

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

For International Socialism.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 19th, 1919

Price Twopence.

NORTH RUSSIA: The Truth About The Expedition.

BY AN AMERICAN LATELY RETURNED FROM RUSSIA.

PART I.

Why was there an expedition to North Russia, anyway? To prevent the Germans going through Finland and using Murmansk and Petchenga as submarine bases: that is the usual answer! And that is a clinching answer, usually! No need for justification! And if you mention the analogy of Germany's invasion of Belgium. Oh, well, the case is entirely different. Besides did not the Soviet of the Murmansk district invite the Allies to land? That foolish Soviet was immediately outlawed by the "outlawish" Moscow Soviet, and in a short time was shown the door by their whilom guests.

At Archangel the invitation was obtained after we had taken the place and nominated those who should invite us. The Provisional Government was kidnapped by members of some Russian militia and taken to an island in the White Sea. This act delighted certain elements of the Allied High Command, and in many circles, is believed to have been wholly their own plot. The American Ambassador forced the return of this Government, but the workmen of Archangel went on a strike as a protest. American soldiers put down the strike and subsequent strikes—the street-car men were always striking, I am informed—and ran the tram lines themselves.

Now that there is no German menace, what is the reason for remaining on in the country six months? Payment of Russia's war debts to England and France, is the usual answer. Very few soldiers know that the Bolsheviks have agreed to pay the war-debts. The Bolshevik answer to the Prinkipo invitation was never published in English in the Murmansk district. Matters damaging to the Bolsheviks in Anglo-Saxon eyes are rushed into print at once. That Pandora tale of the nationalisation of women, which has flown everywhere on mischievous wings, was printed and distributed among all the men. Of course, all the men read it! Other propaganda stuff was put before them. In among magazines sent out to the troops just about election time were hundreds of leaflets of the National Democratic Party, lauding the Government.

The average Tommy isn't interested in the subject of Bolshevism. He doesn't feel the ambition to fight in a war against Russia. The Bolshevik is pretty bad, no doubt, and it would be a right good thing to make him pay what he owes England (?) but then Tommy is tired of all fighting anywhere, and wants to go home.

The officers do more thinking about the object of the expedition. I heard one officer say, being irritated upon receiving news that his battalion should march on to Archangel: "Our being here is nothing but a capitalists' scheme to get a hand on the mines of Russia." One officer high in command spoke to me with surprising frankness: "Of course, I know very well why we are here. I, as an English officer, am here in the interest of England, in the interest of England's prosperity. I am a regular army man; we cannot have an army without money, and we as a nation cannot have money without an army." "But," I asked, "are the Italians and the French here also in the financial interest of their countries?"

"Certainly," he responded. "And how about the Americans?" I questioned: "Don't you believe in the sincerity of Wilson with his fourteen points?" "Very likely he is sincere," said the officer; "perhaps our Lloyd George is sincere also, but our politicians are only the tools of our more clever business men and real rulers." Many officers think that way, and among them, oddly enough, are Canadians, but other officers think more along the lines on which our phrase-makers talk.

I doubt if the soldiers spend much time in argument about why and where they fight. They work hard all day and in the evening during such free time as they have, are naturally enough looking for amusement. They are wondering how soon they can go home; they want demobilisation, not leave. The soldiers are not suffering greatly for want of physical comforts. They get enough to eat, at least now, though they tell me that during the summer they were working hard on less than half rations. They are warmly clothed for the most part, although some have no overcoats, and all the winter equipment did not arrive till about Christmas time.

There has been a great deal of "lifting" of supplies from quays, trains, and dumps. The Russians are blamed for this, but nearly all the soldiers know that it is our own people who are responsible. Some soldiers said they stole dainties which they knew would all go to the officers, otherwise, but of which they believed they were intended to have a share. The railroad in the Murmansk district is run by the former Russian railroad men under direction of head officials appointed by the "Allied-made" Government, through which we used to send orders relating to the Russians. Some of these railroad men will detach a car of army supplies, if possible, particularly if it be a carload of rum. Rum can be sold for a high price to the natives; they will barter the most valuable skins, or pay any number of roubles, for a bottle of rum mixed liberally with water.

