clear political objective of gaining all power for the workers, we shall conquer the forces of capitalism.

# The British Commonwealth Labour Conference.

By ARTHUR MCMANUS

**T**HE British Commonwealth Labour Conference which was held in the House of Commons, Westminster, from July 27—31, can be described in no other way than as a sham conference.

When some months ago the Labour Party Executive decided, jointly with the Trade Union Congress, to summon such a conference, we applauded the idea. The fact that an effort was going to be made to connect up the labour and working-class movement of the various parts of the Empire and to consolidate them with a view to the operation of a common policy, appeared to us a commendable decision indeed. Nevertheless, we said at the time that unless the delegates from the colonies and dominions took the necessary precautions to ensure that the Congress would be a real Congress, they were likely to be tricked.

## A Political Gesture.

We uttered this warning because we quite frankly suspected the motives of the promoters of the Conference. We based our suspicion on the very feasible grounds that the people calling the Conference—the Executive Committee of the British Labour Party—were not at all interested in developing and consolidating the movement in the various sections of the Empire, nor were they at all concerned in endeavouring to discover a common policy to be pursued by each section of the labour and working class movement.

The Labour Government was in power at the time of the decision to call the Conference, and it was at that moment experiencing a barrage of Tory and Liberal criticism with regard to its colonial policy and contacts. It will be remembered that the effect of this barrage was that we had the spectacle of J. H. Thomas, J. R. Clynes, J. Ramsay MacDonald, and other leaders of the Labour Party superseding even Lord Curzon and Lloyd George in their declarations of concern “for the welfare and integrity of the Empire.” When, therefore, we found these same people initiating a Commonwealth Labour Conference, knowing at the same time that their chief concern

was the "welfare and integrity of the Empire," we quite justifiably suspected the motive underlying the calling of the Conference. In fact, we did more. We stated our belief as to **why** the Conference had been called.

We gave it as our opinion that the whole and sole purpose of the Conference was merely a gesture which would enable the Labour Party, and the Labour Government if it were still in power, to declare that the Labour Party and the Labour Party alone could ensure the stability and integrity of the Empire, because the Labour Party alone had any real contacts with any real native movements in the various parts of the Empire.

### **Empire "League of Nations."**

And now that the Conference has been held, the results entirely justify our suspicions and also completely bear out the reasons we gave at the time for its being held. Delegates were present from Australia (1 delegate), British Guiana (1), Canada (3), Ireland (4—two North and two South), India (2), Newfoundland (1), Palestine (3) and South Africa (3). The British Labour Party Executive Committee sent 5 representatives, the General Council of the Trades Union Congress 5, the Labour Party Parliamentary Committee 5, and fraternal delegates were there from the International Federation of Trade Unions and from the Labour and Socialist International.

A survey of this list in itself indicates the tremendous possibilities for the development and co-ordination of the working-class movement throughout the Empire which the Conference presented. It was the first occasion upon which such a Conference had ever been called; and had the promoters supplied it with an agenda of essential working class questions then undoubtedly a considerable amount of good might have been achieved. But this they did not do. Far from adopting the attitude of a working-class Conference approaching working-class problems, they adopted the attitude of an aggregation of statesmen discussing the problems of capitalism. The Agenda itself is sufficient evidence to indicate this. Here it is:—

1. Inter-dominion emigration.
2. Protocol of Geneva for the specific settlement of international disputes.
3. International labour legislation and ratification of International Labour Office conventions (8-hour day, anthrax, white lead, etc.).
4. Inter-dominion trade relations.
5. Conditions of Indian labour in the British colonies.
6. Industrial legislation and labour protection in the mandated territories.

7. Inter-commonwealth relations including the position of States forming the British Commonwealth in relation to other states.

This is exactly the type of Agenda that one can imagine being compiled by any such body as the League of Nations and submitted to any Conference of "Representative Statesmen" concerned about the problems confronting capitalism.

It certainly is sufficient evidence to indicate that there was no intention in the minds of the promoters to have the Conference devoted to the problems confronting the labour and working-class movement in the various parts of the Empire. This policy became further evident when it was decided "that only the Chairmen's addresses may be reported, but that otherwise the Conference should be private and an official *communiqué* issued to the Press."

### Behind Closed Doors.

The entire publicity part of the Conference was circumscribed to the declarations of the chairmen. The Official *communiqué* which they spoke about issuing to the Press was a brief statement which averaged no more than 50 words to each participator in the conference. It will thus be seen that elaborate arrangements had been quite skilfully prepared to smother up the deliberations of the Conference and to give publicity only to the Presidential statements of the initiators. It is true that Mr. H. W. Samson, M.L.A., from South Africa presided at one of the sessions, but Mr. H. W. Samson was most certainly a man who could be **trusted**. Was not one of his classic declarations "that if Socialism meant the granting of votes to the coloured people of South Africa on the same basis as the Whites, then he was opposed to Socialism"? Certainly a quite worthy president at a conference called by such avowed custodians of the integrity of the Empire.

It is also true that it was decided at a preliminary meeting not to accept any resolutions at all. This decision adroitly dispensed with the awkward necessity of arriving at **decisions**. In one instance alone was the Conference compelled to depart from this procedure. That was when the Indian delegation submitted the resolution on Self-determination. But even in this single instance all reference to either SEPARATION or INDEPENDENCE was ruled out. Apart from this not a single decision of any kind is on record from a Conference which sat in deliberation for five days. What a tragedy!

No power known in history has such a bloody record of persecution and enslavement as has British Imperialism. There is no term which symbolises such bloody martyrdom and massacre in history as does the term "Brit-

ish Empire." There is no force or power in existence capable of contending with and of smashing the power of this bloody Empire other than the organised labour and working-class movement throughout the Empire. There is not a single section of the Empire represented at the Conference but whose working-class history has been written in working-class blood.

And yet on the first occasion in history when these working-class movements meet, coming together at considerable expense of the working-class funds, and deliberating for 5 days, not a single decision is recorded! A veritable tragedy it all is indeed! And the tragedy is made greater when one realises that the only single result which can be pointed out as accruing from the Conference is that the British Labour Party is now in the very plausible position of being able to counter the Tory and Liberal criticisms when the next General Election comes, by saying that the Labour Party alone has **real Empire contacts**—that the Labour Party alone is in a position "to ensure the maintenance and integrity of the Empire."

For this and for nothing else was the Conference held. For this and for nothing else was the labour movement throughout the Empire exhorted to go to the expense of time, energy and money, to send delegates to London. One wonders what the unfortunate persecuted and enslaved peoples of India, Egypt, Palestine, darkest Africa, etc., where working-class life and blood is calculated merely as a cipher in the process of exploitation by British Imperialism—one wonders what satisfaction they will derive from the presence of representatives attending and speaking at the Conference in their name. The Conference was indeed a sham and can be described in no other term.

### **Towards Next Year.**

We understand it is the intention to hold a similar Conference next year. Steps must be taken therefore to ensure that the labour and working-class movement throughout the various parts of the British Empire is made aware of the true character of the "alleged" Conference, and also to make certain that before sending delegates to next year's Conference, the necessary precautions are taken to ensure that it will be a **real Conference**, and not a **mockery**.

The fact of the bringing together of representatives of the labour and working-class movement is a principle which we still commend. The holding of such a Conference annually is a proposal to which we must render our fullest support. But as I say, it is also necessary that steps be taken to guarantee that the Conference will discuss real working-class issues and endeavour to arrive at a real working-class policy.

# Mikhail Tomsy

## *A Biography.*

**M**IKHAIL PAVLOVITCH (TOMSKY) was born at St. Petersburg,\* on the 18th October, 1880. At the age of 13, having finished his studies in a primary school, he became apprenticed as a box-maker in a factory called the "Theodore Kibel." While working here he lost a finger, and was discharged. He became a tobacco worker in the factory "Laferme," at 5 roubles a month, then worked as a metal worker in the shop called "Bruno Hofmark," and, subse-



quently, in the big "Rouss-Smirnov," metal works, where he helped to organise a strike, for which he lost his job. At 21 years of age, he finished his apprenticeship as a lithographer in the "Nessler" factory, and was employed in several chromolithographic establishments in St. Petersburg.

In 1903, he came across some Socialist books for the first time. These he read with avidity. In 1904, during the formation of the first Social democratic circles, he joined one of these and took an active part in its work.

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\* Now known as Leningrad.



In the Autumn of 1905, we find him fixed at Reval, where he worked as a lithographer in the factory called "Zvezda." He was soon elected "Starosta" (or chief steward of the shop) by his comrades, who sent him to represent them in the Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Reval. He led a strike movement and helped to organise the trade union of metal workers of Reval.

As a member of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Reval, he was arrested in January, 1906, thrown into prison and condemned to death. After four months detention, he was deported to Siberia, in the region of Narim, from which he escaped two months later. At Tomsk, he received from the Party his first secret mission. It was then he adopted the surname of Tomsky.

In August, 1906, we find him back once more in St. Petersburg. Under the name of d'Artamonov, he got employed in the Khaimovitch factory, and joined the trade union for engravers and bookbinders, of which he was an Executive member until its dissolution. Elected to the St. Petersburg committee of the Party, he worked in different quarters of the town under the names of Mikhail Vassiliostrovsky and Mikhail Tomsky. The St. Petersburg organisation sent him to represent them at the Fifth Congress of the Party, and he came to London. Subsequently, the St. Petersburg Committee elected him to the enlarged editorial board of the Bolshevik organ, "The Proletarian," and to the editorial board of the "Vperiod."

