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The Dissolution of the German Reichstag.

By Th. Neubauer (Berlin).

The bold action of the Communist Reichstag fraction at the commencement of the sitting of the Reichstag on September 12, has illuminated like a flash of lightning the political situation in Germany by revealing the class antagonisms and also the differences in the camp of the bourgeoisie.

The Papen Government and also all parties, with the exception of the Communists, did not wish this precipitation of the situation. The national socialists, only two hours previously, when the Communist deputy Comrade Torgler gave notice in the Standing Orders Committee of the Reichstag of the intended action of the Communist fraction, earnestly warned him against this, because before it could become effective the Government would reply to the motion with the immediate dissolution of the Reichstag. The social democrats also did not wish a sharpening of the situation; they had prepared a motion to postpone the coming into force of the last emergency order until the Reichstag had adopted a final decision.

But all these parties, from Hitler to Wels—although boiling with rage on account of the Communist action—were nevertheless compelled to refrain from raising any objection

to the motion of the Communists. For they did not venture, out of fear of the anger of the masses, openly to oppose the cancellation of Papen's monstrous emergency decree. This is the expression of the extremely accentuated class antagonisms in Germany.

The national socialists and especially the Centre were in a very awkward dilemma. They had hoped that during the debate on the expected speech of the Reichs Chancellor they would find an opportunity of inducing the Reichs-President to give his consent to a reformation of the Government. The Communist motion thwarted these intentions and manoeuvres of the Centre and the national socialists and still further intensified the conflict between these parties and the Government.

The Papen Government itself has been ruthlessly exposed in Germany and abroad by the course of events in the Reichstag. They wanted in any case to prevent a vote being taken which was bound to show that they had nothing behind them in Parliament but the small party of the German nationalists, numbering 32 out of over 600 deputies. It will be of little use to the Government that they deny the validity of the vote (simultaneously with the motion for the cancellation of the

emergency order a vote was taken on the Communist vote of no-confidence). Neither in Germany nor abroad will anybody bother his head much about these subtle points of law. On the other hand, it will be noted that of the 550 deputies who were present, only 32 voted for the government whilst 513 voted against and 5 abstained from voting.

Reichs Chancellor von Papen, three hours after this vote in the Reichstag, saw fit to deliver a speech over the wireless in which he announced that the Government regarded their position as unshaken and that they would continue their policy with a firm hand. But the position of the Government is severely shaken in the eyes of the broad masses of the people—a fact which no words, however brave, can conceal.

The German bourgeoisie are furious because, as a result of this intensification of the political antagonisms, the whole action to revive economy (even if it consists only in the creation of new illusions) has been brought to nought right at the commencement. It is to be expected that the captains of industry and bank magnates will give vent to their whole discontent with the national socialist party, whom they hold responsible for this turn of events.

But this development of the situation in Germany will make an exceedingly strong expression also abroad. The public abroad must record as an important fact that it was possible for the Communist Party, by such a bold step, to upset completely all the combinations of the Government and of all other parties. The pessimism with which the international financial bourgeoisie view the political development in Germany will be increased by the sudden aggravation of the situation. It will be asked: Is it possible to conduct negotiations with this government, which has the whole of the mass of the people so much against it that none of the parties ventured, out of fear of the masses, to oppose the Communist motion?

It is to be assumed that neither the national socialists nor the Centre nor the social democrats, when they gave way in face of the advance of the Communists, clearly foresaw the domestic and foreign-political consequences of this development. The attitude of the national socialist Reichstag President Göhring shows this: after reading the order dissolving the Reichstag (which he declared invalid) he announced a fresh meeting of the Reichstag on the following day. This must be regarded, however, as an open challenge to the government. The agenda of this new meeting was to be decided at a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee. This meeting of the Standing Orders Committee did not take place, because in the meantime the social democracy had adopted the standpoint of the Government that the dissolution of the Reichstag was legally valid. At a meeting of the party leaders convened later, however, the national socialist Reichstag president climbed down by declaring he would not summon the Reichstag before the legal question had been decided. It is highly probable that the national socialists, under the pressure of the capitalists who finance them, will do everything to heal the breach with the Papen Cabinet.

Will the Cabinet prescribe new elections? In reply to this question the Reichs Minister for the Interior von Gayl stated at a press reception on Monday evening, that the elections would only take place if law and order prevail. Thus observation of the provisions of the Constitution is made dependent on certain conditions! In his wireless speech the Reichs Chancellor announced a reform of the Constitution, including a raising of the voting age and an alteration of the relations between the Reich and Prussia.

It looks therefore as if Papen had not yet given up hope of being able to force the Hitler party to accept a compromise. The Reichs Chancellor has again given to understand that he recognises the "great services" rendered by Hitler in having restored to honour the national idea, and that he will continue along this path. Great as the annoyance of the Government at the behaviour of the national socialists may be, the Cabinet does not wish yet to break irrevocably with the Hitler party.

The social democracy has again played a downright despicable role. At first it adopted the standpoint of the Government in regard to the dissolution. It has now commenced a new manoeuvre in order to divert the working masses from the extra-Parliamentary fight against wage reductions: it has proclaimed a referendum, which shall bring

about the cancellation of Papen's emergency decree by "democratic means". As it would take at least six months to carry out the referendum, and as during this time the emergency orders would remain in force, it means that the German bourgeoisie would be supported by the social democratic party in crushing the working class.

The Communist Party has scored a big success with its motion in the Reichstag. It has frustrated the manoeuvres of the Centre and of the national socialists, just as it has thwarted the intentions of the Papen Cabinet. It has thereby clearly placed before the working masses the question of the extra-Parliamentary fight. It is true, that the Communist Party of Germany will now have to reckon with the sharpest measures of oppression on the part of the Government, but this will not prevent its penetration into the masses.

POLITICS

The Government Changes in Poland.

By G. Rada (Warsaw).

Two members of the fascist government in Poland, the Finance Minister **Jan Pilsudski**, brother of the dictator, and the Minister for Transport **Kühn** have handed in their resignations.

It was known to everybody that the only recommendation the late Finance Minister had was that he was the brother of Marshal Pilsudski. His task was, with the name of Pilsudski, to create confidence in the financial policy of fascism. But the awe-inspiring name of Pilsudski proved of no avail against the economic crisis and its financial-economic results.

The chief Statistical Office records a further decline of production. The number of enterprises working had declined by September 1st to 2211, as compared with 2541 last year; the number of enterprises closed down increased in the same period from 618 to 962. The number of workers employed in the enterprises has declined from 259,830 to 212,943. These data, however, do not prevent the same Statistical Office from making out that there has been a decline in unemployment.

The strike struggle of the working class is thwarting at every step the robber-campaign of the capitalists against wages and salaries. The economic and also the political difficulties of fascism are thereby increased every day. The misery of the working masses in town and country, which beggars description, and their increasing resistance to the tax demands render it impossible to record any successes in regard to obtaining revenue from taxation. The police are being more and more employed in order to collect the taxes from the working population.

Whilst the revenue is continually declining, the chief outgoings for military and the police are not only not reduced but are being continually increased. The last two budget years, which concluded with a deficit (62 million deficit for the year 1930/31 and 225 million for the year 1931/32), are now followed by the new budget year the first four months of which show a deficit of 125 million Zloty. The national-democratic "Gazeta Warszawskaya" calculates that the total deficit of the present financial year (1932/33) will amount to between 325 and 400 million Zloty.

The process of reducing the stocks of gold and foreign bills of the Polish bank is now approaching the legal limit prescribed for covering the Note circulation. Among the decisive circles of the bourgeoisie there is an increasing demand for inflation. The "Ilustrowany Kurjer Codzienny", the most widely read paper in the government camp, in its issue of 9th September last published a leading article by the financial editor Ferdinand Zweig, entitled: "The biggest world Powers dethrone gold. End of Deflation the cause of the revival on the Stock-Exchange." The author does not openly state the conclusions to be drawn, but they are easy to guess: inflation in Poland. Hitherto it was chiefly the advocates of inflation in the social fascist "Robotnik" who, after the collapse of the English pound, praised their English comrade MacDonald for having "overthrown the golden calf", and demanded that the same thing be done in Poland.

At this difficult moment Jan Pilsudski deemed it expedient to resign from the position of Finance Minister. Jan Pilsudski's successor, Professor **Zavadski**, who represents the interests of the "Leviathan" (Federation of big industry, high finance and big agrarians), will take care that the offensive of fascism against the standard of living of the working class, the wage reductions and dismissals of State employees and workers and the taxation robbery will be tremendously intensified.

The resignation of Kühn, Minister for Transport, is regarded by the organ of the "Leviathan", "Kuryer Polski", as the fulfilment of the demand of the French armament firm **Schneider-Creuzot**. Schneider-Creuzot, according to paragraph 24 of the Franco-Polish agreement for the construction of the railway between Upper Silesia and Gdynia, has the controlling voice in the Franco-Polish company which possesses the concession for the construction of this railway. This concessionary company has not issued the second instalment of the loan which according to the agreement was to have been issued on May 1st last, with the result that the construction of this railway line, which is of such military strategic importance to fascism, has been held up. Schneider-Creuzot now makes further advances of money conditional on the whole of the orders being placed with its branch undertaking, the Huta Bankova in Dombrova. In this connection the name of the State Secretary engineer **Gallot**, the former director of the French mining and smelting company in the Dombrova basin, is mentioned.

Intensified offensive against the working people, increased war-preparations in close contact with the French armament industry, that is the meaning of the changes in the Polish government.

The Coming Parliamentary Elections in Sweden.

By Ragnar Okeson.

The elections to the second Chamber of the Swedish Parliament will be held on the 17th and 18th September next.

Since the last election, in the Autumn of 1928, the situation in Sweden, the land of "idyllic conditions", has considerably deteriorated. At that time the country was still experiencing good times; Swedish big industry was earning huge profits for the share-holders, although thousands of workers had been rendered unemployed as a result of ruthless rationalisation, and Ivar Kreuger the match king was at the height of his power. Kreuger is now dead; his world-wide concern has collapsed, resulting in enormous losses for the country and prosperity has now given place to a severe crisis. The Communist Party states in its election Manifesto that "the election campaign this year will be fought out in the midst of a tremendous starvation-offensive against the standard of living of the working masses".

In Sweden there are 400,000 unemployed and workers on short-time—an enormous number for a country in which the total number of all wage earners amounts to only 1,100,000. In numerous branches of industry over half of the workers are unemployed, the stone-quarrying industrie is practically at a standstill. There is no regular unemployment benefit, so that the greater part of the unemployed are delivered over to starvation; about 15,000 are engaged on unemployment relief work, for which they are paid starvation wages. The social democratic party, which has been in office three times since 1918, refuses, just like the bourgeois parties, to introduce compulsory unemployment insurance. In numerous localities the unemployed are obliged by constant demonstrations to force the recalcitrant authorities to pay out trifling sums by way of relief or provide a little soup. In the capital town, where the social democracy has the absolute majority on the town council, the unemployed are treated in a particularly brutal manner; their demonstrations for bread and work are savagely dispersed by mounted police.

The antagonisms in the bourgeois-social democratic camp and the fight among the parties for place and power have revealed a monstrous corruption of the Parliamentary system and of its representatives. The press had to record that all parties, from the extreme Rights to the "Left" Kilbom group of Brandlerist renegades, who after the death of Kreuger granted a moratorium of 250 million crowns to the match trust, have for years been bribed by Kreuger. The renegades

in the Kilbom party received 135,000 crowns for their anti-Soviet and anti-Communist propaganda; the social democrats received huge sums by indirect means, a fact which the central committee of the party had to admit in a communiqué. Some of their leaders received "loans". Even the former Prime Minister Lindman admitted that his party and its youth organisation received 12,000 crowns from Kreuger.

The prime Minister Ekman, the all-powerful leader of the Liberal party, was bribed by Kreuger. Shortly afterwards, on October 23 last year, the Reichsbank granted a loan of 40 million crowns to Kreuger, but only after the personal intervention of the Prime Minister Ekman.

On February 13, 1932, Ekman received a further 50,000 crowns on the telegraphic instructions of Kreuger who was in America at that time, and already on February 23, Kreuger received this money back in the form of a loan of 2 million crowns from the national bank.

The objective pre-conditions for an advance by the Communist Party of Sweden at the elections are very favourable owing to the persistent crisis and the growing mistrust of the masses towards the corrupt parliamentary parties. In the course of the last year or so the Party has carried out numerous mass actions, whereby it has gained the confidence of the broad masses. The Party has also grown considerably of late; it now has about 16,000 members and is working much better than under the opportunist leadership of Kilbom before the split.

Unlike all the other parties, the Communist Party has little financial means and is still suffering considerably as a result of the split by the opportunist renegades in the year 1929. At that time the renegades, with the aid of the police, stole the central organ of the party "Folket Dagblad", so that the members had to make enormous sacrifices in order to create a new organ. Another circumstance which has an adverse effect is the hypocritical treacherous work of the Kilbom party, which still calls itself the Communist Party of Sweden and thereby creates confusion in the ranks of the workers. They make use of every victory of the Communist parties abroad and then constantly speak of the "progress of our comrades". When, however, there is a setback or a failure, the "comrades" then become an "ultra-Left Communist sect".

The Kilbom party is conducting a demagogic sham fight against the social democracy, with which however it has concluded an election pact, whereby in numerous constituencies the votes of the Kilbom party are to help secure a seat for the social democrats. On the other hand, the superfluous votes polled by the social democrats will enable some renegades to obtain seats. These parties, which are supposed to be fighting one another, grant each other huge sums of money for election propaganda at the trade union meetings whilst they prevent any support being rendered to the Communist Party by the trade unions.

The vote qualifying age is 23 years, a circumstance constituting a very serious handicap to the Communist Party, as by this means 180,000 young people, mostly radical workers, are deprived of the right to vote. 15,000 unemployed workers engaged on relief work are likewise disenfranchised as they can only vote in the district in which they permanently reside.

Before the split in the year 1929, the Party had eight members in Parliament. These, however, were all expelled with Kilbom, so that since that time the Party has had no representative in Parliament.

In its election Manifesto the Communist Party points to the devastating effects of the crisis and sets forth a comprehensive programme for providing work and bread. It demands full pay for workers on short time, the seven-hour day with no wage reductions, reduction of rents, tenants' protection and compulsory unemployment benefit, as well as the provision of work for the unemployed. It demands for the working peasants the cancellation of bank debts and mortgage debts, lowering of ground rents and customs duties, as well as confiscation of the lands belonging to the Churches and big landowners.

The anti-Communist incitement of the bourgeois and social democratic press as well as the persecution by the government, which is prosecuting numerous Communist editors and causing prospective candidates of the Party to be arrested for no reason whatever, show that the ruling class realise that only the Communist Party is the real leader of the proletarian emancipation movement.

The Second Chamber Elections in Denmark.

The elections to the Danish Landsting were held on September 6. This Landsting plays a role similar to that of the House of Lords in England, i. e. it serves as a brake on the more democratic part of Parliament, the so-called Folksting. The composition of the Landsting, however, differs from that of the English House of Lords. Half of its members are appointed for life, the other half are elected for eight years "by the people". It would be more correct to say they are elected by a part of the people, as at this election only those who have passed the age of 35 and have not received any poor-law relief are allowed to vote. At a time of prolonged crisis this means that nearly one half of the wage earners were debarred from taking part in the election, as about 30 per cent of the industrial workers are unemployed, and after being out of work for a long time they of course prefer to lose their right to vote than forego poor law relief.

