

Workers' Dreadnought

ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

PATRIOTIC IRELAND.

An Open Letter to British Trades Unionists.

By F. O'BRIEN.

Dear Fellow Workers,

During the War you were urged by the Press, the Government, your employers and your Labour and Trade Union leaders to be patriotic. You took your thinking orders with scarcely a backward thought.

You were also told by these worthies that you must stand up for small nations and admire their patriotism. You were told that war in defence of nationality was a glorious thing: you were told that you must support a fight to a finish in defence of your nationality, and to protect the small nationalities from the big. You obediently fought for little Belgium and little Serbia, and for Alsace-Lorraine and Schleswig-Holstein, and their alleged great longing to be freed from German rule.

We Communists told you that nationality is really a very secondary matter and that the capitalist exploitation of labour knows no boundaries. We said that the war was a capitalist war, in which the workers were merely the exploited tools, and that your capitalist bosses would use the German workers to blackleg you as soon as British capitalism had won the war on Germany.

But you British Trade Unionists refused to listen to us. You preferred to echo the opinions of Lloyd George and Northcliffe, and of Henderson, Clynes and Thomas. You agreed with them that the war was a glorious war, and that to be patriotic is the only human virtue.

We told you, plainly and often, that in your professed belief in patriotism, you were simply repeating the parrot-cries of the political wire-pullers without thinking of yourselves at all. You would by no means admit that, at the time, but here some of you are now giving most valuable utterance to sentiments precisely opposite from those you used to shout, and you have changed merely because the newspapers and your leaders have told you to.

To-day some of you say it is quite the proper thing for a great Empire to use force to make itself, or to maintain itself as the greatest Empire in the world.

To aspire to world hegemony was a sin (as some of you did not know it meant world control)—the greatest of all sins—the Kaiser was to be hung for it; you were ready to give your lives—to get him hung for it.

But now Lloyd George tells you that the sin was only a sin because the Kaiser was a German; it was a deadly sin for him to want his empire to be the greatest in the world; but it is quite legitimate for Lloyd George and King George to want their empire to be the greatest.

As for the small nationalities, it was plucky for little Belgium and little Serbia, and Alsace-Lorraine, and Schleswig-Holstein to put up a fight for their nationality—but Ireland, that is another matter! Ireland is putting up a fight against the "benefits of British rule."

If you were really thinking for yourselves during the war, British Trades Unionists, if you are thinking for yourselves now, if you really believed in the virtue of patriotism and the glory of fighting for small nationality, you must part company with Lloyd George and Northcliffe now. You must part company with them because they expect you to be dishonest enough to change your views, just because it is not the German Empire that happens to be the dominant Great Empire in question, but your Empire, or rather the Empire of Lloyd George and King George—for, of course, you are only workers in the Empire—you do not own any part of it.

Some of you do not agree with that, fellow Trades Unionists, but many of you do. That is the kind of thing you cheer for when Mr. Thomas says it. It really seems that, for once, you have found an article you can safely show to the secretary of your Trade Union without offending him. The secretary of your Union will agree with this; Mr. Thomas, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Clynes will all agree, and the proof of this you will say is that these gentlemen have parted company with Lloyd George and Northcliffe, they have come out of the Coalition Government and they are now in opposition to the Government—except, of course, at moments of "National crisis" like a gas strike, or a coal strike, or where "increased production" is concerned.

On the question of Ireland your Trades Union leaders are definitely in opposition to the Govern-

"Daily Herald" Makes a Mistake.

The "Daily Herald" says that "Labour's Policy" is that of "offering Ireland anything it wanted up to and inclusive of an independent republic." But that is not correct. When the "Daily Herald" says "Labour" in this connection, it means, I suppose, the Labour Party. Evidently the writer of the "Herald" article has not read the Labour Party scheme, which I explained last week. The Labour Party scheme proposes not to offer an independent republic, with Dominion Home Rule, with agreements, in which the British Government would be able to dictate what terms it pleased, on Police, Customs, Posts, and many other questions.

Labour Leaders Turn Pacifist.

Nevertheless, the Labour Party is opposed to the Government on the Irish question, but your Labour leaders are opposed also to the Irish. They do not like this fighting. They hate all violence. They

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told you, British Trades Unionists, to "fight to a finish," to give even the last man and the last shilling, even the Trades Union rules, and privileges, to win the war. But now they have turned quite squeamish, the very mention of the bloodshed they lately thought so glorious, now shocks them. And this is true even of such redoubtable warriors as Colonel Will Thorne. It is only the pacifist "Daily Herald" that says: "We have appealed over and over again to the Irish to hold their hands and abstain from violence." The "Herald" did not say that to the British Government during the war with Germany; it did not even say it to little Belgium, or little Serbia. It said, our soldiers are fighting gloriously, but let the efforts of the Generals to overcome Germany be reinforced by the efforts of the diplomats. If we can overcome Germany and secure all our objects by negotiations, let us negotiate for peace without laying down our arms.

Your Labour leaders, as you will remember, most of them disagreed with the "Daily Herald." "Peace by negotiation" was anathema to them. All talk of a truce they regarded as high treason—even the "Herald" dared not mention such a thing, yet now, whilst the Labour leaders ask for Irish votes on the plea that they are defending the Irish cause, they ask the Irish to accept "A Truce of God" without any conditions, and denounce them for using violence.

On Monday, November 23rd, your Labour leaders read in their morning papers that on Sunday the Irish had killed fourteen Government servants, and injured six, and that the British Government agents had fired on a crowd of 15,000 people, killing 12 and injuring 75 men, women and children. Your British Labour leaders at once passed a long resolution censuring the Irish, and postponed their visit to Ireland to show their disapproval of Irish behaviour.