Soon after his return from the Congress he was once more arrested at a sitting of the St. Petersburg Committee in November, 1907, and in the spring of 1908 he was condemned to one year in a fortress. With the help of his wife, and a comrade, Polétaiev, he was liberated under caution to be of good behaviour for three months. But, hardly released, he was again arrested, and remained in prison confinement till April, 1909. During his sojourn in prison he occupied his time in improving his education, and particularly studied Marxism.

In May, 1909, he came to Paris to assist at the enlarged session of the editorial board of "The Proletarian." From Paris, the Central Committee of the Party sent him as representative to Moscow. In Moscow he worked as a member of the regional Bureau, member of the Moscow Committee, and of the District Committee.

After the suppression of the illegal journal of the Moscow Committee, the "Rabotche Znamia," Tomsky was pursued by spies, and in December, 1909, on his arrival at Odessa, he was apprehended by the police at the St. Petersburg Station.

He remained under preventive detention until November, 1911, when the Moscow tribunal condemned him to five years hard labour for belonging to the Party. He served his sentence in the Bontiski prison, and, in April, 1916, he was exiled to Kirensk upon the Lena, in Siberia.

The Revolution of February brought him an amnesty, and, in April, 1917, he returned to Moscow. But, as he had lost touch with the life of the Party, on account of his long imprisonment in Siberia, he could not take up his old work again. He went to Petrograd, where, after an interview with Lenin, he began to work again; first in the Porokhov quarter, then for the Petrograd Committee. The Petrograd Committee delegated him to the Third Congress of Trade Unions.

He helped in the organisation of the July days, after which he left for Moscow to take part in the elections for the Constituent Assembly. He became active in the metal workers' union, and worked as editor of the review "The Metallurgist." The metal workers' union sent him as delegate to the Trades Council of Moscow, and he was elected chairman.

In 1918, at the Fourth Congress of Trade Unions, he was elected to the Presidium of the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, as editor of the "Trade Union Courier," supplementing his function of chairman of the Trades Council for the Government of Moscow.

Tomsky was elected by the Second and Third Congress of Trade Unions as chairman of the All-Russian Central Council. In May, 1920, he took part in organising the International of Red Labour Unions, and became its general secretary.

In May, 1921, he abandoned temporarily his trade union work to become chairman of the Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive for Affairs in Turkestan. In January, 1922, he returned to his trade union work, first as secretary, then, after the Fifth Congress of Trade Unions, as chairman of the All-Russian Central Committee of Trade Unions. Since the Eighth Congress, Comrade Tomsky has been a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia.

Mikhail Pavlovitch (Tomsky), has written a number of works, the principal of which are

- (1) Sketches of the Trade Union Movement in Russia (1920 and 1923).
- (2) The New Paths of the Trade Unions (1922).
- (3) The Actual Position of the Russian Trade Unions (1923).
- (4) The Cultural Tasks of the Trade Unions (1923).

# The Nine Months' Truce

*The Tasks before the Coming Labour Conferences.*

By J. T. MURPHY.

**T**HE three important congresses of the Minority Movement, the trade unions, and the Labour Party, which are to meet in swift succession during the next few weeks, could not meet at a more urgent moment. It is only a few weeks since the whole trade union movement, rallying behind the miners, arrived at a "nine months' truce." This was announced as a "great victory," and, indeed, it was no little moral triumph to secure the demonstration of the will to get together on the part of the unions.

## Prepare Now!

But the hosannas were short-lived. They have been rapidly followed by the warning note—Prepare for nine months hence.

Mr. Baldwin led off by declaring that, in the event of united strike action on the part of the unions, he would use all the powers of the State to defeat us. The "Daily Herald" gave wide publicity to this. Lord Londonderry follows up by announcing that "whatever it may cost in blood and treasure," in the circumstances foreshadowed by Mr. Baldwin, and threatened by the unions, "they would smash the unions from top to bottom."

The threats and warnings were clear enough. So much so, that one Labour leader after another swelled the chorus of "prepare." Indeed, Mr. Wheatley, a late member of the Labour Cabinet, went one better than his friends, declaring that we were rapidly moving towards a revolutionary crisis, when the fate of the working class would depend upon whether their working class brothers in the army and navy would shoot them, or line up with them.

## Our "Military" Appeal, and Why.

The Communist Party in the midst of this chorus suggested to the Labour Party Executive and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, that we agreed the warnings were justified, and it would, therefore, be wise to tell the soldiers and sailors the truth about the situation.

At once all the pæans about "unity" and the "victory" which appeared in the "New Leader," and the "Daily

Herald," ended. The "New Leader" bleated like the "Morning Post." The "Daily Herald" was struck dumb. The aspiring Mr. Citrine so famed "for detail" and his niceness to everybody, sought patronage of the capitalist press by assuring everybody that nobody, especially the Trades Union Congress, would take notice of us.

Mr. Citrine should not be so hasty in his assurances. If he will look at this year's agenda, and reflect on the leading decisions of the Trades Union Congress, its "back to the union campaign," its "demand for more power to the General Council," and even its recent "victory" in the mining crisis, he will find, if he is not blinded by his own conceit, that the Trades Union Congress is increasingly listening to the voice of our Party. What is more, the unseemly haste of many of its leaders to assure the capitalist class that "the army of the capitalist class is safe, so far as they are concerned," will not escape the attention of the workers.

The one great thing which the letters from our Party to the Executive of the Labour Party, and the General Council of the T.U. Congress has accomplished is the swift unfolding, within less than a month, of the real value of the "unity" among the leaders, so widely proclaimed, and in which every one of them was so anxious to share. It has stripped them of all their fine clothes. They are angry. No wonder, for the workers can see that had the government taken up their challenge Red Friday might easily have been another Black Friday.

Immediately the Government had begun to move its fascist forces to blackleg, and the army to protect the blacklegs, its navy to man the pumps, and its special constables to assist the ordinary police force, there would undoubtedly judging from recent utterances, have been such a hurrying and scurrying amongst the leaders as marked the days of Black Friday, 1921.

### **What General Strike Means.**

But let us be clear on what a general strike means. It can only mean the throwing down of the gauntlet to the capitalist state, and all the powers at its disposal. Either that challenge is only a gesture, in which case the capitalist class need not worry about it, or it must develop its challenge into an actual fight for power, in which case we land into civil war. Any leaders who talk about a general strike without facing this obvious fact are bluffing both themselves and the workers. Let those laugh who care, we are egotistic enough to maintain that our Party has rendered a great service to the working class movement by revealing its next step, and in the process, exposing those who shrink from it.

We did not ask the Labour Party or the General Council to "arm the working class." That is not the next step. We simply asked them to "enlighten" the fighting forces, to win them to the cause of Labour, as a means of preventing their use against the workers. To refuse to do this is to shrink from the logic of their own pacifism.

But the working class movement cannot escape from this situation, although many of its leaders shrink back. Indeed, the progress of the whole working class movement in this direction is the most striking feature of the history of the last few years, and, especially this year.

The point of view which the Communists put forward has now a definitely organised expression on a scale which is continually increasing. The Minority Movement, for example, is no longer simply an influence diffused through the unions. It is an organised force pursuing a definite course. Within one year it has doubled its representation at its national conference. This is a positive proof that the mass of workers in the unions are ceasing to be scared by capitalist propaganda against Communism, for this movement is closest in its association and warmest in its regard for our Party. Its congress this year will have at least 600 delegates. Its keynote can only be—"Prepare." The resolutions on the agenda will show how to prepare.

### **Co-ordination Wanted.**

Notwithstanding all that has been written and said against the Minority Movement, evidence of its continuous influence is seen in the agenda of the T.U. Congress itself. So much is this the case, that we have this year a marked contrast between the T.U. Congress and the Labour Party Conference. Ever since the Labour Party got into its stride, and incorporated the most important trade unions, these two congresses have been regarded as complementary to each other.

But so great are the changes during the last twelve months that, this year, they are almost regarded as rival congresses. While the trade unions have been rapidly moving into the path, which leads to revolutionary struggle, the Labour Party has become the storm centre for the resistance of this process. The struggle between the two forces is now on a massive scale. The fight is no longer a conflict between the leaders of the Labour Party, supported by an apathetic mass against a small Communist Party, as was the case a year or two ago, but a mass awakening and a wholesale movement of the industrial workers towards the Communist Party.

Not for a moment do I suggest that tens of thousands of workers are rushing into our Party. That would be an exaggeration. But an amazing fact of the present situation is the widespread sympathy for our Party, and a growing consciousness that we are "delivering the goods." Indeed, we are rapidly approaching the position when it will be exceedingly difficult for many thousands to explain why they are not in our Party.

So apparent is this fact that the success of the "left wing" leaders in the trade unions corresponds to the degree to which they have approximated to the policy put forward by the Communists. Both this fact, and the conflict between the congress of the unions and that of the Labour Party is seen in the pronouncements on "International T.U. Unity," and "National Trade Union Unity," "More Power to General Council," and "Labour Imperialism."

When the General Council pledged the unions to work with the Russian Trade Unions for International T.U. Unity, MacDonald and Cramp of the Labour Party immediately proceeded to sabotage and denounce it. When the General Council worked for a united front of the unions—the Quadruple Alliance—MacDonald and Thomas declared it would be a calamity. When the General Council worked for "more power," Thomas, Cramp, Clynes, worked for union autonomy.

### **Contrast in Leadership.**

On Labour Imperialism, contrast the following.

Mr. MacDonald as chairman of the Empire Labour Conference said :

"There was an idea that the Union Jack was a sort of trade mark to be used in every great national, imperial or international matter, to enable certain sections to trade who, perhaps, would not trade but for the propaganda associated with the Union Jack.