Officers who promulgate the order against selling rum to Russians have been known to do a brisk business themselves, selling whisky obtained by their own messes to Russians. This bartering for large profits is called "skolkoing" after the Russian word, *skolko*, meaning "how much." The High Command has issued minatory orders about this practice, but it seems to continue, driven into subterranean channels. There have been altogether too much rum and liquors brought into the place; wet goods have been shipped when there was not space on the ships for the regular canteen comfort supplies, and when there was no writing paper to be had for love or money. Certain non-commissioned officers' messes had so much booze that the members could keep tight for days on end.

(To be concluded in next week's issue.)

TRUTH ABOUT RUSSIA.

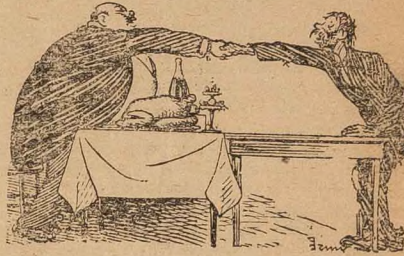
Dr. JOHN RICKMAN will lecture at KINGSLEY HALL,

Devon's Road, Bow, E.

Thursday, April 24th, at 7.30 p.m.

Admission Twopence at the door.

Chair: MISS S. PANKHURST.



INDUSTRIAL PEACE.

(From the "Avanti," Italian Socialist Paper).

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

By An Indian.

O, Princes and Potentates, Mighty Diplomats!
Whose responsible charge is all mankind,
Who zealously strive to put an end to strife,
And make God's earth a harbour of Peace,
When you talk of a League of Nations
For the guarantee of Right and Justice,
I admit your soul is stirred with humanity,
I admit your efforts are all sincere,
But is your vision marred by racial bias
Or the unworthy consciousness of superior culture?
Since I fail to see any mention in your plan
Of the down-trodden, struggling races of the East,
Those unfortunate victims of white exploits,
Who lost liberty, wealth, and all
To pamper the greed and proud ambition
Of Imperialists. Have you forgotten they exist?
Would you close the doors of Freedom against them?
Would you keep them grovelling in thralldom and misery,
And label them out for ever "Un-free"?
Or would you, in justification of your aims,
With even-handed justice and magnanimity,
Restore to them their natural birthright
Of self-determination? Would you give up
The peaceful penetration of commerce,
Or ideas of conquest by colonisation?
Would you acknowledge their equality,
Or would you maintain that hated colour bar?
Would you liberate Egypt, would you liberate India?
Would you unshackle the unfortunate Persia?
Would you uplift the teeming millions of Africa?
Human they are all, one God's creatures.
Would you give them a place on this God's earth?
Would you, like genuine brethren and saviours of mankind,
Help uplift them to culture and progress,
Or would it harrow your soul to let go
Those vast rich fields of exploitations?
This is "an acid test of your sincerity."
By your performance alone and not by your words
Shall you be judged for ever, not only to-day,
But on the Great To-morrow, before
Him whose children we are all and
Who loves them equally. Let it not
Be said, then, that the superior races
Of whites combined to plunder and exploit
The backward blacks of half the world
In the name of goodwill and peace on earth!

M. O. ABBASI.

DO NOT MISS
OUR MAY DAY
NUMBER.

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LONDON MEETINGS.

OUTDOOR.
SATURDAY, APRIL 19th.
Great Push against Conscription in Stratford.— Meet at 3 P.M. at the Grove (buses and trams from Mile End and Aldgate). Speakers: Miss Birch, Miss O'Neil, Mrs. Walker, and others.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25th.
Cobden Statue (near Mornington Crescent Tube Station).—5.30 P.M., Miss O'Neil, Mr. J. G. Stone.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26th.
Great Push in Hammersmith.

