

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM.

Founded and Edited by SYLVIA PANKHURST

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LENIN'S REPORT AT TENTH CONGRESS OF COMMUNIST PARTY.

Candid Admissions and Bold Criticism.

A Speech, much commented upon in the Bourgeois Press, given in full.

After the speeches of the Fraternal Delegates at the election of the Presidium at the First Meeting of the Congress, reports were taken of the work of the Central Executive Committee. Comrade Lenin reported on the political activities of the Central Committee. On rising to speak, he was greeted with loud and prolonged applause.

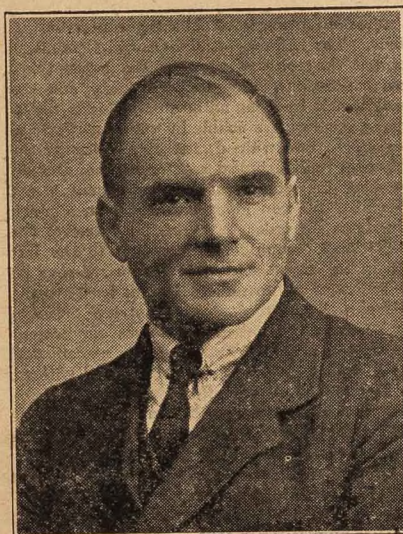
"Comrades, in my opinion, the most important question of the day deserving our closest attention, is that of the transition from war to peace. Probably all of you, at least most of you, will remember that we have attempted this transition several times during the last three and a half years; but at no time did we complete it, because the vital interests of international capitalism are bound up with our failure. I remember that in April 1918, three years ago, I had occasion to speak at the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, on the tasks confronting us then as if the civil war had practically come to an end when, as a matter of fact, it had only just begun. You will all remember, that at the last Party Conference, we based all our calculations on this transition to peaceful construction, assuming that the enormous concessions that we made would secure for peace. But at that very April, the Polish bourgeoisie, in conjunction with imperialist and capitalist countries, interpreting our desire for peace as a sign of weakness, commenced their offensive for which, however, they had to pay very dear, in that they had to accept a less advantageous peace than if they had accepted our earlier proposals. We, however, did not secure the possibility of transferring to peace construction, and we again had to concentrate our attention to the war with Poland and the subsequent liquidation of the struggle. This is what our work for the last year consisted of. Again the whole of our work was devoted to the tasks of war.

The transition from war to peace began again when we had succeeded in clearing every soldier and hostile army from the territory of the Soviet Republic. This transition caused a shock, the effects of which we have not calculated.

The Difficulties of Demobilisation.

"The Demobilisation of the Army, which we had to carry out in the country and which carried with it untold difficulties, has raised problems which are considerably underestimated. Here, to a very large degree, are the sources of the economic and social crises. Already, at the end of last year, I had occasion to point out that one of the greatest difficulties that would confront us in the spring would be in connection with the demobilisation of the Army. I must say that at that time we hardly realised the full extent of these difficulties. We did not yet see to what extent the misfortune which had fallen upon the country already during the previous imperialist war, and later during the civil war, would tell during the demobilisation. The country for several years concentrated its efforts exclusively for war purposes, and sacrificed everything for it, and only now, at the conclusion of the war, do we see the real extent of poverty and ruin which, over a long period, will compel us to devote our energies merely to the healing of our wounds.

"Undoubtedly, the Central Committee erred in that it did not correctly estimate the difficulties of this demobilisation, but it must be said, that there was no basis for this calculation, for the civil war was so difficult, that the only rule was: 'all for victory on the civil war front.' Only the observation of this rule and the incredible concentration of effort which the Red



W. GALLACHER.
Now serving three months.

Army displayed in the struggle with Koltchak. Yudenitch and others, could we have achieved the victory over the invading imperialists.

Errors in Calculation.

"From this basic fact, which determines a number of other errors in the growing crises I would like to pass over to the fact, that in the work of the Party, there were revealed a number of other instances of inappropriate and incorrect calculations and plans. Let us summarise our experiences in such varying fields as the progress of our Polish war and questions of food and fuel.