"This is not good enough for Labour which does not want merely to use the Empire to benefit certain sections of capital. Our conception of Empire is very much wider, deeper and higher than that. The foundation of successful co-operation between different peoples living under different conditions is the power to be sympathetic so that we can understand each other's point of view.

"The idea that we are going to be the policemen of the world and put our noses into other people's affairs is a profound mistake, and the sooner we get back to limited responsibility and trust to the self-development of peoples, the better it will be for the Dominions and this country."

A day or two later, A. B. Swales, Chairman of the General Council, speaking to the same gathering said :

"We are passing through an intense phase in the development of economic Imperialism which is creating serious and complicated problems for organised Labour in every country. To many of us, Imperialism in the form that we have it to-day marks the last stage in the development of Capitalism.

"It represents the final effort of the groups which control financial and industrial capital in the most highly organised countries to secure for themselves markets for their goods and new opportunities for the profitable investment of their money.

"Imperialists never tell the naked truth about their doings in this way. They camouflage the brutal fact that Imperialism means exploitation, by talking about the glory of the Empire, the pride of race, the advance of civilisation and so forth.

"Economic Imperialism uses the language of Patriotism and even a religion to disguise its motives. But the reality is the exploitation and oppression of the weaker peoples and the intensification of commercial rivalries and antagonisms that lead to war.

"The main business of this Conference," he contended, "should be to put an end to this and bring together the workers and the oppressed against the common oppressors."

He was followed the next day by A. A. Purcell, who declared:

"The time has come when we have got frankly to admit the failure of capitalism. Capitalism is stifled in its own fat, and is failing to function. We must take steps to break the capitalist system and re-construct world economy on an entirely new basis.

"Millions of people, black, brown and yellow—even little children—are drawn into the industrial vortex. And so it comes about that the Indian miner gets 6d. per day, and the cotton and jute worker 6s. per week.

"Right well and truly has it been said that the British Empire is one huge slave plantation of the British ruling class."

"The capitalist class of old England—or of any other country—is not concerned how it gets its profits, or where, so long as it gets them. No pride of race compels the British capitalist to employ British men and women only. No patriotic ideals are permitted to interfere with the acquisition of £ s. d.

"Yet the British workers have borne the burdens of Empire. The Empire's frontiers are marked red with the blood and white with the bones of sons of British working class mothers.

"The consequences of the establishment of modern industrialism in the undeveloped parts of the world was not given the least consideration. The immediate gain was the thought. It is necessary to develop a power capable of smashing the capitalist system. And the only conceivable power was the power of the organised working class movement."

There can be no question of the contrast of MacDonald's speech with the speeches of Swales and Purcell. This contrast is more than a contrast of speeches, however, as a comparison of the preliminary agendas of the two Congresses will confirm.

We are thus brought face to face with the fact that the trade unions are moving along a path away from the leadership of MacDonald and Co. There is a reason for this, as significant as the fact that there is an organised revolutionary minority movement in the trade unions, and not in the Labour Party. It means, and can only mean, that the trade unions cannot avoid the struggle against capitalism, while the

Labour Party chiefs, who base their politics upon the exigencies of parliamentarism, strive to prevent the struggle, and in doing so, become the staunch supporters of capitalism.

### **Prepare—But to Fight.**

The foundation of the trade unions is in the struggle. They must fight for improved conditions of labour, higher wages, shorter hours, etc., or they perish. Capitalism will not grant these improved conditions, but must increasingly fight against them. It is this conflict of interest, and sharpening of the fight, that has drawn the unions along the line of class conflict and given an impetus to the development of the minority movements. The Labour Party, however, with its incubus of middle class elements who repudiate the class war, seek to turn the trade unionists against their own struggle based on working class interests. They thus not only turn the Labour Party into a battleground of conflicting forces, but a battleground where the political conceptions of the movement find their level.

This process is bound to be assisted by the coming congresses in September, for the issues are becoming politically clearer. Each congress will agree that it is a congress that has got to say "Prepare!" The logic of the experiences of the trade unions during the last twelve months, much of which the Trades Union Congress will confirm, is crystallised in resolutions formulated by our Party, and placed in opposition to the lead of the Labour Party, the E.C. of which is fighting to subordinate the trade unions to the parliamentary party and to transform them into exchequers for providing parliamentary careers for aspiring politicians .

The choice will be presented in the Labour Party Conference, and the "left forces" will have to make their choice as well as the "right."

The Labour Party Conference will present us, therefore, with a measure of the real preparedness, which exists in the Labour ranks for the crash that is coming. We know, however, that until the working class struggle has developed our Party into a party uniting the workers' organisations on revolutionary issues and for revolutionary purposes, there will be, and can be, no victory in the challenge which is now destined to continually repeat itself.



# Rescued!

(A Play in One Act for Pioneer Clubs.)

The following speech may be given before the play starts:—

Comrades, you have all heard how Soviet Russia had to fight long and bitterly against enemies who fell on her from all sides. Who were these enemies? Why did they make war on Russia? Why did they wish to destroy Russia? This is why. Soviet Russia was the only country where the workers and peasants had risen up against the rich, for which purpose they had worked long, long years. They drove out the rich, and became free to govern their own land. But there are many other countries in the world, and in them the power is still in the hands of the rich, who make the workers bow before them. The workers and peasants of these lands look on Russia as the country whose example is to be followed, and they want to settle with their rich men as the Russian workers settled with theirs. The rich of these countries know this and with all their strength they try to destroy Soviet Russia. That is why they carried on wars for so many long years. These wars were terribly difficult for the Russians. But so strong was their desire for freedom, so deep was their hate of the foe that they conquered the most powerful of their enemies. But the people who had to live through these wars—civil wars as they are called—went through a frightfully difficult time. There were many cases when not only the men, but also the women, not only adults, but children also, had to risk their lives before the guns of the enemies. There were cases when a band of destroyers fell on a small town far from the battlefields. Often there were no soldiers in these towns, and the workers, guided by the Communists, armed themselves and formed a little band which resisted to the last. It is of such a little detachment that this play will tell. A gallant band, whom a fourteen-year-old boy was able to save by his bravery. Listen, and remember that the enemies of Soviet Russia will neglect no opportunity to plunge Russia into war again. And for such a happening, “be prepared.”

(*Characters: Chief of a Communist Detachment. Armed Worker. Second Armed Worker. Peasant. Sergei, a boy of fourteen, son of the Commander. Four of Budenny's Red Cavalry. Merkuloff, head of a gang of Bandits. Four Bandits.*)

(*A camp fire. By it are the Commander and Armed Workers. The Worker gets on to the highest place and looks into the distance.*)

Commander: Well, anything to be seen?

Armed Worker: It looks as if we are in a bad place. They have surrounded us on all sides. How are we going to get out of this?

Commander: Have we any ammunition left?

Armed Worker: Four cartridges each.

Commander: That's bad. What shall we do?

Armed Worker: What do Communists always do in such circumstances? We will defend ourselves to the last.

Commander: You aren't quite right there. A Communist first looks for a way out.

Armed Worker: But if there isn't a way out?

Commander: There *must* be a way. There *is* a way. Look at this map. Here's our position, and there, five versts away, is a regiment of Budenny's cavalry. We will send someone. Let's reckon it out. Five versts. That will take an hour and a half on foot. Allow them ten minutes to get ready, and they will come at a gallop here in fifteen minutes. That makes two hours altogether. Well, we shall have to hold out two more hours.

Armed Worker: Whom can we send? There's a lot of them, and they have us penned in on every side.

(*Behind the scenes shots are heard. The two men jump up and seize their rifles.*)

*Commander* : Hullo there! What's going on? Who's that shooting?

*Voice* : It's not us. There's a boy running here, and the bandits are shooting at him.

*(Sergei rushes on to the stage carrying a bag.)*

*Sergei* : Father! Father! I've brought you some bread and meat. Here they are.

*Commander* : Have you gone out of your mind? How did you get out of the town? What's happening there? Is your mother all right?

*Sergei* : All right. All right. But it's terrible in the town. As soon as you left, the Whites came in. They were all drunk. They went from house to house robbing everybody. You know Matthew the gardener? He hid mother and me. It's he who has sent you the bread and meat.

*Commander* : But how did you get through to us?

*Sergei* : Oh, that was easy in the town. I told them I was taking the chief's dinner, and so I got right out to the firing line. Then I ran. They started shooting, and that was a little terrible, but they didn't hit me. Crikey! But they hit the bag! Look, a bullet right in the bread.

*(He opens the bag, breaks the bread and takes out a bullet.)*

*Commander* : You're absolutely mad. What d'you mean by——. Eh! but you're a young rascal, Sergei!

*Sergei* : There's ever so many of them, father. They are round you on all sides. But they are afraid. They think you have a hundred men and a machine-gun.

*Commander* : And we have really ten men, and only four cartridges each.

*Sergei* : What are you going to do, father?

*Commander* : What are we going to do? Why, Sergei, we are going to try to get out. Now you run back to your mother and tell her that——. Well, in short, when you grow up, remember how Communists died.

*Sergei* : But can't you think of anything to do? Father, father!

*Commander* : Yes, we can think of something. We can think——. Look here. Do you know the village of Kapovsky?

*Sergei* : Yes. It's five versts from here. There's some Budenny cavalry there.

*Commander* : Right, right. You run there as hard as you can and——

*Armed Worker* : Stop! You can't do that. Are you going to send your own son to risk the bullets of the white bandits?

*Commander* : Listen, Sergei. Run there and say——

*Armed Worker* : Listen to me. He's your own son.

*Commander* : Silence! It must be done. He's my own son, and so he will do it.

*Sergei* : And is this order for me? Me?