INDOOR.
THURSDAY, APRIL 24th.
Kingsley Hall, Bow Road (in lieu of Limes Hall, Lewisham).—7.30 P.M., Dr. Rickman on 'Russia.' Chair: Sylvia Pankhurst.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25th.
3 Great Garden Street, Whitechapel.—8 P.M., General Meeting, London Section.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27th.
400 Old Ford Road.—7 P.M., R. H. Pollitt, 'Reform or Revolution.' Chair: Miss N. Smyth. Discussion.

Gratefully Acknowledged

GENERAL FUND.—Irene, per Mrs. Drake (20s. weekly), £2. COLLECTIONS.—Poplar W.S.F., 3s. 2d.; Miss Price, 1s. 3d.

SOCIAL WORK.—Mrs. M. Boswell (monthly), £2; Nurse Hebbes (10s. weekly), £1; Mrs. Richmond (fortnightly), 10s.; May F. Melling, 5s.

COLLECTION.—Misses E. Lagsding and J. Watts (Green's Yard), 8s. 4d.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

HULL.

No, we are not excited about Hull or the other by-elections. The Government has lost this seat, as it lost two others, and at Hull the Government poll is down by over 6,000 votes. Undoubtedly the electors have recovered somewhat from khaki fever; that is quite natural; every one knew they would; but the change in the colour of the representation will make no difference: Kenworthy or Percy, Liberal or Tory, it is all one. There is no material difference between the various wings of the party of capitalism. They are all solidly against the Soviets. Parliament will never abolish capitalism, and whoever preaches reliance upon it is to that extent postponing the revolution.

CHURCHILL REVEALS THE

GERMANY TO BE COMPELLED TO FIGHT BOLSHEVISM

When the war was raging, we said that if our rulers should perceive any reason to fear that the workers would rise against them, they would make peace with the German rulers and join with them in putting down the workers. Winston Churchill's speech to the Aldwych Club on April 11th abundantly proves the truth of our contention. "The atrocities of Lenin and Trotsky," he says, "are incomparably more hideous than any for which the Kaiser himself is responsible." To Churchill that is so, for have not they dispossessed the capitalists and the landlords and made the Soviets of the workers the Government of the country?

Germany, Churchill tells us, is to be made to pay for the war, but we cannot all get all we should like out of her, and if we try to get too much the Scheidemann Government will fall and the Soviets take its place. Therefore, having been disarmed, Germany must be fed and peace must be made with her. He says: "A way of atonement is open to Germany. By combating Bolshevism, by being the bulwark against it, Germany may make the first step towards ultimate union with the civilised world." Churchill explains it plainly: Germany is to be "made to do her share in clearing up the mess" (otherwise Bolshevism), whilst a strong British and Allied army stands by on the Rhine. "Very great perils still menace us," says Churchill. By "us" he, of course, means the Allied ruling classes. "The Great Power which was our foe, and the Great Power which was our friend, are both in the pit of ruin and despair. It is extremely undesirable that they should come together," says Churchill, and adds that: "The Russian Revolution is changing its character. It has completed the Anarchist destruction of the social order in Russia." (Yes, the Revolution has destroyed the bad old social order and now it is building a new order.) Churchill says that Russia's military structure "is growing out of the ruin"; "still weak, but growing stronger," and that the Soviet army will soon be marching over Europe, with only small States, exhausted by the war, standing in its path. Churchill knows, we all know, that the Soviet soldiers will only march to aid the workers of any country; that they will never attack them and only fight as a last resort in self-defence. If Germany becomes Bolshevik Churchill laments: "Where shall we be; where

will be that revival of prosperity without which our domestic contentment is impossible?" "We" to Churchill means the ruling classes; it is their prosperity which is concerning him.

Cannot the workers see it? Surely they should receive such speeches as this of Churchill as a challenge which should spur them on to frustrate the plot to use them to crush the power of the international working class!

Says Churchill: "The Prime Minister has given me the fullest authority to take whatever measures the general staff of the army think necessary to see that our men are relieved, and brought safely through the perils with which they are confronted."

Churchill does not say that the measures are to bring the men home; and Churchill is nothing if not an adventurous dare devil!

SHAM DEMOCRACY.