This resolution of the British Labour leaders said:

"This meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party expresses its deep horror of the brutal assassination of British subjects, civilian and military, during the past week-end . . . condemns acts of violence committed against agents of the British Government and others, under whatever provocation . . . it calls upon the leaders of the Sinn Fein movement to repudiate the outrages."

The Labour leaders did not talk like that during the war; we never heard them speak of the killing of the Germans on the battle-front as "brutal outrage," we never heard of their making a protest against the shooting of German spies caught in London.

If Belgian people during the occupation had killed fourteen German officers, would you British Trades

Unionists have denounced the affair as a brutal outrage? You would not. Your leaders would have called it a brave and gallant action.

But your leaders will tell you British Trades Unionists that the comparison is absurd. Yet Sir Hamar Greenwood, the British Government representative, has plainly told us that Britain is at war with Ireland. On November 24th he declared that the British military are justified in burning Irish creameries, because they are sometimes used as an ambush. This was the case, he alleged, at Bally Macellegot; therefore, he insisted: "as an act of war they were justified in burning a portion of it down."

The Irish have always claimed that their struggle is a war with a foreign enemy which occupies their country. The British Government has hitherto insisted there is no war in Ireland, but only disorder and insurrection.

Now the British Government admits a state of war, not only by this declaration of Hamar Greenwood, but by the decision to intern the troops of the Irish Republican Army. But the British Government has never accorded the Irish combatants the status to which they would be entitled in fighting a foreign enemy.

James Conolly, a wounded prisoner, would have been held till the end of the war and then released, had he been a German. Because he was an Irishman, he was shot as a felon with fifteen other companions in arms. The British Labour Party made no protest against these executions.

You are following your leaders, British Trades Unionists, when you say, as some of you do, that it is unpardonable for the Irish to carry their war into England. They are preparing Downing Street and the Houses of Parliament as though to withstand a siege.

The Irish do not like a war in their country any more than you do, and all sections of the Irish population, even those who are strictly non-combatant, are being obliged to endure conditions whilst the Irish war has been restricted to the other side of the Irish Channel, and you, British Trades Unionists, and the rest of the British public, have not troubled much about it. Those who are conducting the Irish side of the Anglo-Irish war are now determined to wake up John Bull at last, to make him feel that his peace and comfort are involved in the Irish war, and to see that he does not doze off again until it is settled.

The Labour Party protests that reprisals or aggression by the Irish will handicap the Labour Party's efforts to secure a settlement of the Irish question, but the Labour Party took no interest in the Irish question at all until bloodshed and murder and the sacking of houses had become the habitual order of the day in Ireland. If everything were quiet over there to-day, there would be no question of any settlement, nor would the Labour Party concern itself with the matter.

During the war, you British Trades Unionists were enthusiastic nationalists; now that you may be asked to sympathise with Irish nationalism, some of you are internationalists. You have never shown any solidarity with the Irish workers as good internationalists should, it must be pointed out. If you want to be good internationalists, you should study the Communist methods of settling the Irish question:—

(1) Ireland to have the status of an independent nation.

(2) Irish Soviets of delegates from workers in all industries, and land workers, to legislate for and administer Irish affairs, landlordism and capitalism being abolished, and common ownership of the land and means of production, distribution and exchange established.

(3) Any questions in dispute between the two nations to be submitted to arbitration by Soviet Russia.

Some of you, British Trades Unionists, will tell us that these proposals are Utopian. We Communists are compelled to answer that though these proposals are difficult of accomplishment, they are the only proposals that will meet the case.

These proposals would not seem Utopian if British Trades Unionists were determined to set up the Soviets in Britain.

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THE WORKER AND HIS RELATION TO CAPITALISM.

By J. Johnson.

That evils are prevalent in present-day society is obvious even to its dullest member. They are glaring. Unemployment, insanitary conditions everywhere, disease, crime, prostitution, etc. We have speeches by the thousand from Parliament, pulpits, and orators of all descriptions dwelling upon them. Of course we must not forget the Press. They (the newspapers), too, have something to say. What is more, they all have remedies.

Remedies.

Without troubling about finding out the cause for the above evils, some persons, well disposed and otherwise, offer quick remedies and you are told if you only give them a trial all will be well. One of the most amusing is that for unemployment. Most people know it by now. What was it? "Speed up production and the unemployed will be absorbed into industry." Seeing that the speeding up of production causes unemployment, one can only marvel at the audacity of all the quick doctors who gave that prescription. Tuberculosis is rife in the land. "All right," says Lloyd George. "The nation will build sanatoria for these people." What about the insanitary conditions that breed tuberculosis? No reply to that question.

Reforms.

We also have an army of reformers, such as Labour legislators and Trade Union leaders, tinkering with the system. For these people there is no class war. The Labour M.P.s are going to legislate poverty out of existence. The I.L.P. advocates are going to buy the capitalist class out. And, seeing that the capitalist class comprise about one-ninth of the population, and actually own nine-eighths of the wealth, we must admire the pluck and determination of our I.L.P. friends.

In reference to Trade Unions, one has only to look at the various books of rules to find there is the condemnation. It is states, quite clearly in many of them, that the workers and masters should come together in harmony and for co-operation. Many of the Trade Union leaders try to carry this idea out (see Smillie on output, and the opportunists, Bracon and Hartsburns, in their latest moves). Then, again, the present Trade Union Movement is a reformist movement, and only aims, at best, for an increase in wages, or, more seldom, a decrease in working hours. Incidentally, I would like to call attention to the fact that thousands of miners have not received their full amount of strike pay yet. This will go to prove that the miners can never hope to win by relying on their strike pay and doing nothing. The same applies to other workers. Something more than strike pay is necessary to beat our unscrupulous capitalists. Let us see what that something is. First of all, we had best get down to the root of the existing evils.

Causes of the Evils Under Capitalism.

