

Draft Programme of
C. P. G. B. to Com-
munist International

THE
**COMMUNIST
REVIEW**

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IMPORTANT FEATURES of THIS ISSUE

International Delegate's Speech
to Party Congress

Building the Factory Groups

By C. M. ROEBUCK

Lenin's First Newspaper

By D. IVON JONES

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UNIV.

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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

Editor : THOS. BELL

THE EDITORIAL VIEW

BY the time this number of the *Review* is in the reader's hands, the Fifth Congress of the Communist International will be in session at Red Moscow—the heart of the first workers' republic. Since the last Congress in November, 1922, tremendous experiences have pressed into the life of our International Communist Party. There have been many decisive moments in the affairs of Europe, and many important decisions have had to be taken which will in no uncertain manner enable the many delegates that will attend from all parts of the world to tabulate the progress of the world revolution.

The world situation to-day is unique in history, in as much as there stands out in vivid contrast different types of governments thrown up by the march of events in the political struggle between the working class and the forces of capitalism. On the one hand, the Workers' and Peasants' Government of Soviet Russia—the vanguard of the world revolution—stands firm as a rock, the defender and champion of the interests of all the oppressed peoples throughout the world. On the other hand, a rich experience has accrued from the social pacifist governments of the MacDonal type, and the longer these Liberal-Labour Governments are allowed to survive, they reveal themselves as the servile defenders of imperialism and its bloody rule over nations and peoples struggling for independence and freedom. Out of this experience the Fifth Congress of the Communist International should be provided with many lessons that will add to its strength and determination, and enable it to pursue still more vigorously the revolutionary aims and methods which have characterised the Third International with such marked success, since its foundation by Lenin in March, 1919.

For more than a year after the Fourth Congress, the capitalists were uncertain of their course in Europe, an uncertainty aggra-

vated by the conflicting interests of the respective industrial and financial groups in France and Great Britain. The longer unity upon a definite plan was postponed the more Central Europe drifted into chaos and ruin.

Should Central Europe be left to its fate with the risk of another wave of social revolution? This question was brought sharply to the front, in addition to the strikes, revolts, and struggles of the workers, particularly in Bulgaria and Germany, by the phenomenal drop in the exchange rate of the franc. The prospect of the franc going the way of the mark gave the bourgeoisie a jolt such as they have not experienced since 1917. A chaotic France with a ruined Germany could hardly be tolerated. And so, the rush from Wall Street and London to the rescue and the speedy production, and still speedier approval by the governments of the Experts' Report.

The Experts' Plan has been deemed by the entire capitalist press and government of this country to be the most reasonable and moderate plan possible. As a matter of fact, we venture to predict it will take rank with the now infamous Versailles Treaty, which has cost Europe so much blood and anguish.

We cannot too often reiterate the consequences of the muddle bequeathed by the articles of Versailles if the workers are not to be deceived again by a similar swindle. Here is what a leading capitalist organ *The Observer* (May 18th) has to say about it :

"The Allies began by making impossible demands. According to the original French interpretations of Versailles finance, the more the Germans paid the more they would be in debt. They would never be free. The occupied part of their soil would never be liberated. In these circumstances the Germans, i.e., the capitalists of Germany, did what any other people would have done if led with equal cleverness and nerve. They practised gross evasion by means infinitely difficult to deal with. By currency inflation and weak taxes they wiped out their war-debt, vastly improved their industrial equipment, enormously strengthened their capitalist organisation at the cost of the professional and labouring classes, yet ruined their public finances and made payment of the Allies impossible except on more reasonable terms."

If a Tory editor can write thus about the Versailles Treaty, what could he not say about the Experts' Plan—a bastard of the foregoing—which has been swallowed almost without asking for political guarantees. This new swindle provides for the following payments :—

1st year	...	...	...	1,000	million	gold	marks
2nd year	...	...	...	1,220	"	"	"
3rd year	...	...	...	1,200	"	"	"
4th year	...	...	...	1,750	"	"	"
5th year	...	...	...	2,500	"	"	"
In the first five years				7,670	"	"	"

Of this sum 800 millions are to be obtained by a loan, so that for the first five years, payments of less than seven milliard gold marks are provided for. The payments from the fifth year onwards shall amount to 2,500 million gold marks annually, and perhaps more. A prosperity index has been provided for which shall be made up out of various, rather unrelated, elements (railway traffic, population, foreign trade, tobacco consumption, budget expenditure, and coal consumption). If these factors, reckoned according to a certain system, give an increase in the later years over the level of 1926-1929, Germany's obligations will be correspondingly increased.

* * * * *

But the rehabilitation of German capitalism means the intensification of competition between the imperialist forces upon an unprecedented scale, with the inevitable economic crisis. As things are the world market cannot employ to the full the productive forces of Britain, France and America, not to speak of other powerful states. We need here only observe how the recent slight relaxation of allied pressure on the Ruhr has led to the fall of British coal exports in general, by 1,750,000 tons, and a 20 per cent reduction in particular of French coal orders from Britain. Add Germany to the ring, speed up the struggle, and then—the crash. That is the dilemma of capitalism. If it makes no effort to re-establish German capitalism, revolution is at its heels. If it does attempt to re-establish capitalism in Germany, in the measure that it does so, it drives headlong to economic chaos and revolution. Either way it cannot escape. Such is the contradiction that faces MacDonald, that notwithstanding all his pacifist and democratic deceptions, he is in a cleft stick.

* * * * *

The magnificent victory of our Parties in the German and French elections is a splendid victory for our revolutionary policy. It gives the lie to MacDonald, Wels, Crispin, Longuet and the renegades of the Second International who have tried to chloroform the working class with social-reformist illusions, while slandering the Communist International.

In spite of the tremendous handicap of our comrades in Germany, through the Party being declared illegal, the arrest of its leading members, the suppression of papers, and the widespread persecution of every worker holding Communist views, 4,000,000 votes were polled for Communism, and 62 deputies elected to the Reichstag. Everywhere the social-democrats received a set-back, losing 70 seats, while the Communist Party had a net gain over 1920 of 58.

The Communist Party in Germany now becomes the foremost Party of the masses in Germany.

The election results in France also makes clear the trend of events. For our Party to increase its representation from 12 to 29 deputies is a splendid tribute to the ardour of our French comrades in their struggle against French imperialism. Like the results in Germany, it proves that our Party in France has become a force to be reckoned with, and mocks the continuous slobberings of MacDonald and Longuet about the Communists "splitting the movement."

We have no illusions as to the value of votes. We know that the decisive fight is elsewhere than at the ballot-box. But these results in Germany and France proves to us that, notwithstanding defeats and mistakes, nay, rather because of them, the workers know who are their real champions, and are willing to put confidence in those who at all times, and at all costs will fearlessly fight their battles.

More and more the workers are moving away from the Parties of the Second International. Disillusionment amongst the masses and with social reformism is proportionate to the degree that the leaders of the Second International become the "handrags" of the bourgeoisie.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist International will be able to record the continual decay of world capitalism, and great strides in the mobilisation of the workers under the red banner of Communism.

* * * * *

As a full report of the Party Conference at Manchester with all the documents and resolutions presented to it will in all probability be published at an early date, we content ourselves with the publication, in addition to the speech from the Comintern delegate, of the draft programme, submitted by the Central Committee, and passed by the Conference to the Fifth Congress of the Communist International.

Comintern's Message to the C.P.G.B.

**SPEECH OF FRATERNAL DELEGATE TO THE
PARTY CONGRESS AT MANCHESTER, 18th MAY**

I AM asked by the Executive Committee of the Communist International to convey to you the heartiest greetings of the many millions of workers united under the red banner, and resolved to fight to a finish for the great goal of the emancipation of mankind. It is a special privilege to greet the British Communist Party in Convention, assembled in the country where the First International, guided by Karl Marx, was organised sixty years ago. In September, 1864, a new direction was given to the class struggle—a direction based upon the solidarity of the working masses of all countries and all nations.

If we would dare to review this great period of time, full of different events, of lights and shades, of glorious victories and terrible defeats, we would come to the conclusion that humanity was never nearer the achievement of the ideals of the First International than it stands now. The wonderful growth of the revolutionary movement, the sympathy and confidence of the labouring masses to Communism, as shown among others in the last elections in France and Germany, is the best proof that we are moving closer towards the time of great battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat. I hope that you will agree with me, that at this very moment when we think about our past and future, our thoughts should dwell naturally on the figure of that man whom we consider is the creator of the fighting revolutionary International, and who have shown the labouring masses the way which leads to victory. Lenin closed his eyes at the beginning of this year, but he is alive in the great heart of the working labouring masses as the apostle of Communism, as a symbol of the new world we are fighting for. Handling the complicated and urgent problems we have to face, we will try our very best to follow on the heels of our great teacher, in order to fight with greater success for the ideals to which he devoted his great genius. Let us bear in our mind, that if the First International was the

fruit of the great theoretical work done by Marx, the Third International has come as the result of great revolutionary action guided by Lenin.

It is clear enough that at the present moment the so-called Labour Government is the most important issue in this country. Still, I would like before I come to this point to say a few words concerning our past which, according to my understanding, we should all bear in our minds. I am inclined to believe that forgetfulness is the greatest enemy of Labour, and the best servant of the dominant classes. Our forgetfulness is of special value to all traitors of different shades and kinds who are betraying Labour again and again.

TRAITORS TO THE CAUSE OF LABOUR.

The question of Socialist ministers is not a new one in the history of Labour. It was in the year 1904 that the Amsterdam Congress of the Second International in connection with the case of Millerand in France, had to deal with this question. Millerand as you know, is now head of the most militarist republic in the world. He is the French President; but some twenty years ago he claimed that he could manage to be at the same time a member of the Socialist Party and a minister of a capitalist government, and he has had many supporters, including Jean Jaures. How did the matter come up?

At that time no group of the dominant classes could feel safe under the shelter of a Socialist or a Labour Government. The political parties of Labour were not yet sufficiently tried and not enough corrupted for the dominant classes to trust them. The profiteers and the exploiters had at that time enough experience in handling trade unions. They gave up their old views upon the unions, which they considered at the beginning as the creation of the devil, and tried to corrupt them into agencies spreading "sound" opinions among the workers and defending the positions of capital. This policy was very successful in many countries, especially in England and the United States, where the great profits of the capitalists created the economic basis for opportunism among the skilled and highly paid workers. The capitalists used all the ways and means, including open bribery, in order to keep the unions under their control.

As I said, this policy was successful to a very high degree. But it was much harder to handle in the very same way the

political organisations of the working class, which united the more active and the more conscious workers. The invitation of Millerand to office was the first step of the capitalist class to try to corrupt the Socialist parties of the Second International. At that time the French bourgeoisie felt that some feathers would to a certain degree decorate their worn out tail on the one hand, and bring disruption into the ranks of Labour on the other hand. The Amsterdam Congress repudiated the Millerand policy. Nevertheless, we should consider the Millerand case as the first expedient of the dominant classes to serve capitalism under the banner of Socialism, picking up for this purpose individual Socialist ministers.

COLONIAL ROBBERY.

The Second International had to deal with another problem of the same kind. It was at Stuttgart where a part of the British Section of the Second International made an attempt to impose upon Socialism the acknowledgment of colonial robbery. The dominant classes understood well enough that in order that they should not have any hindrances in exploiting the enslaved masses in the colonies as at home, they should make a certain part of the working class partners in this abominable affair. In Stuttgart we have already seen the results of the colonial policy upon the many important branches of the Second International. Many congresses of the Second International pledged their support to the oppressed masses of the colonies, but these revolutionaries' words had nothing to do with the deeds of the Socialist parties in the so-called civilised countries.

The French section put forward the problem of ministerialism. The British section advocated participation in colonial robbery, and at the very same time one part of the German section of the Second International worked upon the revision of the revolutionary theory of the class struggle, trying to prove the necessity of class collaboration. The work along these three lines prepared the collapse of the Second International, at the outbreak of the war. Every sensible worker knows at this time, to use the expression of Lenin "That the imperialist war of 1914-1918 grew inevitably from the division of the whole world, from the domination of the capitalist oligarchy, from the unlimited power of a mere handful of the biggest banks, say, two to five in each country." And to this war, waged over the question

of the division of the world, the Second International gave its full support.

I called your attention to those three issues not only because they explain to us the shameful treason of the Second International, but also because we have to deal with them in this country just now. We have in this country :

Socialist Ministers of His Majesty the King: Ministers of Labour who brag the glory of the Empire. Ministers who preach confidence between Labour and Capital.

We have dealt with questions concerning the history of the Socialist movement as a whole, but I know that Empire topics are greatly in fashion now, in this country, under the leadership of the so-called Labour Government. Mr. J. H. Thomas competes successfully with Mr. Baldwin in the propaganda of imperialism. Mr. MacDonald is trying his best, as he said himself on May 8th at the opening of the Press Club at the Empire Exhibition "to enable the British Empire to continue vital."

LABOUR GOVERNMENTS IN AUSTRALIA.

Let me remind you that before the advent of the MacDonald Government, we have had not only the government of executioners of the revolution headed by Scheidemann and Noske, but also a Labour Government in Australia. It was in existence at the moment when the great slaughter of nations for the profit of the bankers begun. *I would suggest that the Communist Party of this country should issue a full statement of facts concerning the activities of that government.* Such a statement would be a most convincing warning to those honest English workers who sincerely believe that we should not impose too much upon the shoulders of the Labour Government, in order to give them a fair trial.

I will take the liberty only to mention a few facts concerning the activities of that Government.

At the outbreak of war, the Prime Minister of the Australian Labour Government announced a Party truce and the abandonment of contentious legislation. The workers were disappointed, still the politicians of the Government succeeded in persuading the workers to support them in view of the fact that the Labour Government should be well prepared to meet the problems which will arise when the war ends. This political success did not last long. The workers followed the policy of their Government, and in 1916 the conference of the Australian Labour organisations

came to the conclusion that the Labour Government did not fulfil its promises. Let me quote you one of the resolutions passed at that conference. The resolutions reads: "*that the Holman Government be severely censured for refusing to endeavour to carry out the first plank of the Labour platform—the abolition of the Upper House.*"

By the way, has something been done here to solve this question? I am inclined to believe that the Lords feel very comfortable behind the Labour Government. And still the Second International fight the cause of the revolution in the name of democracy!

But let us come back to the Labour Government of Australia. In 1916 the labouring masses of Australia had to take a stand with regard to the so-called War Census Act, which is the Australian counterpart of the National Registration Act. The labouring masses in a series of conferences and meetings fought emphatically against compulsory enlistment, but the Labour Government had the ambition to become the most patriotic government in the Empire. Notwithstanding the protestations of the masses, they started to pass a Census Act in the most drastic way, censoring the Labour Press and gaoling those Labour men who dared to oppose compulsion.

Only on December 14th, 1916, the Interstate Labour Conference of Australia met and passed the following resolution:

"That as compulsory overseas military service is contrary to the principles embodied in the Australian Labour Party platform, all federal members who have supported compulsory overseas military service and who are members of any other political party are hereby expelled from the Australian Labour movement."

To make a little clearer this resolution, I should add that at that time the traitors had already organised the so-called National Labour Party.

Now let us see what were the results of this treason. I should quote the summing up made by Mr. Childe in his book "*How Labour Governs.*" Mr. Childe is not a Communist. He is a University man who had a chance of being closely connected with the so-called Australian Labour Government. He writes:

"On the conscription issue the workers have been once again betrayed by their political leaders who had defied the will

of the movement and sought to dictate to their supporters. As a consequence many of Labour's most trusted and influential guides went over to the anti-Labour ranks. Labour was left in a minority in the Federal and State parliaments except in Queensland Those leaders who refused allegiance to the policy of the movement were rewarded by Labour's enemies with continuance in office or lucrative positions."

As you see, you may find men like Millerand, Briand, Mussolini, Scheidemann in the Empire itself. The dominant classes appreciate treason, and pay for it highly at the expense of the working masses. But this little bit of history concerning the activities of a Labour Government in one part of this Empire should be well-known to every worker of the country in order to avoid deceit in future. The past of Holman and Hughes is the future of MacDonald and Henderson.