"There is no question that we erred in our too rapid advance on Warsaw. I will not discuss at this moment whether that was a strategical or a political error; that would involve us into a too long discussion. In any case there was an error, and this arose from our over-estimating the superiority of our forces. To what extent this superiority of forces depended on economic conditions, or on the fact that the Polish war aroused the patriotism of even the petty-bourgeois elements, who do not sympathise with Communism, and certainly do not support the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a question too complicated to be discussed now. The fact is that we committed errors in the Polish war.

"If we take such sphere of work as food, we will see here analogous errors. With regard to the corn requisitions and the gathering of the corn duties, last year was much more successful than the previous year. Last year the amount of corn gathered reached 250 million poods. Up to February 1st, it was calculated that we had gathered 235 million poods, when for the whole of the previous year we gathered 210 million poods, which means that for a much shorter period, we exceeded the amount of corn gathered for the whole of the previous year. It turned out, however, that of this 235 million poods, 155 million poods were used up in the first half of the year, that is, on an average of 25 million poods a month. Generally, we have to confess that we were not able properly to distribute our re-

sources when they proved to be better than those of the previous year. We were unable correctly to estimate the extent of the approaching spring crisis, and lent ourselves naturally to the desire to increase the rations of the hungry workers.

"It must be said, however, that even here we had no proper basis for calculation. In all capitalist states, in spite of disorder, in spite of the chaos peculiar to capitalism, there is a basis for calculation in the decades of experience, by which the capitalist states, similar in their economic construction, and varying only in details, could be guided. The investigation and comparison of experiences reveals an actual scientific law. We did not have and could not have had a basis for our calculations, and, naturally, as soon as we were able to give the hungry workers an increase of food, we were not able to establish the proper scale. It is clear that we should have only moderately increased the rations and have stored up a reserve for the rainy day that would and did come in the spring. This was an error, the kind of error that is peculiar to all our work, an error which shows that the transition from war to peace would create such difficult problems, for the overcoming of which we had neither the experience or material to go upon. As a result the crisis became more acute.

"Something analogous to this took place with regard to fuel. This is the fundamental question of our economic policy. The transition from peace to war, that transition and economic construction about which we spoke at the previous conference of the Party, and which comprised the main part of our work during the preceding year, could not but be based upon the supply and proper distribution of fuel. Without that, there can be no talk of overcoming difficulties or of re-establishing industry. The conditions in this connection were better this year than last there is no doubt. Previously we had been cut off from the oil and coal regions. After the victory of the Red Army, we secured oil and coal. At all events, the extent of our fuel resources were increased. We know that the fuel resources at our disposal were greater this year than last. But on the basis of this increase we committed our error, in consuming fuel to such an extent that we exhausted our fuel reserves.

"From what we have experienced, we should say that all these errors are connected with our rapid transition from war to peace. It turned out that this transition is a much slower process than we imagined. A much greater preparation was required and a much slower pace.

"Undoubtedly, the crisis was rendered more acute by the failure of the harvest. I pointed out that our work in the food department during last year gave us incomparably larger stocks than the previous year, but this, in fact, was one of the greatest causes of the crisis, because, owing to the failure of the harvest, resulting in an extreme shortage of fodder, which in its turn caused a great mortality among cattle and a deterioration of stock. The food requisition was concentrated in these places where the reserves of corn were not large. These reserves are largest in the various border republics in Siberia and North Caucasus. But it is precisely in those places that the Soviet apparatus works less smoothly, where the Soviet power is less stable, and where transport is very difficult. It follows, therefore, that we secured an increase of our food stocks from those districts which had suffered from bad harvests, and this led to the agricultural crisis becoming more acute.

"Here again we see that we made no proper calculations, but, on the other hand, we were in such a difficult position that we had no choice. A country which had gone through such a destructive imperialist war and a prolonged civil war, could not have acted otherwise than take the food stocks from the peasantry, even without giving them compensation in any form. We said to the peasants: 'Of course, you are giving your corn on loan to the Labour Peasant State, but you really have no other way of saving your State from the landlords and the capitalists.' We could not have acted otherwise under the conditions which the capitalists and imperialists, by their war, imposed upon us. But these circumstances, owing to the prolongation of the war, led to such a deterioration of our agriculture, that the bad harvest was caused by the diminution of the area cultivated, the deterioration of the means of production, diminution of fertility, and reduction of labour power, etc. The failure of the harvest was tremendous, yet it was better than we expected. The gathering of the food, however, was accompanied by an acute crisis. We must carefully examine this circumstance in analysing our experiences of the past year, and the political tasks we should undertake in the new year.