The social democrats, who have been in the government for three years, received 232,000 votes, the Radical Party 49,000, the peasant party 121,000, the Conservative People's party 125,000 and the Communist Party 3534. Owing to the reactionary provisions of the election law, the Communist Party was unable to put forward candidates in all constituencies. It was the first time that it took part in the election to the Landsting, so that there exist no figures with which we can compare the present results. At the elections to the Folksting in the year 1929, for which the voting age is 25 years, the Communist Party polled 1910 votes in the capital town as compared with 3117 votes at the present election. But this comparison does not give a real picture of the situation, as the ideological influence of the Communist Party has increased very much this year and is much greater than the above figures indicate. This is also to be seen from the gigantic demonstrations which the Party organised in the last few months and which in Copenhagen alone were attended by tens of thousands.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Growing Strike Front in Lancashire.

By R. Bishop (London).

The strike front of the Lancashire weavers remains unshaken in spite of the efforts of the employers, the Government and the trade union bureaucracy to bring about a resumption of work before the 17th instant, the date when the spinners are due to come out on strike. The struggle has rallied working class support behind it to a greater extent than in any dispute since the workers replied by the General Strike to the attack on the miners.

So much so that the **Trade Union Congress** which was held on September 11th in **Newcastle** proposed to start a national fund for the strikers and opened it by a donation of £1,000. A committee was appointed at the Congress to consider ways and means of raising cash in support. It aims at raising £500,000 and has already received promises from organisations to the extent of £15,000.

The tremendous mass pressure of the workers has undoubtedly forced this gesture, inside the conference as well as out, because despite the efforts of the bureaucracy to stifle the voice of the rank and file at this year's Congress it has made itself heard to some effect.

The mass pressure of the rank and file compelled **Naesmith**, the weavers secretary, to praise, in the Congress, the fighting spirit of the workers, yet in Burnley and the other strike towns his influence and that of his fellow-bureaucrats has been directed to persuading the strikers to be "orderly and peaceful". The mass pickets which have roused the spirit of the strikers to a high level and have forced the employers to close numerous mills, have been carried through in face of intense opposition from the bureaucracy and not with their assistance.

Throughout the Congress proceedings, the General Council spokesmen have carefully abstained from saying a word in condemnation of wage-cuts in the cotton industry, they have merely declared that "trade union conditions must

be safeguarded". Thus while the strikers are out on the streets fighting the cuts, the union leadership makes a gesture of support the better to betray the struggle.

Whilst the reformists talk of support, their official organ, the "**Daily Herald**", wages a raging campaign for intervention and the Labour Party stands by, not committing itself officially, but one of its leading members, **Joe Compton**, telegraphs to the King to get his Government to intervene, and this in its turn is given tremendous prominence in the "**Daily Herald**".

The history of the strike so far has been one long record of tremendous gains won by rank and file determination. For three years the weavers have fought stubbornly against more-ooms per weaver, whilst their officials have tried to find a formula on which they could get acceptance of this principle put across. Then the employers came forward with a demand for wage-cuts. The weavers rejected all thought of wage-cuts, but the reformist leadership of the unions accepted cuts in principle, but negotiated for a reduction of their extent. Then an overwhelming ballot vote was taken for strike action. Again the reformists manoeuvred for delay, in the hope that in the interim the Burnley and Earby weavers, who were already out, would be beaten back to work and that this would sow demoralisation in the ranks of the workers.

But instead of waiting for the official strike call to mature, the workers in Preston, Haslingden, Bolton and other centres came out at once. Thus when the official strike call fell due, the response was magnificent and has been extending every day.

Now the officials dare no longer call a halt to the struggle openly, and the National Government has been called in. The Minister of Labour has sent a letter to the employers' organisation and to the cotton unions, suggesting that the two should come together as soon as practicable.

Throughout Lancashire wherever the strikers come together in mass meetings they are emphatically repudiating all talk of mediation or arbitration. In **Blackburn** on September 7th a mass meeting of several thousand workers passed the following resolution without one dissident:

"This mass meeting of Blackburn strikers strongly protests against the Government intervention in the present dispute. We also protest against strike pay being taken into consideration under the Means Test by the Public Assistance Committee."

Similar resolutions have been passed at mass meetings in Nelson, Preston, and other places. In order to express their views yet more effectively the workers everywhere are demanding special union meetings, which the reformist officials are doing their utmost to avoid holding. In **Blackburn** a mass meeting elected a deputation of trade unionists to take the following resolution to the union offices while the committee was sitting:

"We demand that the quarterly meeting of the Weavers Union shall be held as per rule, and that it shall be held in the Public Hall, so that as many strikers as possible can attend to express their views in relation to the strike."

When the deputation, escorted by a demonstration several thousand strong, arrived at the union office, they were informed they could not be seen, and when they protested a force of police was called upon to eject them.

The influence of the **Communist Party** and the **Minority Movement** which was at the beginning largely a propagandist one is rapidly growing. Their demand that the issues shall be: No Wage Cuts; return to the 1919 Collective agreement; reinstatement of all victimised weavers and no more-ooms is the demand of the strikers themselves, and the latter are responding in overwhelming numbers to the campaign for requisitioned union meetings, intensified mass picketing and the rejection of arbitration and Government mediation.

The first big step towards translating this mass support into an organised form was made at **Burnley** on September 7th, where a mass conference of rank and file strikers was held. The conference was called by a strikers' committee elected from Burnley, Preston, Earby, Haslingden and Blackburn, in each of which towns independent strike organisations under revolutionary leadership, exist.

At this Conference a fighting Manifesto was adopted denouncing any interference by the National Government and the strike policy of the trade union leaders, calling for

increased mass picketing and the holding of the regular meetings of all strikers at which the union officials should give an account for their actions, and demanding the stoppage of police interference.

The manner in which the workers are steadily coming towards the Communist Party as the struggle develops was well illustrated on September 6th in **Preston**, where, at a mass meeting addressed by Comrade **Saklatvala**, 97 strikers joined the Party on the spot. Hitherto Preston has been a stronghold of the reformists and the Communist Party has never been able to get a real foothold.

The line of the Communist Party is being put forward strongly everywhere and is everywhere being warmly received. A demonstration of 3000 was held in Burnley on Monday 5th inst. and addressed by Harry Pollitt, and as he ramméd home point after point, the enthusiasm grew to fever heat.

Manchester, September 13, 1932.

The meeting of representatives of trade union officials, employers and the government, proposed by the Minister of Labour, is taking place today in Manchester to endeavour to discover a formula for securing the return to work of the weavers before the date when the spinners come out on strike. A rank and file delegation composed entirely of union members, has arrived in Manchester from the strike towns to enter a protest against negotiations being started. The Conference hall in which the negotiations are being held, in the most high-class hotel in Manchester, is strongly guarded by police.

In the meantime strong steps are being taken in the localities to prevent breakaways. At a mass meeting of several thousand Bolton strikers held yesterday, it was decided to organise mass pickets at two weak spots. Defections are very few and only in two or three centres. Food convoys are arriving daily in Burnley from all parts of Britain and are greatly encouraging the strikers. The police are doing everything they can to intimidate the lorry drivers by invoking all sorts of obscure regulations against them. The workers are greatly incensed at these actions.

Burnley, September 12.

Attempts were made to-day in a number of weaving mills in Bolton, Haslingden and other places to reopen mills with scab labour. Large police forces were brought up to these mills, but in no place did the response come up to the employers' expectations. Mass pickets are arranged for this evening at any mills where the employers have managed to make a start.

A large meeting in the Town Hall Square last night endorsed the policy of intensifying the picketing. It also repudiated all talk of arbitration and condemned the action of the Spinners Executive in allowing the struggle in the spinning section to be postponed for a month on the initiative of the employers. A determined attempt is to be made by the Spinners rank and file movement to get action taken by the workers themselves next week-end and thus to force the hand of the reformists in the spinning section, as the action of the Burnley workers forced the hand of the weavers' officials.

Belgian Miners Continue the Fight.

By B. Coenen.

Brussels, September 10, 1932.

The Delegate Conference of the Strike Committees of the Belgian miners was held in Charleroi to-day. There were present 185 delegates, representing 61 trade unions and 50 districts. 29 delegates belonged to the reformist miners union, 48 to the "Knights of Labour" (an autonomous trade union federation), 78 to the revolutionary miners' committee, 8 to the Christian trade unions and three to various other organisations. 15 delegates were unorganised and two attended the Conference as representatives of old pensioned miners.

The Conference decided almost unanimously to continue the fight, only seven delegates voting in favour of resumption of work. The Trotzkyist leader Lesoil advocated resumption of work (he had caused a resolution to this effect to be passed in the trade union of which he is the leader). The delegates furiously opposed this representative of strikebreakers, whose double attitude both before and during the strike reveals him as a propagandist of pessimism and defeatism. For this reason the Conference decided that it was impossible to permit such

an element to remain a member of the national Strike Committee. A delegate from Borinage brought forward a resolution stigmatising before the whole working class the treachery of the Trotzkyist-reformist leaders. After this resolution had been read and adopted, Lesoil and some Trotzkyist delegates left the hall amidst the jeers of 400 workers who were present as guests.

All the other delegates pledged themselves on their return to carry out the decisions contained in a manifesto addressed to the miners. This manifesto demands that from Monday September 12 the strike-front be maintained at all costs in all important mining centres, that there be mass picketing at all pits, that the slogans "No victimisation!", "Cancellation of the 5 per cent wage cut of June 5!" be spread and the fight against the expulsion of revolutionary workers from the trade unions taken up with increased energy.

During the last few days the reformist leaders have made use of the most shameful methods in order to throttle the strike. The decision to fix Monday September 12, as the day for the general resumption of work was only a deceitful manoeuvre. Already last Thursday they gave the order in Borinage to resume work at once. In numerous localities the strike cards were withdrawn from the organised workers with the words: "We are not paying any more strike benefit! Go back to work!" The great mass of the strikers have come to realise how the strike has been vilely betrayed by the reformist leaders. Reports are coming in from all localities that hundreds of miners are tearing up their trade-union membership books.

Everywhere where work has been resumed the employers are resorting to victimisation. It is perfectly obvious that the reformist leaders will help the employers in every way to starve out the revolutionary workers.

From the report on the strike situation issued today by the Minister of the Interior it is to be seen that the majority of the strikers have not returned to work. The report speaks of about 65,000 strikers as compared with 100,000 at the beginning of the week. It must be recorded, however, that thousands of workers who are still strongly under the influence of the reformists, as well as numerous other workers who have been plunged into extreme misery as a result of the fight forced upon them by the mineowners, have returned to work. Nevertheless there is everywhere great resistance. It is reported that apart from the "Knights of Labour" in Gilly, who are immediately under the influence of the Trotzkyist leaders, the miners of Roux, Jumet, Marchienne-Docherie have decided to continue the struggle; this is a nasty blow to the Trotzkyist leaders.

In the Forchies and Goutroux pits in Marchienne-au-Pont a strike has already broken out again against the victimisation measures attempted by the mineowners.

In Borinage the reformist delegates marched with drums, trombones and bells through the streets of the miner's quarters in order to lead the miners back to work. In Frameries and Wasmes the strike front remains unbroken. In Flénu work has been resumed in only a few cases. In Boussu the strike has again broken out as a result of victimisation. In the Liege coalfield there is no important breach in the strike front to be recorded.

The bourgeoisie, who placed their confidence in the reformist leaders, are exceedingly disturbed on account of communist activity and their press is therefore calling for fresh persecution of the Communists.

How the Social Democracy Fought Against War.

"Socialism Wherever We Look."

"A new age has opened up. In a short space of time the war has made new men of us all. This is true equally of high and low, of rich and poor. Solidarity and mutual assistance in bitter and undeserved distress, the principle of action which we have always hammered into the working masses and so often demanded without success from the rich, has become the common principle of a great and capable people overnight. Socialism wherever we look!"

(The "Metallarbeiter-Zeitung", the organ of Germany's Metal Workers Union, on the 7th November 1914.)

THE WAR

Before the Renewal of the Franco-Polish Military Agreement.

By M. Magnien (Paris).

It is generally known that France wishes to renew the military agreement with Poland, which expires on September 15.

This agreement was signed by Marshal Foch on September 15, 1922. In the event of a war between Poland and the Soviet Union, France undertakes, on the basis of the above mentioned agreement, as follows:

1. To provide the Polish army with war material.
2. To secure the sea-routes between France and Poland by the French fleet for supplying weapons and munitions to Poland.
3. In time of peace to give military advice and instruction to the Polish army.
4. The question of France aiding Poland with her troops remains open.
5. In time of peace France shall deliver weapons to Poland on advantageous terms by granting Poland loans and shall train Polish officers in its military schools.

The importance of these obligations and the direct threat which they represent to the Soviet Union must be plain to every worker. If it is argued that the situation has considerably changed now, that there exists a non-aggression Pact between Poland and the Soviet Union and that a similar Pact between France and the Soviet Union has been drawn up in Paris, it must be said that this in no way does away with the danger of an attack on the Soviet Union. If Poland accelerated the signing of the non-aggression Pact with the Soviet Union, there were definite reasons for this.

The economic crisis is developing into a catastrophe in the Central European and South-East European countries, and thereby accentuates the contradictions not only between the individual States but also between the various strata of the bourgeoisie of these States. With the growing activity of the Communist movement the revolutionary movement in these countries experiences a considerable upsurge and wins ever fresh strata of the working and peasant population. These factors to a certain extent render more difficult the realisation

of the anti-Soviet plans of French imperialism in its vassal States.

As regards Poland, it is a fact that in spite of the terrible crisis certain enterprises are working to full capacity, but only because they are producing articles which are exported to the Soviet Union.

Pilsudski's decision, immediately after his return from inspecting the Rumanian troops in Bessarabia, to accelerate the signing of the non-aggression Pact was therefore not due to chance or to his love of peace; rather was it owing to the given economic and political facts. The gesture of military Poland to sign the non-aggression Pact with the Soviet Union is of the same nature as its proposals for "moral disarmament" at Geneva. In each case they are symbolic gestures such as Herriot likes to make, who after his entering into office was faced with the question of granting a new loan for the construction of the strategic railway to Gdynia commenced by Poland. There is no doubt that after the gesture of moral disarmament, which is a manoeuvre carried out in agreement with the "Left" government in France, the credits demanded by Poland for the continuation of its war-preparations will be speedily granted.

The imperialist outpost on the frontier of the Soviet Union needs a cloak for its feverish military activity, for its preparations for attack.

The signing of the non-aggression Pact with the Soviet Union in no way disturbs the Polish-Rumanian alliance which envisages a war against the Soviet Union. This military alliance, which was concluded on July 7, 1926, states that: "three quarters of the forces of the two contracting parties are to be concentrated on the Dniestr against Russia." The two armies are placed under Polish command in order to co-ordinate the operations against the Soviet Union.