*Commander* : Yes, for you. And how do you like it? Are you afraid?

*Sergei* : Afraid! No! I'm glad. I'm so glad. I'll run there. I'll do it.

*Commander* : Off you go, then. But wait a minute. Come and kiss me. *(Kisses him. Sergei starts to go.)*

*Armed Worker* : Stop!

*Sergei* : What?

*Armed Worker* : Come here and shake my hand. Good luck to you!

*(Shakes hand and kisses him. Sergei rushes out. Firing is heard outside. The Second Armed Worker rushes on to the stage.)*

*Second Armed Worker* : Comrade Commander, we are surrounded. We——

*(By all the doors the Whites burst in. Those who come through the door on to the stage drag with them a peasant, bound. The Communists on the stage try to defend themselves, but are taken prisoners.)*

*Voices* : COMRADES! COMRADES! TAKE THEM. TIE THEM UP. BANDITS. THE BANDITS.

*First Bandit* : Don't touch one of them. Take them alive. Tie them up. Who is the commander here?

*Commander* : I am the commander.

*First Bandit* : You? That's fine. Take him and tie him up tighter.

*Commander* : You hound!

*First Bandit* : All right. Talk if it does you any good. You are in the hands of the Merkuloff's band. Which of you are non-party? Step out here. What! All Communists! That's grand.

*Commander* : There's a non-Communist there.

*Bandit* : Who?

*Commander* : That peasant there.

*Bandit* : Why can't you open your mouth?

*Commander* : Peter, you can't save us, and maybe they'll let you go. You are not a Communist.

*Bandit* : Listen, you! Are you really not a Communist? We will set you free. We will pardon you for being found with this vermin. Only—

*Peasant* : Only What?

*Bandit* : Only you will have to show us all the Communists in the town.

*Peasant* : All right. Unbind me.

*(The bandit goes to him and unfastens him.)*

*Peasant* : So if I name all the Communists in the town you will release me?

*Bandit* : Yes.

*Peasant* : All right. But I must tell you something in secret first. Come over here.

*(The bandit leans towards him, and the peasant gives him a punch in the face.)*

*Bandit* (grasping his sword) : Hell! I'll pay you for that! Take them all out. Two men stay on guard.

*(The bandits march off the prisoners, and two stay.)*

*Bandit* (to the others) : Stay here. Watch carefully. *(Goes out.)*

*(Pause. Quietly from under the chairs Sergei creeps out and crawls to the door. Near the door he leaps to his feet.)*

*Bandits* : Stop! Stop! *(They shoot.)*

*(Sergei slams the door and runs off.)*

*First Bandit* (running in) : What's that? What's the matter?

*Bandits* : There was a boy here.

*First Bandit* : Rubbish! There's lots of them wandering round here.

*(Drinks from the bottle, and the others also.)*

*Second Bandit* : Now are we going to torture that lot?

*First Bandit* : What? Of course we shall torture them. We always do that.

*Third Bandit* : We caught them smartly, didn't we? Five soldiers! Even hadn't set a guard.

*Second Bandit* : There were only ten of them altogether.

*First Bandit* : What of that? We could have settled a hundred.

*(While talking they drink and begin to get drunk.)*

*First Bandit* : Eh! I'm tired. A-a-a-ah. *(Lies down.)*

*Second Bandit* : And I want to sleep as well. You keep a look-out.

*Third Bandit* : All right. Go to sleep.

*(Pause. The third walks about. Then he stops, puts down his rifle and also lies down. Pause. Sergei steals on to the stage, unloads the rifles and hides again behind the door. Then four Red Army men creep in.)*

*Sergei* : Come on. They are asleep.

*Voice* : Are the rifles unloaded?

*Sergei* : Yes.

*Voice* : Good lad.

*Sergei* : Lie down here. That's right. Quiet.

*(They lie at the side. Two of them creep on to the stage.)*

*Voice outside* : Hello, you devils! Asleep, are you? Hello!

*Another Voice behind the scenes* : Cold, eh? Hey!

*First Bandit* : Get up. Quick! The Chief. *(They jump up.)*

*Merkuloff* (entering) : What's this? Asleep, were you?

*First Bandit* : No, sir. We are just this moment back from a reconnaissance.

*Merkuloff* : Reconnaissance? Good. And the prisoners?

*First Bandit* : In a moment, sir. Hey! Bring in the prisoners. There are three. The others were killed.

*(They bring in the tied-up prisoners and stand them in a row.)*

*Merkuloff* : Aha! Here's a pretty little group. Well, what shall we do with you? Shoot you?

*First Bandit* : Let's torture them first. We could carve out a red star on their foreheads and breasts. May we, sir?

*Merkuloff*: Stars? All right, it will be amusing to watch. Ha! ha! ha!

*First Bandit*: We'll do that smartly. Watch me. (*Draws his knife.*)

*Commander*: You are a crowd of scoundrels. You white dogs! Your tortures don't frighten us.

*First Bandit*: Here's a bold one. We'll start with you. (*Goes to him.*)

*Commander*: Comrades, The International. (*The prisoners start to sing.*)

*First Bandit*: Very good. You sing well. You'll sing even better when I start to cut. Now ready! One . . . Two . . .

*Sergei*: THREE! (*Jumps out, and with him the soldiers. Up roar. Bandits seize their guns.*)

*First Armed Worker*: Hands up! Your rifles are unloaded. You should sleep less. (*The bandits throw up their hands and are tied up while the prisoners are set free.*)

*First Armed Worker*: March them off. And you, don't tremble. We shan't torture you. We shall try you in a proletarian court. Off!

(*Two Red Soldiers lead off the bandits.*)

*Commander*: Comrades! Our thanks to you, comrades.

*First Armed Worker*: Don't thank us. Thank this boy. (*Points to Sergei.*)

*Commander* (hugging Sergei): Thank you, my son. And thank you all.

*Sergei*: Thanks for what? I have but done that which any young worker is ready to do when the time arises. Isn't that true? (*To the audience*): Isn't it true? Wouldn't you, every one, do the same as I did if there were need? Don't you answer to the call "Are you ready?"

*Audience*: "Always ready."

Curtain.

ANDREY IRKUTOFF.

Translation from the Russian Young Pioneers' monthly, "The Drum," No. 3, February, 1924, by W. M. Wheeldon.

## YOUR CLASS AND PARTY NEED YOU.

There are some who, sympathising with, and appreciating the Communist position, will call themselves Communist without realising that the first duty of a Communist is to become a member of the Communist Party.

Therefore, DO YOUR DUTY,

JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY NOW

### APPLICATION FORM.

I wish to be a member of the Communist Party. Please put me in touch with local membership.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Fill in this form and give it to the comrade who sold you this *Review*, or to Local Secretary .....

Or to Albert Inkpin, Secretary, Communist Party, 16, King Street, London, W.C.2.

# On the Work Among Peasants

(Resolution adopted by the 2nd Plenary Meeting of the International Peasants' Council on April 17, 1925.)

**T**HE imperialist world war constituted the beginning of the period of the breakdown of world capitalism. The colossal devastation of the war period was followed by the ruinous action of the post-war crises. With unprecedented rapidity the brief spells of economic revival are followed by economic crises, and the brief periods of relative prosperity in agriculture by periods of "scissors," i.e., of discrepancy in the comparative prices of agricultural and industrial prices.

All the destruction and all the consequences of the war and of the crises, the capitalist bourgeoisie, which has emerged from the war even more united in monopolist organisations (banking concerns, syndicates, trusts, etc.), is endeavouring to shift entirely to the working class and to the small proprietors, the main bulk of whom consists of peasants; furthermore, it even tries to accumulate further wealth at the cost of the ruination of the latter.

To the working class this means reduction of wages, longer working hours, worse conditions of labour; to the majority of the peasants it means increased taxation, worse terms of credit, ruinous fluctuation of prices—in a word, it means a menace to the existence of both workers and peasants.

## War Ruins Poorer Peasants.

(2) The greatest sacrifices in the imperialist war, along with the working class, were borne by the peasantry. First of all, the blood sacrifices; the sons of the bourgeoisie, by bribery and influential connections, managed to evade military duty in their thousands, while the mobilised peasants were sent to the front and laid down their lives for the capitalist master-class.

The peasant's field was left without its worker: the cattle and the products of agriculture were requisitioned for war purposes at fixed, i.e., low prices, while the war districts were turned into deserts—all in the interests of big capital. While the rich peasants not only pulled through such hard times, but even derived profits from clandestine sales, the masses of the peasants were utterly ruined and impoverished.

### **Shrinkage in Agriculture.**

(3) Moreover, the whole burden of the post-war crises came down upon the working class and upon the bulk of the peasants. The imperialist world-war has led to a considerable shrinkage of agriculture in Europe, and to its considerable expansion outside of Europe. The end of the war meant essentially a diminished demand for agricultural products to feed the armies on the battlefields. Hence came reduced consumption, the agrarian crisis, the drop in prices of agricultural products (the "scissors"), interrupted by brief periods of relative prosperity.

In America this crisis leads to the direct collapse of farming, to the bankruptcy of millions of farmers, while the rest of them are doomed to the bondage of the banks. In Europe it creates a particularly severe condition on account of the decay in peasant agriculture (curtailment of the area under cultivation, reduced harvests), with the consequent depreciation of even the diminished quantity of products which the peasant is able to carry to the market. This hits with particular severity the poorest elements of the peasantry, to whom even a small curtailment of production frequently means the absolute inability to spare anything for sale.