THE MACDONALD GOVERNMENT.

Now let us come to MacDonald's Labour Government. At the Second Congress of the Communist International, Lenin said :

"MacDonald remains throughout a bourgeois pacifist and middle class reformer, cherishing the illusion of a non-class state. MacDonald recognises the class struggle only as a figure of speech, just as do all the deceivers, sophists, and pedants of the bourgeoisie."

At that time MacDonald was not yet Prime Minister of His Majesty. He was seeking for affiliation with the Third International. Now he does not like to speak about the class struggle at all. On the 1st of May he declared that his dream is "to change industry from a battle-ground of strikes, to a co-operation and confidence field between the worker and the owner of capital." Neither does he like Socialism. There is too much pedantry in this word for a Prime Minister. He prefers to be independent as much as possible from the Party. He declared with some pride that he has been privileged "to be regarded as a sort of non-party, party leader." In other words we see already our Prime Minister standing on this slippery ground which leads directly to treason.

But let us first see how the Labour Government came into office. By the way, nobody knows exactly whether the Government is in office or in power, or whether it has got the opportunity only to "walk in the creaky shoes of respectability" to use the expression of the *Times* about a week-end spent by the Prime

Minister and his daughter with the King and Queen. To the question about office, power and opportunity I hope to come again. Now I would like to try to understand the origin of this Government.

At the last elections the Labour Party got a relative majority of votes. This parliamentary victory marks the result of the revival of the Labour movement in this country—a revival which followed the great offensive of capital. It is clear enough that we should do all in our power to prevent the dominant class from converting this Labour victory at the elections into a defeat. For that reason we should as carefully as possible study this break-off of the after-war offensive of Labour.

THE STRATEGY OF BRITISH CAPITALISM.

The strategy of the British Government in 1919 deserves a special study. I would refresh your memory only on the most important moments of that great fight. We all know that the year 1919 was the most critical time in the history of capitalism. At that time it was already clear enough that the United States of America were the only victors in the Great War. All European countries went out of the war—the victors as well as the vanquished—wounded, broken and incapable of establishing economic stability. The working masses, thus disappointed and deceived, tried their best to ameliorate their conditions after the War was over.

We have witnessed at that time a strong development of the revolutionary movement all the world over. The Russian Revolution has been heroically fighting amid disease and starvation the combination of many counter-revolutionary forces which had the support of the capitalist Government of the so-called civilised nations, including that of Great Britain. The Russian Revolution became the centre of hopes and sympathies of the oppressed masses of the west as well as the east. The German workers arose under the Red Banner of Social Revolution. In Italy while the Government was completely demoralised, the workers took possession of the factories and workshops. The masses in the Colonies were in a state of rebellion. I should add that under these circumstances the Third International was organised, and it seemed that a new era in the world's history had begun.

The English Government had to handle the demobilisation as speedily as possible on one hand, and try to secure work for the

demobilised on the other hand, with a clear understanding that the strike movement is an open challenge to the capitalist system and an endeavour to do away with the slavery of wage-earners oppressed by the bankers and profiteers. The Government was clever enough not to meet the Labour masses in open fight. The question the British Government had to resolve was only how to trick the masses and overcome the dangers of revolt, and win the necessary time for war preparedness.

The dominant classes of Great Britain know exceedingly well the artistry of governing the masses by dividing their forces. The defeat of the local strikes (Clyde, Belfast) was the first triumph of capital. As "The Workers' Register of Labour, 1923," says: "work was resumed under the terms of agreements concluded nationally." In other words, it means that national bodies, instead of doing their best to strengthen and widen the local movement, betrayed it. Of course, the failure of the local strikes was a great blow to the local Labour Movement. Nevertheless, it could not stem the development of the struggle between Labour and Capital.

The Mining crisis was the central issue at that time, just as it is now. The miners' demand for public ownership of the mines was under those circumstances an open threat to the whole system of private ownership. In order to avoid trouble, the Government created two institutions, I would rather say two traps, for the purpose of vitiating the revolutionary energy of the labouring masses. The first is known as the "National Industrial Conference," and the second as "The Royal Commission on the Coal Industry." Only a few powerful Labour organisations refused to participate in the conference (The Triple Industrial Alliance and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers). In spite of this fact, the Government succeeded in creating some sentiment in connection with the conference, and at the conference itself the Labour representatives got the chance to win many "victories," namely, the unanimous vote for a general 48-hour working week, and for the establishment of a minimum wage commission. The Coal Commission worked along the same lines. The Labour representatives secured a majority in favour of public ownership of the mines. The Prime Minister pledged himself to honour the recommendation of the Commission, "In the spirit and in the letter." The further events are well known.

In May, 1924, the Court of Enquiry on the conditions of the miners stated that the miners' wages were lower THAN BEFORE

THE WAR, although the output per man as well as the profit of the mineowners has increased since 1914. To be brief, I would say that instead of getting a Law introducing public ownership of the mines, and other Labour laws tending to ameliorate the conditions of the workers, the Labour movement had to face the so-called "Emergency Powers Act," which was passed by Parliament in 1920.

The failure of local strikes is the first triumph: the Black Friday (April, 1921), when the Triple Alliance was broken is the final item of the strategem of the English Government: after which a determined attack upon Labour was launched. The British Government emerged victorious from the first crisis.

Now let us see, what were the main causes of this victory.

We have already referred to the experience and the knowledge of the English profiteers in defending their privileges. Still, this strategical genius is not the sole reason for the victory. *Black Friday is not only the result of the clever manoeuvre of the capitalists, but it is also a result of the treacherous policy of the leadership of the Labour masses.*

More than twenty years ago, Lenin used to work in London, working on *Iskra* (the *Spark*). He once remarked that "many elements of revolution and Socialism are spread among the English workers but they are mixed up with conservatism and religious prejudices so that they cannot come out and be generalised." Unfortunately in the year 1919, the conditions were still worse. The revolutionary elements were not sufficiently united. The Labour masses of this country did not have a strong political organisation of their own which would have been able to secure victory. *But there were in the Labour movement of this country organisations who helped to their utmost the capitalist government to win the game.*

The issue is this, that the Labour movement must not be betrayed again at the moment of a new revival which coincides with the revival all the world over. Parting from this point of view we should review the events which followed the election victory of 1923. In other words, we are coming to the main point, to the Government of the King, which claims to be a Labour Government.

The revival of the Labour movement shows that although capitalism was strong enough to overcome the offensive of 1919, it did not succeed in securing economic stability not to kill the

movement. The movement is alive. The recovery of the Labour masses is a fact which nobody can deny.

WHY THE ADVENT OF A LABOUR GOVERNMENT ?

The question is now, why the dominant classes admitted the advent of the Labour Government. Many of the workers here are inclined to think that the advent of the Labour Government is the result of the inability of the dominant classes to establish unity in their own ranks. The disruption among the capitalist groups is a fact. Still, I think that if the capitalists had reason to fear the Labour Government as a revolutionary force, fighting the capitalist system, they would find a way for co-operation and they would create a coalition government of the Tories and Liberals. The consent to the entering of Labour into office can be explained by the following three considerations.

1. The dominant class feel quite safe behind the Labour Government.

2. They keep the real power—the economic as well as the political—in their hands.

3. They consider the entrance of Labour into office as the best way to crush Labour.

In other words, I think that the consent of the Liberals as well as the Tories given to the entry of the Labour Government into office, is of the same nature as the creation of the National Industrial Conference and the Coal Commission in 1919.

I could not render sufficient evidence that the dominant classes have had a devised plan to trap Labour into office to vitiate the movement, but there is overwhelming testimony to the fact that the Labour Government tries its very best to help capital to convert the last election victory into a terrible defeat.

Let us take first the foreign policy of the Government. MacDonald and his associates are very proud of the fact that the Labour Government recognised the Union of the Soviets. I do not believe that this convention would be inclined to arrange a thanksgiving on the occasion of the recognition. The recognition might be of great importance if the Labour Government would dare to answer the call of the Soviet Government and start a united action for disarmament, freedom of the colonies and International Labour Legislation. A close alliance between English Labour and the Soviets to carry out a clear and definite international programme would have a tremendous importance, the results of which it is rather hard to foresee. But the MacDonald

Government did not do anything of this kind. It did not even dare to repudiate the Bankers' Memorandum which is an open attack upon the achievements of the great Russian Revolution. Instead of seeking unity with the Soviets, MacDonalD prefers to be the welcomed guest of the King and Queen to continue the bloody policy of oppressing the masses in the colonies, and on the very eve of the French elections which were directed against the imperialists and the militarist and reactionary policy of the old French Government, he sent his friendly invitation to the leader of that policy, to Poincaré, to show that he is in sympathy with him.

To have a clear understanding about Mr. MacDonalD's foreign policy it would be enough to quote the statement of Baldwin made in the month of May, that means at the moment when the Government have already had enough time to show its own face.

Mr. Baldwin said: "*I promised this Government that until such time as we are convinced that they are departing from that continuity (of foreign policy) we shall support them.*"

That means that in the month of May, Baldwin was still convinced that MacDonalD continued the old traditions of English Imperialism. This gives us the right to say that the Labour Government is not a Government defending Labour, but a Government of His Majesty the King, and of the Empire. I don't think it is necessary to recall the words and the deeds of the so-called Labour Government concerning the colonies. I am sure that in our ranks everybody knows them well enough. When a Labour Minister calls upon workers, as Mr. Thomas has done in Newport on the 8th May, to preserve the constitution, which entrusted him (Mr. Thomas) with the responsibility and charge of one-fourth of the Globe, then the King may say he has picked up a very good servant.

But servants of the Crown cannot defend the cause of Labour. It would be the greatest mistake to think that MacDonalD is a true servant of imperialism in questions of foreign policy only. The Home policy of his government does not differ a bit from his foreign policy. Comrade Gallacher already referred to the threats of MacDonalD's Government to use the Emergency Powers Act against strikes. There is something in these threats reminding us of the action of the Labour Government in Australia.

If we would only know about MacDonalD's Government that it threatened strikers to use force against them we would be entitled to say it smells like treason. But we know many more

facts, or it would be better to say that we know the *policy* as a whole. Of course, MacDonald is explaining that his hands are tied up, that the majority is sabotaging all his measures, and so on.

Here is the point. The dominant classes having the power, which could be taken away only in a revolutionary way, tied up the hands of the Labour officials showing to the masses what a nuisance the Labour Government is, praising at the same time the Labour Ministers when they act as devoted servants of capital.

"I unhesitatingly say," wrote the *Sunday Times* on the 4th May about Snowden's Budget speech, "that it was the best Budget speech since Gladstone. I think everybody in the House was delighted with him." On this occasion I would advise the Labour Ministers to read their own paper. The *Daily Herald* has written on the 9th May: "When the opponents of Labour speak well of us we shall know we are betraying our trust."

Breach and betrayal of trust. These are the facts we are facing. I could accumulate a big volume of compliments made by the capitalist press and by capitalist politicians to the Labour Ministers, and to the Labour Government as a whole. Furthermore, the capitalist press considers it its duty to defend MacDonald and his Government against the Communist International. In connection with the speeches made by Zinoviev and Trotsky, the *Daily Mail* (May 2nd) wrote, the "The British people do not like to hear aliens abusing our Prime Minister: and we think it is due to National British dignity for him to put his foot down."

MACDONALDISM IN WORDS AND DEEDS.

I am not going to dwell on any question in particular to show that the MacDonald Government did not fulfil a single promise of those which were given in the time of the elections. There is not a single measure of the Labour Government which would contain the endeavour to touch the great profits of capital in the interests of Labour. On the other hand, the Government tries its best to disorganise and demoralise the movement. From day to day the Labour Government is becoming more and more the tool of the dominant classes in the struggle against Labour. Under the shelter of the Labour Government the Association of British Chambers of Commerce dares to draft a programme which is an open attack upon Labour from top to toe. According to this programme peaceful picketing should be abolished, strike before enquiry and report should be considered a punishable offence. Trade Unions should be liable for sabotage and so on. At the

same time Mr. MacDonald speaks about his "hatred of revolution and warm welcome for evolution," and Mr. Thomas preaches confidence to the oppressors instead of suspicion (speech made the same day in Newport—to which I have already referred).

I think that it would be a good idea to issue a short statement comparing the promises of the Labour Party in the times of election on the one hand and the words and deeds of the Labour Government after it came into office. Every worker would see from such a statement that the Labour Government as well as the other capitalist political parties look upon election platforms just as upon a means of getting into office. The moment they get in, the platform is no more use. They would furthermore see that the Labour Government has neither office or power. The Labour Ministers are simply used as figureheads to decorate the capitalist exploitation and to demoralise the energy of the Labour movement.

The statement of facts should be illustrated. Why not show the workers how MacDonald, who does not like the word "Socialism," spends his week-end with King George, or how Mr. Henderson bows his head to the departing King of Rumania, who came to this country to get money for his White Terror, or how Mr. Thomas makes a toast at the Exhibition for the Empire?

Such an illustrated statement would serve as a warning call to the masses against the Government headed by Mr. MacDonald, who is dreaming, as he says himself, "to be transported on a magic carpet over time and space," but who serves with all his devotion the cause of capital. At the same time the statement of facts would serve to show the working masses that there is no way to freedom but the way of class struggle and civil war.

The warning call should have for its purpose the awakening of the working masses of this country who are still—we should state it—asleep.

We are witnessing a turning point in the Labour movement of Europe as well as of this country. At this moment our Party should not be behind the movement, but it is called upon to be in the first ranks, and to show the masses the way of struggle which leads to victory.

THE NEED FOR FACTORY GROUPS.

I would therefore emphasise at this very moment the necessity of creating factory groups in every factory and every workshop. Those groups may help the Party to unite the masses, not

for words but for deeds, namely for immediate action, to impose upon the Government to fulfil the promises they have given and the obligations they have taken upon themselves. This campaign if properly organised should show the masses that the way to emancipation lies outside the parliament. Now, as in 1919, the miners' crisis is one of the central issues of the moment. We should condemn the attitude taken by the Government towards the miners. Every miner should know that our Party is not only ready to help him, but also ready to try its very best to secure for the cause of the miners the support of other workers.

The Labour movement could not afford to have another Black Friday under the auspices of a King's Labour Government.

The miners' issue is of the greatest importance. But there are also other problems which concern the interests of all the workers of this country. Let us mention unemployment, low wages, armaments and so on.

All these issues together are parts of one issue—the struggle for power of the working class.

This is the great issue of to-day.

To this issue we should consistently draw the attention of the Labour mass, using the help of the factory groups who are called to raise the creative activity of the working class by a mouth to mouth wireless and laying special stress upon the work among women as well as among the youth. I know that something has already been done in this direction, but we should state frankly that we are still backward, especially if we have in mind the great work which we have to achieve.

This Conference should initiate the immediate creation of factory groups and issue a ringing call to all the workers and especially to the women and to the youth, calling them to rally under the red banner of active struggle against slavery and treachery.

Comrades and friends, a great danger threatens the Labour movement in this country. The treacherous policy of the Labour Government threatens to drag the whole Labour movement into the old route of shameful compromise and terrible defeats. More than ever we should be on our guard with the slogan :

“Labour should not and must not be betrayed again.”

I know that the Communist Party here is still a small minority. But it is its duty to unite all revolutionary and honest elements of the Labour movements for immediate action. It is a hard task. Still, we have to keep in our mind that Labour recovers everywhere. The impotence of capitalism, and the failure of opportunism became especially clear at the time of the offensive of capital, when the dominant classes, together with the political parties of the Second International possessed full control of the situation. The workers of all countries are beginning to understand the abominable result of the treacherous policy of the so-called Socialist and Labour parties.

The time of great battles draws nearer and nearer and we should be prepared to answer the call of history.

At this very moment I wish to impress upon you the necessity of creating a workers' daily. You may be proud of the fine *Workers' Weekly* you give to the workers of this country, but this is not enough. The *Daily Herald* is in no way the herald of the emancipation of the working class. The Labour Government serves the King, the *Daily Herald* serves the Labour Government. The paper as well as the Government are becoming more and more independent of the aims and claims of the working masses, to depend only upon the will of the bankers and profiteers. I know how hard it is to create a workers' newspaper in this "democratic" country of freedom of the press for profiteers only. Still the movement needs a daily and we are bound to create it. Let me remind you that the German Party being an underground Party has some twenty dailies, and even our Party in the United States of America, where the conditions are not better than here, has a Communist daily in many languages.