The plan of attack against the Soviet Union and the participation of the armies of South-East Europe were discussed at a secret Conference held last year in Czechoslovakia under the chairmanship of the French General Staff Officer Riviere.

It is unnecessary to say that in the secret Chambers of diplomacy negotiations are already proceeding for the renewal of the military agreement between France and Poland against the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Herriot does not think of terminating this Pact of aggression, article 2 of which states that if it is not terminated before September 15, 1932, it automatically remains in force for another ten years. In this he will of course be fully supported by the bourgeois press and the leaders of the social democratic party.

International Fight against War and Intervention

Manifesto of the Amsterdam World Congress Against Imperialist War.

Amsterdam, 27, 28, 29, August, 1932.

The hand and brain workers united in this Anti-War Congress are conscious of the importance of the task that has been entrusted to them by millions of men and women in all countries. In order to lay a solid foundation for their future work, they wish to record in a single document the efforts and the intentions of this Congress and to come to an agreement on the essential points and conditions of the struggle against war, and the duties and responsibilities incumbent on each and on all.

The Congress, regardless of the ideological and political differences which may separate its various component elements, desires to face facts and facts only. It desires to emphasize that the dangers of war are no less real and grave to-day than in the years immediately preceding the war of 1914. Though none, not even those ready to launch the war, can specify the exact date of its outbreak, the fate of the human race is nevertheless at the mercy of a diplomatic incident, a frontier clash, or a political crime.

The Congress faces the facts. It points out that war in colonies and mandated territories, and economic piracy,

ravages the continents of the world. It points out that entire nations and vast countries such as India, Morocco, or Nicaragua, are as a matter of fact at the present moment waging a defensive war against the armed forces of imperialist profiteers.

It points to the invasion of China by Japan, with the evident complicity of the great Powers, that most dastardly act of brigandage, which will be inevitably followed by a division of the spoils no less bloody than the contest itself.

In the present political situation, with its more or less veiled alliances and treaties, its various conflicting yet interlocking capitalist interests, any imperialist war must certainly spread until the whole world is involved.

The Congress denounces the conduct of the big newspapers and of public men who through servility or love of gain conceal or distort the truth about the wars in progress and about the imminent catastrophes towards which the present generations are being visibly impelled, and which will engulf them unless they put up a vigorous resistance.

It points out and condemns the huge and ever increasing growth of armaments throughout the world, which flatly

contradicts the sophistries, quibbles, and theatrical proclamations of the governments concerned. It condemns the terrifying and increasing efficiency of weapons, all the sinister instruments of scientific extermination, through poison gas and disease germs, certain to be employed in the next world war.

It condemns the capitalist policy which rigorously shuts off the countries from each other for the exclusive benefit of a small and voracious minority, which drives every government to exploit to the limit the territory, wealth, and population of weaker countries, in order to secure markets at any cost. It accordingly condemns such agreements as the one recently reached at Ottawa. These protectionist measures, adopted under the pressure of the economic crisis resulting from the existing economic system and lasting as long as the system itself, only serve to accentuate the crisis and render inevitable the transformation of economic strife into armed conflict. The sole course open to the governments of capitalist countries, or rather to the financiers who so thoroughly dominate these countries and governments, is to resort to an act of violence which will forcibly dip the scales to the exclusive advantage of the best armed and most powerful group among them. Capitalism is the cause of the economic crisis and the economic crisis accelerates war.

A single fact suffices utterly to condemn the existing system, since it illustrates the deplorable plight of world capitalism: it is the fact that in some parts of the globe enormous stocks of foodstuffs are being destroyed while in others famine reigns. In India and in China a large proportion of the population die of hunger, and in other continents hundreds of millions of human beings suffer and perish.

The Congress points out that all capitalist Powers treat the Soviet Union as their common enemy which they are attempting to undermine and overthrow. There have been direct wars of intervention, encirclements and blockades, armed attacks supported by western imperialism, raising of White Guards in Europe and Asia, attempts at destruction by sabotage within the Soviet Union, unprecedented campaigns of calumny and defamation, all carried on under the flimsy cover of diplomatic relations established merely for the sake of immediate financial advantage. And to-day is being openly prepared in the Far East: a final armed crusade against the Soviet Union.

The Congress points to the steadfast peace policy systematically pursued by the Soviet Union, and repudiates the legend of "red imperialism", the only object of which is to justify and mask the persistent attacks against the Republic of workers and peasants.

The Congress proclaims that the present and future victims of the whole situation are the great masses of the people. The crisis of overproduction and maldistribution resulting from the chaotic system of private profit, the consequent increase of unemployment which has reduced hundreds of millions of human beings throughout the world to the point of starvation, the enormous growth of military expenditure, the rise in the cost of living and in taxation, all combine to crush the working masses already decimated by the late war and after 14 years still suffering from its wounds and bereavements. After having been ruined they are now driven to the slaughter once more.

It points out that the Japanese workers have, by their heroic example, already shown how the fight against imperialist war is best carried on. They have stood up against their own bourgeoisie, held up war production and munition convoys, and shown up this war in the eyes of the Japanese soldiers for what it is—a war of piracy.

The Congress points out that the maintenance of the artificial frontiers imposed by the peace treaties—those one-sided arrangements dictated by vengeance and by political interest, and sacrificing the immediate future to a momentary gain to the victors—has created a great division between the nations which conjures up war upon all frontiers. The very basis of these treaties, Article 237 of the Treaty of Versailles, which ascribes the sole responsibility of the war to Germany, is a flagrant untruth which has been used by a trick of demagogic mysticism to contribute to the growth of the Fascist reaction in Germany.

The Congress points out that regardless of this or that apparently pacifistic political manoeuvre every imperialist power, whether it be the United States or England or France or Japan or Italy, is working for war.*

It draws attention to the leading role played by French imperialism which, in its preparations for war, is attempting to bring about and to direct, with the aid of its vassals, Poland, Rumania and other states,—at the same time victims of their own imperialist bourgeoisie—a regrouping of the imperialist forces. (Danubian Federation, Lausanne Pact etc.)

Determined as it is to offer every resistance in its power to the current sweeping the whole present generation towards disaster, the Congress sees salvation only in the concerted action of workers, peasants and all who are exploited and oppressed.

It declares that there is no other adequate means of carrying on the war against war.

It is aware that many distinguished minds are desperately seeking to find a means of saving society by noble dreams. It is aware that there are men who offer a personal resistance to war which may draw down upon them the vengeance of capitalist laws. But it considers that in the face of the terrible challenge offered by present developments it is impossible to stop short at abstract formulas, or to confine oneself to means of resistance foredoomed to failure; notably the—unfortunately futile—sacrifice constituted by the noble attitude adopted after a declaration of war by conscientious objectors and by all others who fling themselves individually against a collective disaster.

It expects that the men of character and courage who preach these heroic measures and who are prepared to accept for themselves the very grave consequences of such an attitude, will join with the others in erecting, stone by stone, from the ground up, a massive collective barrier against war. Every form of opposition to this work merely helps the enemy.

The Congress considers that the so-called Plebiscite, proposed by some in the event of war, is ineffective. Such a referendum can have no influence once the war has broken out. Public opinion will then be forced to accept the situation as it is, and will do so the more readily since it will have been intoxicated by newspaper propaganda.

Above all the Congress warns the public against governmental institutions, and especially the League of Nations, which functions at Geneva as an immediate mouthpiece of the imperialist Powers. The words spoken at its great pompous ceremonies are words of peace, but its acts are the acts of war. The Congress calls upon the sincere men and women

How the Social Democracy Fought Against War.

The Production of Munitions must increase Daily.

„Without waiting for a demonstration of the will of the people the head of the government has approached our party and our party has answered: 'We are prepared!' This is the spirit in which our friends have entered the government. We shall begin the work to rouse the masses. . .

We shall examine the sources from which our armaments and our supplies come, and we shall do our best to multiply them. **From day to day the co-operation of all available forces must become more effective, and from day to day the production of munitions must increase.** The presence of our friends in the government is a guarantee that republican democracy is prepared to fight to the last drop of its blood. . .

The first trials and the enthusiasm of the mobilisation give us the certainty that we are fighting not only for the defence of the Fatherland, not only for the greatness of France, but for freedom, for the republic—for civilisation. We are fighting to free the world from the stifling embrace of imperialism, from the horrors of war, and to give the world peace in which the rights of all shall be respected. The socialist ministers will imbue all their colleagues in the government with this conviction. They will rejuvenate the work of the Cabinet and they will convey this conviction to the heroic army in which the flower of the nation is fighting."

(Manifesto of the Socialist Fraction of the French Chamber of Deputies on the occasion of the entry of two socialist leaders into the French Cabinet.)

assembled here in response to our rallying cry against war, to expose this hypocrisy which, like all merely verbal pacifisms, aims only at lulling the vigilance of the masses, so that war may once more take them by surprise.

The Congress warns the true enemies of war against the political compromises with the prevailing system practised by certain leaders of working class organisations. Such co-operation strengthens this system and betrays the cause of the struggle against war. The attitude of the leaders of the Socialist International in August 1914, one of the outstanding facts of the last war, marks a notable setback in the movement towards human emancipation. The hostile attitude adopted by the leaders of the Labour and Socialist International towards the present Congress, confirms the impression that they maintain the same political position they held in 1914, which is in crass contradiction to all true principles of socialism.

The Congress addresses itself to the innumerable masses of the proletariat which needs only conscious organisation in order to come to power.

On the strength of the mandate given to it by a multitude of people coming from all quarters of the globe and united in their sincere and burning desire for peace, though holding divergent political opinions: on the strength of its profound conviction that the struggle against war is only genuine to the extent to which it is efficacious and influences the facts; the Congress calls upon the masses, the only invincible power existing in the tragic disorder of our times, to enter upon this scene of disorder in closed and disciplined ranks and to raise its powerful voice.

It is along these lines that this Congress intends that its International Committee for the struggle against War shall work towards extending this front of the working class across the world.

Each of us here takes a sort of pledge, and we take it all together:

We swear that we will never allow the formidable unity which has been established here among the exploited and victimized masses to be broken up.

We swear to fight with all our force and with all the means at our command against imperialist capitalism, that purveyor to the slaughterhouse.

We swear to dedicate ourselves with all our forces and all our resources to our direct and immediate tasks, taking our stand:

against armaments, against war preparations, and in consequence against the governments ruling us;

against jingoism, nationalist chauvinism, and fascism, the police army of imperialism which leads to imperialist war and provokes civil war against the masses of the working class;

against war budgets, a vote for which is a dishonour and a crime;

against the loans and taxes that rob the masses in order to increase armaments;

against the campaign of incitement and slander aimed at the Soviet Union, the country of socialist construction which we will not allow to be touched;

against the dismemberment of China, of which each imperialist Power covets a portion;

against the exploitation, oppression, and massacre of the colonial peoples;

for the support of the national minorities and the peoples fighting for their national and social independence;

for the effective support of the Japanese workers who have raised the standard of struggle against their own imperialist government.

All the burdens of war, as well as all the burdens of armed peace and of war preparations, are laid on the shoulders of the working class, whose vanguard is formed by the armament and transport workers. The working class must therefore immediately organise and be on its guard.

We swear to fight with all our power against the gathering disaster.

And we continue to appeal to all: to appeal to all workers, peasants, and intellectuals of all countries, to the exploited and oppressed. We call upon them to join us, and in public meetings and demonstrations to take the pledges we have taken here and to put them into effect.

The Friends of the Soviet Union and the Anti-War Congress.

By Walter Stoecker (Berlin).

Almost everywhere the 22 National Sections of the F.S.U. have taken an energetic part in the campaign for the Anti-War Congress, for the aims and objects of the congress—the combatting of the danger of imperialist war and of war-intervention against the Soviet Union—represent the essential tasks of the F.S.U. The International Bureau of the F.S.U. expresses its agreement with the Anti-War Congress in the following declaration:

“The International Association of the Friends of the Soviet Union welcomes with enthusiasm the initiative taken by comrades **Barbusse** and **Rolland** for the convention of an international congress against imperialist war, and has at once taken steps in all its Sections to ensure the sending of delegates.

“The Friends of the Soviet Union in all countries, who have joined together by means of an increasingly comprehensive organisation and concentration of all sincere opponents of an intervention against the S.U. to work for the prevention of this most criminal of all wars, expect that the Congress will devote special attention to this war threatening the land of socialist construction, and will resolve upon practical militant measures.

“The Friends of the S.U. will take part with numerous delegates in the Congress, and pledge themselves for their part to support actively, with their utmost powers, all measures taken by the Congress to exterminate the capitalist roots of imperialist war, and for the strengthening of the constructive forces of socialism.”

Besides this, in the majority of the countries the National Committees of our Sections have issued similar declarations in reply to Barbusse's manifesto, and have placed both the organisations of the F.S.U., and its speakers and organisers, at the disposal of the general anti-war campaign.

In some countries, for instance **England, Austria, Belgium, etc.**, the F.S.U. undertook the initiative for the campaign for the Congress, and carried on practically the whole agitation among the masses, as also the organisational leadership of the local and district anti-war conferences at which the delegates to Amsterdam were elected. In this manner the F.S.U. has contributed greatly to arousing the lively participation of the masses in the Congress, and to the sending of so large a number of delegates.

The organisation of the F.S.U. itself sent **over 150 workers and employees from the different countries as delegates to Amsterdam**; many of these were elected in works meetings. At a meeting of the workers employed by a branch of the Skoda armaments works a delegate was elected by the F.S.U. for Czechoslovakia, and at a meeting of the striking Belgian miners 2 workers were sent as F.S.U. delegates to Amsterdam. Other delegates elected directly by the F.S.U. were sent from: Germany 56, Austria 7, Belgium 7, Holland 39, United States 4, etc. The International Secretariat of the F.S.U. was represented at the Congress by 4 delegates. Besides these direct delegates, there were many members of the F.S.U. present, sent as delegates from industrial undertakings and general conferences. Of the 90 British delegates, for instance, no fewer than 70 were members of the English Section of

How the Social Democracy Fought Against War.

Belgium Should not Recover its Independence.

“Should Belgium recover its independence then it will become to a greater degree than ever before an advanced post of Great Britain on the Continent. The future fate of Belgium can therefore not be dealt with separately, otherwise within a short space of time we shall be faced with a new dangerous and powerful combination against the Central Powers. Self-preservation and logic therefore demand that we should expressly stress this demand that the Belgian question should be considered only as part of a whole.”

(Emil Kloth, Chairman of Germany's Bookbinders Union, in the “Chemnitzer Volksstimme” in June 1915.)

the F.S.U. Of the Austrian delegation 3/4 of the delegates, of the Danish delegation 1/3, of the Czech delegation 1/3, etc.

At the Congress itself the F.S.U. worked energetically. Recruiting work was carried on industriously among all the delegations, with the result that out of the French delegation alone 95 workers, including numerous social democrats and non-party workers, joined the F.S.U. In the German delegation the results were even greater: 107 German delegates joined the F.S.U., including communists, social democrats, non-party and Christian workers and employees. Numerous members of the English, American, Czech, Dutch, and Belgian delegations too became members of the F.S.U. **About one third of the total delegates at the congress were members of the F.S.U.**

The address on behalf of the International Association of the Friends of the Soviet Union was given at the Congress by the Englishman **Albert Inkpin**. He appealed for active self-defensive action against the intervention plans of the imperialists against the Soviet Union, and brought a message of agreement on the part of the F.S.U. in the work of the Congress. He described the activities of the members of the F.S.U. for the aims of the Congress, and called upon all delegates to co-operate in the work of the Sections of the F.S.U. At the mass meeting of the Amsterdam workers held in connection with the Congress, **Walter Stoecker** addressed an audience of 10,000 on the significance and the tasks of the Friends of the Soviet Union.