To find the causes of the evil we must examine the system under which we live—Capitalism. Karl Marx, the founder of scientific Socialism, who put Socialism on a scientific basis and gave an interpretation to political economy that has never been refuted, proved without doubt that the evils that exist are inseparable from capitalism, are inherent to it. He tears aside the veil and lays bare the true position of the worker in capitalist society. The workers' status in capitalist society is one of the fundamentals of the social problem that confronts us. Marx proved scientifically that the worker today is only a commodity, only functions as a commodity, is bought and sold on the market as such, subject to the same conditions of supply and demand, and his value determined like that of all other commodities. There is one difference: he is a value-creating commodity. He has brains and muscles which the capitalist buys in order to become richer. Let us quote Marx: "In order to be able to extract value from the consumption of a commodity, our friend, Moneybags, must be so lucky as to find, within the sphere of circulation, in the market, a commodity, whose use-value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value, whose actual consumption, therefore, is itself an embodi-

ment of labour, and consequently a creation of value. The possessor of money does find on the market such a special commodity in capacity for labour or labour-power."—Capital, chapter 6. This special commodity is the worker. He owns his labour power; he cannot be divorced from it. When the capitalist buys this labour-power, he buys the worker who possesses it. Let us now examine more closely this peculiar commodity, labour power," says Marx. "Like all others it has a value.

The value of labour power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction of this special article. For his maintenance the worker requires a given quantity of the means of subsistence. Therefore the labour-time requisite for the production of labour-power reduces itself to that necessary for the production of those means in the workshop. No value is created by exchange of commodities. All value is created in the workshop, mine or shipyard, etc., and that is where Moneybags appropriates it. To sum up, the worker is engaged by the capitalist, for the specific purpose of being robbed of the fruits of his labour. Under capitalism the worker is a commodity, something less than man or woman, and a commodity he is doomed to be while the blight of capitalism lasts. We find in studying the capitalist system of production that the working day is divided, broadly speaking, into two parts. The worker applies his labour power until he has produced his own value as a commodity. He does not finish work at this point—he goes on. If it takes four hours in which to do this, and the length of the working day is eight hours, then for four hours the worker labours for nothing, because the result is the surplus-value appropriated by Moneybags. In this division of the working day we have the cause of the class struggle; the workers ever striving for increased wages to retain their commodity value, and the capitalist class ever striving for profit. Profit and wages, coming from the same source, the labour of the worker, it can clearly be seen that the workers, ever seeking an increase, causes strife, while the constantly improved methods of production throw back the worker to his former position. Thus we have class antagonism.

Reformist Failures.

We now can more easily understand why reform movements are of necessity bound to be failures. They are unscientific. Based upon fallacies, they tragically endeavour to cope with modern capitalism, with the inevitable result that capitalism comes out of every struggle triumphant. For if, for instance, a trade union manages to secure a rise in wages, the process that goes on under capitalism behind the producer's back, so to speak, puts our old friend Moneybags back to his old position again. When hours of labour are reduced, the process going on, and labour-saving devices introduced, brings Moneybags again on top. An increase of wages or a decrease in hours does not emancipate the worker from his commodity status. Indeed, if any worker takes the trouble to review his position over a number of years, he will find, that in spite of all the wage increases, he is not one whit better off. Relatively he is worse now than ever he has been. Trade Unions, as at present constituted, are hopeless failures.

The State.

It, too, is hopeless so far as the workers are concerned. It is the executive committee of the capitalist class. The State only exists because class antagonisms manifest themselves, and are irreconcilable. As Lenin says, in his book "The State and Revolution"—"It is precisely on this most important and fundamental point that distortions of Marxism arise along two main lines. On the one hand, the middle class (bourgeois), and particularly the lower middle class (petty bourgeois), ideologists, are compelled by the pressure of indisputable historical facts to recognise that the State only exists where there are class antagonisms and class struggles," correct? Marx in such a way as to make it appear that the State is an organ for the reconciliation of classes. According to Marx, the State can neither arise nor maintain itself if a reconciliation of classes is possible. . . . According to Marx, the State is the organ of class domination, the organ of oppression of one class by another. Its aim is the creation of order which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between the classes. . . . On the other hand, the distortion of Marx by the Kautsky school is far more subtle. "Theoretically," there is no denial that the State is the organ of class domination or that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable, but what is forgotten or overlooked is this: If the State is the product of the irreconcilable character of class antagonisms, if it is a force standing above society and "separating itself gradually from it," then it is clear that the liberation of the oppressed classes is impossible without a violent revolution and without the destruction of the machinery of State power, which has been created by the governing class and in which this "separation" is embodied.

So that if we study the Marxian solution of the social problem, we find that the only function the State can perform is that of "perpetuating the oppression" of the wage-earners. Therefore, La-

bour M.P.'s, or any other kind of M.P., no matter what his label may be, cannot serve the working-class by entering the national gas-house. Then the question arises, what must be done in order that the workers be emancipated from their slavery, from their commodity status.

The Emancipation of the Workers.

The emancipation of the workers can only be accomplished by themselves. "He who would be free, he himself must strike the blow," and the workers must unite and confront the capitalist class as their avowed enemy. They must be in clear-cut opposition to capitalism and all its bulwarks, and its legal structures. This involves definite anti-parliamentary action. The capitalist system is in its dying struggles. It has had its day and served its purpose, but just as other systems died out, so must capitalism. We must admit it is pretty vigorous to be in a dying condition, but its vigour is only its brute force intensified, and only proves the desperate position it is in. Capitalism is a social system of mismanagement and must be replaced by a system which will be conducive to the well-being of the whole of the human race. The proletariat is the only class that can take this responsibility upon its shoulders. It is the only class fitted to do so, and in accomplishing this fulfils its historic mission. The Communist Party is the only party that can lead the workers to emancipation, for it is the advance guard of the workers, and only takes within its ranks those who fight consciously for the application of the Communist programme. It is definitely anti-parliamentary, and has a legal structure of its own, organised on the Soviet principle. The duty of the Communist Party is to form a network of groups in Great Britain, and link up, forming a nucleus of the future working-class organisation. Up to the revolution the Communist Party must get the workers to organise in one Union, which embraces the entire industries of the country. We learn much from the Russian Revolution, and a study of Comrades Lenin and Trotsky's works, not forgetting other Russian revolutionaries' works, will do much to enlighten us as to what ought to be done. One thing is certain, the Capitalist State must be abolished, that is, the "bourgeois dictatorship" must be abolished, and in its place we of necessity must have the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat." This Dictatorship is necessary, for a strict guard must be kept on the workers' interests, and any attempt on the part of the dispossessed bourgeois to rear its head in any shape or form must be ruthlessly suppressed. Thus will private ownership be abolished and in its place social ownership established.