The Prospects of International Revolution.

"Help from the Western European countries is coming. It is not coming as fast as we should like, but it is undoubtedly coming. I have already said that one of the greatest factors of the preceding period was the Second Congress of the Communist International. In comparison with last year, the international revolution has made considerable progress. Certainly the Communist International at its first Congress was nothing more than a "proclamation," but now it exists as an independent party in every country, and not only as the advance party. Communism has become the central question of the labour movement as a whole. In Germany, France and Italy, the Communist International has become the centre, not only of the Labour movement, but of the whole political life of the whole country. It was impossible to pick up a German or French newspaper last autumn without seeing discussions on Moscow and the Bolsheviks, and how the 21 conditions of entry into the Third International became the central question of the political life of these countries. This is our gain of which no one can deprive us. The international revolution is growing parallel with the growing acuteness of the economic crisis in Europe. But if we were to suggest that in a short time help were coming from that quarter in the shape of a proletarian revolution, we should be mad, and I am sure that nobody in this hall would make such a suggestion. We have learned to understand during the last three years that basing ourselves on an international revolution does no mean calculating on a definite date, and that the increasing rapidity of development may bring a revolution in the spring, or may not.

"For that reason, we must be able to base our activities in accordance with the class relations in our country and in other countries, in order to retain the dictatorship of the proletariat for a prolonged period, and in order, if only gradually, to extricate ourselves from the misfortune and crises which have come upon us. Only such an attitude can be sensible and correct.

Foreign Relations.

"I will now deal with the question of foreign relations. Up to the Ninth Congress of the Party, all our attention and all our efforts were directed towards securing a transition from a state of war with the capitalist countries, to relations of peace and trade. For that purpose we took various diplomatic measures, and proved victorious against undoubtedly great diplomats. When for example, the representatives of America or of the League of Nations proposed that we should, on certain conditions, cease military operations against Denikin and Koltchak, they thought they would place us in a difficult situation. They were deceived, however, and were compelled to withdraw their conditions, a fact which later was exposed in the diplomatic press and literature of the whole world. But we could not be satisfied merely with diplomatic victories. We must have real trading relations.

But only during last year were things approaching to a point where commercial relations were beginning to some extent to develop. The question of trading relations with England arose, but the war with Poland threw us back for a long period. England was already prepared to sign a trading agreement. The British bourgeoisie desired this agreement, but English Court circles were opposed to it and hampered it. The war with Poland postponed the agreement, with the result that the question has, even up till now, not been settled.

"In this connection, there is the question of concessions. During the past year we devoted more attention to this question than previously. On November 23rd, a decree was published by the Council of People's Commissaries, dealing with the question of concessions in a form most acceptable to foreign capitalists. By this decree we advanced towards establishing concession relations. The majority of the Central Committee accepted the point of view of the necessity of these concessions, and we will ask you to strengthen it by your authority. This is necessary, because we are unable by our own efforts to re-establish our ruined industry without the equipment and technical assistance from abroad. The mere importation of this equipment is not sufficient. We can give concessions on a much wider basis, in order to secure for ourselves the installation of equipment according to the last word in technique. In this manner we may be able to catch up, to some extent at least, to the modern production of other countries. Not a single person who soberly examines our present position can doubt that without this we will find ourselves in a very difficult position, and without the exertion of all our efforts, we cannot make headway. Negotiations with some of the largest trusts have already been commenced. Of course, these trusts, on their part, are not merely rendering us a service. They are doing this only for the sake of colossal profits. Modern Capitalism is not like the Capitalism of normal periods. It makes hundreds per cent. profits by taking advantage of its monopolist position in the world market. Of course, we shall have to pay very dearly. But we must improve our technique.