During the Congress, and in the days following it, the International Secretariat of the F.S.U. organised numerous **conferences** with all the national delegations of the F.S.U. Such conferences were held with the delegates from France, England, America, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, etc. Both the general work of the F.S.U., and the special work for the aims of the Amsterdam congress were discussed in detail. Besides this it was made possible to hold special conferences with the **whole of the delegations** from some countries, such as France, Denmark, etc., at which the work, aims, and significance of the F.S.U. were dealt with. **An especially impressive and successful session was that of the French delegation, attended by over 500 delegates.**

The F.S.U. was the sole organisation which hastily organised an **exhibition in the Congress hall**, enabling the over 2000 delegates to gain a certain idea, if by no means a complete one, of the work of the F.S.U. Besides this, the International Secretariat of the F.S.U. submitted to all delegates a special portfolio (in German, English, French, and Dutch), showing the latest material on the F.S.U. including a leaflet on the tasks of our organisation, numbers of our periodicals and of the international Bulletin, pamphlets, etc. Almost all the participants in the Congress wore the October badge of the F.S.U., thereby proclaiming their sympathy and solidarity with the land of socialist construction.

One of the best means of carrying out the Amsterdam decisions is more active co-operation in the development and extension of the organisation of the F.S.U., both as regards agitation against imperialist war and intervention against the U.S.S.R., and as regards collaboration in the development of the anti-war committees.

How the Social Democracy Fought Against War.

Wilhelm II. to Scheidemann: "You fenced brilliantly in Stockholm."

"In that year (1917) we began the preparations for the Peace Conference in Stockholm in good time. Ebert and I were the main driving forces in Germany, and we acted in complete agreement with the government . . .

We left behind a memorandum which was unanimously adopted by our delegation and which was afterwards praised by the Minister for Foreign Affairs as a **first class piece of work**, and even the Kaiser was compelled to declare during a casual meeting with me in the house of Herr Helfferich: *A la bonheur, Herr Scheidemann, you fenced brilliantly in Stockholm.*"

(Scheidemann in evidence during the "Dolchstoß" proceedings in October 1925. ["Dolchstoß" Stab in the Back. Ed.]

The International Red Aid At The World Anti-War Congress.

By J. Louis Engdahl.

It was inevitable that the **International Red Aid**, fighting against the terror, against fascism, against imperialist war and for the defence of the Soviet Union, should be in the centre of the World Congress Against Imperialist War, Amsterdam, August 27-29, 1932.

It brought the full weight of its 12 million individual members into the anti-war struggle, and raised the fight against the imperialist war as one of the major bases for the mobilization of the whole working class for its own World Congress to be held in Moscow in November.

"Save the Scottsboro Negro Children from the Electric Chair!" was the central slogan above the tribune at the great mass demonstration of 15,000 Amsterdam workers greeting the anti-war congress, thus linking up this major protest action of the International Red Aid with the anti-war struggle: the bestial judicial lynching of the Scottsboro children as part of the whole lynch-murder regime of the dollar reaction feverishly preparing for war through the most brutal oppression of the million Negro masses in the United States.

It was with this full understanding that the 2,200 anti-war delegates thundered their greeting to the Scottsboro Negro Mother, **Mrs. Ada Wright**, on her arrival at the congress immediately following her arrest in the Belgian mine strike area and expulsion from the country by the government of Congo imperialism. The Scottsboro Negro Mother raised the struggle for the lives of her two sons and the other Negro children as the unified effort of the oppressed masses of all races and nationalities against all persecutions of those who labour. She raised the slogan of "Fight Against Imperialist War!" as labour's reply, mobilized by the International Red Aid to the judicial lynching of the Scottsboro boys, the imprisonment of Mooney and Billings, the murder of Sallai and Fuerst in Hungary, the life imprisonment of Paul and Gertrude Ruegg in China, the fiendish torture of 150,000 proletarian political prisoners buried alive in the prison tombs of the profit social order.

"White supremacy", the rule of the "Southern Gentlemen" in the United States, had sought to burn children, even 13 and 14 years of age, to death in the electric chair that had taken the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti, but it also sent the Scottsboro Negro Mother into the world as a symbol of working class unity and struggle.

Thus **Robert Lejour**, chairman of the Belgian Red Aid, the spokesman in the Anti-War Congress for the International Red Aid, himself a victim of Belgian militarism, greeted the anti-war delegates on behalf of the dozen millions of Red Aid members, the millions of persecuted under profit rule, and appealed for the widest mobilization for the immediate future struggles against the terror, fascism, war, and for the Soviet Union's defence under the banners of the International Red Aid's World Congress.

It was not merely coincidence that Henri Barbusse, who takes a leading role in the struggle against terror, should be the leader of the congress; that Helene Stasova, secretary of the International Red Aid, was seated as a member of the presidium, and became a member of its permanent international committee; that Red Aid delegates were found in practically all of the delegations from the various countries; that Sen Katayama, prominent in Red Aid activities, should receive one of the greatest ovations of the congress.

Thus the demands of the Red Aid were written into the declarations of the congress and the Red Aid will be one of the most active organizations of the working class in carrying them into effect. One of the most conspicuous exhibitions at the congress was that of the Red Aid, with the Scottsboro campaign in its centre.

The participation of the International Red Aid in the World Congress Against Imperialist War again brought forward sharply its fundamental role as a militant organ of working class struggle. In the days ahead it will carry this militancy in its fight against the imperialist war, into the shops and factories, among the masses in capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries, registering its successes at its own November World Congress.

How the First World War Was Prepared

Newly Discovered Documents On the Preparations For the World War.

By G. Vassilkovski (Moscow).

The communists have invariably maintained, and continue to maintain, that at times when international politics appear to be covered with an icy sheet of perfect quiet, the preparations for war are being carried on with the greatest intensity.

It is precisely at such times that the general staffs and the spies are working most intensely! The archives of tsarist diplomacy revealed by the revolution, every fresh document brought out of the dust of the records, proves this.

The appended material, published for the first time, from the **Central Administrative Records of the Soviet Union**, adduces documentary proof contained in the second, third, and following volumes of the **complete work: "International Relations in the Epoch of Imperialism" (Commission for the Publication of Documents on the Epoch of Imperialism, appointed by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union)** that long before the shots were fired at Sarajevo, the machine for the preparation of imperialist war was running at full speed.

Valuable information is furnished by a letter sent to the Russian ambassador in Belgrade, **Hartwig**, by the Servian prime minister **Pashitch**, on the sending of munitions and cartridges (Hartwig passed the letter on to Petersburg on 2nd June 1914).

This interesting and instructive document is worded as follows:

"To the Ambassador, Dear Sir,

Re the note which I had the honour of handing over to his Excellency Sassonov, home secretary for Russia, on 26th January (8th February), I beg your Excellency to inform the government of the Russian Empire that in the opinion of the Servian general staff Servia requires the following as rapidly as possible:

120,000 rifles with 1500 cartridges each, 24 large field guns 10 cm calibre with 500 shells each, 43 mountain guns of latest model with 2000 shots each.

The Royal Servian government expressly begs the government of the Russian Empire to place these arms at its disposal as rapidly as possible at cost price, and the Royal Servian government undertakes to pay the sum incurred as soon as it possibly can. In the above mentioned note sent through his Excellency Sassonov, I had the honour of emphasising the extreme urgency of this request, and since then this urgency has become greater, now that the neighbouring countries have finished their armaments. The Royal Servian government will be extremely grateful to the government of the Russian Empire if this replies in the affirmative to this request, and thereby helps to complete armaments in these hard times. (The emphasis is mine. G. V.) Pashitch."

The rifles, cannon, guns, and munitions here referred to are those afterwards used in the first conflicts on the Austro-Servian frontier. Pashitch's request was the result of lengthy and intense course of provocation work carried on by the tsarist government in Belgrade. A glance at the secret letter sent by **Savinski** to **Sassonov** on 4th February, interpreting Hartwig's "idea" ("setting Servia on Austria") will convince the reader:

"4th Feb. (22nd Jan.) 1914.

Sergei Dmitriyevitch, Dear Sir,

I permit myself to write you the following lines, which are intended solely for your personal information (The emphasis is mine. G. V.), since they must contain a number of questions which are of a personal nature, always very difficult to mention, and which I should avoid did I not think it my duty to raise them.

During my sojourn in Belgrade I had repeatedly long conversations with Hartwig, who had obviously hoped that you would call him to Petersburg when the Servian crown prince and Pashitch arrived there. He is disagreeably surprised at

not hearing from you. I asked him what he was particularly anxious to discuss in Petersburg. He replied that there are a great many things he wanted to speak about, especially about the sending of guns and ammunition to the Servians, and that for this reason he wanted to meet the ministers of finance and war. In the course of further conversation I became convinced that Hartwig's idea was to set Servia on Austria.

Naturally it is not my business to judge of the dangerousness of such a policy at the present juncture, and I deem it my duty to inform you of the above."

In Sofia nobody knew what was going on in Belgrade, but Petersburg was well informed. It is not for nothing that this letter from the tsarist ambassador in Sofia was preserved in an especially secret portfolio of the ministry for home affairs.

Hartwig's efforts were "successful". When the news arrived of the culmination of his activities, the murder of the Austrian crown prince in Sarajevo, the immediate impetus for the world war, Hartwig was so overcome with joy that he succumbed to heart failure.

The documents referring to the war preparations often appear pale in comparison with present preparations, and the facts which they adduce insignificant as compared with all that is being done at present to prepare for the intervention against the Soviet Union and for new imperialist wars. It must however be remembered that **the documents of the last war throw light on the practices of the imperialists.** The spoor left by the criminals of yesterday leads us on the track of those who are preparing the blood bath of to-morrow.

The Soviet Union, and the revolutionary labour movement in the West, break the silence surrounding the preparatory work for the new wars. We have exposed, and continue to expose, the interventionists at their work, on the spot where they commit their crimes. We stopped the hand of the provocateur Stern, with whose aid the imperialists intended to bring about a second Sarajevo in the streets of Moscow. We tear the "peace" mask from the faces of the warmongers and show their real countenances.

Thanks to the struggle carried on by the Soviet Union against the war provocateurs, the workers of the whole world are already able to make themselves familiar with the new material evidencing the preparations being carried on for the coming war. Compare this new material with the old, and the bloody work of the organisers of the new world war will be the more clearly recognised.

Another document is appended: a letter from the deputy **Klofač**, the present leader of the **Czechoslovakian National Socialists**. This document reveals one of the methods of war preparations.

In this letter (dated 1914 in Prague) Klofač offers to put his party at the service of the Russian espionage service. He recommends his goods as follows:

"Where the National Socialist Party agitates, where it applies the extensive means at its disposal, there the spirit is to be found which the Slav nationality needs . . . It is in the interests of Russian policy to support the National Socialist Party, in order that its agitation may penetrate where the Slav feeling is still weak. This is the case in East Moravia and in Silesia, among strata of the utmost importance for Russia in case of war. Russia must devote special attention to these. It is impossible to send agents to these people; even now they would be seized. Work must be done cautiously, inconspicuously, and exactly. This task can be carried out by the National Socialist Party, which is opening new secretariats in the above named districts. This is the manner in which Austria has worked, and still works, against Russia in Russian Poland.

Every secretariat would need 1000 roubles yearly; including the newspapers, about 10 thousand roubles would be

needed yearly. The results of the whole action would be both rapid and effectual."

Thus Klofač sold his party to the Russian espionage department for ten thousand roubles yearly. It must be commented that Klofač did not estimate his party very highly... He certainly under-estimated its espionage capabilities.

Are not similar transactions being concluded, or at least negotiated, in all the lobbies and antechambers of the general staffs of the imperialist states to-day? The trial of the Industrial Party, the trial of the Mensheviks, showed us how and where such transactions are carried on.

Among the documents of the second and third volumes there is an extremely characteristic telegram from the **tsarist ambassador in Tokio**, dated 25th May 1914. This states that the economic rapprochement of Japan and England "on Chinese soil, is especially desirable to the Japanese".... "Will England agree to such a combination—asks the tsarist ambassador Maljevski-Malevitsh—and will it be prepared to bell the cat for the Japanese? The near future will show."

The future has shown that England is ready to bell any amount of cats, for anybody, including Japan in Manchuria, so long as the Americans are not permitted to get any advantage from it...

A characteristic document on war preparations is furnished by the report of the **tsarist military agent in Germany, Colonel Basarov**:

"Military agent in Germany.

(24th) 11th February 1914.

No. 93, Berlin. Strictly confidential.

To the General Quartermaster of the General Staff.

Report.

A few days ago I spoke to the French military agent here, Colonel Serret, and became fairly friendly with him.

Colonel Serret is of the opinion that it is of paramount importance to prepare public opinion among the broad strata of the French people on the probable course of war events on the Eastern and Western frontiers of Germany in the case of a joint advance on the part of Russia and France against Germany.

General Serret stated his ideas as follows:

There is no doubt that Germany will deal its first blow against France, concentrating at least 20 to 22 field corps on her, for France is its most dangerous enemy. Hence decisive conflicts may take place within two weeks of the announcement of the general mobilisation.

For various reasons, entirely comprehensible to the French general staff, and perhaps to other persons with knowledge, but not likely to be comprehensible except to a few people, the concentration of the Russian army on the German frontiers will take place much later than the concentration of the French army.

Decisive conflicts between the main forces of the Russian army and German troops can scarcely be expected earlier than four weeks after the declaration of war. Hence it is comprehensible that the majority of the French population will become extremely impatient on receiving no news from the Polish scene of war. When the general excitability of the French is remembered, it may be easily imagined that if public opinion is not properly prepared beforehand—this necessary preparation must consist of teaching the public to form a correct estimate of the totality of circumstances, and to understand the possible if only partial failures of the French troops—if this necessary preparation is omitted, then there will be expressions of dissatisfaction in France, and especially in Paris, with regard to the allies, leading to very disagreeable assumptions, which might very easily become exaggerated under the conditions of nervous strain among the people.

Therefore I deem it advisable to prepare public opinion to a certain extent in time of peace, and to inform it as to the probabilities of the order of succession of war events on the East and West scenes of war.

In any case, the decision on the question of the extent to which and the manner in which the people can and should be prepared for the modern peoples' war in which the people take an immediate part, and have naturally the most vital interest in the events deciding these wars, which may decide their whole future fate, is subject to the joint decision of the general staffs of Russia and France.

Indubitably this question deserves the most serious attention, and must be solved at once.

General Staff Colonel Basarov."

On the margin there is a pencil note: *More than has been done cannot be done. Sh.* (Shilinski. Head of the Tsarist General staff. G. V.)