Lord Milner, the Royal Colonial Institute of London, and he hoped that though the War Cabinet would disappear at the close of the war, the Dominion Prime Ministers would continue perpetually to sit with British Ministers to deal with all matters of common concern to the United Kingdom and the Dominions. The War Cabinet has certainly been the chief governing body in this country ever since its formation. It has been a highly reactionary body in close touch with the great capitalists and financiers and obedient to their wishes. The British Cabinet has more and more usurped the power of Parliament which long since became little more than a cipher. The War Cabinet has not troubled even to make a show of reporting to Parliament and obtaining Parliamentary assent. Indeed, it has virtually told Members of Parliament to be silent and cease from meddling with affairs of State.

Should any friction or conflict develop between Parliament and the Cabinet, would not the Cabinet insist that the inclusion of Dominion Premiers in the Cabinet had rendered the Government, not responsible to Parliament, but to the Empire, and had emancipated the Government from the duty of consulting Parliament upon the issue in question?

Parliamentarian Socialists should consider who chooses Prime Ministers and how Cabinets are appointed. The sovereign chooses the British Prime Minister, and it is a matter of history that British sovereigns have repeatedly selected as Prime Ministers, not the acknowledged leader of the party which has secured the majority at the election, but some other person whose personality and views have been less offensive to the reactionary forces. Sometimes the individual thus chosen has declined office, knowing that he could not secure the support of a Parliamentary majority; but on other occasions he has taken office, ousting the man who ought to have been chosen. An instance of royal discrimination recently occurred in Sweden. Branting, the Majority Socialist, was the leader of the largest party in the Swedish Parliament, but the King chose a Liberal to be Prime Minister and a Coalition Government was formed. The Prime Minister who appoints the Cabinet does not disclose the conditions of taking office imposed on him by the sovereign, but no doubt the capitalist powers behind the throne confer with the King and advise him concerning these matters.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

Classified advertisements one penny per word. Displayed advertisements 7s. 6d. per inch. Pre-pay and send to Manager, "Workers' Dreadnought," 152 Fleet Street.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR EDITOR,—You wish me to say "what contract the workers broke" when they held a meeting at the Crossley Motors, Ltd.

I understood the workers were engaged by time or for a job, in either case having started they were due to finish it before leaving off, except at specified intervals. I believe engineers, being engaged by the hour, can cease work at an hour's notice, but in the accounts of the case spoken of no indication of even that hour's notice of stopping work appears to have been given.

Secondly, you wish me to say "how the workers could have guarded against such breach."

An employee should ascertain what are the terms of his contract before he starts work—having started he should abide by those terms until he gives the requisite notice of refusal to do so.

In the case under consideration I have not seen it stated that there was any particular provocation, or extreme cold or the fact that repeated complaints received no attention. The latter is what usually leads to actions which may be technically wrong, but which must command the sympathy of any decent employer. In the light of the note which appeared in last week's DREADNOUGHT I do not propose to take up space by replying at length to Mr. Halls—after all as we are working together there should be opportunities for helpful personal discussion—I will only say that in my opinion it is the conduct of capitalists that will be responsible if capitalism has to give way to Socialism before the majority of Socialists have educated themselves and others for it.

J. EDWARD FRANCIS.
[Mr. Francis seems to us to have missed the point. The workers were not holding a meeting to amuse themselves. The workshop was not heated. They were cold and they held a spontaneous gathering to decide what to do. By the end of the day some of them might have become ill. Even in these days of capitalism the employer is required to supply certain minimum heating and other amenities for the workers.]

SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' COUNCIL FORMED IN CHICAGO.

American soldiers and sailors have formed a Council in Chicago. It proposes "to make the United States a fine place for human beings." It is "not interested in the making of millionaires and political heroes," but "in giving every man and woman a chance to participate in the best things of life." It says: "We meet in the streets of Chicago thousands of our comrades who are idle and penniless. They can beg, steal, or depend on their sisters." The Council is not yet a Revolutionary Socialist body, but by the example of Russia it may become so!

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