At this moment the British Communist Party is as I have said, still a small organisation, but it is a part of the great Communist International which has entered the sixth year of its existence full of hope and energy and strong will to draw from the treasure groves which we have inherited from our great teacher and leader—Lenin—to achieve the great work which he began so well to create—a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics all the world over.

Raise the banner higher. Carry it forward. The future belongs to us.

The End—or the Beginning?

The Remaking of Russia. By KURT WIEDENFELD. Labour Publishing Co. 3/6.
The First Time in History. By ANNA LOUISE STRONG. Labour Publishing Co. 6s.

NOTHING demonstrates the fundamental *ignorance* of capitalist culture so much as its utter incapacity to evolve any sound and workable theory of social relations and development. And nothing has revealed that incapacity more than the helplessness of its chief exponents before such a phenomenon as the Russian Revolution.

There are not (and probably never were) in the world any set of men quite so book-learned as the "cultivated" classes in England and Germany. In their departments they have achieved intellectual triumphs before which future ages will stand rapt in admiration, and of which present ages for the most part know nothing (since the knowledge is either locked in the records of each speciality or "expounded" in "popular" fashion by people totally unqualified to judge of the significance of the accomplishment).

The re-discoveries by the *savants* of the ability to read Egyptian hieroglyphics or Assyrian cuneiform stand, as romantic episodes, comparison with the voyages of Columbus or Vasco de Gama. The work of the Higher Critics in dissecting the component strata of the Bible or of the Odyssey are marvels of patient and ingenious scholarship: the work of the anthropologists in re-discovering Primitive Man and collating his mythology are triumphs of the scientific use of the imagination combined with cultivated sympathy and trained judgment. The biologist, the chemist and the physicist each has his triumph to show which the world will some day acclaim at its proper worth.

Yet if you put before any of these learned Dons, or High Professors the simplest problem in practical sociology or political science (as for instance, the actual economic consequences of "payment by results," or the true historical significance of the

Russian Revolution) and these learned ones incontinently fall to gibbering.

The proletariat is not by any means a learned class; but it has one immense advantage over these Highly Learned ones—it can explain *them* while they are utterly unable to explain it.

Kurt Wiefenfeld is an illustration. He is not, perhaps, one of the Highly Learned; but as a state official of the German Reich he obviously belongs to their world. He has turned out a neat little description of the state apparatus of the Soviet Republic and something near a completely objective analysis of the possible forces of revolt against it. Taking each class in turn from the old aristocracy downward, he convinces himself (and should his readers) that the possibility of counter-revolution in Russia not only does not exist, but cannot be created by any manipulation from without.

His demonstration is all the more convincing because of his unconcealed impatience with much of the Soviet apparatus. To him, with his neat and tidy bureaucratic mind, there is far too much of the "Council" and far too little of the Departmental Head. Not because it is dictatorial, but because it is "too damned democratic," does he dislike the Soviet machine.

Yet for all that he cannot bring himself to have any faith in the permanence of the Soviet system. It was designed and is maintained by the Communist Party. He admires their zeal, their devotion, their self-sacrifice and their realist readiness to accept the teaching of plain fact. Yet for that very reason he (seeing in the N.E.P. nothing but a reluctant abandonment of Communism) believes that every realist endeavour to re-awaken the economic life of Russia must necessarily bring nearer and nearer their theoretical as well as practical surrender to capitalism—the definite retreat of Communism to a point at which it will be indistinguishable from the "evolutionary" Socialism of Scheidemann, Noske, and Ramsay MacDonald. When that point has been reached not only will the road into Russia be wide open for the commercial enterprises and business managers (without whom the learned and official-minded Herr Wiefenfeld cannot imagine production being carried on at all!) but the ideological transformation of the Communist Party will enable it to fuse with the "old upper class." And *then* (but not till then!) the moral force will have been constituted which can alone provide the dynamic for the reconstruction of Russia.

The worst feature of this picture is that it is (by orthodox bourgeois standards) such a fair and plausible one that it will tend to solidify the prevailing misconception about Russia into an immovable obstacle to all proper enlightenment. It is so plausible that it has imposed completely upon Commander Kenworthy, who has written a laudatory preface which leaves an impression of the Communist Party of Russia throwing itself bodily into the arms of the Cobden Club and publicly recanting at the foot of the Gladstone statue. Yet it derives all its plausibility from the fact that it is all but impossible to get anyone trained in the orthodoxy of bourgeois economics and ethics to interpret any fact other than in terms of their pre-conceptions.

If bourgeois economics are sound, any sort of Communism is impossible. *If* bourgeois ethics are valid any sort of Communism is plainly folly when it is not downright villainy. *Therefore*—as Russia is ruled by the Communist Party it “must” show signs of (a) “failure” and “economic collapse” and (b) of “fanaticism” and “tyranny” from the worst types and “disillusionment” and “moderation” from the best.

By that formula every bourgeois survey of Russia and its Revolution has been constructed. Angry bourgeois have fulminated against the “destruction,” the “collapse” and the “fanaticism.” Stupid bourgeois have expatiated upon the “tyranny” and the “failure.” Sentimental bourgeois have exercised themselves in approval or disapproval of the “disillusionment” and the “moderation”—and the optimists among these have already started greasing the hinges of the gate which will re-admit the repentant Bolsheviki to the Holy Democratic Fold.

All this is (for all its plausibility) pure myth, since the beginning of all understanding about the Russian Revolution lies in a recognition of the fact that *not only is it not completed, but that in its positive phase it is only just begun.*

It is easy to feel a thrill at the description of the Bolshevik *coup d'etat* of November, 1917, or over any one of a hundred incidents in the civil war—the bringing of the fleet from the Baltic to the Caspian, the taking of Baku, or the storming of Perikop. These are in terms of primitive combat and one can admire the fight without understanding much about the objectives of the combatants.

Similarly the Soviet system as an instrument of government has about it not only the charm of novelty (itself an attraction to people accustomed to looking for the “very latest”) but also as a vehicle of representation it sufficiently resembles the process

of electing delegates to a church convention or a trade union conference to be within the range of easy comprehension. Yet of all the rhapsodists for and against the Soviet system (outside the ranks of its official interpreters) how many have realised its most significant fact—that it puts an end entirely to all the old parliamentary dualisms—of Legislation versus Executive, of Parliamentary Chief versus Permanent Official; of Cabinet versus Private Member; of Member of Parliament versus Electorate. Few of them have noted even so much as Herr Wiedenfeld—that the Council of Commissars has none of the independent authoritative superiority over the All-Russian Executive, that a Cabinet has in Western Europe over Parliament.

And if even on such a comparatively simple matter as the comprehension of the political machinery the bourgeois observers wander into misconception, how can they be expected to have but the most chaotic misconceptions of a process necessarily so vast and so all-embracing as a proletarian revolution?

The proletarian (as the bourgeois sees him) is incapable alike of refinement, responsibility, initiative or creative imagination. What means have the poor bourgeois critics of understanding a process in which the proletariat bring all these faculties into play?

Miss Strong is the exception that proves the rule. She is still enough of a bourgeois to be in a constant state of amazement at the unsuspected moral and intellectual resources of the proletariat; but she has the wit to see what all her rivals have missed—that the Revolutionary process is not only continuing but gathering force as it advances.

The first phase of the proletarian conquest of social mastery was of necessity the struggle to destroy all the instruments and potentialities of a bourgeois counter-revolution. So far as the bourgeoisie were armed, either themselves or in the persons of their dependents and their dupes, they had to be defeated, disarmed and dispersed. So far as they had the means of sabotage by bribery and corruption they had to be dispossessed and their influence destroyed. So far as their ideology remained as a passive obstacle in the path of proletarian reconstruction, it had to be disintegrated by the moral overthrow of their accepted standards and the exaltation of the proletarian alternative. So far as their unity created a potential of danger it had to be disrupted.

By the Red Army the forces of counter-revolution were overthrown in the field; by the Extraordinary Commission their organisation was revealed and disrupted and their disarming completed; by the same means the moral standards of the bourgeoisie

were drastically discredited in the persons of the speculators and profiteers; and by a wholesale propaganda campaign the concept of class war was made a reality to every peasant and proletarian in the land.

Now. Part of the process of defeating the bourgeoisie included the wholesale inflation of the currency (which made their hoards of roubles innocuous) the wholesale nationalisation of the banks and factories, and the establishment of a drastic rationing system administered with a large preference to the proletariat and a punitive vigour against the bourgeoisie. The throwing of public services open to the public without money payment was the corollary of the purposeful inflation of the rouble—it abolished so much of the advantage of possession of stocks of money. The suppression of private trading in necessaries was a corollary of the rationing system. All these measures were part of the process of class war and all had a vivid propaganda value in mobilising the proletariat for that war—a fact of which the revolutionary leaders made full use.

Yet not one of them was or could by any acute sociologist have been supposed to be a measure of positive Socialism or Communism.

The “nationalisation” of the factories was no more than the Government control applied in this country during the war period modified in its application to suit the special character of the war; the rationing system and the suppression of private trading were simply the methods of our Ministry of Food Control adapted to the exigencies of a proletariat civil war instead of a bourgeois imperialist one. Only in a figurative sense can this period even be given the name now applied to it in Russia—“War Communism.” It was “Communist” only in objective—in the sense in which the party aiming at Communism is a Communist Party. Only by the most superficial of observers (or by those rendered incapable of judgment from ignorance of Communism and saturation with bourgeois prepossession) could the enactments of this period have been mistaken for the positive programme of the Communist Party.

That the bourgeoisie should make this blunder was natural; that both Wiedenfeld and Kenworthy made it, was only to be expected. That our own Left-ists should make it, is surprising only to those who have failed to perceive the essentially bourgeois nature of their thinking. That Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden should be in the same category is equally as was to be expected.

It is all the more to Miss Strong's credit that she has evaded the pitfall and gone straight to the heart of the matter and seen in the heroic struggle to re-create Russia's industries and develop its productive forces the real beginning of the positive phase of the Communist Revolution in Russia.

Every Marxist knows (it is another of Miss Strong's virtues that she makes no pretence of being a Marxist, whereas every orthodox bourgeois critic poses as an authority upon Marx—the more cocksure the less he knows of his work and thought)—every Marxist knows that the positive foundation for a Communist consumption of wealth will only exist when there exists a Communist system of wealth production; and that this in its turn can only develop when the instruments of production are of such a character that they can be controlled and directed on a pre-determined plan. Only when the technical development of production has reached such a stage that the methods of mass production with a scientific elimination of all waste from the basis of the total economy will Communist production be an immediate possibility. Only when the tools and processes are of this character can all consciously co-operate to produce for the common well-being.

From its very nature this degree of technical excellence must be reached in differing fields and branches of production in unequal degrees—and this fact is exaggerated and multiplied by the private competitive enterprise character of capitalist production. Still, in the main the trend of capitalism is technologically in that direction, so much so that it is the conflict between the *forces* of production which have developed under capitalism and the capitalist *conditions* of production which are the root of the crisis in world economy at the present time.

Productively, Russia when it fell into the hands of its victorious proletariat was two-thirds undeveloped, one-third a wreck, and the whole a chaos. Not Bolshevism, but the counter-revolutionary fight against it produced the chaos; the backwardness and the wreck were the twin legacies of Tsardom. The first positive task of the Revolution was, therefore, to complete the technical development which elsewhere was accomplished under capitalism.

Wiedenfeld's book was completed in its essentials too early for him to take note of the marvels of technical accomplishment in Russia since the close of the civil war, and the liquidation of the famine. He has no faith anyway in the possibility of a reconstruction of Russian industry (without his beloved "business

organisers") and still less in the possibility of its expansion. Hence he leaves the subject satisfied that the need for credits will compel the Soviet Republic to open wide its doors to the men of business and so close the whole "Communist" episode. Miss Strong's book, on the contrary, contains the information provided by a full year's development beyond the point at which he left it, and by those facts his every conclusion is pulverised.

Russia still needs credits—needs them acutely. With credits they will advance further in a generation than without them they will in a century. But even without credits the future of Russian production is sure. With credits they can multiply their productivity at once (by the importation of the necessary plant) and although only a small part of the increased product will be available for domestic consumption, even that small part will have an effect expanding in geometrical proportions. An increased production in the factories means more tools to sell to the peasants. This in turn will mean an expansion of both the area and the intensity of agricultural production. This in its turn will mean an expansion of real wages for the town workers (and an increase in their productivity), and an expansion of foreign trade, with its concomitant strengthening of the state credit and power to undertake far-sighted schemes.

Even without a war or a revolutionary uprising, capitalist Europe and America are faced with a portent that every year will make more ominous. In twenty years American supplies of oil (unless the experts have bungled sadly) will be exhausted. Russia (as Miss Strong shows in her fascinating chapter "The Story of Russian Oil,") has many times the total oil deposits of the United States. Russia's wheat lands, worked as they can and will be worked, will precipitate a world-crisis some day by knocking the bottom out of the wheat-pit of Chicago. The capitalists of the western world will give credits to Russia because they have no better investment in sight. Gladly would they crush the Soviet Republic, but each of them wants the whole spoils and so neither will help the other to do the crushing. They will give credits and the Soviet Republic will pay faithfully and punctually.

For all that the bourgeoisie will pay—for the privilege of being paid! But one must be a Communist and a Marxist to see that—and this article is already too long.

Miss Strong's book is a real gain: Herr Wiedenfeld's is a tombstone, erected to the memory of a dead myth.

THOS. A. JACKSON.

Lenin's First Newspaper

"THE SPARK" THAT GREW INTO A GREAT FLAME.

LENIN'S newspaper, "Iskra," ("The Spark") formed the starting point for the formation of an organised party of the proletariat in Russia, when the words "Menshevik" and "Bolshevik" had not yet been coined. In order to understand the character and purpose of the journal, it is necessary to go back a few years.

When Lenin appeared in Petrograd in 1894, and began to form Social-Democratic groups of workers and intellectuals, the Social-Democratic idea,* which was then synonymous with revolutionary Marxism, had always been disseminated in Russia for about ten years, but only among isolated individuals here and there. A number of Russian Marxists, prominent among whom were Plekhanov and Axelrod, had formed the "group for the emancipation of Labour," in Switzerland. They worked, as it were, in the absence of a workers' movement, when it was still a question of theory, as far as Russia was concerned. They perforce confined themselves to the literary task of popularising the Marxian principles among the Russian revolutionaries, who were in a state of disillusionment and disappointment at the failure of the "Narodvltzi" (Populist) creed, which based its hopes upon the peasant.

Lenin started the period of action in Russian Social-Democracy. But, as we saw in our previous article,† he also, most effectively of all, incarnated Marxism in the flesh of actual Russian economic conditions. This he did in his controversy with the "narodniki." He left a monument to this controversy in his masterly work, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia."

But Lenin not only wrote. With him theory served to give replies to the problems arising out of the struggle. He formed groups of workers to organise agitation in the various workshops of Petrograd. The agitation among the workers took the form of issuing leaflets in connection with a certain factory, flagellating the abuses and oppressions, the petty fines, etc., to which the workers were subjected. But Lenin's group not only advanced particular economic demands, but also the struggle for the over-

* The word "Social-Democratic" is retained throughout the present article because it then stood for revolutionary Communism, and was so used by Lenin.

† See March issue.

throw of Czarism, thus placing the workers in the forefront of the struggle for political freedom. And the workers readily responded. A wave of strikes dated from this time. The workers finally demonstrated their capacity for political struggle, which was of vast importance in winning over the revolutionary intelligentsia to Marxism.