On February 1st, 1921, the Council of People's Commissaries decided to purchase abroad 18,500,000 poods of coal, and at that time our fuel crisis was already looming. We shall have to make yet greater concessions for the purpose of buying articles of use for the peasantry.

The Proletariat and the Peasantry.

"We must realise that in these critical conditions we cannot exist otherwise than by appealing to the village and get it to help the city population and to strengthen itself. We must remember that the bourgeoisie is making efforts to arouse the peasantry against the workers. Here we are facing political difficulties requiring that the ruling Communist Party and the leading elements of the proletariat should take the proper course.

"Then we must consider the economic questions involved. What is the meaning of the slogan of freedom of trade, which is now advanced by the petty-bourgeois elements? It is an indication of the fact that there are some difficulties in the relations between the proletariat and the small landowner, which we have not yet overcome. I refer to the attitude of the proletariat to the small property-holders in a country where the proletariat has been victorious and the proletarian revolution is developing, but where the proletariat makes up the minority of the population, and the majority is made up of petty-bourgeois elements. In a country like that, the proletariat must take upon itself the leading rôle in the transition of these petty property-holders into social, collective, and Communal labour. This is theoretically beyond any dispute, and, on this ground, we based a number of our legislative acts. But we know that legislative acts by themselves are not sufficient, that only actual achievements are counted, and that these achievements cannot be secured unless we have industry carried on on a large scale, and this industry affords such advantages as would make the small producer realise its advantages over individual production.

"This is the position which all Marxians and

Socialists always occupied in dealing with the Social Revolution and the problems resulting from it. The feature which is peculiar to Russia is the highest degree, is that we have here a proletariat making up the minority, and a considerable minority at that, of the population, while the overwhelming majority consists of the peasantry. Besides, the conditions under which we had to defend our revolution were of such a nature as to have made the solution of our problem extremely difficult. We were not in a position to demonstrate the advantages of large industry for that industry was ruined and dragging on a very precarious existence, and it could not be reconstructed without imposing various sacrifices on these very small farmers. We must increase production and so we need fuel, but for fuel we must resort to wood, and that means that we must count upon the peasant's horse. In critical times when there is a shortage of fodder, resulting in diminution of cattle, the peasant is compelled to render assistance to the Soviet Government for the sake of that large industry which as yet has given him nothing. This is the source of the economic difficulties we are in, and this is what compels us to give consideration to this period of transition from war to peaceful pursuits. During the war we had to say to the peasant: 'You must loan your corn to the Workers' and Peasants' Government, in order to enable it to extricate itself from the difficult position.' Now, in directing all our attention to work of reconstruction, we must bear in mind that we have to deal with the small farmer, the small property-owner, the small producer, who is working for the market, and who continues to do so till large industry has been established and has achieved a complete victory. But this triumph of large industry is impossible on the old basis. This is a matter which will take decades, and considering our lack of economic cohesion, perhaps even more. Till that time we will have to do business with this small producer as such, and the slogan of free trade will inevitably come to the front. Prompted by these considerations, the Central Committee decided to raise discussion on the question of substituting the corn requisitions by a definite tax and to place the question before the Congress to-day for your approval.

Corn Tax or Requisition.

"The question of tax or requisition came up in our legislation as early as the end of 1918. The tax law of December 30th, 1918, imposed upon the peasants, tax in kind, which was, however, not carried out. The law was accompanied by a number of instructions, but it was not applied. The conditions of war made it imperative that we take from the peasant all they could spare; but this measure is not at all suitable to peaceful conditions of agriculture. The peasant must have assurance that after having delivered a certain amount of grain to the State, he will have the rest left for his own household needs.

"The whole of our industry was saturated with the conditions of war.