On the other hand, the war has reduced for the poor elements of the rural population the possibility of diverting the surplus population to the towns and to foreign countries. The decline of industry in the towns renders impossible the absorption of the stream of unskilled rural labourers, while emigration to other countries is rendered difficult by the general mistrust of aliens, the difficulties of transit, and the restrictions in the admission of immigrants.

### **Crisis Persists.**

(4) The sharp changes in the economic turnover of the different countries (the decline in Europe and the growth outside of Europe), the rupture of the world's economic relations, which have not yet been fully restored, the irregularity of relations in central Europe, the strained relations among the different countries, the military occupation of certain districts, the reparation indemnities—the whole regime of the Versailles and other peace treaties is the cause of exceptional instability of the economic situation, of rapid economic changes from revival to severe crisis, to an extent unknown before the war. At the present time we are passing through such a revival owing to the execution of the first part of the Dawes Plan, the granting of credits to Germany, which increases her buying capacity. However, the execution of the second part of the Dawes Plan will be bound to lead to a

sharp increase of German exports, and to an over-flooding of the world market.

At the same time the present increases in the prices of agricultural products is also the result of the bad harvest which occurred last year in nearly all the countries of Western Europe, as well as in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and of the preceding agricultural crisis in North America. This advantage of increased prices to those peasants who **have grain to sell**, even the more prosperous European peasants, is partly cancelled by the fact that owing to the bad harvest they can sell a lesser quantity of products. On the other hand, the poor peasants gain nothing from increased prices, so that the cleavage among the peasantry is increasing.

At the same time, as has already been pointed out, the rapid change from economic revival to crisis has become characteristic of the post-war period, and it may therefore be assumed that these high prices are not going to rule for very long.

### **Struggle for Colonial Markets.**

(5) The imperialist world war, far from reducing the competition among the world's capitalist powers, has rather increased the rivalry among them for the possession and exploitation of the colonies, which are considered by world capitalism as one of the solutions of the crisis. The great majority of the population in the colonial countries are peasants, who are now subjected to unheard-of exploitation. This is being aggravated by national oppression on the part of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

### **Capitalism Burdens Peasantry.**

(6) Under these conditions, capitalism is endeavouring to attain stabilisation at the expense of the other classes—at the expense of the workers by means of reduced wages and longer hours, and at the expense of the main bulk of the peasantry in the first years after the war by means of inflation, which at first relieved the position of the peasantry by reducing its indebtedness, but later on it became a severe burden in view of the depreciation of currency, and later on by means of increased taxes, higher interest on loans, and increased monopoly of the capitalist organisations.

(7) In all countries the war has led to a colossal swelling of the foreign debts. The payment of interest on these debts, as well as the growth of expenditure on the maintenance and technical equipment of huge armies and navies, causes everywhere an unhealthy inflation in the State bud-

gets, and compels the increase of the old and the introduction of new taxes, mainly indirect, whose burden is shifted by the ruling classes to the shoulders of the workers and peasants. To this should be added the severe conditions of the post-war crisis which render the peasants and tenant-farmers the slaves of the banks and the usurers.

### **Peasants' Political Struggle.**

(8) The hardships endured by the small peasants in the victorious countries, and by all the peasants in the vanquished countries, are causing great discontent among these elements of the peasantry and are arousing revolutionary sentiment in some places. These revolutionary sentiments are further sustained by the example of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat which, in the course of the world revolution, succeeded in dealing some severe blows to the ruling classes, thereby breaking the spell of the bourgeoisie in the eyes of all the toilers and causing them to lose their faith in the invulnerability of the existing order. Prominent in this respect is the example furnished by the successful revolutionary struggle of the peasants and workers in the Soviet Republics, where workers and toiling peasants, thanks to their fraternal alliance, have finally vanquished the bourgeoisie and the big landowners, have taken the power into their hands, and having given the land to the peasants, have cleared the road for the development of their prosperity.

All these facts cause the peasants to aspire to active political work, to the creation of peasant organisations and to the exercise of peasant influence on the government. In some countries the peasant parties have already succeeded in establishing such influence, and even in getting at the helm of the State.

### **Agriculture in Grip of Monopolists.**

(9) The war and the post-war crises, which have ruined the mass of world capitalists, have caused an unprecedented concentration and centralisation of capital, and a colossal growth of monopolist capitalist combines: banking concerns, syndicates and trusts—consequently a gigantic economic predominance of monopolised capital over the unorganised peasantry. Relying on such powerful organisation and monopoly, financial and industrial capital is able to raise the prices of industrial products and freight tariffs, to take higher interest on loans, and at the same time to lower the prices of agricultural products, thus severely exploiting the peasants and farmers. Unable to create similarly powerful organisations, and, on the other hand, seeing how the trusts and the banks use the power of the State to further their own



interests, the peasants come to the conclusion that their only means of defence is to capture the power of the State in order to use its entire machinery for the defence of their interests.

### **Agrarian Reforms.**

(10) After the close of the imperialist world war, the bourgeoisie hastened to quench the discontent of the wide masses of the peasantry, and to break-up the alliance imminent among the peasants and workers, by promising agrarian reforms to the peasants in those countries where the peasants' movement had assumed a particularly stormy character (Poland, Lithuania, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary, and so on). The peasants took the bait and failed to support the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. However, as soon as the bourgeoisie succeeded in getting over the difficulties of the demobilisation period, in disarming the masses of the toilers, and in crushing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in many countries, it tried to reduce the promised agrarian reforms to nothing. These reforms it carried out, not in the interests of the peasants, but of the big landowners, leaving in the hands of the latter a considerable portion of the land, paying them large sums in compensation for the land taken from them, selling the land to the peasants at a high price, and, on the other hand, giving away this land to officers and big bureaucrats at a ridiculously low price, or using it as a weapon of national strife, distributing such land on the borders to colonists of the politically dominant nationality, and withholding this land from the oppressed nationalities. Such use of agrarian reform as a weapon of forcible colonisation is to be observed in Greece, Macedonia, Rumania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and so on.

### **Workers—Only Ally of Peasants.**

(11) The peasants, in spite of their great numbers, owing to their lack of organisation and to their living far away from the cities where the great affairs of State are managed, cannot by themselves maintain the power of the State and use it to their own interests. The peasants, therefore, need an ally. The peasants before the war used to be in the organisations that were led by the bourgeoisie and the big landowners, and even now they retain the alliance with these elements. The result is that some elements of the ruling classes get into the ranks of the peasant organisations and, by relying on them, they fasten their grip on the State, directing its work exclusively in their own interests. The peasantry remains to a considerable extent the obedient tool of the bourgeoisie and big landowners. Take, for instance,

Czecho-Slovakia, where an agrarian party is at the head of the government coalition, and has in its ranks considerable masses of the peasantry, and where we find, nevertheless, that the policies of the State are not carried on in the interests of the peasants, but of the bourgeoisie and the landowners. This shows how fruitless are the efforts of the peasants to improve their condition as long as they do not completely sever their ties with the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, take the case of Bulgaria, where the peasants had created their own government (which was not entirely free from bourgeois influence, to be sure), which was not united with, but rather hostile to, the proletariat, and here again we see that the peasants are unable by themselves to run the State. The bourgeoisie overthrew that government and established its own fascist class regime, subjecting the peasants to cruel repressions. The example of the unsuccessful isolated actions of workers and peasants in Czecho-Slovakia, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary, and, on the other hand, the example of the triumphant revolutionary movement of the alliance of workers and peasants in the Soviet Republics, clearly proved the fact that only the close alliance of the workers and peasants is able to wrest the power from the bourgeoisie, to emancipate the toilers from exploitation of every kind, to give the land to the peasants and to firmly establish the power of the toilers.

### **Work in Peasants' Unions.**

(12) The toiling elements of the peasantry are already beginning to be convinced that their interests are not at all identical with, but frequently contradictory to those of the big landowners, usurers and wealthy peasants (the questions of the land, of custom tariffs, of grain exports, and so on). This causes the break-up of the peasant organisations, in which left-wings are being formed alongside of the right and centrist tendencies (Bulgaria, Rumania, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland). As the class and caste antagonisms grow in the ranks of the existing peasant and agrarian parties, ever-increasing numbers of the toiling peasantry are striving to break loose from the leadership of the big landowners, usurers and hirelings of the bourgeoisie (the formation of the Independent Peasant Party in Poland, the creation of the Fellowship of Toiling Peasants in Germany, of the Union of Toiling Peasants in France, the formation of the Peasants' Defence Association in Italy, and so on).

It is the fundamental task of the adherents of the International Peasants' Council in all countries to assist in liberating the toiling peasants from the influence and leadership of landlords, usurers and bourgeoisie. There-

fore, the adherents of the I.P.C. should enter into such organisations and work in them, endeavouring to unite all the elements of the small and middle peasantry upon the platform of the I.P.C. and to gain the leading role for this tendency in the whole organisation. In the event of the dominant reactionary elements making a split inevitable, an independent organisation should be created out of this tendency. Similar mass unions of the toiling peasantry should be created in those countries where no peasant organisations exist. Here should be organised cohesion among the individual groups of toiling peasants of the different organisations.

The peasant unions created by adherents of the I.P.C. should have the character of both political and economic organisations. They should conduct their work on the basis of a platform composed of a series of concrete demands and slogans to meet the interests of the masses of toiling peasants. The basis of the work in the peasant unions should consist of a combined economic and political programme on which the different elements of the toiling peasantry might unite.

### **Support for National Independence.**

(13) One of the most outstanding and characteristic features of the growth of imperialism after the close of the last imperialist world war is the increase of national oppression, particularly in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. This oppression weighs down particularly heavily upon the peasantry. It therefore becomes tremendously important for all adherents of the International Peasants' Council to support the fight against this national oppression, and to organise the masses of the peasants for the fight for the rights of the oppressed nationalities and for complete national self-determination, even to the extent of seceding and forming independent states.