Needless to say, the agitation had to be carried on under the severest conspirative conditions. The growing working class revolt roused the forces of the Czarist police to action, and, at the end of 1895, practically the whole of Lenin's group, the "Group for the emancipation of the working class," was arrested, including Lenin himself. In 1897, Lenin was exiled to Siberia. There, however, he managed to continue his literary work, his controversy with the legal "narodniki," besides writing on the urgent tasks of the Social-Democrats in Russia in the light of the experience gained in the first attempts in Petrograd.*

While Lenin was in exile, Social-Democratic groups were being formed in all the large cities of Russia, and an attempt was made to hold the first congress at Minsk, in 1898. But, as Lenin afterwards showed, the young Social Democrats, were as yet inexperienced in conspirative organisation, and the central organisations set up by the Congress were broken up by the police as soon as formed. Nothing remained but the Manifesto of the Congress. So that there was still no organised Party. It remained an idea, a trend. There was no co-ordination among the groups. Each was a law to itself and each had a different interpretation of the Social-Democratic programme, tactics and methods of struggle. This was the period of the groups or circles.

Lenin returned from exile in 1900. In the five years since his arrest, the elemental uprising of the workers had taken a mass character. This disquieted Lenin, even while it filled him with confidence in the working class, as all elemental uprisings without conscious direction disquieted him. He saw the mass movement going ahead of the conscious Social-Democratic movement, and he sounded the alarm. He saw much that was contrary to Marxism in the tactics and teachings of the young groups. A certain vulgarisation of Marxism, a kind of "I.W.W.'ism," had taken hold among the revolutionary youth during these five years.

This trend was known as "economism." The "economists" declared the economic struggle to be paramount. "Politics follow economics," they said. "Leave politics to the liberal

* Now Leningrad. The old name is used in order to retain the historical perspective, especially as the subject is Lenin himself.

bourgeoisie; and all this talk about the overthrow of Czarism is not the concern of the workers. Talk to the workers about matters that promise palpable results. Too much ideology, too much theory, etc., etc." How familiar all this is to any Party worker no matter in what part of the world he may be! Lenin sensed a great danger in this trend. With the air of being ultra-working class, the economists reduced working class politics into a tool of the bourgeoisie. For many at that time wanted the revolution who were not of the working class movement, but saw in the working class a force to be exploited politically. The liberal bourgeoisie desired revolution of a sort. The petty bourgeoisie desired revolution. Whose revolution it was going to be, whether the proletariat should be a tool in the service of the bourgeoisie, or whether it should retain the lead in the revolution, depended on the correct proletarian tactics and the correct methods of organisation in these critical days. The revolutionary intelligentsia were prone to say: "The proletariat is necessary for the revolution." Plekhanov corrected them from his Geneva study: "No, on the contrary, *the revolution is necessary for the proletariat.*" Such were the "economists," consciously or unconsciously reducing the role of the proletariat to an appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Lenin now saw himself obliged to carry forward the theoretical struggle from the domain of programme (controversy with the narodniki) to the domain of tactics and methods of organisation, namely, the fight with the "economists" within the Social-Democratic movement. On his return from exile Lenin, and a few others who held similar views, met at Pskov to consider the needs of the movement. It was decided to start an all-Russian Social-Democratic newspaper. There had been several previous attempts made to start a paper. Some had had a short-lived existence before being discovered and suppressed; others, like the "Rabochi Dyelo" ("Workers' Cause"), the first paper printed by Lenin's group in 1895, had been seized by the police before leaving the press. The only hope of success was to establish what Lenin called a base of operations beyond the reach of the Czarist police, that is, abroad, and thereto establish a newspaper which would be an ideological guide for the movement, gathering the various groups together round the true Marxist tactics and methods of organisation. For this purpose, Lenin was selected to go abroad and establish contact with the Plekhanov group, enlisting their aid in the work.

In this task Lenin had brilliant success. He established the now famous newspaper, "Iskra," (The Spark), and the

"Iskra" organisation for the dissemination of the paper. The paper became not only a theoretical guide, but an organisational centre, to which group after group adhered, to form the basis for an All-Russian Party of the proletariat.

But, needless to say, "Iskra" met with considerable opposition from the "economists" within the movement. For, was it not formed to wage uncompromising war on Economism, which exalted the immaturity of the movement into a considered policy? In its first announcement, the paper declared: "*Before we unite, and in order that we unite, it is necessary first of all resolutely and definitely to divide.*" Here, however, there was no question of splitting any organisation, for a centrally organised party did not yet exist. It was "Iskra's" task to form it. But, first of all, it was necessary to delimit, fix boundaries, define the Social-Democratic method and those who belonged to it, and label those who departed from it; separating the tares from the wheat. And the tares at this time were the "economists."

Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and others were on the "Iskra" editorial committee. But "Iskra" was essentially Lenin's paper. Of all these, Lenin alone had clear, impelling ideas as to what the movement needed. He put forward the celebrated idea of an "*organisation of professional revolutionaries.*" He had seen group after group broken up by the police, every forward movement thwarted by wholesale arrests because of what Lenin called a "tinkering" view of the incredibly difficult task of counteracting the political police. A broken up group, having no link with a central organisation, left no trace whereby its activities could be speedily revived. Lenin demanded a centrally directed organisation of comrades as scientifically equipped as the police in the art of conspiracy—"professional revolutionaries" the iron-sides of an All-Russian Party, of the Proletariat. "Iskra" also elaborated in detail the plan of such a Party, and not only proposed this, but proceeded to carry its ideas into practice, gathering round itself group after group of adherents in the various industrial centres of Russia.

In 1902, a year after starting "Iskra," Lenin issued his epoch-making brochure, entitled, "*What Must We Do?*" This he describes as a synopsis of the "Iskra" tactics and methods of organisation. The book became a veritable storm centre in Russian Social Democracy, not only because of its campaign against "economism," but also because it laid down principles of Party organisation which went much further than the fight against "economism." "*What Must We Do?*" cleared "economism" off the field, but it raised new issues, a new conflict on a higher

plane, which a year later crystallised in the division of the movement into Menshevism and Bolshevism.

Meanwhile "economism," degrading the political role of the proletariat, found its kindred expression in Bernstein's revisionism. At first glance the latter had little in common with the slogans of "economism." But Lenin branded it as the Russian form of opportunism. The "economists" chafed at the rigours of "orthodox" Marxism, and demanded, like their German confrere, "freedom of criticism." This brought from Lenin a retort characteristic of the uncompromising revolutionary: "*People who are really convinced that they carry science a step forward would demand, not equal freedom for the new theory along with the old one, but the substitution of the old by the new,*" and, in the first chapter of "*What Must We Do?*" he adds: "Oh, yes, messieurs, you are free to invite, and, not only to invite, but to go where you please, even to the morass; we even think that the bog is your proper place, and we are prepared to lend you every support for your migration thereto." Lenin believed in giving the confirmed opportunist a push to the right!

At this time, using the terminology of the French revolution, "Iskra" declared the existence of the Mountain and the Gironde in the Russian proletarian movement. Indeed, Plekhanov, some time before Lenin's arrival in the "emigration," had broken with the "Union for the Emancipation of Labour" because of its "economism" and had formed the "League of Social Democrats." But Lenin does not seem to have suspected (or else deemed it unwise to reveal his suspicions), that the final cleavage should take place on a line between him and his "Iskra" colleagues, Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod, and others. But this amazing "right-about-face" to opportunism, constituting one of the most striking studies in the psychology of menshevism, must form the subject of a separate article, devoted to the Menshevik split.

"*What Must We Do?*" in spite of the familiarising of Leninism by the Communist International, has till much that is new and startling to the English reader, and it is to be hoped that these early Lenin brochures will soon be published in the English language. It is inevitable that we should become more and more familiar with their historical allusions, as allusions to our classic history. For Lenin was wont to say, "It is an axiom of the Marxian dialectic *that there is no abstract truth, truth is always concrete.*" And one may say that what the "Communist Manifesto?" is to Marxism in its first phase, so is "*What Must We Do?*" to Marxism in its second phase, the phase of action, in its Leninist phase. Take the second chapter of this brochure, en-

titled "The Elemental and the Conscious." Opportunism, at first taking the form in Russia of "economism," magnified the role of the elemental or the spontaneous in the workers' mass movement. The "economists" accused "Iskra" of exaggerating the factor of consciousness (*vide* Engels' definition of the Party as "the conscious expression of an unconscious process.") The "economists" opposed what they termed their "tactic-process" to the "Iskra's tactic-plan." Lenin was filled with profound uneasiness at every spontaneous uprising of the workers in the absence of mature party guidance. The backwardness of the Party disquietened him. He invented a special nickname for the "economist" tactic—"hang-on-the-tailism," which is used to-day in the Russian movement. He accused the "economists" by their genuflections before the "elemental" of wanting the party to be forever "studying the hindquarters of the proletariat," of making the principle of the class struggle an excuse for waiting on events, instead of forestalling them, dominating them. "*Every exaggeration of the elemental, and depreciation of the conscious, factor in the Labour movement is a strengthening of bourgeois influences among the workers.*" He denied the current impression that Socialist consciousness comes to the workers inevitably from their conflicts with individual capitalists. "The workers by their own strength can only achieve Trade Unionist political action." "The spontaneous workers' movement of its own accord is capable only of forming (and it inevitably forms) trade unionism; and trade unionist political action of the working class is precisely bourgeois political action." Lenin roundly accuses the "economists" of an "oblique attempt to prepare the ground for transforming the workers' movement into a tool of bourgeois democracy." Further on Lenin devotes several pages to "Trade Unionist *versus* Social Democratic political action," with copious references to English Trade Unionism. Reading these chapters, one receives a flash of revelation as to why great waves of working class mass action have swept over England and receded again, leaving hardly a trace in the collective experience. For this collective experience can only be garnered by a Communist Party. This responsibility of the individual before history, the role of human initiative of the Party, is the great Leninist corrective to the conception of Marxism hitherto prevailing in the West. If the "great man theory" be regarded as the *thesis*, and historical materialism (vulgarised) as the *antithesis*, then Leninism, the restoration of the emphasis on conscious initiative, is the *synthesis* of it all. In "*What Must We Do?*" we feel this power, this revolutionary driving force, permeating every

phrase. He conceives the role of the revolutionary as the liquidator of outworn historical periods, the refuse of which encumbers the way. He concludes the preface to this book with the words, "For we cannot move forward unless we finally liquidate this period (the period of the groups)."

Lenin's chief antagonist among the "economists" was Martuinov (not to be confused with Martov). Now Martuinov is in his own person a living symbol of Lenin's driving power on history. Martuinov started his career with the "narodniki" (the Populists) and left the "narodniki" when their position became untenable from the attacks of Plekhanov and Lenin. He then became an exponent of "economism" in the Social-Democratic movement. "Economism" in its turn was smashed under Lenin's sledge-hammer blows, and Martuinov had to move forward to a more consistent position. Later, he took the Menshevik side in the great division, and even became its official theoretician. Last year, after twenty years, Martuinov unconditionally capitulated to his old opponent and signalled the complete downfall of Menshevism by going over to the Communist International. "Thou hast conquered, oh, Galilean!"

Before leaving the subject of "Elemental *versus* Conscious Action," let us indulge ourselves in one more quotation: "Only the most vulgar understanding of Marxism, or the 'understanding' of it in the spirit of Strouvism,* could engender the idea that the uprising of the spontaneous mass movement of the workers relieves us of the duty of forming such an efficient organisation as that of the *zemlevolio*,† nay, of forming an incomparably more efficient organisation of revolutionaries. On the contrary, this mass movement precisely *imposes* upon us this duty; for the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat does not become a real *class struggle* until it is directed by a strong organisation of revolutionaries."

"What Must We Do?" devotes much space to the question of party democracy; and the recent discussion in the Russian Communist Party can only be fully comprehended in the light of these early works of Lenin. In the days of "Iskra" it was a question of party democracy in a severely conspirative organisation; but the Leninist axioms retain their force. "A revolutionary organisation," he says, "never could and never can, with the best of intentions, instal the broad democratic principle." Primitive democratic notions, such as the one that a people's

* See reference to Strouve in previous article (March) on "Lenin's First Book."

† Zemlevolio (Land and Freedom) preceded the "narodvltzi" (Peoples Freedom Party) in the revolutionary seventies.

newspaper should be edited directly by the people, were rife among the revolutionary youth, as a revulsion from absolutism. Lenin had to fight against these primitive notions in order to establish his organisation of "ironsides." "The broad democratic principle is impossible without full publicity." Lenin was a sworn enemy of the principle expressed in the words "from the bottom up." He demanded that the Party be organised from the top down. Not on democracy, but on the mutual faith of comrades. "*Vulgar democratic tendencies in the Party reflect bourgeois democratic party tendencies.*"

Lenin published a reprint of "*What Must We Do?*" in 1907, during the temporary spell of political freedom under the Duma. In the preface to that edition, he refers to the organisation of professional revolutionaries as having well completed its work and planted the party on impregnable foundations. In the same connection, he welcomes the introduction of the elective principle in the party organisation owing to the greater freedom of action. But that freedom was short-lived. The party had to return underground. And it is only now that the Party, emerging from the period of civil war, has been able to apply "workers' democracy" to the Party apparatus. Nevertheless, Comrade Kamenev warned the Party against "vulgar democracy," which is only bourgeois democracy, excluded from all other avenues, knocking at the door of the Party.

Who said that Lenin had no humour? His was a versatile, many-sided genius. "*What Must We Do?*" like all his brochures, teems with humorous asides, a certain pawky Scotch humour which keeps close to the gist of the matter. He refers for example to Soubatov, the Czarist agent, who was known to be in favour of legalising trade unions, and who instigated strikes, Lenin said in effect, "All right, we'll gain from it in spite of the tares in the wheat, we don't want to grow wheat in flower pots."

The spirit that animated Lenin was a pride in the working class, unbounded faith in the proletariat. He denounced any and every attempt to degrade its political role. "The consciousness of the working class cannot be a truly political one unless the workers respond to every case of oppression, violence and abuse, *no matter to what class they are applied.*" (p. 78). When the Czar's government drafted 183 students of Kiev University into the army, in punishment for insubordination, "Iskra" called for workers' demonstrations of protest. And the workers responded, a fact which Lenin exultantly shows to the "economists."

This exalted view of the role of the proletariat is balanced by a sense of tremendous responsibility.

"Our backwardness," he says, "will be inevitably taken advantage of by more agile, more energetic 'revolutionaries' outside Social Democracy; and the workers, no matter how boldly and energetically they may fight the police and the soldiers, no matter how revolutionarily they may act, will be only a force in support of these 'revolutionaries'; they will be just the rear-guard of bourgeois democracy, instead of being the Social-Democratic [read Communist] advance guard."

He hurls the word "tinkers" again at the "economist" defenders of party backwardness. And then, all at once, we have another Lenin, the master, unsparing above all towards himself.

"Don't be aggrieved with me for this harsh word," he says. "For, in so far as it is a question of unpreparedness, I apply it to myself. I worked in a group which set before itself a very broad, all-embracing task, and to all of us members of that group came the torturing feeling that we were nothing but tinkers, at an historic moment when it was possible to say, adapting a well-known phrase: 'Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will conquer Russia.' And, since then, the more I recall that bitter feeling of shame, which I then experienced, the more does my choleric rise against those false Social-Democrats who, by their preachings, debase the revolutionary name; against those who do not understand that our task is not to condone the debasement of a revolutionist into a tinker, but to raise the tinker to be a revolutionist."

These lines were written many years before the October revolution, but, in reading "*What Must We Do?*" one feels that the critical days of the October revolution were not the days of October. It would have been too late in 1917 to form that ironclad Party—steeled in two revolutions, and in innumerable contests with the Czar's police—capable of leading the proletariat along the inconceivably difficult paths of the proletarian dictatorship. And this titanic struggle of the Russian proletariat, a struggle which has also cleared the path of the Western revolution, was only possible as the fruits of an equally titanic *theoretical* struggle waged by Lenin in the first years of the century. And Lenin, in "*What Must We Do?*" pierces into this future, as is his wont. Marvellous prophet—in the power of his revolutionary logic the future blends with the present in one iron inevitability. He has just been quoting Engels on the leading role of the German proletariat in the international movement, and says:

"Before the Russian workers now stand immeasurably heavier trials, now stands a struggle with monsters, compared with which the exceptional laws in a constitutional country are a mere bagatelle. History has placed before us the immediate task, which is the most revolutionary of all the *immediate* tasks of the proletariat of any country. The realisation of this task, the destruction of the most powerful buttress, not only of European, but also (we may now say) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the advance guard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we have a right to expect that we shall achieve this honourable role, already earned by our predecessors of the seventies, if we can inspire our movement, which is a thousand times deeper and wider than theirs, with the same unsparing devotion and energy."