"Taking this into consideration, we had to undertake the collection of a definite quantity of food without taking into consideration the effect it may have upon our industry as a whole. Now that we are transferring from questions of war to questions of peace, we begin to regard the tax in kind differently. We regard it now not only from the point of view of maintaining the State, but also from the point of view of maintaining the small farmers. We must strive to do the utmost in this direction. This is the most important question for us. We must give the peasant the possibility of a certain freedom in local trade, substitute requisitions by a tax in kind, order that the peasant may be better able to calculate his output in accordance with the tax. Of course, amidst the conditions which surround us, this thing is very difficult to realise, but we make the maximum of concession to provide the small producer with the opportunity of revealing his power. Up till now, we adapted ourselves to conditions of war, now we have to adapt ourselves to conditions of peace. This question came up before the Central Committee, and is closely connected with that of concessions—it is the question of transferring to a tax in kind under

LENIN'S REPORT AT TENTH CONGRESS.

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proletarian government. The proletarian government, by means of concessions, may secure for itself an alliance with the capitalist governments of the advanced countries. The improvement of our industry depends upon these alliances, without which we will not be able to proceed along the path towards Communism. On the other hand, in the transitional period, in a country with a predominance of peasantry, we must be able to give the maximum maintenance to the peasantry. We must secure the possibility for them to work freely. Our revolution is surrounded by capitalist countries. As long as we are in that position, we are compelled to seek extremely complicated relations. Crushed by the war, we could not concentrate our attention to establishing economic relations between the proletarian State which has large industry, and the peasant who, in its hands, and the small farmers who, for the time being have remained the same, and who cannot exist without small farming being supported by a certain amount of industry. I consider this one of the most important questions of economics and politics for the Soviet Government at the present moment. I consider this question politically summarises our work from the time we concluded the war period transferred last year to a state of peace. This period is so closely connected with difficulties which are so clearly reflected in the petty-bourgeois movement, that one must examine it

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THE CRISIS IN THE WORLD ECONOMIC SYSTEM.

By Eugene Varga

In the capitalist world there is an unprecedented economic crisis. Its intensity is explained by the fact that the normal periodical crisis of capitalist production in those countries where Capitalism is still going on, coincides with the permanent state of crisis in those countries where Capitalism is already broken up.

When we take a bird's-eye view of world economics, we can easily discern certain groups of countries which are in quite different stages of economic development (or stages of decay). These fall into the following groups:—

I.—Russia.

Here, Capitalism, although not entirely overcome, yet, in any case, already mastered. It still exists in the form of smuggling, and in the form of peasant trading, but above all in the ideology of the majority of the narrow-minded mass. Yet the essence of Capitalism, the immediate exploitation of the workers through private ownership of the means of production, stamped out. In the same way, anarchy in production, generally speaking, overcome, although production according to plan has not, as a matter of fact, been realised as yet.

II.—Those countries on the Continent of Europe which took part in the War.

Here, Capitalism is not in a position to recover from the effects of the war, and displays signs of rapid decay. Here, the bourgeoisie is incapable of assuring its wage-slaves an existence in the framework of the wage system. The position is this: the bourgeoisie no longer being supported by the workers, but it is still forced to support the workers. European workers are, however, by no means inclined to be content with that kind of life. They react by sabotage, continuous strikes, which certainly, though not leading to an improvement in their position, yet tend to hasten the end of Capitalism.

III.—England and the Neutral Countries of Europe.

Here the economic break-up is not yet so clearly marked, but everywhere there are signs of weakness. A sure symptom of feebleness is the fact that Britain, centuries the "ruler of the waves," is tacitly admitting that the United States and Japan, in three or four years' time, will have bigger fleets at their disposal than herself.

IV.—The United States of America and Japan.

These countries are experiencing the full flush of imperialism, great export of manufactures, investment capital abroad, rivalry in armaments, powerful national policy, serious preparations for the new World War.

V.—Border Countries of the World Economic System; South America, South Africa, Australia and some parts of Asia.

At the time of the war, thanks to transport difficulties, these countries were freed from the competition of the West European industry and quickly developed their own industry, entering then on the stage of Big Capital without, however, attaining as yet the stage of Imperialism.

Corresponding to the law of capitalist production, the varying economic position expresses itself most prominently in the standard of values. The once ruling English £ sterling has given place to the American dollar, and in connection with this, points a significant disruption of the rate of exchange in European values.



IF HE WANTS TO STOP—DROP HIM!