On 24th February 1914, six months before the outbreak of the world war, a consultation took place in Berlin between the two military agents, the Russian and the French. Here the events taking place after the mobilisation were stated beforehand. Would this have been possible if the plan of the war had not been worked out to the last detail, if the war itself had not been prepared in every point by the Russian and French general staffs on the one hand and by the German and Austrian general staffs on the other? Six months before the outbreak of war the military agents consult on how "public opinion" is best to be prepared by the press for the first period of the war. And how often do the Serrets and Basarovs of to-day consult on the slander campaigns to be undertaken in the press against the Soviet Union, in order to work up feeling in favour of war?

When we take up these documents from the tsarist records, now at the time of the International Anti-War Congress in Holland, we find that we have every right to ask: When and where did the general staffs arrange through their agents that the Soviet delegates were not to be permitted to attend the Congress, and when and where did they agree on the slander drive carried on by the social democratic and bourgeois press against this Congress, and against the mobilisation of the anti-war forces?

We shall not receive an exact reply to this question till the proletarian revolution opens the records of the imperialist states. But the documents now published, revealing the crimes of the past, give the clues to the path taken by the imperialists in preparing fresh crimes, fresh wars and interventions.

These clues lead to international social democracy. Below we append the viewpoint of a fairly resolute man, the **tsarist ambassador in Paris, Isvolski**. In his telegram to the minister for foreign affairs, No. 914 of 29th August 1916, he reports:

"As is known to you, three members of the Socialist Party, Guesde, Sembat, and Albert Thomas, take part in the present French government. All three belong to the majority of this party, which recently announced its patriotic feelings at the congress of the national council of the French socialists, and opposed the renewal of relations with the German socialists. Of these, A. Thomas has distinguished himself by special energy and successful activities; he manages the armaments affairs. The presence of these three socialists in the cabinet has so far not only not hindered the unity of the activities of the government, but has on the contrary imparted to this a special value and therewith special firmness—for instance as the dangerous campaign of M. Briand commenced in parliament."

Not bad! The socialists **Guesde, Sembat, and Thomas** are preferred to even such a protector of imperialism as Briand, who is known to have been inclined for a time to a separate peace with Germany.

Another secret telegram, from the **Russian ambassador in Belgium, Nelidov**, dated 25th April 1917, reports:

"Yesterday the minister for foreign affairs gave me reliable information that in the near future the minister Vandervelde is to travel to Russia in order to establish contact with our socialist circles, and in order to come forward as enthusiastic patriot against the strivings of some Russian social democrats who desire peace with the Germans; he is also to deal with the questions of the Armenians and of the Straits. The minister will pass some time in Stockholm, but will carefully avoid meeting the German emissaries; this has been impressed on him as a duty by his party. To-day Vandervelde himself confirmed this information to me personally, and emphasised that he travels not only as a representative of his party, but as a member of the Belgian government and with the approval of the ministerial council."

What can be added to this exhaustive characterisation of the leaders of social democracy by the officials of tsarism? The characterisation is as fitting to-day as it was at that time.

Especially careful study should be given to the preparations made for the last war, in order that all the motive forces and methods may be discovered. The documents of these records not only bear witness to the past, they show what is going on in the present, and what will be done in the future, by world imperialism and social democracy.

Socialist Construction in the Soviet Union

The "Red Manchester" of the Soviet-Union.

By W. M. Holmes.

The following article, which appeared already in the London "Daily Worker" of Sept. 12, is published by us in view of its interest having regard to the present conflict in the English textile industry. Ed.

Ivanovo-Vosnessensk, August 28, 1932.

"Red Manchester" is already a familiar name to many British workers. And the fame of the Soviet Union's great textile centre has spread to other sections of society also. On my arrival here today I found evidence of this in the form of a large party of British tourists. Unfortunately, they are not British workers. They are people who can afford to pay for a long holiday tour. But the fact that they are spending a part of their time looking at Soviet cotton mills and Soviet textile workers' houses is interesting. It might be good for them if they were to compare their observations here with a view of British textile workers' conditions.

That is what brings me to Ivanovo-Vosnessensk. While Lancashire textile workers are fighting capitalist rationalisation, wage-cuts, unemployment and starvation, how are the textile workers living in this land of socialist construction?

Ivanovo-Vosnessensk is, as a matter of fact, about as unlike Manchester as it is possible for any town to be. There is nothing here to suggest the black solidity, the overpowering density, of Manchester. Despite its array of great cotton-mills, the "Red Manchester" appears full of light and air. Arranged on a series of little hills, with a small river winding between the great new factories and the modernistic blocks of workers' flats composed an industrial landscape with a certain beauty. The reconstructed main street, with lawns dividing the lines of traffic, and with imposing blocks of new buildings in course of construction, set well back from the road, is wider and far finer than the widest of the new roads in the outskirts of Manchester.

The "Red Manchester" is a town of gardens. In this respect it is richer than most other Soviet industrial towns which I have seen, let alone British ones. There is a reason for this. The former capitalist mills-owners, when they built luxurious houses on the best situations in the town, were very generous to themselves in the matter of gardens. The working class of Ivanovo has not neglected to profit by the capitalists' self-indulgence. A fine garden is now allocated to each textile mill, and thousands of workers come daily to stroll and bask in the sun, to eat and drink at the buffet, hear the music and, in the evenings, watch the open-air cinema or theatre.

So much for the lighter side of our first glances at Ivanovo-Vosnessensk. But there is the dark side. You see streets of decrepit, one-storeyed wooden houses, leaning this way and that, lining cobbled streets along which you stumble and splash. It forms a striking contrast with the smooth, asphalted pavements and imposing buildings of the main streets. Is the "Red Manchester", then, like the towns of Lancashire, a place of contradictions, of riches and poverty? Let me tell you that these old houses are relics of the days before the revolution which freed the workers of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk from their taskmasters. I have come across a description of the old Ivanovo, by a writer who lived in the town in 1907. A part of it is worth quoting. Here it is:

"Ivanovo-Vosnessensk produces, even on the most casual and superficial glance at its streets and buildings, a strong impression. In all my wanderings in the wide world, I have nowhere seen such naked, glaring contrast between misery and luxury as that which immediately strikes the eye in Ivanovo.

"In every 'well-ordered' town, the poor houses of the workers are, as is well known, carefully concealed from the eye in the outer districts and suburbs. But the whole of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk represents such a suburb, densely inhabited by an immense population of textile workers with their exhausted wives, who work as weavers, with their ragged, rickety children, who are destined one day to become just such textile workers.

"Amongst little houses with half-shuttered windows, each house sheltering several families, rises suddenly the magnificent palace of a manufacturer, in wonderful architecture . . . In the streets, covered with disgusting refuse among which pigs rummage, one frequently meets with a shining coach, with snow-white horses and a fat, magnificent coachman. In the coach sits the family of some manufacturer—his well-fed wife and his carefully nurtured children, with governesses, servant maids or other domestics.

"Seeing these things, one often wondered how these people dared to drive in this manner past the windows of the workers who toiled for them, and how the workers kept their patience when such a coach rolled past them."*)

But the workers of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk did not keep their patience. Many a time they struck and struggled against the masters who lived in the palaces, and rode in the shining coaches at their expense. And, in the end, in the revolutionary struggle of 1917, they succeeded in driving out the tyrants from the palaces, and the shining coaches vanished from the streets of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk.

That which remains of the contrasts of those days is only the shell. The contents are now entirely different. The former millowners' mansions still stand as before, but what do you find inside them? Here, in this one in the centre of Ivanovo, you may talk to the woman weaver who is now the secretary of the local soviet. The house is the headquarters of the Ivanovo Soviet. In the hothouse which supplied its former occupant with luxuries for his table, workers now eat their dinners. Another group finds excellent restaurant accommodation in the vaulted hall, with heavy ornamental metal doors, which was the wine-cellar of the late millowner. In another such mansion, you may talk to the leaders of the trade union committee of the town. Another, a very fine one, is entirely devoted to children—the children of the workers. You may walk from room to room, solid, spacious, light and airy, and lavishly supplied with central heating. Wonderful what a lot of money they spent on making themselves comfortable, these millowners. They knew **how** to do it, too. And now it is the children of the workers who play eat and sleep in these rooms in cleanliness, warmth and comfort. Tended by trained nurses, given plenty of baths and taught hygiene, they are no longer "ragged and rickety".

That is one of the changes which have taken place in the contents of these mansions. I have already told of the use now made of the millowners' gardens. But what about those streets of old workers' houses? Why are these reminders of the old time swept away? Take a look round the landscape. The town of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk now covers an area far larger than that of the two original villages from which it takes its name. Its area is far greater than that of the old capitalist industrial town. New areas of building stretch out towards the forest which surrounds the town. These are all the results of working class rule during the fifteen years of the revolution. And on every hand is to be seen scaffolding and the outlines of new buildings.

These areas of building which you see round the old town are not the haphazard growth of a capitalist industrial town. They are orderly, planned. Each one is a settlement of workers. And there are seven such settlements round Ivanovo. They are not merely groups of houses. Each settlement has hospital, creche and kindergarten, school, co-operative and so on. These are the new habitations of the workers. As they are completed, the old houses are destroyed. Given another year or two of such work, there will no longer be any traces of these relics of the old time in Ivanovo-Vosnessensk.

*) Bobrowskaya: "Bolsheviks in Tsarist Russia."

The Truth About Ivanovo-Voznessensk.

W. M. Holmes, the special correspondent of the London "Daily Worker" in the Soviet Union, has sent us the following telegram:

The "Daily Express", the Berlin "Lokal-Anzeiger" and other bourgeois papers are publishing their regular "Telegrams from Moscow", "Famine Riots", "Workers Raid Food Stores in Ivanovo-Voznessensk", "Troops Shoot Workers Attacking Shops" etc.

I have just returned from Ivanovo-Voznessensk after a tour of the Soviet textile district, and definitely state that the statements of the "Daily Express" are imaginary from beginning to end. It is unnecessary to add that no representative of the "Daily Express" or other papers printing this news has been to Ivanovo-Voznessensk. Such "information" is evidently from the same source as hundreds of similar "Telegrams from Moscow" manufactured for the past 15 years for the yellow press of the capitalist world. The Riga correspondents and other anti-Soviet romancers are well-known. The only remarkable thing is that during 15 years they have not changed either the form or contents of their "information". Just the same "Special Correspondent", same "Telegrams from Moscow" composed in their own offices, and finally the same "Hunger Riots", "Shooting Down of Rebels" etc.

Whilst staying in Ivanovo-Voznessensk I lived and ate with textile workers. The only bread riots I heard of were those of 1915, when the bourgeoisie ordered cossacks to shoot down striking workers. But the Ivanovo workers soon drove out their bourgeoisie and now, together with the working class of the whole of the Soviet Union, are overcoming all difficulties in their path, are building socialist economy, and building it well. All Ivanovo-Voznesensk factories, both old and new, are working to full capacity, three shifts, no unemployed in the Ivanovo region or in the Soviet Union. Ivanovo workers know only one fight, namely the fight for the construction of Socialism, and greet the British textile workers fighting against capitalism with wishes for victory.

Holmes.

THE WHITE TERROR

Scottsboro in Czechoslovakia.

By J. Louis Engdahl.

The Scottsboro Negro Mother, Mrs. Ada Wright, spent three days and three nights in the police stations, jails and prisons of Kladno and Prague in Czechoslovakia. This attempt to silence the Scottsboro appeal failed. It may be said that it was heard louder throughout Czechoslovakia, and out into the neighbouring nations, with the Negro Mother in prison, than in any of the dozen countries so far visited where the attempted humiliation of prison bars was not forced upon her.

The Czechoslovakian press, with few exceptions, was filled for days with favourable mention of the Scottsboro struggle. The outstanding exception was the "Vecer", personal organ of Minister of the Interior Slavik, who sent Mrs. Wright to prison. This government organ and voice of the agrarian reaction loudly applauded the expulsion decree issued against Mrs. Wright, whom it denounced as a "Bolshevik Negro Woman", and as "A Black Communist".

There are no doubt many reasons why the Scottsboro Negro Mother should be jailed first in Czechoslovakia. The president of the republic, T. G. Masaryk, at one time professor in the University of Chicago, the Rockefeller Standard Oil University, is keenly sensitive to the pressure that emanates from Washington through the American Embassy in Prague. The date of **October Tenth**, when the United States Supreme Court in Washington will hear the Scottsboro appeal, is rapidly approaching, and Embassies all over Europe are getting progressively more nervous with the increasing protest against the planned judicial lynching of the Scottsboro children. It may be said that the American Ambassadors in all the thirteen countries have sought to

smash the Scottsboro Mother's tour with prison bars. This resulted in two expulsions from **Belgium**. The diplomatic ambition, however, has so far been successful only in Czechoslovakia, but with the result that the Scottsboro issue looms bigger than ever in the Masaryk Republic. The Scottsboro Mother went to prison with head erect and firm faith in her cause, and she was vindicated by the ever-broader basis developed for the Scottsboro struggle.

The Scottsboro Negro Mother was charged with being an "undesirable foreigner". What "undesirable" means in this instance may be judged by the fact that this same Czechoslovakian government, not many days before had acclaimed the fiendish oppressor of the workers of Chicago, its mayor, Anthony J. Cermak, born in the same Kladno where Mrs. Wright was arrested. Official Kladno had prepared festivities for Mayor Cermak, head of the Chicago police department that carries through the worst oppression of workers, especially Negro workers, two of whom were shot dead in the police war against the protest of the jobless against the eviction of some of their comrades from their homes. Official Kladno sent Mrs. Wright to jail claiming she had come to talk "politics", that she intended mixing in the "internal affairs" of the country. It may be said, however, that Czechoslovakia's official regime themselves helped to give added political significance to the Scottsboro persecution which is an outgrowth of the national oppression of the Negro masses in the United States. The Germans, Slovaks, Ruthenians and other national minorities, forced into this artificial creature of the Versailles peace, easily indentified the basis of the Scottsboro persecution with their own oppression.

The **International Red Aid**, that organised the Scottsboro campaign and gave it leadership in Czechoslovakia, had been outlawed by the government but, with the presence of the Scottsboro Mother, even in prison, the bourgeois press declared that, "It seems as if the Red Aid is still with us and as active as ever."

The regime of Masaryk-Slavik, with its chief of political police, Rejsek, prepared for the Scottsboro Negro Mother's coming by prohibiting all the meetings and demonstrations arranged at which she was to speak. New meetings had to be organised by special invitation as ordered by Paragraph Two of the Criminal Code. With the Negro Mother in jail, and later expelled from the country, even these meetings were smashed by the police.

The Masaryk-Slavik-Rejsek police regime was worried because Mrs. Wright had attended the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress; it wanted to know where she got the money to pay the expenses of her tour: exactly why she had chosen to come to Czechoslovakia and with whom she had been in contact, her whole life's history, and finally Mrs. Wright was finger-printed and her picture secured for the police archives. The professor-president in his most scholarly researches could not have delved into his subject more intensely.

But the government has made the Scottsboro issue a major political issue for itself. The vicious treatment of the Scottsboro Mother will be made the basis of an interpellation in Parliament. Slavik's organ, "Vecer", will be called to account in the courts, with no illusions as to the decisions of this capitalist tribunal. A special delegation will raise the whole question directly before President Masaryk at the first opportunity. It is believed that Masaryk will not dare refuse such a hearing. And the Scottsboro Campaign in Czechoslovakia has taken on new life. **Scottsboro-Mooney Committees** will be organised everywhere and Czechoslovakia will be in the forefront of the October Tenth campaign.