And so it came to pass. Whatever Lenin set himself to do he achieved. And his deathless name shall still lead us on from strength to strength; and revolution after revolution shall be monuments to his memory.

D. IVON JONES.

FACTORY GROUPS

AN OPEN LETTER TO A PARTY COMRADE.

25/4/1924.

DEAR JACK,

The question of workshop groups, about which you and I—and some others—talked a long time ago, is being brought up afresh just now, both because it is arising in several other parties and because of the critical position our own party is in.

From the few words we exchanged the other day, I gathered that in all essential your views were the same as mine on the question of the area groups as the basis of Party organisation. Not only has the resolution of the Third World Congress been applied without humanity in the *working* of the area groups, but in their very *inception* it has been widely misunderstood.

The positive good that has been achieved during the last 18 months, as the result of the Battersea Conference—a *working* Party, if only one working at distribution—was nothing to do with the area groups as such, and could have been carried through with the old branches (or the old branches split up a little).

At present we have got to the stage when the maximum effort of the membership in its present grouping cannot produce more than a more or less unvarying sales figure, while the recruiting of new members, which would provide new distributors, is prevented to a very large extent indeed by the concentration of members' efforts on distribution, to the exclusion of everything else (after essential meetings of trade union branches, trades councils, etc.). They have no time to talk a little politics, they have no time to read or train themselves, they have no time to do propaganda.

Of course, much more important, but bound up with the above, is the fact which was brought out at the conference of district party representatives—that in the area groups our members are deprived of contact with the working masses. Apart from the physical difficulties of the area group system, which prevent it functioning as a natural unit of Party organisation, it throws back our members upon house-to-house canvassing if they want contact with the working class. And they get the contact just at the very time when the worker is away from his collective spirit, his sense of being one amongst a hundred

others, and when he is tired, resting, and hand and foot a subject to individualist influences and moods.

The area group, which is only a little branch, has this in common with all "branches." They are all the inheritance of the proletarian, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois system, which springs from the "citizen" or "householder" as a unit (naturally, since the "citizen" is the fetish and delusion upon whom the bourgeois society rests). They all date from the clubs of the French Revolution and the Chartist times.

What we want is something different. We want a unit that is superior (a) from the standpoint of contact with the workers, (b) from the standpoint of circulation of the paper, (c) from the standpoint of maximum efficiency and economy of forces in the Party organisation.

Such an unit can only be the factory group. In the factory the workers feel the pressure of the capitalist system most regularly and painfully. In the factory a working class organ, (responsive to the needs of the psychology), will find the readiest audience, and is easiest to circulate (not necessarily by the light of day). In the factory group the Party members are thrown naturally together by their daily work, and can talk politics, discuss, study, plan, and do everything else that does not demand a wider assembly. (I am all for fortnightly aggregate meetings, if a trial of the factory group system still leaves the desire for them as keen as was shown at the conference.)

One impression I did carry away from our conversation, however. That was that you were placing trade union branch groups on the same level as factory groups. If my impression was correct, I disagree. Trade union nuclei are of great importance, because of the *indirect* influence over the masses that they give us. I believe, in particular, more attention should be paid by the Local Party Committees to their organisation and work (reserving control of policy and co-ordination to the D.P.C., of course). That, at any rate, is the conclusion I drew from attending several aggregate meetings, at which trades council fractions and unemployed nuclei reported, but not union nuclei, and no one seemed to know who was and who was not in a nucleus.

But if you test the union nuclei with the three tests I have suggested above, you must agree that, as *basic units* or cells of Party organisation, they cannot compare with the factory. The factory group is in an entirely different plane, because it reaches for purely objective and inevitable reasons, 100 per cent. of the workers, while the trade union branch meeting, as you know is

attended by 5-10 per cent. And though I don't dispute that the members attending a union meeting probably offer better promise to the *Workers' Weekly* distributor than a row of doorsteps (even in a proletarian street), again one should not compare them with the mass reader that one can get in a factory. In this connection, the case which Comrade Cant quoted at the conference (two C.P'ers in a factory of 400 trade unionists, 86 readers, 30 potential Party members) is a particularly striking and persuasive illustration.

Of course, there are comrades who point to the difficulties and quote cases of victimisation which have occurred. But in all the cases which I have heard, and which the Party paper has reported, the difficulties quoted are purely technical, to be overcome with a little thought (*e.g.*, distribution of papers at midday or after work, meetings at the same times, canvassing likely members, who are already readers, at their homes, etc.). As for victimisation—well, we don't expect the factory managers to love Communists, and must act accordingly. And how much luckier are our Party members than their comrades in Russia 25 years ago, who had to fear not only economic victimisation, but also political victimisation and suppression for attempting to spread Communist views!

There is another danger, or at least difficulty, which I have met in talking to comrades, and which is due to the same unfamiliarity with the idea of factory groups. I mean the enthusiastic acceptance of the principle as the one and only sheet-anchor to which we should cling immediately, letting everything else in the nature of Party organisation go by the board right away. This unthinking grab at form above all is only a reaction from what occurred after the last Party congress with the area groups: but there is no reason why we should not learn from mistakes.

One expression of this instinct which I have encountered is the demand for the scrapping right away of all area groups, and the re-arrangement of the Local in so-called "factory" groups, in which there may be only one or two members working in the factory in question, while the remainder are "attached" Party members (unemployed, intellectuals, clerical or commercial workers).

At the bottom of this scheme lies the undoubtedly healthy feeling that the core of our Party should be the factory workers, and their specific and distinct position should not be lost sight of in a heterogeneous mixture such as the average area group. But it is absurd to shut our eyes to the fact that such a specific position should correspond to reality, *i.e.*, to an actual preponderance in

numbers. Whereas at present such a scheme would simply mean that, in the "factory" group, the opinion and spirit of the factory workers would be submerged in the non-factory element, who would inevitably, in the process of work, tend to become a decisive and *not* an auxiliary factory.

And besides, it is not a mere matter of tactics that we should beware of "wiping the slate" of our past experiences. However unsatisfactory the area groups may be in comparison with what might be, they still represent a good deal of work that is being done day by day, and some kind of a link between the members. It is our business to replace it by a better link: but to throw away this one "on spec" would be childish.

The very value and importance of the change from area to factory groups is that it is not a mere mechanical reshuffle of our members, or a change in outward form, but an *organic* change, a change in the orientation and outlook of the Party. As such, it is not a change that can be carried out overnight, or by a paper re-allotment of members. It can only take place as the Party *grows*: and the contrary is equally true—the Party can only grow in proportion as it takes place. In other words, the change is bound up with a series of preliminary reconnoitings and preparations on the spot. Particularly is the question of factory groups bound up with that of *recruiting*. The natural and only valuable form the change can take is by an enormous expansion of the existing Party in respect of its factory membership—not by an artificial labelling and separating out of the factory members within the charmed (one might almost say "bewitched") circle of the present membership.

As I see it, the process of the change should be something like this. The Local Party Committee goes over its existing acting membership of 30-50, and finds 10-15 (or only 2 or 3) are working in factories. Some of them are already selling the paper to regular readers, others are not. To increase the sales in the first case, to start them in the second, the L.P.C. organises all kinds of "stunts"—special workshop gate meetings in the dinner hour on topical subjects, special arrangements with the Editor to print three or four letters from the factory in succession, a special poster announcing the fact, free distribution at the workshop gates one week, etc. In all this work it draws freely, of course, upon the services of the non-factory members, but does not withdraw them from the area groups, or attempt to break these up.

When a regular circulation of at least ten has been achieved

in any one factory, the process of converting the regular readers into Party members begins. One way, of course, is by direct approach of the factory member; another way is the special recruiting meeting at the workshop gates, with sales of Party literature; a third is the organisation of classes or lectures under Party auspices: while a fourth, and very important, is the canvassing of the regular readers at their homes, mainly by the non-factory Party members, armed with the necessary literature and application forms. During this process, again, the whole membership of the local is drawn upon if need be: and it may well be found that in some areas the distribution of the paper to the regular readers at their homes can be safely committed to a "united distribution group," covering several areas. Such a group will have several other distributive or other *intermediary* functions (contact with the factory groups, billposting or leaflets, etc.): but in return would be relieved of the task of pioneer house-to-house canvassing, *i.e.*, of getting *new* readers by this method.

As soon as the members in the factory in question number three or five, they are constituted into a group, and the original member or members withdrawn from their area groups. Thus, after a short period of time the actual numerical majority of the Local will be grouped in the factories, and the remainder re-apportioned to special work (distribution group, propaganda and training group, etc.). In this connection, it is well to remember that the *natural* unit of organisation for the working woman is her street or ward group: as it is, a degree of collective spirit amongst housewives exists in working class streets, as you know, which is unknown to other classes. Common misery and exploitation drives them together almost as effectively as it does their relatives in the factories.

Of course, in everything we must act as reasonable beings. In the villages there are no factories. Milkmen, postmen, busmen, have their natural unit organisation in the depot or union branch (they may be coincident), and not strictly in the place of employment, which is the street. The unemployed, apart from their union connections when they can maintain them, have their own special organisation for work (although there is no reason why, in the preliminary stages I have suggested, they should not assist in the formation of other groups).

Nevertheless, the more I reflect over our own experiences, the more I find that the same problems occurred in Russia 25 years ago, and are being encountered, and solved successfully, on a far larger scale (in many cases) elsewhere. And I am more than

ever convinced that the idea of factory groups is the right one. As for the method of getting to work which I have suggested above, it seems to me the most commonsense of all, and one which has the virtue of coming immediately, to-day, within the capacity of any enterprising Local Party Committee in an industrial area, which wants to give the Party a new lead, without infringing any of its existing duties and obligations.

Yours fraternally,

C. M. ROEBUCK.

“A New World”

LLOYD GEORGE SAID IN 1919:

“The Old World (a world where toil for myriads of honest workers, men and women, purchased nothing better than squalor, penury, anxiety and wretchedness) must, and will come to an end if there be any who feel inclined to maintain it, let them beware lest it fall upon them and overwhelm them and their households in ruin It should be the sublime duty of all . . . to help in building up the new world.”

Do *your* Duty, and

JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

Recruiting Sergeant.

JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY NOW

APPLICATION FORM.

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

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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

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

C. R. I.

Draft Programme of the C.P.G.B. to the Comintern

INTRODUCTION.

The Communist International is the recognised vanguard of the proletariat fighting for world power. It concentrates within itself the revolutionary experience of mankind, its science, its inspiration, its purpose.

Herein it surveys the history of the human struggle, traces the tortuous pathway of the exploited, examines the collapsing fabric of capitalism and blazes the light upon the tasks of the proletariat on the high road to Communism. This constitutes the Programme of the Communist International.

PRE-CAPITALIST FORMS OF SOCIETY.

The earliest and most universal form of social organisation known to history is the *gens*—an organisation based upon kinship and the common ownership of the means of life. This primitive Communism lasted unnumbered centuries. From the moment that the elementary social requirements of mankind, food, clothing, shelter, could no longer be satisfied within the narrow limits of social organisation based on blood kinship, the struggle for life was transformed into a struggle for private property.

From that moment "all history is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slaves, patricians and plebians, lords and serfs, masters and journeymen, faced each other as oppressors and oppressed in ceaseless conflict." Society became everywhere more complicated with manifold gradations of social rank. The patriarchal *gens* gave way to the tribe, the tribe to the nation, and with the nation came the state as the organised instrument of class oppression.

Many of these old primitive forms of society still exist and in its relations with them the Communist International adopts the historical viewpoint and with a view to developing the conditions which make Communism possible, takes into account the stage of historical development which any group or nation may have reached.

THE RISE OF CAPITALISM.

1. Practically the whole world is now under the rule of capitalism. "Rising out of Feudalism as a means to give freer play to the forces of production, it changes the form of class rule. Into the place of feudal Property stepped Free Competition, based upon the private ownership of the means of production of commodities for the market." A small class, the capitalist class, own the means of production and distribution, and by means of this monopoly, aided politically by the state and culturally by its schools and press, it dominates the lives of millions of proletarians, who, having no independent means of existence, are compelled to sell their labour power to the ruling class. The working class is thus a commodity slave class, serving as a source of profit to the bourgeoisie.

2. The competitive nature of capitalism compels the capitalists to form ever-newer and larger combinations in the form of joint stock companies, trusts, cartels, etc., to develop the banks, which in turn amalgamate into powerful financial oligarchies uniting industrial and finance capital and absorb much of the possessions of the large landowners.

The state passes under their control and becomes increasingly the instrument for new forms of competition on a colossal scale, placing armies, navies and air fleets at their disposal, interfering in trade disputes, regimenting the workers, setting up trade departments, imposing tariffs initiating tariff wars, developing consular services, supporting their economic and financial penetration into other countries with all its military power. It conquers, colonises or controls the small states, and transforms the era of *laissez faire* into an age of imperial conquerors struggling for control of the whole earth.

The rivalry becomes ever more intense, and immense expenditure on armies, navies, air fleets, and every means of annihilation, militarism and war becomes a permanent feature of society. The economic crises which have characterised the development of these forces, through the inability of capitalism to regulate production in relation to the market, become a permanent crisis because the productive capacity of capitalism has outgrown its capacity to absorb the products.

3. Profound changes in the social strata of society accompany these developments. Agriculture passes under the industrialisation process, although more slowly, and large numbers of the peasants are forced to become proletarians of the towns. Science is harnessed to industry and production; all forms of

transport are continually revolutionised, and all kinds of mechanical devices and machines are introduced to simplify the labour process. The monopoly of the skilled craftsmen of earlier years is destroyed and the proletariat is reduced more and more to a uniform level of poverty.

4. The natural course of capitalist evolution thus inevitably sharpens the contradictions of capitalism. It concentrates the wealth of the world into fewer hands and draws the masses of the exploited together and facilitates their organisation. It develops the machinery of production and trains the exploited to work collectively. It develops a powerful technique, capable of producing untold wealth, and drives the masses into poverty and revolt. It creates the premises for the application of socialist economy which it is incapable of applying to society, and is thus destroyed by the proletariat which revolts against it as the barrier to human and social development.

THE RISE OF THE PROLETARIAT.

1. The first proletarian organisations arise as instruments of defence against severe exploitation. They take the form of political parties, trades unions, co-operative societies, leagues and associations, etc. The precedence of one or another form depends upon the historic conditions. In Britain and Southern Europe unions precede political parties. In Germany and Russia parties precede the unions.

The unions develop as economic organisations from narrow local craft unions to national, industrial and general labour unions, as the small factories give place to the large factory system and the development of the means of communication and transport brings the workers into closer contact with each other. These combine into local federations and councils, national federations and councils, and international federations.

The political parties are historically later organisations with more definite political aims, utopian—reflecting revolt against oppression and aspirations for a new social order, revolutionary—aiming at the overthrow of capitalism and the inauguration of socialism, reformist—adapting working class aims to the claims of capitalism. Each of these types of parties appears according to the intensity of the class struggle and the stage of political development reached by the working class.

2. The first actions of the proletariat against capitalism take the form of protests against change, strikes for the improvement of conditions, leading to the idea of sudden substitution of

the "Co-operative commonwealth" by mass action, the general strike and physical force.

Defeat leads to a reassimilation of experience and more limited aims—economically through the trades unions for wage improvements, modification of conditions of employment, insurance against unemployment, sickness, etc. In the category of economic organisations must be placed the co-operatives societies first "productive co-operatives" combinations of producers, which fail for want of capital and later "consumers co-operatives" which grow into a great economic achievement within the framework of capitalism, competing against private enterprise.

The political efforts of the workers change from utopian measures of substitution to limited aims, such as the extension of the franchise and increased representation within the parliamentary and municipal institutions of capitalism.

Through these defensive struggles the workers gradually become conscious of the character of the struggle they are waging and of their political destiny as a class. This process is intensified as the reform struggles bring them up more and more sharply against the powers of the state.