The present crisis is characterised by the fact that the normal crisis of over-production in those countries where Capitalism is still "healthy," coincide with the permanent crisis of the capitalist disruption in the countries of the second group. The crisis began in that country which had reached the highest capitalist development, namely, the United States of America. Already in the middle of last year, news began to come through that in that country there were vast stocks of unsaleable goods, etc. In the course of the last decade the United States were changing from an agrarian into an industrial country. The war helped that process enormously. From America the crisis spread to England, where its first symptoms were seen as early as the August of last year. From there it spread over the neutral states of Europe, thence to France, and developed itself, side by side with the permanent crisis of Central Europe, into an unexampled world crisis. The deeper causes of this must be sought in the contradictions of the capitalist system of production. The crisis of Capitalism as an order of society consists in the fact that the proletariat is not able or willing to be contented with its present position in life which, through the wastage of the war, has been pressed down to the lowest level. This forms the foundation of the Revolutionary movement in the broad proletarian masses. The latter could only be weakened through improvement in the position of the proletariat, but that, on the other hand, is only possible by way of raising production (the same problem as in Russia). For that reason, the capitalists, supported by the Social Democrats and Trade Union leaders, have raised the cry: "More Production."

In the countries of the second group, the breaking up of Capitalism and the revolutionising of the masses

is already so far progressed that the raising of production is a failure. If, after long negotiations, the workers agree to do overtime and production accordingly increases, then there is a block owing to lack of coal, waggons, etc., or the achieved result is cancelled by another big strike.

In the groups III and IV, they have succeeded, as a matter of fact, in raising production; the result, however, is no improvement in the position of the workers, but a terrible unemployment and closing down of works.

The apostles of the Raising of Production have here, once more, fallen into the error of applying to capitalist production that principle which would be "in general," correct. "In general," it is quite right that the raising of production must have as result the improvement of the position of the workers, and of all members of society. That is literally correct for the present-day Russia; but applied to anarchistic capitalist economics, this principle means over-production, economic crisis, unemployment. In capitalist society, an increase of production means nothing more than that each producer or producing group increases the output of their own products, without in the least inquiring whether these products are in demand.

The economic crisis, going out from America and spreading over the countries of Group III, is sharpened more than usually because:—

- 1.—Russia has nearly ceased to come in as a buyer;
- 2.—Even the countries of Group II do not come in as buyers, owing to their low rate of exchange which prevents them from satisfying the capitalists of Groups III and IV. The dollar costs in Poland 700 Polish marks; an English £ sterling, over 3,000 marks.

After the war, the strong groups, Groups III and IV, strove to raise the purchasing power of the Group II countries by loans, yet the sums placed at their disposal in this way were simply wasted, because the break-up of their system had already gone too far for them to be assisted in this way.

Finally, the countries of Group V, the border lands of the world economic system, are still less inclined to be buyers, for the simple reason that they are developing their own industry.

Thus the campaign for more production ends in a terrible economic crisis, and nothing characterises the position better than the coal crisis in England. All the capitalist-inspired Press at the time of the miners' strike, took the greatest trouble to move the workers to an agreement which should make the rate of pay depend on output. They succeeded, and in December, the output of coal had increased greatly; yet by January already, the coal pits were being closed down one after another. As might have been foreseen, too much coal had been produced.

Organised capital is striving to throw the whole burden of the crisis on to the working class. The fall in prices is only nominal, famous concerns are going bankrupt all the time, yet for that very reason unemployment is growing day by day. This crisis will therefore sharpen the feeling amongst the proletariat and will bring the economic crash from Central Europe to the neutral countries and to England.

THE FOOLISH FIFTY.

If fifty men did all the work
And gave the price to five,
And let these five make all the rules,
You'd say the fifty men were fools
Unfit to be alive.

And if you heard complaining cries
From fifty brawny men,
Blaming the five for graft and greed,
Injustice, cruelty, indeed—
What would you call them then?

Not by their own superior force
Do five on fifty lie,
But by election and assent,
And privilege and government—
Powers that fifty give.

If fifty men are really fools,
And five have all the brains,
The five must rule as now, we find;
But if the fifty have the mind—
Why don't they take the reins?

CHARLOTTE STETSON.