Good education work is being done in this direction by the Central Labour College, and wherever classes are established, all workers who can should attend. Marxian Economics and Industrial History are taught, and the pupil benefits much by the study of these subjects in that he will be more able to understand his to-day degraded position as a commodity, and know the history of the struggles of the working-class up to the present day. Having acquired this knowledge, his sense of the injustice of his position will surely spur him to end the accursed system of Capitalism and all the miseries it entails.

NEWS FROM INDIA.

Reports from India show that the first All-India Trades Union Congress, held at Bombay under the Presidency of Lala Lajpat Rai, was a great success. Lajpat Rai vigorously denounced "the oppression, degradation, and injustices" under which Indians suffered, and contrasted the lavishness with which English members of the Indian Civil Service are paid with the mean wages paid by the Government to the postal workers. He declared that Indians had come to the conclusion that they could place no more faith in British statesmanship, and must rely upon themselves.

Colonel and Mrs. Wedgwood were present. Col. Wedgwood appealed for the formation of well-organised Trades Unions and the avoidance of wild, loosely-prepared strikes.

A resolution was carried condemning the attitude of the employers towards the Bombay strikers, and a deputation was sent to the Governor of Bombay asking him to intervene. Mr. Baptistia, one of the Bombay National leaders, denounced the unsympathetic attitude of the employers and of the Government.

A Standing Committee was appointed to manage the affairs of the Congress during the coming year, and to further the cause of the workers, until a permanent constitution for the Trade Union movement is adopted.

The wave of industrial unrest in India is still spreading, and 4,600 workers on the great Indian Peninsula Railway have struck work, and there is also a big strike among the mill-workers of Madras. The printers of the "Korachi Daily Gazette" have also struck, with the result that the paper is not appearing. The Bombay correspondent of the "Times," states that the employers are assuming "a more stiff-necked attitude."

Trafalgar Square Demonstration.

The National Executive is now actively making arrangements for a gigantic Trafalgar Square demonstration on Sunday, December 12th, to protest against these arrests and savage sentences. All supporters of Soviet Russia are asked to prepare to rally on this occasion.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia and the World Revolution. By N. BUKHARIN.

COMMUNISM IN THE DOMAINS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

Our critics in the "Socialist" camp, often censure the Soviet Government on the ground that the "official Communism" of the Bolsheviks is nothing more than a communism of distribution. The Soviet power, say these critics, has merely effected a universal dividing-up; it has shared out housing accommodation, furniture, clothing, food, etc. On the other hand, the chief task of true Communism, should be the organisation of production. The Bolsheviks, we are told, think chiefly of organising distribution. By degrees, they transform the proletariat, which has hitherto been a class of producers, into a non-working class (idle owing to lack of fuel and other raw materials), pensioned by the State. The proletariat becomes a social stratum resembling the proletariat of classical Rome, supported by doles.

How much truth is there in all this, and how much falsehood? What should be the relationship, from the Marxist outlook, between the Communism of production and the Communism of distribution.

It is obviously impossible to deny that the Soviet Government has taken various steps in the direction of expropriation, not merely of the means of production, but likewise of the means of distribution. Typical instances of such measures are the installation of the workers and their organisations in bourgeois dwellings; and rationing by class, that is to say, the assigning of larger food rations to members of the proletariat. But only one who is absolutely ignorant of the specific conditions in which the International Revolution is developing could possibly maintain that these measures are unjust. Marxism is founded upon the theory of the increase of productive forces in human society. As we have shown in the previous article, it does not follow that we need dread a transient decline in the forces of production, a decline which is absolutely inevitable in the course of the Revolution. By parity of reasoning, our chief aim, the organisation of production, may require, as a stage in its fulfilment, the communism of distribution to which our critics refer.

The Revolution, as a historical fact, has originated amidst the overwhelming devastation resulting from the Imperialist war. As everyone knows, this devastation, has in large part, taken the form of the destruction of enormous reserves of productive forces. Now what do these productive forces, which are the foundation of all progress, represent in the world of concrete reality? In part they are the means of production, and in part, they are the labour power of the workers. The productive forces do not consist of machines merely, but, in addition, they consist of the workers, the working class. Marx has shown more than once, that in contemporary society, the proletariat is the most important of all the forces of production. It is easy to understand that if the Revolution, at its outset, inevitably involves a still further depression in the forces of production, we must do all that is humanly possible to safeguard, to maintain, to preserve from utter ruin, this most important element in the forces of production, the working class itself. The preservation of the working class is an indispensable condition for the reconstruction of the productive apparatus of society.