The revolutionary character and purpose of the working class nationally and internationally first finds clear scientific expression in the Communist Manifesto issued by Marx in 1847. It inspired the creation of the First International Workingmen's Association in 1864. But the International integration of capitalism and the workers' movement was too undeveloped to make it anything more than a herald of what was yet to be.

Not until the vast undeveloped countries had been brought within the domain of capitalist development, and there was no longer any way of escape for the workers from the old scenes of oppression by means of emigration, was it practicable in the eyes of the masses to build international organisations. The era of imperialist expansion during the 19th century has as its corollary the vast increase in the forces of the proletariat and the beginnings of their organisation into international organisations of trades unions and co-operatives, and the creation of the Second International of Socialist Parties.

The wealth concentrating in the imperialist countries was used to corrupt the proletarian movement by concessions. Revolutionary action and thought were thus stifled at their source and reformism and reformist leaders, believing in the permanency of capitalism, held sway over the working class. It was thus totally unprepared for the crisis of capitalism which began with the war of 1914. The international combinations were shattered

by bringing them face to face with the issue of class political power before they were capable of accepting such a challenge.

Revolutionary experience on an international scale alone was capable of creating a revolutionary international of the workers. This was provided by the world war of 1914-18, and out of it came the Russian Revolution and the creation of the Communist International as the instrument of world revolution.

4. Each country has its own counterpart of the international crisis wherein the defensive struggle of the workers is transformed into the struggle for power—from the dictatorship of the capitalist class to the dictatorship of the Proletariat. In this struggle the workers find they are opposed by the institutions of capitalism, parliamentary, municipal, educational, religious, juridical, etc., a vast apparatus of spiritual and physical oppression. The representative institutions have the appearance of a democracy wherein all have equal rights, but actually their economic and social power dominate the institutions, and use them as effective instruments of capitalist dictatorship, assisted by the army, navy, police, the law courts, etc., all of which are officered by the ruling class. The more the proletariat grows in political and organisational strength, the more the capitalist class has to concede to the working class in the form of democratic representation in these institutions, until the progress of the workers becomes a danger to the continuation of capitalist rule.

The capitalist then discards all democratic cloaks and leads the way to open civil war as the means of suppressing the aspirations of the workers. This course of action reveals to the proletariat that it cannot hope to attain political power through the democratic apparatus of the capitalists, and has no alternative other than to seize power, destroy the bourgeois state and create its own apparatus of class political power.

5. The Paris Commune of 1871, the Russian and Hungarian Revolutions, have demonstrated that the Soviet State is the type of state which assures proletarian democracy, *i.e.*, a form of government which gives facilities for the active participation of the working masses in the making and execution of all legislation, and is the most effective weapon of proletarian dictatorship. By the workers' right to elect and recall their delegates, the combination of Executive and legislative power, and the adaptation to economic requirements instead of to arbitrary territorial divisions, the Soviets present an abrupt contrast to bourgeois democracy.

6. In this struggle for proletarian dictatorship it becomes clear to the most advanced workers that the broad mass organi-

sations such as the trade unions, the co-operatives, the reformist parties of social democracy, are ideologically subordinate to the bourgeoisie, that to free them from this influence and make them effective weapons in the class war it is necessary for the most class-conscious, revolutionary workers to organise themselves into a Party expressing the interests of the working classes, and win the leading role in the proletarian class struggle. Such a Party is the INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY of which the Communist Parties of all countries are sections, the vanguard party of the workers, the concentrated expression of their interests.

7. This process of uniting the masses under the Communist flag can only be carried out in the actual struggle of daily life, in which the reformist parties and trade union leaders continually betray the interests of the workers by siding with the bourgeoisie.

The struggle assumes more than an ideological struggle within the unions. It becomes a struggle for the elementary needs of the workers and compels them to reinforce their struggle against the reactionary leaders in the unions by the creation of factory and workshop committees organised irrespective of trades and crafts. The sharper the class struggle is waged, the more prominent is the role of these organisations as the basic units of the revolutionary mass organisations for waging the workers' war against capitalism. The workers see in them the forerunners of the Soviets which are developed out of them in the revolutionary crisis, and look upon them as the new units of the revolutionary industrial unions.

8. The growing strength and importance of the Co-operative Societies (Consumers' and Productive), and the increasing support which they draw from the working class, makes it imperative that the petit-bourgeois leadership which now dominates them be replaced by Communist leadership. Without the co-operatives are won to the side of the revolution before the seizure of power they can and will be used by the reactionaries as instruments of counter-revolutionary sabotage.

9. In order to win the majority of the working class the Communist Party has to utilise all the possibilities of bourgeois democracy by securing the election of Communists to Parliament, Municipal Councils, Boards of Guardians, and such administrative bodies, for the purpose of using them as a revolutionary forum and waging an incessant fight against the reformists and reactionaries who seek to use these institutions as a means of stabilising and defending capitalism.

10. It has to combat pacifism as an instrument of the bourgeoisie, recognising it as a means of paralysing the initiative

and will of the proletariat towards revolution in the most decisive hours of the struggle with the bourgeoisie. Pacifism drugs the workers and offers them as sheep to be slaughtered by their enemies, who are prepared to fight to the death to prevent the workers becoming the ruling class.

11. In the same category must be placed "religion, the opium of the people." By its mysticism and concentration on some other life, by its slave morality and its institutions which are increasingly utilised as political institutions of the bourgeoisie, encouraging the dread of change and fomenting the ignorant prejudices against the instruments of change, it is a counter-revolutionary force, an enemy of the working class. Religion and pacifism are the two deadly drugs used by the bourgeoisie to paralyse the actions of the masses against the sacred rights of property.

12. The campaign against violence must be revealed as sheer hypocrisy. The bourgeoisie came to power by violence, by "bloody revolution," by civil war. Only when the bourgeoisie had firmly established itself and met no opposition to their expansion did "peaceful democracy" play any part in its existence. Its affection for "no violence" and its loyal advocacy of religion are only developed when the working class begins to be conscious of its class interests and to assert its superiority in numbers and strength. As history does not reveal any ruling class willing to abdicate voluntarily, the Communists unhesitatingly declare that civil war, the most acute form of the class struggle, is the final means whereby all ruling classes will be overthrown. But in all struggles the action of the broadest masses is the deciding factor. Individual terrorism and individual acts of sabotage are useless.

13. In the period leading to civil war, the period of the penetration and decay of the bourgeois institutions and the struggle against the reformism of the social-democratic parties and the trade union bureaucracy, a variety of transitory forms of government may take place. Bourgeois governments, Constituent Assemblies, etc., may exist side by side with Soviets or Workers' and Peasants' Councils. In the Soviets there may be at first the supporters of the capitalists. In the Parliaments and Assemblies there may be representatives of the workers. In such a situation the whole aim of the Communist Party must be to strengthen the apparatus of the Workers' Councils and to destroy the apparatus of the bourgeoisie.

14. In some countries, as, for example, England and Australia, Labour Governments may be formed within the Par-

liamentary system. These Labour Governments are really movements dominated by the ideology of the middle class or petit-bourgeoisie and only tolerated by the capitalist class so long as they do not attack their vested interests or the rights of property.

The advent of such governments represents an important stage in the disintegration of capitalism, and should be used as a means to force working class issues to the front and to intensify the struggle against reformism in the working class organisations. The advent of a Labour Government should be regarded as the signal for the strengthening of the working class organs, the factory committees, etc., leading to the creation of workers' councils as the only means capable of exercising the will of the proletariat in its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

15. The conduct of the struggle against reformism on an international scale, and the relating of the sectional and national struggles of the proletariat to the international requirements of the class war, become for the first time possible with the creation of the Communist International. For the first time the millions of oppressed peoples of countries under the domination of the imperialists of the world have a common centre to which they can turn for guidance and are encouraged to find in the working class their ally against oppression.

The reformists answer the efforts of the revolutionary workers by efforts to reconstitute the old internationals of unions and parties and join with the capitalists in the creation of the League of Nations, the "democratic" cover for the rapacity of the imperialists. The whole movement in these directions represent the attempts of capitalism to heal the breach created by the Russian Revolution.

There is thus no alternative to the proletariat other than the creation of new revolutionary international mass organisations of unions, co-operatives and peasants, etc., to harness the results of the struggles within the national sections of the old organisations against reformism and reaction.

16. The Communist International, therefore, is the leader of all the exploited and oppressed. It defends the proletarian states that have arisen, fights for the liberation of oppressed nationalities from the bondage of imperialism and leads the workers of the capitalist countries to the conquest of political power.

17. Armed with these weapons of struggle, the Communist International pursues the aim of the substitution of the capitalist order by the Communist order, wherein the social ownership of the means of production supersedes private ownership; wherein

classes are abolished and mankind combines in common effort to exploit the riches of the earth and human effort in the interests of all humanity.

THE HISTORIC CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND THE STRUGGLE TOWARDS COMMUNISM.

1. Between the period of the beginning of the collapse of capitalism and the establishment of Communism a long interval of transition must ensue, in which the capitalist forces and the forces of revolution continually war with each other. Neither the defenders of capitalism nor the warriors of revolution can shake themselves free from the material and cultural conditions which exist throughout the world in varied array. Although modern imperialism brought all the regions of the earth beneath its sway, neither the great imperialist powers nor the smaller nations are uniformly developed. Hence the great crisis of capitalism, which produced the war of 1914-18, not only violently changed the relative positions of the imperialist powers, it also made vast changes in the material and political conditions of all the countries and in the class aspirations of large social strata throughout the world. From periodic crises such as had occurred repeatedly in its development it passed into its permanent historic crisis.

2. The world war constitutes the main factor in precipitating capitalism from its ascendent period into the present condition of chronic crisis. Instead of proving a means to the consolidation and uniform development of capitalism, it set the contradictions and uniform development of capitalism, it set the contradictions of capitalism in more violent antagonism, let loose the forces of social revolution, shattered vast productive forces, dislocated its markets and made inevitable the periodic repetitions of world war until the social revolution intervenes.

3. The war began with Germany and Britain as the principal protagonists, each with subordinate allies less economically developed than themselves. As the process of destruction and attrition made the protagonists more and more dependent upon the neutral countries for resources, they each sought to make allies of the neutrals. The entrance of America and Japan became the means of developing these new imperialist powers and changing the relative positions of all the great powers of the world.

4. German imperialism was shattered, as a competitor for the world domination, by the American reinforcement to the Entente powers, and by the great wave of revolution which swept

over Russia (relatively the weakest of the great capitalist powers, and Central Europe. The war ended with the centre of gravity of capitalism transferred to America, where the forces of production were greatly increased. The "victorious" countries were indebted to her, and Eastern and Central Europe were in a condition of famine, and their forces of production were terribly shattered. This contradiction intensified the rivalries rather than appeased them. In the place of Germany and Britain as the world's leading rivals stepped the Social Revolution, the revolt of the oppressed nations and colonials, the rivalry of the imperialists of Britain, France, America and Japan.

Notwithstanding the League of Nations, the Washington Conference, etc., the imperial rivals are more powerfully equipped than ever, with all the deadly weapons of war, and face each other with assumptions of faithlessness and threats of war. They are struggling to colonise the world, and their only opponent is the Social Revolution.

5. Economically Europe is divided into two groups of countries—the group suffering from under-production and the group suffering from over-production. The countries suffering under-production cannot buy, because of their poverty, from the countries suffering from over-production, who will not sell without payment. The world's market, based upon the exchange of goods with gold as a negotiable medium, is thus divided into sections, the economic and social conditions of which are utterly different. The visible index of capitalist decay is the rapid fluctuations and depreciation of the exchanges.

6. The lack of capital and material means of production in the under-productive countries leads to the deterioration of the physical condition of the workers, and reduces their capacity for production, whilst the middle classes (salaried, intelligencia, etc.), are thrust into the ranks of the proletariat in a similarly weakened condition. In the over-productive countries there is extensive unemployment among the workers, with a vast amount of machinery and means of production lying idle in want of markets for the goods they could produce.

7. Thus proceeds the general depreciation in the forces of production and the loosening of the ties between industry and agriculture in all countries. In the under-productive countries, because of the shortage of the means of production (artificial manures, etc.) the farmers take advantage of the shortage to force up high prices and to satisfy their own needs without regard for the needs of the towns. In the over-productive countries the same process operates because there are few buyers at profitable

prices. Land thus goes out of cultivation. This process is advantageous to large farmers, severely handicaps the small farmers, intensifies the competition between them and leads to the big farmers monopolising the situation with a view to crushing out the small farmers. The position in the towns becomes more acute. The competition in industry is intensified—a competition which lends itself to the further concentration of capital.

9. These conditions are still further aggravated by the efforts of the Entente countries to recover their war losses by transferring them as a charge upon the Central European countries, and their efforts to make of them their economic and financial colonies. The Versailles Treaty has Balkanised Europe and torn its economic units asunder.

10. Nor can the countries outside Europe escape the crisis. The colonial countries are in a state of chronic crisis, owing to their inability to dispose of their agricultural and industrial products in competition with the older industrialised countries, while America and Japan and Britain are in constant difficulties with regard to over-production and are striving to perpetuate capitalism by developing new colonial markets in China and South America.

11. The capitalists are powerless to affect a cessation of the decay of the capitalist world order. Those of the under-productive countries seek to escape by transferring their capital to neutral countries, and with high exchange rates. Those of the over-productive countries vacillate between two methods equally inadequate—either to leave the decaying countries to their fate and keep their own markets by high tariffs, or to re-establish the economic system of the under-productive countries.

The first leads inevitably to social revolution throughout Continental Europe; the second leads to the rehabilitation of Germany, the rival they set out to destroy, which in turn, if uninterrupted by social revolution, would intensify the world rivalry and lead direct to a repetition of 1914 on a vaster scale.

This latter policy also means the strengthening of Soviet Russia, where the proletariat holds power, not only because Germany would in the main be dependent upon Russia for raw materials, but also because the lack of markets elsewhere sets up a veritable scramble for the Russian market after the bourgeoisie have become convinced that they cannot kill Soviet Russia by military means. Paradoxical as it may seem, this policy tries to strengthen the storm centre of the social revolution as the means to escape revolution due to its own internal decay.

12. But there is no escape; the decisive struggle between the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat is being waged. The capitalists

are trying to win through the crisis also by intensifying the process of exploitation, reducing real wages, abolishing the eight-hour day, cutting the costs of production wherever possible. The proletariat is resisting fiercely and with revolutionary energy. In spite of the endeavours of treacherous Trade Union and Labour Leaders to persuade the workers to submit peacefully to the demands of the capitalists, the proletariat offers stubborn resistance. Strikes, armed risings, civil war, have become the normal conditions of many countries. The vanguard of the workers is inspired by the triumph of Soviet Russia to courageous and decisive actions. The Proletariat everywhere is making great strides in class consciousness and losing all faith in the permanence and durability of capitalism.

13. The capitalists can no longer depend upon the power of the state for protection, and fear the revolt of the rank and file of their army and officials. They find it necessary, therefore, to organise new forces drawn from their own class and the disappointed petit-bourgeoisie, and make a new state power which over-rules the old parliamentary machinery. These forces gather strength from every failure of the proletariat and even win workers into their ranks. By these means they have administered military and political defeats to the workers in a number of European countries. But military conquests by force which have not the mass of the workers behind them are compelled to broaden their social foundations and make way for the re-invigoration of the proletariat by concessions, in order to get the machinery of production to work again. This is the dilemma of the capitalists in Europe. Having destroyed the illusions of the masses by violence they are compelled, in order to restore production, to give the proletariat strength and greater liberty of movement. Renewed strength and shedding of illusions leads to the extension of the social revolution beyond the borders of Russia.

14. The same factors operate in the capitalist relations to Soviet Russia. Rushing to a "new market" as a means of recuperation, they enable the proletarian state to recover from the destructive attacks of civil war and imperialist invasion. The longer the proletarian state survives the more it is enabled to widen the area of its influence and power in the world market, and to introduce new factors into the rivalry amongst the capitalists by the intensification of their quarrels in the struggle for trade privileges.