### **A Workers' and Peasants' Bloc.**

(14) In an ever-growing number of countries there are being created groups, tendencies, and even organisations, of toiling peasants, who want a total break with the bourgeoisie and its allies, and who are beginning to understand the community of their interests with those of the proletariat, whom they want as an ally in the fight for their demands (the Independent Peasant Party in Poland, the farmers' organisations in the United States and Canada, the Peasants' League in Mexico, and so on). It is essential that all the adherents of the I.P.C. should accelerate this process, and in accordance with the resolution of the First International Peasants'

Conference, launch the slogan of the fraternal union of workers and peasants in the fight for the power, and carry it out in the shape of the workers' and peasants' bloc.

(15) As one of the forms of organisation of the peasantry, defence committees may serve the interests of the toiling peasants, in order to carry out campaigns on the most important demands (the fight for the land, the fight against heavy taxes, the demand for cheap long-term credits, the fight against national oppression, relief for sufferers from natural calamities, and so on). These committees should embrace the whole of the toiling population of the villages, and in accordance with their tasks, they should be united into country, district and national associations.

**This form of organisation, which unites the wide masses of the peasantry, should be utilised and adapted to the actual conditions in every country.**

(16) When the peasantry becomes confronted with the question of the direct fight for power in alliance with the working class, it is necessary, according to the decisions of the First International Peasants' Conference, to create peasants' or workers' and peasants' councils, which should take charge of the work in close solidarity with similar organisations of the working class.

**Organisational cohesion should be established among the individual groups of the different organisations of toiling peasants.**

#### **Consumers' Co-operatives.**

(17) The I.P.C. adherents in all countries should develop the most energetic activity in the peasants' co-operative organisations of every kind, thus creating a firm basis for the unions of toiling peasants, linking them up with the consumers' co-operative societies of the workers. The methods of activity for the purpose of capturing the co-operatives should not be the same as in the other organisations of the peasants. The feeble activity and the shortcomings of the present co-operatives should not be a reason for slackening our activity towards getting the co-operative organisations to fight for the interests of the toiling peasants.

(18) The most serious attention should be given to the work among the peasant women, not organising them separately, but joining them to the general peasants' organisations and unions. It is necessary to work in the women's organisations that are led by landlords, wealthy peasants and other bourgeois elements, grouping the toiling peasant-women into an independent wing.

(19) Equally serious attention should be given to the work among the toiling peasant youth. Such youth should be organised and linked up with the peasants' unions or other centres. It is also necessary to work in the peasant youth organisations led by landlords, wealthy peasants and other bourgeois elements.

(20) For the purpose of successful fighting, the toiling peasantry must establish the closest ties with the organisations of the working class in the villages. In order to oust the influence of the bourgeoisie and wealthy peasants, the constant participation of proletarian elements in the peasants' unions is extremely desirable.

### **Programme of Action.**

(21) The platform (programme of action) of the peasant unions and other organisations created by adherents of the I.P.C., and in which they exercise influence, should include all the most important demands of the toiling peasant masses in the respective countries at the actual moment. For instance, this platform should include such questions as the confiscation of all the large estates, without compensation, for the benefit of the toiling peasantry, the question of taxes, of cheap long-term credits to the toiling peasants, of the fight against mercantile, usurious, and banking capital, and against the trading monopolies (trusts), against reparations in the vanquished countries, against militarism and the menace of a new imperialist war. It is necessary to include in the platform the defence of the U.S.S.R. as the world's first workers' and peasants' State, against any attacks attempted on the part of the capitalist powers. In the programme of action it is necessary to launch the slogan of the self-determination of nations, of the fight of the peasants of the imperialist States against the colonial policies of their governments, demanding the complete emancipation of all the colonies and semi-colonies, while the peasants in the colonial countries should be called into the fight against the imperialist aggressors.

**At all points it should be particularly stressed and emphasised that without the alliance with the working class, the peasants cannot attain their emancipation.**

(22) In all countries the fight of the toiling peasant masses against the ruling classes should be strengthened by the organisation of meetings and conferences, and of various campaigns, chiefly of campaigns against the menace of new war, organised jointly by peasants and workers. It is necessary to appeal to the peasantry to support the workers in their fight against capitalism, and to form workers' and

peasants' blocs both during elections and on other occasions. Constant propaganda should be carried on everywhere for the decisions of the First International Peasants' Conference and of the plenary conferences of the I.P.C. In countries where illiteracy is still strong, all kinds of oral agitation and propaganda should be utilised (by the aid of pictures, songs, etc.). It is necessary to establish peasants' newspapers, and to arrange for the publication of pamphlets and leaflets on questions of the peasants' movement.

(23) It is necessary to expose before the peasantry the reactionary role of the clergy, pointing out that the clergy plays the part of agents of the landlords, bourgeoisie and wealthy peasants; but this should be done without in any way offending the religious feelings of the peasantry.

(24) It should be aimed to get all the peasants' organisations, both political and economic, that are influenced by adherents of the International Peasants' Council, to affiliate to the I.P.C., or at least to establish contact with it.

(25) It is necessary to expose the reactionary nature of the international "peasants'" organisations either organised already or being organised by the landlords and wealthy peasants, such as the International Agrarian Bureau of Prague, known as the Green International.



# The Economics of Capitalist Production

By JAMES MCDUGALL (Scottish Labour College Tutor)  
(Continued from last month.)

**W**E have seen that the formula, for simple circulation of commodities, is :

$$C \text{---} M \text{---} C'$$

At this stage the commodity when it completes its cycle, falls out of the circulation and is consumed. The linking of all the cycles together forms the total circulation. The money, however, remains continually in circulation, one piece being capable of realising the value of a number of commodities, and this perpetual movement of money, induced by the circulation of commodities, is called by Marx the currency of money. When the historical conditions are ripe, simple circulation of commodities is transformed into capitalist circulation, the formula for which is :

$$M \text{---} C \text{---} M$$

Money—Commodity—Money

$$£1 \text{---} 1 \text{ coat} \text{---} £5$$

When the two formulæ are contrasted, the difficulties are seen to be striking. In the first we started with commodity and ended with a commodity of the same exchange value, but of a different kind from that at the beginning. There was a gain of utility, but no increase of exchange value. In the second, however, we start with money and end with money. The exchange seems to be purposeless, as indeed it is, unless the sum of money at the close is greater than that at the start, in which case the formula will read :

$$M \text{---} C \text{---} M'$$

Money—Commodity—Money

$$£5 \text{---} 1 \text{ Coat} \text{---} £6$$

We call the second sum of money  $M'$  to show that it is different from  $M$ . Writing the formula in full we thus get :

$$M \text{---} C \text{---} (M \text{ plus } m)$$

Money—Commodity—(Money plus)

$$£5 \text{---} 1 \text{ Coat} \text{---} (£5 \text{ plus } £1)$$

This  $M$  or increment of value Marx terms surplus value, and a sum of value which breeds surplus value in this way he calls capital. It is not any sum of money at any time or place which constitutes capital, but only such sums of money as undergo this peculiar circulation and that, as we shall see directly, is solely possible under certain historical conditions.

But at this point we appear to be faced with a gross con-

tradiction. If the law of the circulation of commodities is that equal values exchange, how is it possible for me to buy a coat for £5 and then to sell it again for £6? The cycle can be broken up into two places :

$$\begin{array}{ccc} M & \text{---} & C \\ & & C \text{---} M' \end{array}$$

But just as M equals C, so ought also C equal M'. Now it really is impossible to create any surplus value by mere buying and selling, these are mere formal operations which do not change the value of the commodity. Circulation can do nothing more than realise the values already produced. Hence the only possible solution of the problem is that the commodity bought by the capitalist is itself a source of exchange-value. Is there such a commodity? At a certain historical stage there is. When the collapse of Feudalism severs the connection between the producers and the instruments of production, a commodity, labour power, appears on the market, which possesses the desired quality. Should the capitalist buy labour power he must on the average pay for it at its value. How is the value of labour power determined? Like that of any other commodity, its value depends on the average social labour necessary for its production, i.e., for the production of the necessaries required by the labourer to live. Say that the labourer needs ten commodities, each taking, say, one hour's labour to produce (1s. per hour) to maintain himself and his family for one day. If five hours' social labour in gold mining embodies itself in a bit of gold of the weight of a half-sovereign, then we say that the value of one labour power for a day is 10s. So that the capitalist must pay 10s. for the labour power. Having decided, let us suppose, to produce cotton yarn, the capitalist also purchases the other requisites of production, machinery and raw materials. We will consider, for simplicity's sake, the machinery and buildings all to be represented by a single spindle, embodying twenty hours of social labour, therefore having a value of £2. The capitalist buys 10lbs. of raw cotton, each having taken one half-hour of social labour to produce, therefore the 10lbs. is worth 10s. Say that in working up 10lbs. of cotton into yarn, one-quarter of the spindle is worn out, that will be a value of 10s. If a spinner can spin 2lbs. of cotton into yarn in one hour, then the expenditure of the capitalist will be as follows :

10lbs. of raw cotton	10s.
¼ spindle ... ..	10s.
1 labour power ... ..	10s. (5 hours' working day)
Total	30s.

He will have expended 30s. and at the end of the labour process will find himself with 10lbs. of yarn, also, of a value of 30s. Our capitalist scratches his head in astonishment.