The bourgeois endeavours to throw the whole cost of the war upon the working-class. In relation to the powers of the workers, the economic system of the bourgeoisie is what the Germans call "Raubwirtschaft," — robber economy. But, as a matter of course, a Proletarian Government must make titanic efforts to maintain the power of the workers intact. During the period of unparalleled impoverishment, in which our resources have been so terribly reduced, there is only one way in which this task can be performed. The proletariat must be placed in a privileged economic position,

or must at least be enabled to live quite as well as the hungry bourgeois. All that is possible must be done for the proletariat in order to make up for the prevailing insufficiency of food, clothing and shelter. If, for a brief period, it should prove impossible to continue the productive supply of food, clothing, and shelter (and the impossibility, in existing circumstances, is obvious), there remains only one alternative. The objects of distribution must be re-allotted among the various classes. There must be a compulsory expropriation of these articles, and a proper supply of the proletariat must be organised. In short, we must practise the "Communism of Distribution."

In practising this Communism of distribution, our ultimate aim is to promote the development of the forces of production. In other words, during this period of impoverishment and famine, the so-called Communism of distribution is a necessary stage on the way to "true" Communism, on the way to productive Communism.

As a matter of course, the lower middle class must not be affected by this expropriation. It is equally a matter of course that in the colossal upheaval of the Revolution, there have been thousands of instances in which this rule has been broken. Yet no one but a pedant would "repute the Revolution" simply because the Revolution had not been achieved with that perfect orderliness we might desiderate.

To sum up: the concrete conditions of our time, the widespread impoverishment that exists, compel us to expropriate the means of distribution, no less than the means of production. The working class is the fundamental force of production, and the expropriation of the means of distribution is essential to the preservation of the working class.

II.

THE PROLETARIAN AND MILITARIST CHARACTER OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION.

We come at length to a series of questions which are closely interconnected. We are accused of a variety of sins. It is said that we make an improper use of the power of our Party, that we are "oligarchs"; we are terrorists; we practise Socialism of a militarist type. (The last accusation is quaint in the mouth of Imperialist and Royalist Socialists; etc.) We need not waste time over the abusive epithets or other labels employed by our opponents. Nevertheless, we do not for a moment deny that our apparatus is rigidly centralised; that our policy towards the bourgeoisie and towards the parties of the compromising Socialists is repressive in character; that the organisation of our own Party, as a ruling Party which exercises a dictatorship through the Soviets, is of a militarist type. To the pedant, these things may appear monstrous crimes; but they must be sacred laws of action for every revolutionist who has to work under the conditions imposed by circumstances upon our Party.

At this very moment, the Russian proletariat is the object (I use Churchill's own words), of a concentric attack on the part of fourteen states. But if we reckon up all the states which are at war with us, directly or indirectly, the number of these brigand organisations is considerably larger. If we superadd the "national" and declared counter-revolution, we arrive at a force of considerable magnitude. In these circumstances, the Soviet Republic is perforce an entrenched camp, and the dictatorship of the proletariat must necessarily take the form of a proletarian and militarist dictatorship. It would be impossible for us to countenance any disintegrating elements within the sphere of our rule; we are compelled to maintain military discipline throughout the country and in all departments of the administration. This explains everything. Those among the intellectuals who are swayed by foolish sentimentality, those in whom the severities of the great struggle arouse

a shudder, those who are filled with fear mingled with disgust, are unremittent in their attacks against the proletarian regime—for the simple reason that they are utterly unable to understand the conditions of the struggle, and the active will which the historical conditions demand of us. The best illustration of the need for such a regime is furnished by the organisation of our own Party. Everyone of its members considers himself mobilised for active service. At the first summons of our Central Committee, the member of our Party, wherever he may be, must go to the post assigned to him. He must leave his family and make his way to the front, rifle on shoulder; or he must do observation work from an aeroplane over the enemy lines; or he must visit one of the enemy countries; or must give up nights and days to whatever he is ordered to undertake. In these respects, there is no difference between military and civil life.

For instance, in order to increase the productivity of labour, the members of our Party work overtime, or work on holidays, forming special Communist detachments; they load wood, unload trucks, labour in factories and workshops, setting an example of a new fraternal discipline. Nothing of the kind has ever been known before, and nothing of the kind is possible as yet outside Russia. Here it is absolutely necessary. And for every violation of this Party discipline there are strict and extremely disagreeable penalties.

From these considerations we may draw a number of conclusions. It is obvious that we cannot give a free hand to an "opposition" which, in the situation that now obtains, could within twenty-four hours transform itself into a counter-revolution. Such an opposition must be ruthlessly crushed.

Compromise here would only result in the internal disorganisation of the whole apparatus. Free controversy, in conditions such as now prevail in Russia, would not lead to the "truth" but to the victory of the counter-revolution.

In like manner, at the front, where a pre-determined plan has to be carried out, and where rapid action is essential, we cannot tolerate "discussion" of the Parliamentary type. Mutatis mutandis, the same reasoning applies to many other branches of our activity, applies because the Soviet Republic is an entrenched camp.

But will a dictatorship of this sort be permanently requisite? Certainly not. The acuteness of its form depends upon the situation of the Soviet Republic in relation to the outer world.

Just as the terrorist policy of the Montagnards was justified by the position of the French Republic at home and abroad (a fact which Kautsky, "the historian," would do well to call to mind), so the Russian Soviet power, if it had failed to set up a regime intolerant of weakened individuals, would have been an opportunist lamb, and would long ere this have been torn to pieces by the Imperialist wolf.

Before the War, the comparison of the fighting proletariat to an army aroused no criticism. We used to speak of the "proletarian army," of the "soldiers of the revolution," and so on. Yet now that the movement has come when in stern reality, and no longer merely on paper, we have to be the soldiers of the revolution, many of these sometime soldiers prove to be deserters and strike-breakers, while not a few (nay, the majority as far as the Social-Democrats are concerned) actually find their way into the camp of our foes.

It is perfectly clear that as soon as the pressure from without is relieved, as may and should result from the international revolution, the forms of the dictatorship will be "mitigated."

Ultimately, when our enemies have been rendered powerless once for all, when they have mingled with the ranks of the workers, these enemies will become citizens. They will acquire equal rights with the workers of proletarian status. That status itself will then cease to exist, being insensibly replaced by a Communist society which knows nothing of status or class.