15. In order to use the capitalists to the utmost in restarting and rapidly developing industry after the revolution, the proletariat of the revolutionary states grant concessions to the capital-

ists which are a source of danger to the proletarian states, but only necessary and dangerous so long as the revolution is confined to the economically backward countries such as are in the union of Soviet Republics. Nevertheless, the policy advances the industry in the revolutionary states, whereas capitalists outside their frontiers cannot even with any concessions make the fullest use of their existing forces of production and are on the down grade.

16. The colonial peoples are also roused to demand and secure concessions from the imperialists. The colonial countries which are the product of racial expansions such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, emancipate themselves from the control of the mother country partly by peaceful means, partly by violence, and independently seek new outlets for their products.

17. The races held in subjection by white foreign powers have been taught to fight with arms, to desire higher social standards and greater freedom. Their belief in the permanence of supremacy of the white imperialist peoples rapidly vanishes.

18. The Communist International therefore affirms that only by the proletariat of the capitalist countries seizing political power, breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, expropriating the expropriators, can the productive forces again be restored and developed, and the masses of mankind set free to advance from Capitalist slavery to Communism. To meet the demands of the economic and political crisis, which varies in acuteness from country to country, the Communist International proposes the following fundamental measures to be applied by the various proletariat.

1. Nationalisation of all land without compensation, the handing over of the small farms to the farmers and the operation of the large farms by the state under the control of the workers.

2. Nationalisation of all banks, mines, railways, communications, transport, engineering, shipping, cotton and woollen industries.

3. The disarming of the bourgeoisie and the arming of the proletariat; the creation of a proletarian army, navy and civil guard.

4. The abolition of capitalist law courts and the establishment of workers' tribunals.

5. The monopoly of foreign trade.

6. Nationalisation of distributive trades and fusion with co-operative societies, which become state distributive organs.

7. State monopoly of press.

8. Annulment of state debts, with allowance to small investors.

9. Nationalisation of all building and housing property, except small property owned by small tenants. Rents to be payable to the state.

10. Separation of church from state and equal status of all religious opinions.

11. Nationalisation of all day schools and universities; raising of school age to 18 years with equal opportunities for all the children to fullest secular, technical, and political education.

12. The liberation of the colonies held in military subjection (Egypt, India, etc.), and support of countries liberated against imperialism, whether the liberated countries are proletarian states or not, the question of their proletarian character being determined by the relation of social forces within them.

13. Recognition and alliance of the proletarian republic with the U.S.S.R.

Proletarians of all lands unite under the banner of the Communist International, in the revolutionary struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat!

PROGRAMME OF THE BRITISH SECTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

On the basis of the above and in adaptation to the conditions obtaining in its own country the British Section of the Communist International presents the following complementary demands and programme theses.

1. Great Britain is the oldest of the Capitalist powers. Its economic organisation is most ripe for the transition to Socialism. The centralisation and trustification of industry and banking are highly developed and ready for Socialist ownership and control with the minimum of dislocation. The proletariat forms the great majority of the population. Only the political control of the bourgeoisie and the unpreparedness of the proletariat for the revolutionary seizure of power stand in the way of a Socialist Britain. The continuation of the capitalist method of production, after the historical justification for its existence has passed, has precipitated this country with the rest of Capitalism into a chronic crisis from which only the proletariat can bring it successfully.

2. Great Britain is also a leading imperialist power involved in all the classic problems of the imperialist struggle for world power. Its colonies and dependencies vary in the degree of their development. Australia, New Zealand and Canada, South Africa and Ireland have emancipated themselves to the extent of assert-

ing themselves as independent entities, partly by peaceful means, partly by violence, and are rapidly becoming competitors with the mother country for the disposal of their products. India and Egypt are in constant revolt, demanding home rule, whilst the newer dependencies wrenched from the control of German imperialism, and those secured as "Mandatories under the League of Nations" (Palestine and Mesopotamia) are unceasingly demanding the right of self-determination.

3. Of these countries India especially is rapidly undergoing the process of industrialisation and has become an important factor in the dislocation of home industries (cotton, jute, etc.). The exploitation and development of the colonies and dependencies has been a means of developing the productive forces of Britain, and of interesting the workers in imperialist extension as a means of continued employment and high wages. The reactions throughout the British Empire in the period of the crisis of capitalism are all the more acute.

4. Britain emerged from the war with her industrial forces not only unimpaired, but with a greatly extended and more centralised and trustified plant. By extensive subsidies the area of agricultural production had been increased. The proletarian forces had been enlarged by the transfer of old and young into all departments of production. The old craft demarcation barriers of the trade unions had been swept away with the consent of the trade union leaders, social pacifists and national patriotic Labour leaders, and mass production was developed on an enormous scale. The capacity for production was thus greatly increased.

5. By concessions in wages, hours of labour, preferences of employment to ex-service men, and the creation of an artificial boom in trade, etc., the capitalist class steered safely through the demobilisation crisis, only to plunge deeper into an extensive and long period of stagnation due to the contraction of the world markets and the advent of new and powerful competitors. Internal trade suffered a set-back. The building of houses ceased during the war, whilst the high prices of materials, resulting from the shortage, and inflation made it impossible after the war to proceed with building operations without state subsidies. But state subsidies became increasingly hard to get, owing to heavy taxation and the determined efforts of the bankers to restore the pound to its pre-war standard. Extensive unemployment among the workers, and the over-crowding of the proletariat and lower middle class, has accordingly become chronic. The state was forced to control rents in response to the political pressure of the masses.

6. The small farmers, encouraged during the war by profits from subsidised prices to enlarge their holdings by mortgage, find themselves with a double burden. They are unable to get the war prices for their produce, and they have to pay off their mortgages in a restored currency. They are compelled either to hand over their farms to the large farmers and landlords and become tenant farmers again, working under unprofitable conditions, or to pass into the ranks of the proletariat.

7. All the measures of state control, both in industry and in agriculture, are abolished. Whitley councils and wages boards, whereby the workers had exercised a check upon the rate of exploitation, are swept away in many industries. Educational facilities for the children of the proletariat are cut. Measures of social amelioration, such as feeding school children and the granting of milk for children, and maternity welfare, are cancelled. An offensive on wages has reduced the workers' conditions below the level of 1914.

The reactions of the Versailles Treaty conditions further paralyse important industries, such as shipbuilding, through the placing of the German Mercantile Marine upon the British market at cut prices and the sending of ship repairs to Continental ports to secure advantage of cheaper labour and weaker currencies.

8. But the capitalists reject any attempt to cut the colossal state debt, and extract thirty per cent. of the annual revenue in the form of interest on debt. They attack state expenditure on social services, insist upon the reduction of taxes on profits, and cut all subsidies to the working class, such as unemployed relief, etc.

9. The whole internal situation thus produced is one of instability. The capitalist parties are torn asunder in their efforts to find a way out of the constant crises, whilst the working class becomes increasingly restive and stronger in its challenge.

10. Faced with instability at home, Britain's position as an imperialist power is no less difficult. America overshadows her in the struggle for world power. Although at great cost she recovered her financial credit with America by funding the debt, America wields the financial hegemony of the capitalist world. Britain lost her naval supremacy at the Washington Conference, whilst America is struggling with her for the possession of her colonies, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, by financial and economic penetration.

11. Without still further concessions to the colonies, and the restoration of Europe under British hegemony, British imperialism is defeated. The struggle for the hegemony of capitalist

Europe lies between Britain and France. Both are parties to the Versailles Treaty, which continues the war of 1914-18. By this Treaty Central and Western Europe were to become the Balkanised states of Europe, subject to the financial and economic control of Britain and France, with the League of Nations as the democratic cover for the pursuit of imperialist aims.

The resistance encountered in the application of the Treaty has intensified the rivalry between France and Britain, stripped the League of Nations of its pacifist garb, brought the economic fabric of Europe into a serious condition, and let loose national hatreds to be fed by the militarist aspirations of the leading powers. The occupation of the Ruhr and Rhineland by French troops has placed the seal of a predatory purpose upon their policy, and nakedly revealed the real aims of the imperialists in the war.

12. Equally vicious is the policy pursued by these "Allies" who have now replaced the British-German rivalry in their relations to the Balkan states along the Mediterranean route of Empire. Wherever the Empire extends the same predatory course is pursued.

13. British Imperialism has been and is the mortal enemy of the social revolution. It pursued the policy of military intervention in Russia, and fomented the enmity of its border states in south, east and west. The backward countries of Afghanistan, Palestine, Mesopotamia, etc., are constantly bludgeoned or intimidated into active opposition to the Workers' Republic.

14. The Communist Party sees no way out of this chaos for the workers other than through the revolutionary action of the working class, and outlines the fundamental economic and political measures necessary for a solution in the interests of the workers and all the oppressed of mankind.

(1) Nationalisation of all land without compensation, the handing over of the small farms to the farmers and the operation of the large farms by the state under the control of the workers.

(2) Nationalisation without compensation of all mines, railways, communications, transport, engineering, shipping, cotton and woollen industries, banks.

(3) The disarming of the bourgeoisie, the arming of the proletariat, and the creation of a proletarian army, navy and civil guard.

(4) The abolition of capitalist law courts and the establishment of workers' tribunals.

(5) Monopoly of foreign trade.

(6) Nationalisation of distributive trades and fusion with co-

operative societies, which become the state distributive organs.

(7) State monopoly of the press.

(8) Annulment of state debts with allowance to small investors.

(9) Confiscation of all fortunes over £5,000.

(10) Nationalisation of all property, except property owned by small tenants. Rents to be payable to the state.

(11) Establishment of national minimum wages and 40-hour week, in agreement with trade unions.

(12) Separation of Church from State and equal status of all religious opinions.

(13) Abolition of Poor Law. State responsibility for aged over 60, for unfit, for widows unable to work, and for unemployed.

(14) Free medical service.

(15) Nationalisation of all day schools and universities, raising of school age to 18 years with equal opportunity for all the children of the workers to fullest secular, technical and political education.

(16) The abolition of the monarchy and all hereditary titles.

(17) The liberation of the colonies held in military and political subjection. India, Egypt, etc., and support of the colonies liberated, whether they are liberated proletarian states or not, the question of the proletarian character being determined by the relation of social forces within them.

(18) The creation of economic and political agreements with all countries with a view to peaceful development and exchange of goods.

(19) Alliance of Britain with the U.S.S.R. and other Soviet Republics.

(20) Repudiation of the Versailles Treaty. The cancelling of war debts and reparations.

(21) Universal simultaneous disarmament.

These measures cannot be carried through in their entirety without the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, exercised through the Soviets, and the crushing of the capitalist class. The working class is the only social force which can give effect to the demands. The opposition of all other classes to them, along with the opposition of the reformist leaders of the workers in the trade unions and the Labour Party, increases the social and economic chaos and intensifies the misery of the masses. But until the illusions concerning all other "solutions" to their social problems have been swept away from the mind of the workers, until the reformist leaders are disowned and the workers support the Communist

Party and this programme, a succession of critical experiences is inevitable.

Already the development of the conditions outlined has led to a period of political instability and chaos amongst the parties of capitalism, the Liberals and the Tories, and the formation of a bourgeois government led by the Labour Party. The Tory Party represents in the main the landlord interests allied to banking capital. The Liberal Party represents the commercial and big industrial interests which have been severely hit by the breakdown of industry. The Labour Party composed of trade unions, the salariat and middle class intelligentsia, the Independent Labour Party, and other reformist parties, have accordingly received an impetus from the discontented workers and middle class elements who have suffered during the crisis. Its political outlook is a mixture of Liberalism, of the trade union bureaucracy which grew enormously during the period of imperial expansion and social patriotism of war time, of the reformism of the Fabians, the I.L.P., and parties of the Second International, propagating the gradual transition through capitalist democracy to Socialism.

The complex social character of the Labour Party produces conflicts within its ranks. The proletariat, who form the majority of the membership, feel the distress and poverty arising from the breakdown of industry, and increase their demands for improvements, while the petit-bourgeois elements, fearful of the development of a revolutionary crisis, strive to divert the protests of the workers from mass action into parliamentary channels. In this policy the Labour Party leaders have the assistance of the trade union bureaucracy, who, in addition to being reformist in outlook, use the narrow constitutions of the unions as a means of confining the workers to sectional action, and thus prove a tremendous bulwark of capitalism.

It is the task of our Party to penetrate the ranks of the Labour Party and the unions, to combat their reformist leaders, and to encourage the workers increasingly to united mass action in the defence and prosecution of their interests. It is incumbent upon every Communist to be a member of a trade union, the most elementary form of workers' organisation, in order to help the workers to secure greater solidarity in action, combat reaction, and win their confidence as the real leaders in the fight for their interests.

10. The British working class is politically backward. All its existing traditions belong to the period of social patriotism. The revolutionary experiences of its early history, including the

struggles of the Chartists, are only known to the students. It has been taught to regard the unions as only instruments for "collective bargaining" and to relegate politics to "politicians." The wealth accumulated by the capitalists throughout the period of imperial expansion has enabled the exploiters to corrupt the British workers, creating a labour aristocracy of skilled workers, while the unskilled have been organised into general labour organisations staffed by a well-paid reactionary bureaucracy.

11. These conditions make the British proletariat strongly susceptible to the Liberal policy of concessions and compromises, no matter at whose expense, as also to the Labour Government policy of conciliation, constitutionalism and imperialism. They have enabled the Labour bureaucracy subsequently to turn to their own account the "unofficial revolts" (the shop stewards' movement, the unemployed committees, the dockers' revolt, etc.), although these indicate the beginnings of the revolutionary experiences of the British working class, and reveal the manner in which the workers through factory committees, unemployed committees, etc., will break free from the influence of the reformists as the futility of the latter's efforts unfold themselves in their experience.

12. The formation of the Labour Government has not come through the aggressive action of the workers, or even by the Labour Party's securing a majority of the votes in a parliamentary contest. Millions of workers still vote for the Tories and Liberals. It has come through the chaotic condition of the capitalist parties, which have proved incapable of solving the problems of the historic crisis of capitalism. Unable to secure unity among themselves, they had to call on the Labour Party to form a parliamentary government. The product is a bourgeois Labour Government, conducting a policy of Liberalism towards the workers with the consent of the capitalists, pending the reorganisation of their forces for further attacks upon the workers.

The foreign policy of the Labour Government is conditioned by the consent of the capitalist parties, because of its refusal to pass beyond the limits of capitalist constitutionalism. The policy of imperialist subjection and exploitation of the masses of India, Egypt, Africa, etc., and the whole imperialist fabric continues under the name of labour imperialism.

In its relations with the Workers' Republic of Russia, it defends the interests of the bondholders and speaks in the name of capitalism.

Although the Labour Party is the product of the working class movement, political power has not passed into the hands of

the workers by the creation of the Labour Government. The capitalists are still in power, through their henchmen leaders in the ranks of the workers who form the Labour Government and the large body of its supporters.

13. It is the task of the Communist Party to expose this kind of Labour Government, to insist upon the leaders who claim any connection with the workers' organisations fighting for the workers' interests and with the workers or being exposed as the enemies of the workers. It accordingly supports the Labour Government where its actions are in accord with the demands of the workers, and urges the workers to challenge it with mass action where it supports the bourgeoisie.

14. The longer the Labour Government exists by the consent of the capitalist parties, and not upon the mass support of the workers, the more it forms working coalitions with the bourgeoisie and betrays the workers.

With the bourgeoisie it supports the policy of restoring capitalism and the strengthening of British imperialism by demanding the economic and financial colonisation of the defeated countries in the war, and effects the further enslavement of the workers.

Against this policy the C.P. demands (1) the repudiation of the Versailles Treaty, (2) the repudiation of the policy of reparations and indemnities, (3) the withdrawal of British troops from Europe, (4) the calling of an International Conference of the governments (a) to cancel all war debts, (b) to agree to restore devastated areas by united international action, (c) to determine frontiers on the principles of self-determination, (d) to secure peace by simultaneous disarmament, (e) to supplement governmental action by the calling of an all-in international conference of workers' organisations, (5) action necessary to secure the carrying-out of this policy.