The Italian Communists will soon start the publication of a daily controlled by the E.C. of the Party. It will be called the "Quotidiano" (the "Daily").

OUR COMPETITION.

The closing date of our Pamphlet Competition has been postponed until April 30th.



OUR BOOKSHELF.

RUSSIA IN THE SHADOWS.

(By H. G. Wells. Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.)

This is undoubtedly a book for Communists, although a Communist, while reading it, may be kept in doubt as to Mr. Wells's real attitude towards the Bolsheviks. The great Revolution in Russia has had a very disturbing effect on the minds of many; so startling an upheaval has been too strong for certain types of advanced thinkers, and their mentality has received a staggering blow from the sheer unexpectedness of events and the bravery and audacity with which they have been tackled by the Bolshevik Government.

Reading Mr. Wells's book gives one the impression that this was the atmosphere in which he found himself; yet in spite of himself, in spite of his Western prejudices, the book on the whole is a remarkable tribute of praise to the simplicity of attitude, the creative ability and the directness and honesty of the Communist Party of Russia. So marked is this principal acknowledgement of the nobility of the ideals which are the underlying driving force of the revolution that all his criticisms may be said to resolve themselves into criticisms of minor points and side issues.

Neither is the book without some glaring contradictions and examples of small-minded carping. Mr. Wells the prophet falls out occasionally with Mr. Wells the journalist. If the Russian Revolution continues to be a success, or if it finally turns out to be a failure, he will be able to say, "I told you so," by referring to different parts of his book.

He will dilate on one page about the narrow-minded outlook of the Communists, their indifference to science, art, education and culture, and then on another he tells you of the extraordinary efforts made to salvage the art treasures (Maxim Gorky is the appointed minister for this department), the wonderful travelling libraries, the excellence of the schools and other mighty efforts to which we Communists may point with legitimate pride as things accomplished under difficulties unparalleled in history.

We do not share his tearful lament and his professional pity for the men of science in Russia to any great extent. They have been no worse treated than any other type of worker, and probably the awakened social conscience has taught the Bolsheviks that these men do not possess the exaggerated social value which Wells attributes to them. What, after all, have the scientific professional workers been under modern civilisation but the henchmen of the capitalist class? Have they not provided that ruling caste with its battleships, guns, bombs, and weapons of oppression and destruction? They have shown the master brewer how to make beer out of chemicals cheaper than from malt and hops; they have taught the textile boss how to make shoddy for the workers' clothing, and the wholesale food merchant how to preserve his doubtful fish and meat by doctoring it with boracic acid and other gentle poisons. Not for the good of the people, but for the profit of the money-

FORMING "DEFENCE UNITS."

In the event of a strike spreading over essential industries, evidently there is a sudden arrest in the ordinary routine of social life.

In the keenness of the struggle, those may be forgotten who are less able to protect themselves.

Simply to stop production, without taking steps to procure, for these dear to us, the elementary necessities of daily life, would be a one-sided policy, maybe, a fatal one.

The wealth-producers should form "Defence Units" for the protection of the young, of the enfeebled, of the expectant mother.

In every Metropolitan Borough and in every industrial centre, delegates from Trade Unions' Councils should assemble at the Town Hall and take steps for the allocation and the distribution of food and other necessities for the young, for the helpless women.

The formation of these "Defence Units" is a first necessity in the present hour. The Trade Unions' Councils, although at the present without great influence, are, we are inclined to think, the working-class body best fitted for the purpose. They represent various trades, and those locally, and are in a position to know the needs of the poor better than anybody else, both from the point of view of the producer and of the consumer.

Officialism and "voluntarism" are good for certain purposes. They are, the former too slow, the latter too amateurish, in time of crisis.

If you want goods moved about, you go to the carman and the railwayman. Goods are made by the workers in the factories, not by the shareholders at their annual meetings.