“ But,” he cries with righteous indignation, “ are my services to go without reward ? ” Then he bethinks himself, perhaps the work did not go on long enough. So he decides to have a working day of ten hours instead of five. After all he has bought the labour power for a day. He is entitled, like the owner of any other commodity, to its entire utility. But if the work is to go on twice as long as before, then the labour will consume twice as much raw material and machinery, so that his account will now stand :

20lbs. raw cotton ...	20s.	
$\frac{1}{2}$ spindle ...	...	20s.
1 labour power ...	10s. (10 hrs.' working day)	

Total 50s.

What has he got for this expenditure ? He has 20lbs. yarn worth 60s. and has therefore realised a surplus value of 10s. To conclude, then, the capitalist bought all the elements of production at their value, machinery, raw material and labour power ; he consumed the labour power by means of the instruments of labour, and thus found himself, not through any violation of the law of commodity exchange, but in virtue of it, possessed of value for which he required to give no equivalent.

How is this capitalist miracle to be explained ? Certainly not by accepting the contorted notions of the bourgeoisie or their professors as to the nature of the present system, but only by means of the historical and critical method of Marx. The working day of the slave was apparently all surplus labour. Was it actually so ? Not at all ! The slave had to be fed, clothed and sheltered, therefore during part of each working day he was reproducing the value of his necessaries of life ; only a part of the working day could be surplus. The serf of the Middle Ages worked Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, say, on the land of his lord, and Thursday, Friday and Saturday on his own land for himself. In this case the necessary labour and the surplus labour are physically separate portions of time. The wage labourer, on the other hand, appears to do no surplus labour, he is “ paid ” for the whole day. Is this the case ? By no means ! for if it were so the capitalist would have no profits. The labourer is not paid for his labour, but for his labour power, and the value of the latter being always less than that of the former, the capitalist cannot fail to gain a surplus. Under capitalism the necessary labour and the surplus labour are mixed throughout the entire working day, so that in the case we have taken above every second may be looked on as half necessary and half surplus.

### **Absolute Surplus Value.**

The surplus value obtained by prolonging the working day beyond the necessary labour time, Marx terms absolute surplus value. In a previous article we have seen how, in the early days of capitalism in Britain, the greed of the capitalists for surplus labour led to such an unbearable extension of the working day that the workers were forced out of mere self-preservation to raise a mighty agitation for the limitation of the hours of labour by law. A great victory was won with the passing, in 1847, of the Ten Hour Act, limiting the hours of labour in factories for women and young persons to ten hours.

### **Relative Surplus Value.**

When the working day is fixed, it is possible to increase the surplus labour. Perfectly! for as the working day consists of two portions, the necessary time and the surplus time, the latter will be increased, while the working day remains constant, if the former can be reduced. But the length of the necessary portion is determined by the value of labour power, and this one can only be reduced by cheapening the necessaries of life. This the capitalists accomplish unconsciously, driven by the spur of competition. In endeavouring to beat their rivals they are continually introducing new machines and methods for making labour more productive, and this by increasing the volume of articles produced in a given time, reduces the value of each single article.

### **Anarchy of Capitalist Production.**

Under the capitalist mode of production, social production is a private matter. There is no common organ of all the producers to link their efforts together, and to ensure by working to a plan that all the wants of society are supplied without labour being wasted. The producers are only connected with one another through the market. The sole regulator of the capitalist system is the law of supply and demand working blindly on the market. When too much of anything is produced then its price will fall and also the profits to be made from producing it. Capital will therefore tend to withdraw from that industry, the output of the article will decrease, wages will fall, workers will leave that branch of production to go to others. This process will continue until, with the fall in output, the price has been raised to the point at which it will yield the average profit on the capital invested in the industry. Conversely, when too little of anything is produced then its price will rise, as will the profits to be gained from making it. Capital will therefore flow into this sphere, pro-

duction will increase, wages will rise, workers will be attracted to this occupation from others. This will go on until with increased supply the price falls at least to the point at which the capital in this particular branch yields no more than the average profit. Thus, under the present system, we have continual fluctuations of prices, of profits, of production; a perpetual movement of capital from industry to industry and a migration of workers from one occupation to another according to the rates of wages prevailing. Supply and demand, however, does not regulate matters exactly, but only in a rough way and in the long run. The usual condition of a capitalist industry is that either too much is being produced or too little. Moreover, when a change of price does take place, the capitalist machinery of production is so sensitive that the reaction is always of an exaggerated kind.

### **Industrial Crises.**

As Engels shows in "Socialism, Scientific and Utopian," which, by the way, is excellent meat for young minds, there is the absurdest contrast between the order and economy which reigns within the single capitalist factory and the utter confusion and anarchy to be found in capitalist economy as a whole. We have already referred to the perpetual improvement of technique, the continual advance to new improved types of machines, the changes coming so fast that often the old machines are far from being physically used up before they have to be scrapped as obsolete, that characterises the rising phase of the capitalist epoch. But this constant increase of the productivity of labour means that there is every year a vast volume of additional commodities which must find customers. Now as the working class only receives a fraction of its product in wages, its consuming power remains strictly limited, and consequently the only hope of finding a sale lies in the expansion of the market, for these goods are such as are only suited for mass consumption, consequently could not be used by the capitalists themselves, even if that were not impossible on other grounds. Hence the rapid extension of capitalism during the 19th century.

In spite, however, of the steady opening-up of new markets, periodically the powers of production would outstrip the possibilities of distribution, then there would come over-production, fall in prices, bankruptcies, financial panic, unemployment, in a word, all those symptoms of social disorder which we sum up under the term—crisis. The cycle of trade during the 19th century was roughly a ten-yearly one. At the trough of the depression, when prices were at their lowest, interest rates would also be low and this would act as a stimulant upon production; in a year or so there would be mod-

erate activity, the rate of interest being still unaffected, but with prices rising under the influence of increased demand; then with the coming of brisker times, the interest rate would be raised to counter the growing demand for accommodation, until with prices rapidly rising and apparently going to continue to do so indefinitely, the boom would be in full swing; then, when the prosperity was at its height, rumours would begin to spread that all was not well, bills would be closely scrutinised and under the pressure for cash, at all costs the interest rate would rise sky high, people carrying stocks on credit would be forced to sell at slaughter prices, bankruptcies would multiply, and finally production would slow down 'once more, with the return of the depression.

### **The Remedy.**

The apologists of capitalism try to assure us that the crises are healthy symptoms, indications that the system is sloughing off some of the fatty tissue it has accumulated in the preceding prosperous periods. They were never that, even in the days of the upward tendency of capitalism. The crises were and remain fateful reminders to the complacent bourgeoisie that their system rests upon an incurable contradiction, not evidences of life and abounding vitality, but of that secret sore eating into the body of capitalist society and rendering its death inevitable. For it is the crises which awake and arouse the working class, and clearly reveal to them the irreconcilability of their interests with the further existence of the capitalist order.

The remedy for the anarchy of production, which characterises capitalism, into which social forces work unconsciously upon the human agents of production, is to recognise the existence of social labour as the determining fact of life, and to conduct production consciously according to plan.



# Party Training Notes

It is evident by the lack of reports from districts that Party Training activity suffers during the summer months. Probably this is to some extent unavoidable, but D.C.P.'s and L.P.C.'s should endeavour to arrange for Training Groups continuing on as wide a scale as possible. Party Training is not merely a winter pastime.

It is to be hoped that during September a number of new groups will be set up; Locals should set themselves the task of carrying through Party Training on the basis of covering the whole of the present membership during the autumn and winter, for an influx of *new* members will otherwise leave Party Training work considerably in arrears.

The importance of improving the theoretical knowledge of the existing membership cannot be over-emphasised, and every effort should, therefore, be made to carry out Party Training on a very much larger scale this winter than in the past.

It would be very helpful to us if Training Group Leaders particularly, as well as Party members in general would write concerning any difficulties met with in the work of Party Training, and giving the benefit of any successful experience either in methods or meeting arrangements.

Members have many questions to raise on this matter, but often feel that the particular point is only a minor one, and of no general importance.

On the contrary, however, such is not the case, and we desire a more direct contact to be established between ourselves and Trainers through these notes than is possible in statistical reports.

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One of our Locals informs us that they have re-arranged Training Group Meetings so that these will *not be held* during the same evening as ordinary meetings and that consequently the Training work is obtaining better results.

Obviously such arrangement is essential; Party Training Groups cannot get on with their work properly and satisfactorily if another meeting follows immediately afterwards. Both meetings are restricted for time, and both suffer accordingly.

## THE QUALITIES NECESSARY IN A PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY.

Conditions do not remain stable under capitalism, and in the present epoch of imperialism which Lenin characterised as "Perishing, decaying capitalism," economic and financial forces create fluctuations and crises of varying intensity, and all tending to clashes on a big scale between the rival imperialisms, and between the proletariat and the imperialists.

The Communist Party must understand what these forces are and estimate their strength and the direction in which they are operating, so that it can formulate its tactics accordingly and guide the workers correctly.

The function of the Party is, as the advance guard of the proletariat, to rouse the masses to class-consciousness, diverting them from the narrow paths of Trade Unionism and transforming them into an independent political force. The Party is the political leader of the proletariat.

The vanguard, the leader, cannot become separated from the masses, but must retain an intimate contact with them. All branches of working-class activity must be kept in touch with, and the Party lead should be put forward in the Trade Unions, Trades Councils, Labour Parties, Co-operatives, etc., etc., so that, by experience, the workers organised in these shall realise that the Communist lead is the correct one. This leadership does not necessarily mean that Communists must strive to be elected to offices, but that they shall show themselves the most capable and devoted fighters for the workers' cause.

These varied and various activities, however, must be co-ordinated. Mistakes made in one section can be avoided elsewhere, and experience gained in one activity used in others.