There are four social-democratic members of the cabinet in Czechoslovakia, the ministers of justice, of culture and public instruction, of public welfare, and of relief. They did not raise their voices in defence of the Scottsboro Mother, not one of them.

The growing protest, however, was seen in the **Mothers' Delegation** organised spontaneously that came to the office of Minister Slavik protesting against the Scottsboro Mother's treatment. One Mother came with a babe in her arms. Of course, Minister Slavik ordered them out of his office, as if that settled the Scottsboro issue.

The Situation of the Working Masses in the Capitalist Countries

The Situation of the British Proletariat.

How Do the British Workers Live?

By R. Bishop (London).

The number of unemployed workers in Britain has increased by over 200,000 in the past two months and now total over 3,000,000, including those who do not figure in the official returns. Their number is steadily growing and their plight is common knowledge. Under the Means Test, the Anomalies Act etc., hundreds of thousands of them are now completely destitute and homeless. Their diet now is in many cases confined to bread, margarine and tea. If they taste meat once a week, they may in most instances be deemed more fortunate than the majority of their mates.

But what of the employed workers? Is their lot so much better than that of the unemployed? An examination of the life of the average British worker, on the lines of the investigation by Engels in 1848, would reveal a steady deterioration at an ever increasing tempo since 1918. It would also reveal that to-day, except in certain favoured industries, the conditions of the employed workers are little better than those of the unemployed.

Under the Means Test the responsibility of maintaining their unemployed relatives is thrown upon the employed workers, whose own wages are steadily dropping.

In April 7000 workers had wage increases amounting to £450 per month, but 187,000 had wage reductions amounting to £11,800 per month. And this is a steady process. In 1931 47,000 workers had wage increases amounting to £5,150 per week. But 3,010,000 had wage decreases amounting to £406,300 per week. **Thus the net result was that 2,963,000 workers had wage cuts amounting to £401,150 per week.** In six years the workers have lost in wages a total amount of over £52,000,000 per year.

But while wages are going down, prices are not dropping. It is true, that the fall in world prices has to some extent neutralised the effect of tariffs, but all the efforts of the Government, as they themselves admit, are being directed to securing a substantial increase in both wholesale and retail prices.

Let us take the position of the **miners**, of whom there are 800,000 working, and over 300,000 unemployed. The earnings vary from coalfield to coalfield, but the average earnings per shift are about 8/6 as compared with nearly 10/- in 1924. The miners, it must be remembered, are also working a longer working day than they were in 1924. In this they do not form an exception. Since 1926 by increased hours an increased amount of 171,692,000 have been worked in all industries of which records have been kept.

Few miners are working more than 3 or 4 shifts, some only 2. The man who is working more than 4 shifts is in an infinitesimal minority, taking the British coalfields as a whole.

This means to say that 30/- per week represent the average earnings of a miner who is in employment, while the incidence of unemployment is tremendous. Out of this 30/-, say 8/- goes for rent, another 2/- for union dues, insurance etc. and you have the family to be maintained on £1, with perhaps an unemployed son, daughter, brother or sister to be partially maintained, by order of the Public Assistance Committee operating the Means Test.

Pay a visit to a miners' home in S. Wales or Durham, and you will find the furniture bought during the war or just after has been sold. A lodger has been taken to help meet the rent, but he, in all probability has become unemployed and can contribute nothing to the household budget. If the father is working, his son or sons are almost certainly unemployed. Or the position may be reversed. Everything that can be pawned has been pawned. A dead weight of debts accumulated in the great strike of 1926 hangs round the neck of the family.

At the weekend, when the wages are brought home, after the rent, insurance etc. is paid, the housewife plans how to

make the £1 keep the family. Maybe she will buy a scraggy piece of meat for the Sunday, maybe some poor quality bacon for breakfast. But after Sunday the dinner will be bread and margarine, maybe a bit of cheese, perhaps a few potatoes. With tea this is the staple diet of the mining population of Great Britain. With regard to clothes, there is scarcely a miner who has been able to afford anything new in this line for himself, his wife or his bairns, for many a long year.

Bare-footed the children play in the street; the only change of clothes they get is when sometimes some old rags are bought and patched up by the careful housewife—rags which are bought for a few coppers at a jumble sale, discarded by their former owners. Or occasionally some charity organisation may send some oddments of clothing down.

A few coppers a week for tobacco, maybe an occasional trip to the cinema, in a threepenny seat. Nothing for beer, nothing for books or papers, nothing for any other amenities of life. The shops of the mining villages are denuded of everything except the very barest necessities of life.

What is the cultural life which the working miner has to compensate him for his shortage of material things? Most mining villages have their Miners' Institutes, erected by the workers themselves when times were better. They once had fine libraries, theatres etc. The libraries are years behind the times. New books can no longer be afforded. The theatre may be shut altogether, or it may be run as a cinema, in which case the only films which can be afforded are the oldest and cheapest of the trash of the bourgeois studios—and these after they are nearly worn out by years of usage in the cinemas of the outer world.

Sporting facilities are of the scantiest. Maybe a football pitch is improvised near the slag heaps. Maybe boxing bouts take place on pieces of open land where not a blade of grass will grow.

The men, women and children of the coalfields are undernourished—the deterioration is obvious to anyone who visits the coalfields today and who knew them ten or even five years ago. The life of the coalfields today is a living hell, and the miners are themselves conscious that capitalism has nothing different to offer them except a continued deterioration even from the present standards.

The miners have nothing to hope for from "Protection", and they know it. The Government boasts that during the period since the new tariffs were introduced, 123 new firms have opened up business, employing 2,800 workpeople. During the last two months 173,000 miners have lost their jobs, as a result of the counter-tariff moves directed against British coal of other countries, principally France and Germany.

But the lot of the miners is notorious. The extent of their misery is understood nearly as clearly as is that of the unemployed. But the case of the miners is by no means exceptional. The **iron and steel workers**, the **shipbuilders** and other workers in basic trades are in the same plight. Go to the great shipbuilding centres of Tyneside—Newcastle, Jarrow, Shields, Hebburn, even to once wealthy Newcastle itself. Here the picture of misery is as patent for all to see as in the derelict villages of the coalfields. Barefooted children are in the majority in Jarrow; children with half-starved, pinched faces. Rarely is work started on a new ship nowadays. It is an event if a ship comes in for repairs.

The **dockers** in every port in Britain are in the same position, a position aggravated, not improved by tariffs. Even the **railwaymen**, often jibed at in the press as men in a "sheltered trade", not subject to the buffets of adversity, have lost what little security they ever had, and their wages, always miserably low, are constantly being attacked. C.T. Cramp, the Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, recently admitted that there are now 100,000 less railwaymen employed than there were in 1925. Thousands of workers find themselves degraded and, apart from open wage reductions, actually drawing less than they did a few years back. Countless railwaymen have to keep their family on £2 a week.

In the **textile industry** wage cut after wage cut, rationalisation measure after rationalisation measure with growing

short time and growing malnutrition. 24.9 per cent. of the insured workers in the cotton industry are unemployed—a total of 137,000.

The most glaring condemnation of life under capitalism is to be found in the report for 1931 of the Chief Inspector of Factories. The report states that in Nottingham young lads between 14 and 16 were found to be employed in a hosiery finishing factory on night work, working altogether 74 hours per week. In Gloucester a young man rented an old warehouse and started to make cheap ladders by unskilled youth labour at low wages. As the work was piece-work, the boys were told they could work seven days a week if they liked, and were found in a number of cases to have been working 66 hours per week.

In East Lancashire women and girls were found to be regularly employed from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. A bedding manufacturer in Kent was found to be employing 14 years old boys and girls for a number of consecutive weeks, for 14 hours per day. Hundreds of similar cases could be quoted. Such is the misery of the workers, that not a day passes but one reads in the press of workers' suicides, a thing almost unheard of a few years ago.

To sum up, the worker finds himself with a rapidly declining standard of living, which for 3,000,000 unemployed and the majority of the workers in the basic industries, has already got perilously near the starvation level. The worker can live on what he gets, that is to say it may take ten years or so for him to die of the malnutrition which is daily sapping his strength. But how surely his life's blood is being sapped was shown in the case of a Black Country blast furnace re-opened a little while ago after being closed down for a period of nearly two years. In re-opening the works, the management announced that first preference for jobs would be given to men employed there at the time of its closing down. Some 500 men were taken on, of whom 100 had been unemployed for the period of years during which the furnace had been closed. Within the first week after re-opening, 60 of these collapsed at their work, no longer able to endure the strain of the work they had previously performed as part of their normal life. The Medical Officer of Health declared that these men were suffering from malnutrition developed during a long period of unemployment.

Short of food, without decent clothes to wear, no prospect of a job if unemployed, with every prospect of being scrapped if employed, in daily danger of eviction from their homes, or of having their few sticks of furniture seized for non-payment of rates, with very limited social and cultural opportunities, with no hope for the future—this is the lot of millions of workers to-day in Britain, the classic home of capitalism.

True that some workers are still comparatively well-paid. Printers on daily newspapers, engine drivers, some highly skilled branches of the metal industry still get a wage that enables them to feed well, to dress well, to enjoy what cultural opportunities capitalism has to offer. But even these have no security and know that their standard is falling.

Consequently a greater unity is growing up, a unity of skilled and unskilled workers, of employed and unemployed, of better paid and worse paid, all knowing that they are in the same boat.

The Position of the Durham, Northumberland, and Cumberland Miners.

By H. Lee (London).

The conditions of the miners in the North-East and North-West coalfields are a real reflection of the fact that the coalmasters are forcing the burdens of the crisis on to the backs of the miners. The pay, hours, conditions of labour, and housing, all are at such a low level that they are correctly described by the miners as "hellish".

The miners' officials in Durham boast that their men are the best organised in the country, yet in Durham wages are the lowest in the country. Though a small section of the miners can earn over £3 a week, there are thousands of miners earning about 25/- or 30/- a week. It is a common thing in the villages in Durham for miners not earning the

minimum wage, or on short time, to come home with 25/- a week. The coalowners are pursuing a policy of systematic short-time, with the result that thousands of men may have only 3 or 4 days' pay, and the short-time is so arranged that the men receive no Unemployment Benefit for idle days.

The Durham miners are suffering terribly from the quota system (Government-controlled restriction of production); under this system many pits are being closed. In the last three months more than 10,000 miners have been deprived of work through the closing down of pits.

A favourite trick of the masters is to close down the pit, and then offer the men re-employment at a much lower rate of pay. The men refuse the lower rates and apply for unemployment benefit. Then we find the Minister of Labour acting in unity with the coalowners. Such a case exists at the Silksworth Colliery (owned by Lord Joicey). The men have been denied unemployment benefit on the grounds that they refused "Suitable Employment". The suitable employment they have refused entails, in many instances, 3/- per day reduction.

The conditions in the adjoining coalfield, in Northumberland, are no better. Here the introduction of mining machinery is used, not to lower hours and lighten the miners' heavy labour, but is being used to smash down old working customs and to sweat and speed up the miners. Boys of 14 slave in the pits, earning for six shifts the low sum of 14/-. At twenty-one, if they get a full week's work, they earn just over £2-0-0; but even this is made less by a whole series of deductions for Union fees, Relief funds, State Insurance and checkweigh funds. In Northumberland the conditions of the young hand-putters are notoriously bad. This "putting" (pushing the tubs along the roads, from the coal face), usually done by ponies, is done by lads in seams where the roof is very low. This hand-putting is heavy and arduous work. The young lads sweat at this job. The pits are often wet, the roofs low, and the sides narrow. The lowness of the "top" causes the boys to be cut to bits at the end of a day's work. The skin is knocked off the backbone, through scraping, and sores grow on the body. The heat is so intense that it produces boils. The boys in this state describe themselves as being "like a butcher's shop". For this difficult toil they receive 30/- a full week. Many of these young miners pay 22/6 week for board and lodgings, and a few shillings for travelling to and from the pit, leaving little for clothes, and pleasures during leisure time.

On the North-West coast there is the Cumberland coalfield; the coalfield is a small one but it contains the infamous Whitehaven pits. The Whitehaven miners have suffered continuously through pit explosions, the last one taking place in 1931, when 28 miners lost their lives. The Whitehaven pits are on the coast, and their working seams extend under the sea, making the work hard and dangerous. Very often the work is so difficult that the miners cannot earn the minimum wage of 6/7 a day, and they have to argue and fight with the management. The weapon of the management is the threat to sack the men if they demand their rights. In Cumberland there is mass unemployment. It is the highest percentage in the country. Maryport, a little mining and seaport town has 75 per cent. of the insured population out of work. But this mass unemployment has not broken the spirit of the Cumberland miners. Last year, in July—August (1931) they fought heroically for 8 weeks, against a reduction of 7½ per cent in their wages. The miners of Cumberland have to live in small backward villages, in some of which there is still no drainage and no gas, and the houses are old. Where the municipal councils build houses the rents are too high for the miners. The colliery companies also supply houses for the miners, and the rent is deducted at the pit office, irrespective of how much the miner earned in the week. Thus a miner on short-time, earning 15/- or £1-0-0, will have 10/- or 11/- deducted for rent before he sees the cash, leaving him just a few shillings for food for himself and his family.

These brutal conditions are producing a wave of resentment and revolt amongst the miners. Miners in several pits have struck work in Cumberland, and in Durham a big opposition to the Capitalist and reformist policy is developing—showing that the miners are preparing to fight against these degrading conditions, and to win a better standard of life and finally to overthrow the Capitalists altogether.

Conditions of Life in the Cotton Industry.

By R. Bishop (London).

Let us start our examination with a few facts. 24.9 per cent. of the insured workers in the cotton textile industry are unemployed. 137,000 are entirely without work. 410,000 are working, but mostly on systematic short-time.

The average wage of those working is 31/8 per week. In 1924 it was 34/10 per week. Weavers when times are good earn 10/- per loom. In Burnley for the past year weavers have been having only two looms, and many adult weavers have been taking home a weekly wage of 15/- to £1.

The weavers work on the same price list with good material as they do with bad. But for bad work, in ninety per cent. of the cases due to bad material, they are fined. In some mills they have to buy the spoiled cloth.

In the spinning section of the industry there are two piecers to every spinner. A piecer is lucky to earn 25/- for a week's work. In the developing period of capitalism it was the ambition of every piecer to become a spinner, and perhaps one in six achieved this ambition. To-day the position is reversed. With mills closing down on every hand, the spinners are being de-graded to become piecers. Whilst a big piecer will earn 25/-, a little piecer may get only half as much. Big piecers to-day are married men with families. Twenty years ago their work was done by boys.

The wages of cotton workers have always been low, but in the days of comperative "prosperity" this was to some extent compensated for by the fact that every member of the family would be working in the mill. Mother, father, son and daughter, all contributing their quota to the family purse. But to-day all that is altered. Wages are lowered, and there is hardly a family without one idle mouth to feed. And with the Means Test, which has wrought more havoc in Lancashire than anywhere else, the full responsibility is thrown on to those who are working to maintain those who are not.