It is therefore to the experts in doing things—not talking about them—that the duty comes of forming Defence Units for the protection of life, of the life of the young: a thing far more sacred than property.

maker, has margarine been substituted for butter by these benefactors of humanity. Therefore, some of us besides the Bolsheviks of Russia may have reflected that peasants used to make clothes to wear and food fit to eat, quite successfully, before the era of scientific manufacture. The Bolsheviks have shown so much administrative acumen that before long scientific men in Russia will be employed in real service to the community instead of serving the private interests of profiteers. It is surely colouring the picture too pathetically also when Mr. Wells speaks of the musician Glazounoff's lack of music paper as one of the woes of the professional class under the Bolshevik regime when we recollect that the great Schubert could scarcely afford paper to write down his immortal harmonies. Class sympathy will go to great lengths if he can score against real Socialism, as witness Mr. Wells's delight that Chalippin the great baritone refuses to sing unless he and his family can enjoy much greater comforts and luxuries than the average worker, artist, actor or technician. It would redound to the fame and credit of this great singer if he gave his services on the same terms as his suffering fellow-countrymen, seeing that the Bolshevik administration is doing its utmost to wilen the artists' appeal by bringing the best music, opera, drama, art and literature to the whole mass of the workers. What nobler effort has ever been made towards a better and more beautiful life for all humanity?

Wells has a low opinion of the Russian peasant on account of his superstitions, his illiteracy, his worship and kissing of images. It would not be unreasonable for a Russian to retort, "Are you English any different in the mass?" "Does not your British public devour the spiritualistic articles of the Rev. Vale Owen and crowd round 'haunted houses' and place 'mascots' on its motor-cars?"

Wells, the investigator of education, has to admit in the latter part of his book the excellence of the schools both in quality and extent, though his earlier statements are coloured antagonistically by his prejudice against Marxism and all its devotees. He is not a humourist, but the story of his visit to a school where the children were so intimately acquainted with the great works of H. G. Wells appeals to any one with a sense of humour as a delightful instance of "leg-pulling."

When he attempts to be funny at the expense of Karl Marx's beard he is a failure. It is so obviously dislike of Marx which produces this cheap and trivial attempt at satire. Ruskin, Tolstoi, Browning, Brahms and a host of other intellectuals were bearded, and they do not seem to have annoyed Mr. Wells at all; one wonders therefore if Karl Marx's beard came in useful as a hair-mattress for padding this somewhat scanty book (the last page is 153 and blanks between the chapters are counted in this number) and the price is six shillings.

A frequent question put by the simple-minded Bolshevik is: "When will the Social Revolution begin in England?" Our author puts this to the reader as a sample of their ignorance of international affairs, but on pp. 54 and 55 occur such sentences as: "The state of affairs we have seen in Russia is only the intensification and completion of the state of affairs towards which Britain was drifting in 1918"; and "For all I know, Western Europe may still be drifting even now towards a parallel crash." "Russia fell into its present miseries through the world-war and the moral and intellectual insufficiency of its ruling and wealthy people (as our own British State—as presently even the American State—may fall)."

On pp. 76 and 77 Mr. Wells can scarcely contain himself for glee that Marx's theory of the Social Revolution is all wrong, that it should not have begun in Russia but in the more highly-developed

capitalist countries like England, France and Germany. It was the clash of capitalistic interests in the West and the international character of capitalism which caused the breakdown of mutual trade and economic interdependence in which Russia shared. French and British capital had been invested in Russia to such a degree that Russia could be included in the list of Capitalist States. That the economic breakdown happened sooner in Russia is no great proof of the falsity of Marx's predictions, as on Wells's own showing a similar breakdown was on its way in England or France if the war had continued somewhat longer, or as it may even now arrive.

On p. 48 we are told that "In regard to the intellectual life of the community one discovers that Marxist Communism is without plans and without ideas. Marxist Communism has always been a theory of revolution, a theory not merely lacking in creative and constructive ideas, but hostile to creative and constructive ideas. Every Communist orator has been trained to condemn 'Utopianism,' that is to say has been trained to condemn intelligent planning."

After all this we are told what wonderful things these Marxists Communists have done, and are doing, in creative planning and intelligent reconstruction. Space forbids further quotation, but if carefully read the book will be found to be, in spite of its pages of feeble criticism, a remarkable tribute to the triumph of the Social Revolution, the truth of Marx's prophecies and the immense abilities of the Bolsheviks. Long live the Russian Revolution and its noble humanitarian ideals!

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