TWO "BRICKIES" AND A DINNER-HOUR TALK.

By JOHN STEELE.

"Hello, Bill, got yer pipe agoin'. What about them big Labour men and their 'dekerations.' Do you say they get them 'ere titles to mislead us." "That is so, Bert. You see, as things are today, society is made up of two classes: the Boss class and we who are called the working-class, and who are at war with them—an economic war called the class-war."

that you toil on for eight hours every day: six of these go to the boss as profit. He does not work. He lives in a big house. He owns a 'luxury' motor-car. He travels all over the world. He thoroughly enjoys life. He goes to Parliament, and to church of a Sunday. He owns the bricks, and that is why he can force you to work and keep him in comfort. He pays the 'Empire Union' speakers to hold the ballot-box before your eyes, that you might not think about the bricks."

BETWEEN OURSELVES.

By L. A. MOTLER.

I was watching Herbert. And Herbert was working. It is not often that I get the pleasure of seeing other people at work, whilst myself hangs round with a bag and a question-list as long as anything. He was picking up small bits of metal from a series of small boxes or sections in a large shaft case. He put these in a peculiar tool or container, which he held in his left hand."

THE REVOLT AGAINST THE LABOUR BUREAUCRACY.

We have often pointed out the manner in which the Workers' Movement in this country is the easy prey of a whole hierarchy of grafters. We have also shown how "Graft" strengthens the self-regarding emotions, and weakens the other-regarding emotions in the evolution of character. To-day we will examine the causes of the widespread revolt against the Trade Union leaders, the surge of which becomes ever more menacing and widespread."

NATIONALISATION IN GERMANY.

Immediate and complete nationalisation of coal mines is recommended by the majority report of the special commission appointed to investigate the question of socialisation of German industries, made public last week. All the members of the commission agreed that the elimination of capitalist profit in the coal-mining industry is indispensable. An imperial coal council, which would have complete control over the industry and which would turn over all profits to the State, is recommended in the majority report. Mines would deliver their entire product to the Council, which would arrange deliveries and fix selling costs. It would have power to open, close or buy mines."

COMMUNIST PARTY (Bow & Poplar Branches).

A DANCE

In aid of the "DREADNOUGHT" FUND will be held at CROWN HALL (40, Redman's Road, Mile End), on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 1920, Doors open at 6 p.m. Dancing from 6.50-12. Tickets, 1s. 6d. each can be obtained from the 'Workers' Dreadnought' office, 152, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

A Monthly for Proletarians. THE DECEMBER

PLEBS

includes articles on:—H. G. Wells on Marxism; Engels; Socialist Classics (the 18th Brumaire); Geographical Footnotes to Current History (Ireland); etc., etc., and Ten-Minutes' Talks with New Students; Students' Page, Book Reviews, Correspondence, etc. 6d. monthly (post paid, 7½d.), from all Labour bookshops, or from Plebs, 11a, Pennywell Road, Earls Court, S.W.5.

MALTHUSIANISM BIRTH-CONTROL METHODS

by PROFESSOR G. HARDY. Translated from the 46th French Edition. 39 Illustrations. Price 3s. 6d. post free. "Professor Hardy spares no pains in pointing out why parental prudence would be productive of so much good in ameliorating the conditions under which the poor live. His arguments are concise, clear and conclusive. He then shows the latest and most hygienic methods known to science which can be practised by even the poorest couples. In fact, the work is a perfect encyclopedia on Neo-Malthusianism and should be found in every household and read by all married people and those about to marry."

The book is only supplied to persons over 21 years of age. State age when ordering from J. W. GOTT, Secretary Liberator League, 61, Dorset Street, Bradford.

SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS—1d. a Word.

ADVERTISER, qualified ACCOUNTANT, fluent Spanish, will do anything, or anyone, anywhere. MUST OBTAIN FUNDS.—Write (in confidence), "Disabled, c/o Workers' Dreadnought." RUSSIAN CLASS (in Olive Beamish's Office), 93, Bishopsgate, on Fridays, 7-8 p.m. For terms apply Mrs. BOUVIER, 32, Mount Pleasant Road, Lewisham. GRAMOPHONES FOR SALE, splendid Xmas presents; first-class quality; new; good Records.—Apply, Workers' Dreadnought Office. FURNISHED BEDROOM and SITTING ROOM (piano), ground floor, suitable for two; with or without attendance.—32, Mount Pleasant Road, Lewisham. Good train, tram, and 'bus service. EVERYONE interested in the question of ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM should read "THE FINISH REVOLUTION," by O. V. Kuusinen, post free 3½d., and an "OPEN LETTER TO LENIN," post free 1½d. To be obtained from the Literature Secretary, 400, Old Ford Road, London, E. 8.

NOW READY. THE REVOLUTION TO-MORROW.

By L. A. MOTLER. Copies of this pamphlet can be obtained from L. A. Motler, 47, Crowndale Road, London, N.W.1, and from the "Workers' Dreadnought" Office, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. Price 2d. Post free 3d.

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S NOTES.

The Cardiff Conference.

By the time these notes are in print, Group Secretaries will be in possession of the final agenda for this Conference. There is every prospect of a valuable and fruitful Conference.

Two More Imprisonments.