This is how the Means Test works in Lancashire:

At the Barnoldswick Means Test Committee recently a young widow was deprived of transitional unemployment benefit on the grounds that she had an unemployed brother drawing the "dole" who paid her 6/- a week lodging rent, and a young brother earning 10/- per week, and therefore she herself was not in need of assistance. Her income was 16/- per week. Her expenses apart from food were:—

Rent 6/5; coal 4/-; gas 1/- and milk for a child (she had one child) 2/6. This makes a total of 13/11, leaving 2/1 for food for her two brothers and herself.

Whilst this case cannot be said to be the normal, it is by no means exceptional in Lancashire to-day.

Here is a letter from an unemployed weaver received recently by the "Daily Worker":

"For 14 years I worked at Cuerdale's mill, Burnley. As a result of speeding up and having to wind stuff that was full of dirt, I have been forced to go on to the National Health Insurance, suffering from bad nerves. When I was working two months ago it was impossible for me to earn more than 17/- per week."

"My husband is unemployed and between his dole and my sick pay we draw 24/9 per week. Out of this we pay 10/- rent and 3/9 for coal. This leaves about 11/- to feed and clothe three of us. This week my husband received a form for the Means Test."

Sick pay is being cut down, the Means Test is becoming ever more ferocious in its operation, the employers are driving for a cut of 12½ per cent in wages, and rationalisation in various forms is being intensified in the industry.

Let us examine the conditions in **Wigan**, a large Lancashire town the bulk of whose population are either textile workers or miners. The Medical Officer of Health's report for 1931 shows that 322 persons in this town are living in houses that have been condemned as unfit for human habitation. In two working class wards 590 children were born in the last quarter; of these 146 died at birth. In one month 2,697 children were examined by the Medical Officer and 853 were certified as being under-nourished. At five years of age the children at the schools in the working class quarters of Wigan were found to be two inches below standard height and 8 lbs. below standard weight.

Let us look at **Bolton**, one of the most important centres of the cotton industry. Frederick Engels writing on the

"great town" in the "Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844", said of Bolton:—

"It is even in the finest weather a dark, unattractive hole in spite of the fact that except for the factories, its sides are formed by low one or two-stories houses. Here as everywhere the older part of the town is especially ruinous and miserable."

"A dark coloured body of water leaves the beholder in doubt whether it is a brook or a long string of stagnant puddles, flows through the town and contributes its share to the total pollution of the air, by no means pure without it."

This description was true of Bolton 88 years ago. Things have not improved in the intervening period. The Bolton Housing Survey Committee issued a report a short time ago on conditions on two of the wards in the town, needless to say the two wards with the largest proportion of workers.

The Report opens with the statement that more than two-thirds of the present houses were built over a century ago, and the wards as a whole have changed little since that date. A comparison is then given with another ward mainly inhabited by mill managers and business people. In the workers' wards the density of population is 63 per acre. In the other 1.6 persons per acre. The death rate per thousand is 16.3 in the workers' ward, but only 13.4 where the bosses live. The infant mortality rate is respectively 56 and 40 per thousand.

Here is a description of the environment:

"Along the east end the railway—with its embankment and high walls overshadowing the houses, runs the length of several streets. This district is indescribably squalid and depressing. Within a small area are contained a railway siding, gas works, lead works, a marine store, a mill stream the same described by Engels) and a lodge."

After emphasising again that most of the buildings are over a century old the following comment is made:

"The wastage of human material has its price, which sooner or later must be paid, far better to save at the beginning."

The Report reveals that 93 per cent of the houses in Bolton are without baths, that 40 per cent are without a scullery, that 94 per cent have no pantry or food store of any kind and that 2.7 per cent are even without what one would think an elementary necessity, a sink.

One chapter in the report is entitled "Housing Conditions From the Women's Point of View". It says:

"We have visited 1595 houses in East Ward and never again can we look out on Bolton with the same eyes. We have seen wives and mothers bravely endeavouring to do the most important work in the world—the bearing and rearing of children—in houses (one could not by any stretch of imagination call them homes) unfit for human habitation."

"The lives of these people are deprived of decency dignity and privacy, even in the sacred intimacies of birth and death; yet their heroism is marvellous."

"We have seen houses over-run with vermin and heard pitiable stories of weekly expenditure upon disinfectants, which mean deprivation of food. In one such house we saw a child seriously ill with pneumonia in a bed in the kitchen, through the wainscotting of which rats made a nightly visitation."

"Some houses had no washboiler and many had no separate sanitary—or rather insanitary—accommodation."

"A good number were close to open ashpits, privy middens, pail closets, and even stables, with manure heaps outside. In all of these flies bred freely and swarmed in the house, to the distraction of the already harassed mother."

This is a description of Bolton furnished—not by "prejudiced" Communists, but by bourgeois humanitarian "reformers". Such reports have been plentiful in the history of Bolton and every other industrial town from 1844 to-day, but the conditions persist, and will do so as long as capitalism exists.

Not only in Bolton, but in every cotton town such conditions can be found—conditions which take their toll in the heaviest tuberculosis death-roll in the country. Yet the cotton bosses and the business men live in as great luxury as could be wished for. They do not live in these miserable hovels, neither do they eat in the dirty and smelly fish and chip

shops, or tripe shops which are the landmark of every Lancashire town, the only restaurant the workers can afford.

Vile housing, underfed, bad and insufficient hospitals, shabbily clad—this is the condition of the cotton workers in capitalist Britain. Here are no palatial workers' clubs, such as are to be seen in every Soviet town, here are no airy schools for the children—they are educated in overcrowded class rooms in grimy, ancient buildings—; here is no Park of Rest and Culture to bring a healthy glow to the cheeks of the toilers. Here is squalor, the squalor of capitalism, which can only be overcome by bringing down capitalism itself.

Wages in the Distributive Trades and in the Lower Paid Industries.

By R. Bishop (London).

In 1926 the Trade Boards Advisory Council of the Trade Union Congress conducted an investigation into wages and conditions of distributive workers in the grocery, drapery, and meat trades. The following figures culled from the Advisory Council's reports give some indication of the position six years ago. It is not too much to say that in almost every case wages are lower today (and substantially lower) than they were in 1926. Hours of labour have remained much the same. The numbers of unemployed have tremendously increased.

10 per cent of the male workers in the drapery trades receive £2. per week or less. 39 per cent of the adult male workers receive less than £2. 10 s. per week. In the case of women, 80 per cent receive 35/- per week or less, and 46 per cent of the adult female workers receive less than 30/- per week. (These figures apply to workers who are paid entirely in cash.)

In the wholesale and retail meat distribution trade 42 per cent of the adult male workers receive less than £2.15s. per week. 30 per cent of the adult female workers receive less than 25/- per week. 50 per cent of the workers in this trade work a minimum of 50 hours per week.

40 per cent of the workers in the wholesale grocery trade work more than 48 hours per week, whilst in the retail trade 60 per cent work more than 50 hours per week. 30 per cent of the adult male workers (25 years of age and upwards) receive less than £3. per week. 20 per cent of the salesmen, managers and shop assistants receive less than £3. per week. In the case of females 60 per cent receive 35/- per week or less whilst 33 per cent receive 30/- per week or less. According to agreement, a big London multiple stores pays its adult female assistants 32/6d. per week. This is typical for other big concerns in the retail grocery trade.

In addition to wage cuts and increased unemployment, since these figures were compiled, it must be remembered that the investigations upon which they are based were of a limited scope. Many small concerns, for example, employing non-trade-union labour, pay lower wages than the bigger and better known concerns.

The general conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that a considerable proportion of the workers in these trades get wages far below trade union rates, wages which are insufficient for a decent livelihood.

Women Workers covered by the Trades Board Acts.

The returns issued under the Trades Board Acts (1909 and 1918) show the time rates fixed by the Board and in operation on May 1st. of this year. They cover nearly 50 Trades and Industries (Aerated Waters, Boot repairing, Brush making, Button making, Chain making, Clothing, Flax, Hemp, Fur, Laundry, Linen, Milk distribution, Paper, Pin, Rope, Tobacco, Confectionary etc.) and probably account for the wages of between 750,000 and 1,000,000 workers, both men and women.

From these Government figures we gather that the wages of female workers vary from £1.0.6d. (Chain workers, certain grades of Textile workers) to £2.; this last figure applying only to such skilled workers as those engaged in boot and shoe repairing. The average for women workers in some 43 trades and industries would be approximately £1.8s.0d. This, it should be emphasised, is the inference drawn from the Government figures: in practice the position is far worse. Many women workers qualify for Trade Board rates of wages only by working a certain period in the given trade or industry. Again, the prosecutions which take place from time to time bear witness to the fact that underpayment is by no

means uncommon. Hence the figures given above present an "optimistic" picture, and would have to be greatly toned down to harmonise with realities. Above all, it should be borne in mind that perhaps a majority of the workers in these occupations at the present time rarely get a full week's wage.

Male Workers covered by the Trades Board Act.

With regard to men in the same industries, the figures show that the lowest rates are £1.17s.5d. per week (jute workers, certain grades of textile workers). The highest wages—£3. per week—are paid only to skilled tailors in the London and one or two other districts. The average for 43 trades and industries is approximately £2.6s.— per week.

The observations made concerning women workers apply equally to male workers. In every trade and industry, unemployment is rife, under payment is not uncommon, and the full rates apply in many cases only after four, five, seven or even eight years service in the given trade.

There is in England a big, vague, "floating" mass of workers, men and women, whose conditions are little known either in this country or abroad: hotel and restaurant workers, catering workers of all descriptions, casual workers on the fringe of many trades and industries. Five years ago the Government made an enquiry into the conditions of certain sections of these workers and the resulting picture was one of super exploitation and tyranny. Their conditions today are much worse than in 1927; they have been particularly affected by the crisis. Though up-to date detailed statistics pertaining to their wages, hours and conditions are not obtainable, from the columns of the Daily Worker and the union journals we can derive considerable information.

Thousands of these workers work ten to twelve hours per day, or an eighty hour week: this applies particularly to catering and restaurant workers. There are many young salesmen earning from 15/- to 25/- per week. Others may get "good" wages (i. e., up to £3. per week): against this must be set the fact that they work 74 to 78 hours per week.

A case was recently brought to light of adult female workers in the biscuit industry receiving the princely wage of 18/- per week.

In seasonal trades such as fruit picking, wages are incredibly low.— 12/- per week or less for hard driven labour. This applies also to packing trades where the cuts in wages, accompanied by terrific speed up result in such wages as 13/- for a full week's work.

Casual workers, (for example in the sugar trade) often receive up to 10/- a week less than the recognised rates under the board of trade.

Bullying, tyranny, constant dismissals are common in these jobs. The intolerable conditions of the workers are reflected in the innumerable small lightning strikes that occur—and often pass unnoticed.

Scales of wages don't exist: or they vary at the whim of the employer.

The Position of the Black Workers in the African Colonies of the British Empire.

By R. Bishop (London)

The African Negroes are being steadily exterminated as a result of the development of Imperialism. The population of the **British Sudan** has decreased from 10 millions to 6 millions, that of the **Belgian Congo** from 20 millions to less than 7 million. The native population of **French Equatorial Africa** has declined steadily from 9 millions in 1910 to 2,800,000 in 1921, since which year the Government has decided the publication of further statistics to be „undesirable“.

The causes of this decline are patently obvious. In **Kenya** and many other parts of Africa the reserve and compound systems have robbed the Africans of the best and most fertile lands, and reduced them to a state of complete slavery. Unable to make a living in the „reserves“ the Negroes have to work at starvation rates for the white robbers who have stolen their land from them. Driven by their dire poverty, the parents hire out their children to the Whites for 12 months in return for a heifer, valued at between 30/- and 40/-.

For 10/- a month the mothers work from early morn till late at night, performing the most arduous tasks. Coupled with an almost entire lack of sanitation and malnutrition of

the most shocking type, this compulsory labour has resulted in an infant mortality rate that exceeds in many parts 500 deaths per 1000 births. The surviving children grow up ragged and dirty, eating rotten food in scanty quantities, debarred from any medical facilities, and liable to thrashings for the most petty offences.

The Australian aborigines provide a prime example of the extermination of a people by imperialism. Where once there were millions of healthy native Australians, there is now but a mere handful, and these have had their physique destroyed by the "civilising" advent of the white man. If the imperialists have their way, the Africans will follow the same path.

It is through these abominably treated people that the imperialists continue to draw their huge tribute from the colonies and try to stem the growing crisis in the metropolitan countries. André Gide, the French writer gives the following picture of conditions in the Belgian Congo: —

"In the neighbourhood of our encampment a whole flock of children, between 9 and 13, squat around a feeble grass fire all through the cold night . . . These children have been marched from the villages with ropes round their necks, for 6 days they have been forced to march without pay or food."

Here is another passage from the same book: —

"We met a group of prisoners, all of them tied together by ropes. One of them carried nothing; he was a lad between 10 and 12 years old, frightfully emaciated and utterly exhausted from misery, hunger and want of sleep. From time to time his whole body shook and the skin of his stomach moved convulsively. His head was full of scabs and in place of the hair there grew skin, the like of which usually forms over wounds. He seemed to have lost his smile forever.

"If these children should find their conditions unbearable and venture to protest against it, their fathers are tied to trees and then shot, as was clearly stated at a Parliamentary session in 1927, when a terrible massacre took place among their parents, and 5 small children were chased into a hut and then burned alive."

Gide confines his observations to Belgian territory. But the same things hold good, in a greater or lesser degree, for

all parts of Africa, whether ruled by Belgium, France, Britain or Italy.

In British Nigeria, the standard of living of the Negroes was driven down through the operations of Lever Brothers, causing tremendous hardships. The situation became so desperate that on December 14, 1929 some Nigerian women demonstrated at the station of Abaho. Six of them were shot dead by the police. Two days later another large number of women collected at Opobo; they were attacked by troops who killed 19 and wounded many more. And this was to maintain the profits of the Unilever soap and margarine combine. All was carried out with the full approval of the British Labour Government then in office, who issued a whitewashing report exonerating the officials on the spot.

In 1925 the Governor of Kenya reported to the British Colonial Secretary that thousands of Negroes were being compelled to work on the construction of the Uganda railway for wages of 12/- a month. In a medical report on 2½ million natives in Kenya, the Chief Medical Officer reported in 1930 that:—

"In general they are naked, poor, illiterate, uncultured, entirely without common things like soap, beds, tables, chairs etc. which are usually believed to be necessary for a comfortable life. Their huts are infested with worms and other parasites, so much so that it has been said that the inhabitants of some areas do not know what 'health' means. In general between 30 and 80 per cent of them have malaria."

The murderous role of Imperialism in the colonial countries is beyond cavil. But what of the Negroes abroad? In the United States the brutal oppression and exploitation of the Negro masses goes on apace. The whole press and educational system aims at fostering race prejudice against the coloured people, the logical outcome of which is Lynch Law, and cases like the Scottsboro' frame-up.

The Scottsboro' case is as typical of American imperialism as the Meerut case is of its British counterpart. It is significant, however, that the masses of workers in both Britain and the States have refused to be stampeded and have rallied to the side of their coloured class-brothers. As a matter of fact the Scottsboro' case has done much to cement the unity of white and coloured workers throughout the world.