The Party is the organised detachment of the working class. Organisation implies Party discipline, and Party discipline will be ineffective unless members understand the Party policy and programme and the theories upon which these are based.

Instructions must not be blindly carried out, but must be understood by the membership.

# “Our” Empire

## British Legerdemain in Palestine.

The amazing facility with which the British governing class can adapt its imperialistic colonisation policy to fit in with the varying conditions obtaining in the different colonies and mandated areas, which have been brought under their control, must be a source of chagrin and envy to the diplomats and Empire-developers of other powers. We read in the excellent little article by M.H.D. in the July issue of the “Communist Review” of our Imperialists’ methods for encouraging cotton growing in East Africa, which shows us how in these colonies the introduction of the Hut Tax was intended to force the otherwise independent natives, who had no keen desire to become wage-slaves, to enter the labour market in order to raise money with which to pay the exorbitant demands of the Hut Tax collector.

In Egypt we know how Britain seized upon the pretext of the murder of Sir Lee Stack to issue the famous ultimatum as an excuse for the definite severance of the Sudan from Egypt, and to all intents and purposes, bringing the Sudan under direct British control. Many more instances could be enumerated were there time and space.

### ROBBING THE ARABS.

In Palestine, a different problem faces our Empire builders. Economically, and from the point of view of exploitation of national resources, this barren and sun-scorched country had little to offer them. Politically, and strategically, it was a weak and vulnerable spot. During the European War it was quickly realised that it was one of the most important fronts on which decisive campaigns would have to be fought in order to crush Germany and her ally, Turkey, then the sovereign power over Palestine, Syria, Trans-Jordania, etc.

Taking advantage of the great antipathy and hatred which the Arabs, who formed the vast proportion of the population of Palestine and Trans-Jordania, had towards their Turkish overlords, the British secured their allegiance and active co-operation in the war against Turkey and Germany, this support be-

ing given on the strict understanding that, on the successful conclusion of hostilities, the Arabs’ right to self-determination in these countries would be definitely established.

This was the undertaking Britain faced at the end of the war, and the way in which this pledge has been violated opens up a chapter of treachery towards the Arabic people which has rarely been equalled even in the previous black record of British Empire promotion. One, therefore, turns with a certain amount of interest to the report of the British High Commissioner for Palestine, Sir Herbert Samuel,\* in which he gives an account of his stewardship from 1920-1925.

In looking through the Report, one is amazed by the impudent omission to even mention the question of Arab independence, and at its efforts to describe all the disturbances which have resulted in the country as manifestations of Bedouin and Arabic brigandage. That there has been great anger and bitter resentment amongst the Arabs because of the non-fulfilment of the promise of the establishment of Arabic independence is very well known. And this resentment was increased a hundred-fold by the still further act of treachery of Britain, in her position as Mandatory Power for Palestine, in the promulgation of the infamous Balfour Declaration, which declared Palestine the “National Home for the Jews.” Only the great military and police display of force by the British Administration temporarily succeeded in crushing down the smouldering resentment. It is, therefore, a fitting commentary that the Government report should open with a chapter on “Public Security.”

### BRITISH PROVOKE RIOTS.

Friend Samuel leads off with a description of the country and its population. “The majority of the people,” he says, “are illiterate, placid and, as a rule, easily led by men in whom they place confidence.” Here he speaks almost boastfully of the gullibility of the Arab

\*PALESTINE: Report of the High Commissioner on the Administration of Palestine, 1920-1925. Issued by Colonial Office.

peoples. He describes how he found the country in 1920, still disturbed by the "ground-swells" of the great war; fierce riots breaking out between Arabs and Jews, and feelings inflamed. He omits to describe how these disturbances were a result of the breach of faith with the Arabs, and the operation of the Balfour Declaration, under which great numbers of Jewish colonists were being attracted from all parts of the world, settled on land which for generations had been farmed by Arab fellahs, and which had been bought over their heads from the rich Syrian and other landlords, families being evicted to make room for the immigrants.

#### USING BLACK-AND-TANS.

However, having secured an ally in the reactionary Zionist movement, and, with the aid of the Army and Air Force stationed in Palestine, which, on his own showing, cost the British taxpayers £3,155,000 in the first year of his administration; with the assistance of a police force drawn from the local population, and manned by British officers; a special organised force of gendarmerie consisting of 500 mounted men with British officers, and, lastly, the assistance of a special battalion of British gendarmerie organised in Ireland, and obviously composed of members of the Black and Tans (762 in number), the gallant members of the administration were able to successfully quell all the disturbances, and we are assured that "a rapid pacification of the country took place. The spirit of lawlessness has ceased. The atmosphere is no longer electric. There have been no further raids from Trans-Jordania. All the brigands have been **hunted down and either shot, executed or imprisoned**" (page 5, Report). One notes with what charming naivette the High Commissioner discriminates between being "shot" and "executed."

#### CRUSHING TAXATION.

Commenting on the methods in operation with respect to the collecting of taxes, the Report states that, "except in cases of clear necessity, it has not been thought desirable to effect rapid changes in the systems of administration to which the peoples were accustomed. . . . For this reason the Turkish taxes have, in general been continued." The report does not mention that there has been great discontent owing to the

fact that, whereas under the Turkish rule a tithe was levied on all agricultural land of 12½ per cent. of the total produce of the land, under the British administration this tax was converted into a money tax, the land assessed as to the value of the crops, and the 12½ per cent. tax levied and collected irrespective of whether the peasant was able to dispose of his crops or not. It is true that the tax has been reduced this year to 10 per cent., but still the burden on the peasants and farmers is unjust, and in many cases almost impossible to bear.

#### D.O.R.A. METHODS.

It is also significant to note that the administration has retained the old Turkish legal codex, paragraph 66 of which makes it a severely punishable offense to incite the people. This codex has been further strengthened by the addition of a clause dealing with the prevention of crime under which any person suspected of intention to incite may be arrested and detained without warrant. Furnished with these large powers, the authorities have used their power unmercifully against the Communist Party in Palestine, and also against the militant Arab Nationalist movement.

#### WORKERS IMPRISONED.

It is important to note that the persecutions which took place included the suppression of the Workers' Section (R.I.L.U.), whose members were rounded up and hunted down like dogs, expelled from their work, from their homes, and workers' clubs, etc., many of them being cast into prison. Further, that at Haifa, Jaffa and Jerusalem, there were upwards of 30 arrests and imprisonments without trial of workers who were accused of distributing the Manifesto of protest against the visit of Balfour on the occasion of the opening of the Jewish University in Jerusalem, and, that at Haifa, there was also a further arrest of 14 workers on May 1st, because of participation in the May Day celebrations and, **as far as we know, these comrades are still in prison without trial.**

Much space is devoted in the Report by Sir Herbert Samuel in explanation of the efforts which have been made to get the Arab Nationalists to participate in the various forms of Administrative machinery

cunningly devised to win them away from their claim to full rights of self-determination. And, whilst it is well-known that the Arabs are prepared to concede participation in a government to the other Nationals settled in Palestine, it is not to be wondered at that they have definitely refused to enter any Administrative, or Legislative body, where the representation of British, Jewish and other Nationals will place them in an impotent minority.

#### OIL VERSUS NATIONAL LIBERTY.

Under the heading of "Future Work," the report deals with projected developments of the country. As any intelligent observer must agree that there cannot be at any time any great industrial development in Palestine owing to the almost entire lack of those natural mineral reserves such as coal, ores, etc., and the absence of timber and water-power, one is justified in looking closely for the motive behind the boosting of the construction of the suggested huge harbourage at Haifa, which undertaking can only be done at enormous cost running into millions. A glance at the map will throw light on the motive underlying this inspired project when we notice that Haifa is the nearest point on the Mediterranean to the new oil-fields of Mosul in Mesopotamia under the control of the British, and already the construction of an oil pipe-line from Mosul to Haifa has been spoken of with enthusiasm in the British financial press.

We are, therefore, justified in assuming that the main concern of Britain in the suggested undertaking is the providing of a great Mediterranean naval base in close proximity to French controlled Syria, and which would also give to her a dominating influence over Asia Minor, the Aegean Sea and the approach to the Bosphorus and Black Sea. It would also provide her with an oil-fuelling base of great importance.

#### COMMUNISTS AID IN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE.

In spite of the enmity which has been engendered in the past between the Arab and Jewish population of Palestine, due thanks to the cunning diplomacy of Great Britain allied to the reactionary Zionist imperialists, a new psychology is now being created. Thanks in a great measure to the untiring efforts of the gallant band of workers in the Communist Party of Palestine and the members of the Workers' Section (R.I.L.U.), with the co-operation of the militant Arab Nationalist movement, the workers and peasants, both Arab and Jewish, are coming more and more to see that they have been used as catspaws in the furtherance of British Imperialist aims.

Every day witnesses some new manifestation of the growing sense of solidarity between Arab and Jewish workers. The Arabs are entering into the Trade Unions, which have hitherto been mainly Jewish. Only recently we read in the "Sunday Worker" an account of a strike of Arab brickmakers at Jaffa in which the Jewish workers stood by them and refused to blackleg, and how they were responsible for getting the Trades Council to take up the matter and to secure a complete victory for the Arabs.

Thus we see in Palestine how the familiar Imperialist British policy of "Divide and Conquer" is being frustrated from below, and the day fast approaching when, throughout the slowly awakening East, in common with their brothers and sisters in Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Syria, Kenya, China and other Eastern countries the workers and peasants will unite and arise, irrespective of colour or creed, and as workers with but one common enemy will cry, "Down with the Robber Imperialism." "All Power to the Workers' and Peasants' Republics of the East."

J. C.