Comrade R. V. Harvey, Secretary of the Birmingham Branch, and Comrade John Steele, Secretary of the Hyde Park International Branch, were arrested on Thursday, November 25th, and Friday, November 26th, respectively, and sentenced by the Birmingham Bench to four months' hard labour for speeches delivered in the Bull Ring, Birmingham, the previous week. The savagery of these sentences and the serious position in which the dependents of our comrades find themselves calls for the establishment of a Soviet Workers' Defence Committee without further delay, embracing all organisations supporting the Third International, so that the right of free speech on Communism may be established, funds provided to fight cases in the courts and to conduct appeals where advisable, and maintenance provided for the dependents of those victims of the British White Terror. This time it is our own organisation which has been hit. Another time it may be our Maiden Lane comrades or the Scottish comrades. The National Executive is making arrangements to approach all kindred organisations so that this defence committee may be properly constituted and set up without delay. Meanwhile immediate funds are needed for the support of the wife and child of our Comrade Steele, and the dependents of Comrade Harvey. Trade Union branches who have at heart the welfare of Soviet Russia, and the propagation of the Soviet ideals in this country, are especially asked to make donations to this fund from their incidental funds. Cheques and orders should be sent temporarily to Edgar T. Whitehead, 8, Sinclair Gardens, W. 14, and will be acknowledged in these columns, all such donations being ultimately incorporated in the funds of the Defence Committee.

Do the Theses and Statutes Insist on Revolutionary Parliamentarism?

In order to fully consider this very vital question, the answer to which will certainly have a great bearing on our Cardiff Conference, let us take the extract from the thesis which brings the point specially home.

"In this way, while recognising as a general rule the necessity of participating in the elections to the central parliament, and the institutions of local self-government, as well as in the work of such institutions, the Communist Party must decide the question concretely, according to the specific conditions of the given moment. Boycotting the elections of the Parliament, or leaving the Parliament, is permissible, chiefly when there is a possibility for an immediate transition to an armed fight for power."

I claim that this paragraph answers the query at the head of this article, and answers it in an emphatic negative. Boycotting the elections of parliament is permissible chiefly, etc., etc. It is then also permissible under some other condition besides the "chiefly." I am claiming it is then permissible for Britain at this juncture. And I am claiming it is permissible on the ground of the very special conditions which happen to exist in this country and which do not exist in any other of the countries which have parties affiliated to the Third International. Let us briefly review these special conditions. Firstly we read (page 47) that the Communist campaign must be carried "by the entire mass of the party members, not by the leaders alone."

A united Communist Party for Britain next year may number something like six thousand members. This gives an average of something like ten party members per parliamentary constituency. There is certainly going to be a fearful debacle when these ten members advance in mass formation to capture the parliamentary seat! Even in those fortunate constituencies which possess something more than the average, even up to one hundred or one hundred and fifty party members, nothing very alarming would happen in a mass tactic at the election.

Secondly comes the point of whether the parliamentary tactic is important. It may be unimportant, and is unimportant from its viewpoint on the progress of the class-war. But it is going to be very important on the question of the development of the Communist Party here.

Parliamentary elections are very costly things, and such work is going to make a very important hole in party finance. Waste of good gold, which might be better used. To speak of a tactic as "unimportant," when possibly three-fourths of party finance, three-fourths of party energy, and attention are swallowed up by it, is certainly not very far-seeing.

Thirdly, and this is a point which I do not think has ever been urged before in considering this question, we have to consider the extraordinary traditional British pacifism in regard to all political struggles. This pacifism is largely the result of Manchester Liberalism. I do not recollect a single instance in this country where the "fighting" for a parliamentary seat has resulted in anything more alarming than a rotten egg. I do not recall a single other country where political struggles are not carried on in very different fashion. Here, we are so instilled with the idea that the "weapon" is the "vote," and that "votes" are the only real "force," that to combat this extraordinary delusion of mixing up the shadow with the substance, it is necessary to make it clear everywhere that a vote

(Continued at bottom of column 2.)

COMMUNIST PARTY

British Section of the Third International.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP.—The acceptance of the following points: (1) The complete overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Communism. (2) The Class struggle. (3) The Dictatorship of the Proletariat. (4) The Soviet or Revolutionary Workers' Council system. (5) Affiliation to the Third International. (6) Refusal to engage in Parliamentary Action. (7) Non-affiliation to the Labour Party.

MINIMUM WEEKLY SUBSCRIPTION: Threepence. **Entry Fee:** One Shilling.

Provisional Secretary: EDGAR T. WHITEHEAD, 8, Sinclair Gardens, West Kensington, London, W. 14. Branches' notes and list of meetings, sent in for publication, should reach the Secretary not later than first post Thursday morning.—All articles and news matter (other than Branches' notes) to be sent to: 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, London, E. 3, and marked: "The Editor, The Workers' Dreadnought." The Editor, The Workers' Dreadnought may be obtained for sale at 3/- per quire (26 copies). Usual Trade rates for wholesale and retail newspapers.

All Members should make a special effort to see that our paper is on sale and posters displayed at local newsagents, trade union branches, in the workshop and at all public meetings in their districts.

BRANCH NOTES.

Hammersmith.

Thursday's meeting at the Grove was very well attended. Our special thanks are due to Comrade McCannell for coming to speak at very short notice. Branch meetings are held Fridays at 8 p.m., at 152, Goldhawk Road, Shepherd's Bush, and Comrade Secretary Birch will be glad to have the names of further recruits to keep the banner of Communism flying in Hammersmith. Letters to Minnie Birch, 10, South Street, King Street, Hammersmith, W. 6.

Birmingham.

The Secretary, Comrade Robert Harvey, is in Birmingham Gaol undergoing a sentence of four months' hard labour. It is alleged that he urged the workers to seize the factories and workshops.

Swansea.

This Branch is holding well together, and gets in a good deal of propaganda. All Swansea Communists are asked to communicate with the Secretary, Comrade E. Penny, 60, Alexandra Road, Swansea. It is not enough to sympathise with Soviet Russia or to believe in Soviet Russia, it is necessary to work for the establishment of a Soviet Britain.

Poplar.

Comrade Walker, Branch Secretary, handed in her resignation on Thursday last, because she wants to give her whole time to propaganda and building up the organisation. Comrade Dunne was elected Secretary in her stead, and there is no doubt Poplar Branch has the right man in the right place.