In the International

Problems Confronting the CP. of Australia.

By Orr.

The question of sectarianism has been a burning issue with our Party and the most consistent of all our campaigns has been waged around this shortcoming. We have not succeeded, however, in overcoming all the manifestations of sectarianism which permeate our ranks.

In our endeavours to avoid many of the mistakes of our former Right wing leadership, we have shown tendencies to veer to the opposite extreme.

The issue to be raised here is the question of the "United Front" and "independent leadership", on the latter point especially to take up the question of what are the organs of independent leadership, and how they are formed.

Before going into the points raised, it is necessary to emphasise the tremendous importance of real clarification of these issues so that our Party can really move into the leadership of the vast movement of unrest now sweeping the working class of the Commonwealth. Such a careful study is all the more necessary in view of the partial success that has attended the "left" social-fascist moves to lead this movement into parliamentary channels.

The reality of their success may be gauged from the fact that on the basis of anti-capitalist demagogy, Garden, Lang and Co. were able, at the height of the anti-fascist and anti-loan council movements to prevent the establishment of independent struggle by the masses against the capitalists.

Our inability to expose the manoeuvres of the social-fascists is expressed in the fact that: at the elections they

mobilised the largest election meetings ever heard of in the Commonwealth and secured over 500,000 votes in N.S.W. on the basis of a programme presented to the working class as a programme "for militant struggle against the enslavement of the people by the capitalists through the loan council proposals for wage cuts, reduced pensions, forced labour, etc."

These facts make it of first importance that we, the only Party really fighting capitalism, should ask ourselves wherein does our weakness lie? Why is it that these workers, who are anti-capitalists, should still not only vote for, but supply the election funds of the capitalist agents in the leadership of the A.L.P.? Why is it that these workers, who are desirous of fighting the loan council proposals, should still be without the organs of struggle in the factories and mines where the main weight of the capitalist offensive falls.

All of these questions must be answered by an acknowledgment of our insufficient ability to be able to prove the fundamental difference between the revolutionary, anti-capitalist role of the Communist Party and M.M., as compared to the real programme in practice of the capitalist, anti-proletarian leadership of the social-fascists. Such an acknowledgment has its basis in the fact that though we are able to produce wonderfully fine indictments of social-fascism as, for instance, the article "Langism in the Dock", in the "Red Leader" of April 8th, 1932, and in many other issues of our publications, we have not yet been able to carry out our exposure in such a wide and concrete fashion

amongst the workers in the enterprises and the unemployed as to prove to the masses the counter-revolutionary role of the Garden, Lang junta.

In our work amongst the masses we show the tendency to separate the question of struggle against the social fascists from the struggle against capitalism. And we do not raise as the main issue in all our propaganda, the need for the "United front" of the working class for struggle against the daily encroachments of capitalism on our living standards. The smashing of the influence of the social fascists must be pursued more relentlessly than ever if we are to succeed in leading the workers to the revolutionary way out of the crisis. The struggle against social fascism, just because of its identity of interests with capitalism, will succeed all the more rapidly to the extent that we are able, on the basis of our work amongst the masses in the enterprises and amongst the unemployed, to develop the struggle against wage cuts and worsened conditions and for the revolutionary way out of the crisis. In the agitation and preparation of the workers for struggle, and in the carrying through of these struggles, we shall be able, in the most concrete fashion, to expose the role of social fascism as the purveyors of defeatism, disorganisation and strike-breaking, and in such a way make our exposure real and convincing to the masses who are drawn into such activity.

Our experience of the widespread disillusionment of the workers with the Scullin Government, and the fact the left social-fascists, by clever left demagoguery, were able to swing the vast majority of these workers behind them in 1930, is proof of this. Since then, however, the left social-fascists led a vicious drive against the workers of N.S.W., reducing wages of civil servants, railwaymen, tramwaymen, teachers; carried out wholesale evictions with batonings and shooting; this government appointed dole inspectors and worsened the position of the unemployed, and during its term in office, unemployment grew from 16 per cent. to over 31 per cent, and as a result of its actions, Rodger's Report, Coal Bill, etc., the way is opened up for a continuation of the offensive through wage-cuts, speed-up, and mass dismissals.

In spite of this the "lefts" were able during the recent elections again to retain the support of 500,000 workers, whilst the Communist Party increased its vote by only about 2,500. The 12,500 votes of the Communist Party represent only a small part of the voting strength of the workers who have shown a willingness to participate with us in the struggles of the unemployed against Lang; of the thousands of miners who repudiated the Lang Coal Bill; and of the tens of thousands who have responded to our call for special protests and demonstrations against the left social-fascists on such questions as free speech, defence of eviction fighters and anti-fascists, against rationing, etc. etc.

A mere recital of the past crimes of the social-fascists is itself not sufficient to smash their influence; the lessons of their betrayals of the past are given the necessary sting only when concretely linked up with the actual struggles of the moment, when we are able to contrast and expose their immediate and past treachery with our own consistent revolutionary programme. **We shall be able to make such a contrast only when we prove our consistency by taking up and leading the everyday struggle for all the needs and demands of the workers** and not because every day we appear before the workers as the opponents of social-fascism.

Our opposition to social-fascism, and our attempts to win the masses away from their influence, must be strengthened, but on the basis of our raising very sharply the leading role of the revolutionary movement as the only force consistently organising opposition to capitalism.

We have discussed the question of the "united front" on so many occasions that we have managed to convince ourselves that we know what it means. But do we?

When we consider the widespread unrest that marked the support of the General Strike agitation of early 1931, the huge struggle of the unemployed which followed, the wide militant reaction of the workers to the threats of the fascist New Guard, the discontent in a whole series of industries during 1931 over wage-cuts, longer hours, speed-up and rationing, and, more recently, the agitation in connection with the latest Loan Council plans for a further drastic worsening of our position, and compare all these evidences of growing radicalisation and willingness to struggle with the very small number of strike struggles that have taken place in this

period, and the fact that our Party vote in the recent elections showed only a small increase, we are compelled to say that we do not yet understand how to do united front work correctly.

We are undoubtedly performing much more work than ever before; we conduct more meetings; sell more papers; produce more factory bulletins; have built our membership tenfold in the past 2½ years, and have established more factory units. We have also laid the basis for a real R.T.U. centre and won many militant workers to our M.M. In other fraternal organisations we have recorded steady progress but we are by no means a mass Party nor does our Party or fraternal organisations lead masses of workers, even though we have on a number of occasions drawn masses behind our banner on special issues, i. e., General Strike agitation, United Front Against Fascism, Coal Bill Campaign, Eviction Fights, and Defence of eviction fighters, etc.

The instances quoted prove that large sections of workers are prepared to struggle and accept our leadership in the struggle when we are participante, and where we have established our leadership on the basis of work amongst the masses in preparation for struggle for certain specific demands of the workers.

The strike struggles also show an interesting situation insofar that in the great majority of cases the struggle have broken out chiefly in fields with a long record of militancy or in places where the reformist officials were not directly able to smother the strike agitation. In the places where the reformist machine is still strong they were able to capture control and lead the dispute to defeat, even where such had started under rank and file leadership.

The struggles which have taken place provide us with many examples of united action, an important fact not grasped by many of our Party members. In these struggles, on the basis of immediate demands, the workers adopted the united front to force their demands from the bosses.

This then is the lesson of the struggles which, if examined, gives the most concrete explanation of what is meant by the united front. **The united front means the unity of all workers without regard to political affiliation or craft differences in the struggle against the employers' offensive, for the enforcement of special or central demands.**

We lead in the development of such united front work when, through our agitation, we initiate discussions amongst the workers for common action in struggle for demands, which we help the workers to formulate and by using the discussions on these demands to mobilise masses of workers. A condition for the success of our united front work is the overcoming of lack of faith in the workers. This lack of faith expresses itself not so much in an under-estimation of the willingness of the workers to struggle, as in a lack of confidence in the ability of the workers to lead their own struggles and develop their own organs of struggle. This is reflected in our insistent raising of such slogans as "only the militant workers on the organs of struggle". Such an attitude not only reflects our weakness in the factories and our lack of faith in our class, but is a form of sectarianism which must be combated ruthlessly.

What are the United Front Organs of Struggle?

In the course of our agitation and discussions, and at the job or union meetings of the workers, we must consciously develop our propaganda in such a way as to win the widest sections of workers for the idea of struggle, and, by drawing upon our own and their experience of the altered conditions under which struggle must be waged, we attempt to win support for organs of struggle that will meet the new conditions.

In the conduct of our campaigns, our line must be of the most positive and constructive character, taking up the issues which are agitating the minds of the workers; explaining to the workers our united front policy, the need to win the widest sections of workers for the struggle, and how this can be carried out by the election of wide committees representative of the workers of various tendencies.

We should strive where possible to have such meetings and discussions in the factories. However, there are instances where the workers were willing to struggle and where it was not possible, due to weak preparations to initiate discussions and organise elections in the factories, but where it was possible to effect this at special mass meetings convened by the unions.

One example of our own may be sufficient to draw upon. With the proposal for a 33¼ per cent wage-out for textile workers last year, the union called a meeting at which 2,000 operatives turned up. We did not strive for a rank and file committee at this meeting "because the officials may have been elected". In this case we had not yet established our organisation in the factories and were without machinery to mobilise a big campaign near the factories, and in any case, it would have taken us a considerable time to develop an independent campaign to get together so many textile workers where a discussion could take place on the need for action committees and how these function.

The fact that 2,000 workers came to the meeting in response to the union's call showed that there was considerable unrest amongst the workers. We should have taken advantage of this meeting to propose a wide committee. To offset the bureaucrats and any treacherous moves they may make, the numbers of such a committee could have been broad enough to place the officials in a minority. We had a small fraction in this union through whom we could have worked to guide the committee and attempt to defend the interests of the workers. We failed even to struggle for this, but commenced to work chiefly from the outside, and in the meantime the officials succeeded in turning the dispute over to the Arbitration Court and by a piece of legal trickery helped to disarm the workers.

The whole question of strike strategy must be more carefully gone into and studied by our Party, not in an abstract fashion, but on the basis of the objective situation in which we work, with a real attempt made to work out our tactics with a full appreciation of our own weakness or strength as the case may be, and with a proper appreciation of the strength and traditions of the reformist T.U. movement and the power of the machine which still remains in the hands of the social-fascists.

More than 800,000 workers are organised in the reformist unions, and a large majority of these workers are still brought directly into contact with the ideology of the social-fascists by means of union journals to which they subscribe as part of their obligations to the reformist unions, and this situation demands that our work in the unions must be strengthened and better organised so that we may launch a really wide campaign for the winning of the rank and file for struggle on the basis of the R.I.L.U. programme.

Our work in the factories, mines and amongst the unemployed, must be placed in the foreground, and in the struggle to win the rank and file for our programme, we must learn to closely relate the job activity to our work in the unions and vice versa. Very often in the course of our work in either field, we make contacts that may be cultivated for assistance in both fields of activity. It is particularly important that our sectarianism on the question of fighting committees should be overcome at once.

We have been raising more and more in the course of our work such slogans as "only the militant workers on the strike and action committees"; "No T.U. functionaries on the fighting committees". We even demand that Red Trade Union functionaries shall not be members of strike committees. In the first place we can say that, to this approach, which says in effect to the workers, "you are not fit for the strike committee, and you are not to be trusted even to elect representatives except from the circumscribed list allowed by us", accounts for much of our isolation.

When we speak of "drawing the masses into struggle and into the elections of their organs of struggle", we mean what we say, and we cannot overcome the possibility of being left out of the leadership of struggle, and by dogmatically raising the demand that the leadership be elected from "amongst us".

Rank and file committees mean what the term conveys in its broadest sense, and the extent to which such committees accept our leadership will depend on the nature of the work to carry out amongst the masses. We cannot dictate to the masses who shall be upon the organs elected by them, but we can demonstrate the difference between a fighting leadership and a treacherous leadership, by ourselves taking up the workers' battles and proving ourselves worthy of their confidence.

Secondly, our slogan of "no trade union functionaries" not only denies the role of our Red Trade Union leaders, who should always be leaders of the workers' struggles, but it

also refuses even to recognise that many lower functionaries of the reformist unions not only hold these positions because they are more active than their fellow-unionists, but are also workers who can be won for the struggle against capitalism.

In some cases the workers may elect paid trade union leaders who have acted treacherously in the past to the strike of lock-out committees. When such a situation arises, our task is to see that every treacherous move made by these individuals is repudiated and reported to the rank and file and in this way we strengthen our position and reduce the influence of the social-fascists.

To summarise, we can quote from the thesis of the 8th session of the Central Council of the R.I.L.U. Which stated "the most important task confronting the adherents of the R.I.L.U. is the capable organisation of workers of **all tendencies** (my emphasis), as well as the unemployed, for the joint defence against the offensive of capital and for the counter-offensive of the working class".

"The forms of the united front which have existed up till now, are not sufficient, because they are too uniform and too much of one type. The forms of organisation, and the names, may and should be changed, but the main thing is not the form or the name. What is important is that the organs of the united front should be:

1. formed for the struggle against the employers;
2. elected by the workers in the factories;
3. They should consist of workers of various tendencies;
4. They should not substitute the revolutionary trade unions.

It is necessary, therefore, to display the maximum organisational elasticity in the forms of organisation and name of the organs of the united front".

Recognising, however, "The united front and unity can and should be formed on the basis only of the joint struggle against the bourgeoisie. Every united front or unity created on any other basis is opposed to the interests of the working class".

The fact that the workers take part under our leadership against special attacks on their conditions proves the growing radicalisation of the masses, but does not necessarily mean that they are fully conscious of the need for revolutionary struggle as the only way out of the crisis. The development of this revolutionary consciousness amongst the masses is a task of the Communist Party which must learn to be able to study not only special problems but all the problems of our class and show how these are interrelated. We must be able to show the workers in the most simple fashion that this crisis which arises out of the fundamental contradiction of capitalism itself calls upon us to choose one of two ways: either in the capitalist way, leading to our further enslavement, or in the working class way of proletarian revolution.

In the carrying through of our propaganda in the unions and on the jobs to organise the workers for struggle against wage-cuts, longer hours, forced labour, and unemployment, we can develop the revolutionary consciousness of these workers if we show that our line against wage-cuts, etc., social-fascism, fascism and war, is a consistent line in defence of the workers against any attempt to find a capitalist way out of the crisis at our expense. We must propose to the workers the widest united front for the fight for partial demands, against suppression, against the war danger, and in the work of preparing for these struggles against the capitalist offensive, we also must clearly show the need of defeating the influence of all capitalist agents in our own ranks, particularly must we expose the social-fascists and rally the masses behind us in the struggle for the proletarian way out of the crisis by revolutionary struggle.

When we convince the whole of our Party that the struggle for partial demands is the real starting point and the basis upon which we can begin to revolutionise the whole movement, and when we draw our whole Party into leading this work and mobilising the masses behind us and into the M.M. and fraternal organisations on the basis of struggle against the capitalist offensive, and when we correctly link up all these partial struggles with the need for the revolutionary way out of the crisis for the working class, we shall begin to develop that revolutionary consciousness which will find expression in support for the Communist Party; not in some issues alone, but in all our struggles.