Organising the Unemployed.

It was decided, owing to the demand of the local unemployed ex-servicemen and others, to call a public meeting in the Town Hall, for the purpose of organising the unemployed. Poplar unemployed will soon be well to the front and take their stand by their comrades in Shoreditch, Islington, Camberwell and Hackney. Will speakers desiring to help Comrade Walker communicate with her at 158, East India Dock Road, Poplar, E. 14. "Wherever there are ten proletarians, there should be a nucleus for a branch of the Communist Party." With these words from the thesis as our guide, we cannot go wrong. All Poplar rebels desiring to work for Communism are asked to communicate with Comrade Dunne, 20, Railway Street, Poplar, E. 14.

Hyde Park International.

The Secretary, Comrade John Steele, is now undergoing four months' hard labour in Birmingham Gaol. His crime is that he is alleged to have echoed the sentences of Comrade Malone's speech at the Albert Hall. Comrade E. Thomas, 75, Marylands Road, Maida Vale, is acting as Secretary during our Comrade's enforced absence.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

Porth Comrades 12s, Hammersmith Comrades 9s 4d, Exeter Comrades 6s 8d, D. Roodzant 10s, Staines Comrades 6s 8d, Poplar Comrades £1, Swansea Comrades 7s.

is not a weapon, and that it is not by a fight with votes that the Communist International expects to carry through the world revolution. I claim that this could be best instilled by "repudiating" the vote, at least for some years, until clear thinking on this subject resulted. If we fight with votes, innumerable workers are bound to be deluded into the belief that we expect to "win" with votes, or that "votes" are an essential weapon, and, as all the Labour Party fakirs are assiduously fostering the same delusion, the effect on the proletariat of our political antics will be very misleading. "Action," "Mass Action," and "Direct Action" are to be the battle-cries of Communist propaganda, and not "Votes," "Mass Votes," and "Direct Votes."

The great task before the United British Communist Party will be organisation. Wherever there are ten proletarians to get a Communist nucleus, a group must be formed. In place of six thousand members, we must aim at sixty thousand members, and then six hundred thousand. The right sort of members will not be attracted by a "voting" programme. Until the sixty thousand mark is reached, at least, all voting should be taboo and all energies and funds go to perfecting and building up the organisation. As to the question of whether the thesis binds Britain to revolutionary parliamentarism, I answer an emphatic NO. The drafters of the thesis neither understood the peculiar British psychology, the peculiar British pacifism, nor the impossibilities of revolutionary parliamentarism here nearly so well as we Communists on the spot understand these matters. Let us get down to the realities of the organisation of force. Let the Labour Party carry on with the organisation of mere votes. It is the crucial difference between us.

LONDON MEETINGS: OUTDOOR.

Whitechapel.

Osborne Street, Sundays, at 11.45 a.m.

Poplar.

Dock Gates, Sundays, at 7 p.m.

Camberwell.

Saturdays, at Hanover Park, Rye Lane, at 7.30. Sundays, Peckham Rye, at 11 a.m.

Hammersmith.

The Grove. Every Thursday at 8 p.m.

Willesden.

Manor Park Road, Fridays.

Birmingham.

Bull Ring. Every Friday at 7.30. Every Sunday at 7 p.m.

Barking.

Near Barking Station. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Communist speakers.

INDOOR BRANCH MEETINGS.

Soho International.

58, Old Compton Street, Soho, W. Every Wednesday at 8.30 p.m. prompt.

Bow.

400, Old Ford Road. Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Poplar.

20, Railway Street. Every Thursday at 8 p.m.

Camberwell.

16, Peckham Road, Mondays, at 7.45 p.m.

Hull.

Argyle House, Anlaby Road. Every Wednesday night at 8 p.m.

Hammersmith.

Branch meetings held Fridays, at 8 p.m., at 154, Goldhawk Road, Shepherd's Bush, W.

Barking.

Thursdays, at 8 p.m. At "Glenhurst," Ripplie Road, Barking, E.

Stepney.

Branch meetings held Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at the I.S.C., 28, East Road, City Road, N. 1.

HYDE PARK PROPAGANDA GROUP.

Sundays, at 11.30 a.m. Prince of Wales, Harrow Rd., Paddington.

Sundays, from 4 p.m. till 10 p.m. Hyde Park, Marble Arch.

Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Garrould's Corner, Edgware Road.

Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m. Prince of Wales, Harrow Road.

Saturdays, 6 p.m. till 10 p.m. Hyde Park, Marble Arch.

IN CONFERENCE.

Communist Comrades of South Wales.

Districts represented:—Merthyr (H. Griffiths), Dowlais (J. S. Williams), Cardiff (Pope), Tonyrefail (A. Harding), Porth and District (T. Thomas, F. Burt, and W. O. Jones), Peuriweaber (Phil. Thomas), Mardy (A. Horner), Ferndale (Midwinter and Jones), Ogmere Vale (E. J. Howell), Port Talbot (D. Benetta), Abercynon (J. Dicks), Barry (J. Jones).

Fraternal delegates from the Communist Party of Great Britain (A. E. Cook, J. Warren, and Chappell). Nominated to the chair (T. J. Watkins).

The question of unity was discussed at length, and it was resolved:—

- (1) That this Conference, representing South Wales' revolutionary element, can only attain unity by having local autonomy in given local area.
- (2) That we recommend all bodies represented to attend the Conference on December 4th and support the above resolution as the only method of unity, and force capitalism to get out.
- (3) That the Secretary write both Communist parties asking why the South Wales Comrades have not been invited to sit on the unity executive at Manchester.

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN RUSSIA.

At the third session of the Moscow Central Executive Committee, the Commissar of Public Instruction has given the details of the steady increase of primary schools. The number has grown from 55,000 in 1911, and 73,000 in 1918, to 87,000 in 1920. The schools are attended by five million children.

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