15. Against the attempts of the capitalists and the Labour Government to impose bondholders' and bankers' terms upon the Workers' Republic, the Communist Party declares its solidarity with the workers revolution and demands the conclusion of the economic Treaty with Russia, the cancelling of property-owner claims, the non-recognition of pre-revolutionary debts, and the granting of credits to the Soviet Republic. These are essential demands in the interests of the workers of each country.

16. The Communist Party regards the maintenance of the British Empire as an act of deadly enmity to the workers of this country and the whole world. So long as British imperialism reigns, there can be no peace in the world, nor can the world's economy be organised or bring relief to the masses. Our Party,

therefore, declares its solidarity with the oppressed nations under the British flag, and, contrary to the bourgeois Labour Government, demands the full political and industrial freedom of India, Egypt, and the "protectorates" within the confines of the Empire.

17. The whole period of the existence of the Labour Government is one of fluctuating struggles, wherein the masses are repeatedly roused to action by their deepening anxieties concerning the uncertainties of their conditions. The Communist Party formulates demands accordingly, keeping constantly in mind the limitations of the workers' outlook and the fundamental tasks before them. Either the Labour Government must take action on behalf of the workers' demands or lose the support of the workers. On the other hand, the attempt to carry them through meets with relentless opposition of the bourgeoisie, which in turn compels them to face the issues of the class war, convincing the workers by their own experience of the correctness of the declarations of the Communist Party. The Communist Party in this period accordingly sets forth the following demands on behalf of the working class.

1. Nationalisation without compensation of mines and railways, and the control of the industries by the workers' organisations.

2. Application of the Capital Levy to all incomes over £5,000, and the use of the capital so obtained for the relief of unemployment, and for other social measures.

3. Cancelling of the National Debt with compensation to small depositors only.

4. State control of banks and opening of accounts to inspection.

5. Control of foreign trade and state regulation of internal prices.

6. Grants and credits to local authorities for the building of houses by direct labour.

7. Payment of unemployed relief from the national exchequer through the trade unions.

8. Payment of old age pensions from 60 years of age, without any other qualifications.

9. Granting of political rights to soldiers and sailors, placing them on the same footing as civilians, with the right to refuse to blackleg in industrial disputes.

10. Establishment by law of minimum wage, based on subsistence minimum, for all young workers.

11. Raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen years,

and the granting of full maintenance based on subsistence minimum. Youths between 14 and 16 years to receive vocational training based on the work school and training centres attached to workshops.

12. Elimination of all night work for all youths under eighteen years.

13. Provision of free meals for all school children, and abolition of child labour.

In addition the Communist Party supports every demand and struggle of the workers for increased wages and shorter working hours and improvements in conditions, and encourages them continually to increase their demands for control in the factories and workshops.

18. The unescapable struggle involved in the support of any of these demands increases the political and economic instability and is a corollary of the advancement of the Labour Party. The ascendancy of the Labour Party to Government operates in two directions. It awakens the political consciousness of masses of the workers because of its association with the workers. It attracts increasing numbers of the middle class, who feel the uncertainties of their position. Losing faith in the permanency of things to which they have been accustomed, they look for new leaders, finding them in the petit-bourgeois leaders of the Labour Party who have demonstrated to them their non-revolutionary character. The parties begin to break up this process of class assimilation proceeds. They form new coalitions, make frequent elections, project alterations to the parliamentary constitution, prepare for unconstitutional action.

The Labour Party and the unions cannot escape this process, wherein class issues become sharper and society divides up into two opposing camps. The advent of a Labour Government with a majority over all other parties would make no difference to this fundamental process, involved in the clash of the workers' interests with the demands for the preservation of capitalism torn by its conflicting elements.

19. The more these tendencies develop, the more urgent and imperative becomes the full programme of the Communist Party, and more and more workers are attracted to it.

It opposes all efforts to split the trade unions and proposes measures for the strengthening and developing the mass organs of the proletariat and encouraging mass action. The importance of the mass organisation of the workers, and the struggle towards power, makes it imperative that the present weakened condition of the unions and other organisations be overcome, and an effec-

tive struggle be conducted against the reformists and reactionaries for the leadership of these organisations. The Communist Party regards the numerous unions and their lack of central direction and craft outlook as a menace to the workers. It regards the basis of organisation external to the factories as a source of weakness. The Trade Union Congress is ponderous and weak through union jealousies and divisions, unable to wage a united fight because the decisions of its congress are not binding. The General Council functions as a mediator and not as a general staff leading the unions in the struggle. Its affiliation to the International Federation of Trade Unions is an autonomous affiliation, meaning stagnation in the international struggle of the workers.

20. Local organisations of Trades Councils, potentially a class weapon uniting all the local organs, are unrelated to the national movement.

21. The co-operative movement has been drawn closer to the unions through banking connections, through sympathetic actions in strikes. Though dominated by petit-bourgeois leaders and decentralised, they are reservoirs of strength if harnessed to the working class struggle and objective.

22. The Communist Party, therefore, proposes the following measures for the strengthening and developing of the working class organisations.

1. Amalgamation of trade unions into industrial unions, with factory committees as the units of organisation.

2. Creation of workshop and factory committees as the immediate means of struggle, both for the fusion of the union and the driving force in the economic and political fights.

3. Federation of Industrial Unions and the General Council of Unions, which shall be bound by the decisions of the Union Congress in order to act as a united body.

4. Formation of a joint council of unions, workers' parties, and co-operatives, for united action in all campaigns and struggles.

5. Reinforcement of the Trades Councils, the local organisations of the trade unions, by delegates from districts committees of the unions and from the factory committees. The affiliation of the Trades Councils to the Trades Union Congress.

6. The creation of a central council of Consumers' Co-operatives and C.W.S. drawn from the National Conference

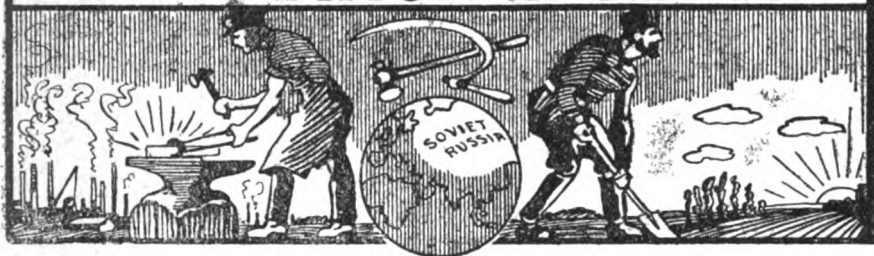
of Consumers and Wholesale Societies. Every worker to be a Co-operator.

23. The efforts to secure united action even along these lines meet with the vigorous opposition of the reformist leaders. Instead of assisting the unity of the workers, they defend with all their powers the interests of the bourgeoisie. The workers are opposed even by the Labour Government with a majority in Parliament and the workers are increasingly compelled to turn to the creation of the factory committees as the means of mobilising their forces against reaction. The fight increases in intensity and extent until the conquest of power through the Soviets.

24. Thus armed with the measures for the strengthening of the mass organisation of the working class with the successive political and economic measures for the development of the revolutionary purpose and power of the masses, the Communist Party responds to the International of the workers as a fighting force in the liberation war of the exploited.



INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



POLISH EXECUTIONERS.

(AN APPEAL FROM THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE WORKERS OF ALL LANDS.)

The Executive Committee of the Comintern has already called your attention several times to the insolent and infamous manner with which the Polish bourgeoisie are treating the toiling masses of Poland. Poles and Jews, Ukrainians and White Russians—workers and peasants—they have all alike been subjected to the same oppression and terror, which has been carried on in the name of the most bombastic phrases about democracy, the republic and the constitution.

Recently word has come from Poland of a new wave of this regime of terror.

In the Dombrow basin, where sixty thousand workers went on strike in the struggle to retain the eight-hour day and in support of their striking comrades in Upper Silesia, the police shot into an unarmed crowd of workers. Three workers were killed, 37 were wounded—7 fatally—and 200 of the strikers were arrested.

In Warsaw 27 young men and women, workers, students and soldiers of from 16 to 21 years age, have been held for 18 months in preliminary confinement, and sentenced to from 3 to 6 years penal servitude (exclusive of the period of preliminary confinement) for taking part in the Young Communist movement. When the Young Communists were sentenced they replied by singing the International.

In Krakow, a big trial is being prepared of several dozen workers and soldiers for taking part in the Krakow uprising in November, 1923. The defendants are facing the death penalty. In the same city the editor of a peasants' newspaper has been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment

for membership in the Polish Communist Party.

Similar sentences are pronounced almost every day in all the cities of Poland against every worker and peasant who is taking part in the struggle against capitalist exploitation and against the oppression of classes and nationalities by the Polish aristocracy and bourgeoisie.

On the White Russian and Ukrainian territory seized by Poland, new crimes are brewing. Poland is instituting court-martials there, and is preparing a punitive expedition after the manner of the Czarist generals, Mina, Doumbadze and Kaznakov.

At the present time 4,000 political prisoners are languishing in Polish jails. They are starving, they are beaten, they are forced to occupy the same cells as criminals, they are not allowed to receive newspapers or letters. During the last four weeks six hunger riots have broken out, in which several hundred prisoners took part.

Beating and torture of the prisoners are everyday occurrences. In the Lvov prison, a woman, Bessarabova, was tortured to death during the examination. In the Bielystock prison there have been seven deaths during recent months as a result of the beating of the prisoners during the hunger riots. Every day come new tidings of the brutality of the police toward the workers of Poland, and especially toward the peasants of the White Russian and Ukrainian districts.

Comrades!

Brand the Polish hangmen with the stigma that is their due! Remember that Poland, along with Roumania, serves as the bulwark of reaction in the West, as one huge tomb for the workers and the national minorities. When the representatives of the Democratic Polish Republic come to your countries to make speeches about civilisation and democracy and the

League of Nations, give them the necessary answer. Throw your contempt and your hatred into their teeth.

Down with the hangmen and hypocrites!

Honour and glory to the workers of Krakow and Dombrow!

Honour and glory to the Communist Youth of Poland!

World-wide aid to the political prisoners!

Long live the united struggle for liberation of the Polish, White Russian, Jewish and German workers and peasants under the banner of the Communist Party of Poland!

*The Executive Committee
of the Communist International.*

THE GENERAL ELECTION IN GERMANY.

The General Elections throughout Germany on May 4th, have resulted in tremendous gains for the Communist Party. The number of members to be elected to the Reichstag were 471. The number of electors who went to the poll were 29,257,116. The results were as follows:—

Party	Members—		Gains	Losses	Votes.
	Old(1920)	New(1924)			
Communist	4	62	58	—	3,712,002
Social-Democrats	173	100	—	73	5,973,770
Nationalists	69	96	25	—	5,755,609
Centre (Catholics)	68	65	—	3	3,899,022
Populists	66	44	—	22	2,642,843
Voelkisch (Ultra Nat.)	3	32	29	—	1,917,578
Democrats	39	28	—	11	1,657,451
Populists (Bavaria)	20	16	—	4	941,982
Agrarian League (Bav.)	4	10	6	—	683,093
Agrarians	—	9	—	—	568,288
Guelphs (Hanoverian)	2	5	3	—	318,451
Germans (Social)	0	4	4	—	338,356

The other Parties did not receive sufficient votes to entitle them to a member.

The names of the principle Communists elected are Comrades Clara Zetkin, Froelich, Ruth Fisher, Eichhorn, Rosenberg, Geischke, Scholem, Schuman, Hoellein, Schubert, Vrbahus (at present in prison), Koennig, Stoecker, Eppstein, Mayer, Eckert, Rommelé, Thaelmann, Dr. Herzfeld, Pfeiffer (at present under arrest), Sychalla, Dr. Schwarz, Bartels, Munzenberg, Thomas, Zade.

A feature of the elections has been the defeat of the Social-Democrats in places formerly strongholds, whereas the Communists have gained consider-

able strength. In Rhineland, the Ruhr, and the workers' quarters of Berlin and Upper Silesia, in Wurtemberg and in Central Germany, the Communists have gained solid majorities over the Social-Democrats. In Upper Silesia and in the Ruhr, the Social Democrats have been wiped out. In Berlin, in Hamburg, and in Wurtemberg it is considerably weakened. Without exaggeration, the Communist Party has won over large majorities of the workers in the industrial territories and has become *the Party of the proletariat.*

REPRESSION IN THE RUHR

Everyone remembers the first days in the Poincare policy of occupying the Ruhr. At first "pacific," leading to the passive resistance of the German industrialists, the imprisonment of Krupp and his co-directors, and the subsequent military occupation.

Though Krupp and his friends were sentenced to periods of imprisonment for 10 to 15 years, for not carrying out the order of General Degoutte, it is probably not well-known to readers of the *Communist Review*,

how Krupp did his time. Krupp lived in the house of the prison chaplain of Dusseldorf, with windows overlooking the street and four rooms at his disposal. He was allowed to receive his wife and to give business instructions.

The *Armament Ring* of Krupp, Schneider, Skoda and Armstrong had demanded this little sacrifice of Krupp, but, even before passive resistance broke down Poincare released Krupp recognising no doubt, he (Poincare) had achieved his purpose.

Far otherwise, however, was the treatment given to the Communists. Comrades Kerster and Sartuer of Dus-

seldorf were arrested in the first days of February. So badly were they maltreated that they had to be removed to hospital. Condemned to several months in prison, they were torn from their families and sent to the military prison of Zivesbruken, regardless of their condition.

General Bourgoin, of Bochum announced "if the population provokes incidents, the troops will be obliged to use their arms." And General Degoutte added, "without any warning."

That is the language used to the Communists and the treatment our Party has to suffer.

The suppression of papers and the arrests of the Communists and militant workers makes a long story of honour and glory to the working class—too long to deal with here.

But in the measure that the German working class and the French soldiers began to fraternise, the repression was intensified.

On November 17th, 1923, General Degoutte issued his famous order (No. 5842). "For the proper supervilliance of the Communist Party agitation and to render it more and more impossible we shall take advantage of every circumstance to arrest them."

This was the signal for a savage campaign against the Young Communists who were especially active in anti-militarist propaganda.

More than 200 workers, men and women, fathers of 55 years of age, mothers with four or five children under-aged, girls of 15, 16 and 17 years of age, and lads of the same age were arrested.

Germans, French, Austrians, Yugo-Slavs, Italians, civil and military, all were scooped up.

If the *Entente* had been in danger of lapsing, it was reanimated, notably when the English and French police proceeded in company to carry out the arrests and domiciliary visitations at Cologne and Solingen. The same policy was carried out by the Belgians in the territory occupied by them.

In all more than 120 comrades are in the military prison of Mayence.

REPRESSION IN EGYPT.

(APPEAL FROM THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF EGYPT.)

The new Egyptian Government, the government of Zaghloul Pasha, who became famous for his obstinate struggle against England for the in-

dependence of Egypt, has begun its reign with an attack upon the Young Communist Party of Egypt.

Several members of the Party have been badly mauled and with the utmost rigour rounded up and thrust into prison as vile criminals. The offices of the Party have been besieged by a band of thugs, sacked and closed. The houses of many of our comrades have been subjected to repeated visitations, and arrests are continually being carried out.

At the opening of Parliament and the coming to power of Zaghloul, a Draconian law was promulgated, essentially directed against the workers' organisations. Whilst the country as a whole directed all its forces towards liberty and independence from the English yoke, this law denies the right of the workers to meet in defence of their elementary interests, and interdicts the most sacred right of the workers, viz. : the right to strike. The Communist Party of Egypt, although still very young, has decided, whilst working towards pure Communism, that in a country still impregnated with feudal survivals, where there are no constitutional guarantees, nor workers' legislation; in a country where the working class must struggle all the time against the newly arisen bourgeoisie, and against the domination of English militarism, it is necessary to win the confidence of the workers in the factories and workshops.

With the opening of Parliament, coincided a strong effervescence amongst the workers, and numerous strikes took place throughout the whole country. The Communist Party faithful to its role and to its duty to the proletariat, undertook the direction of this movement.

In the course of these strikes and the demonstrations of the workers, and after the first arrests, the Wafd (the National Party directed by Zaghloul) sent representatives to the workers to remind them of the sacrifices of the Wafd for the country, promising big things and the best of conditions, if they would only return to work, and stop their demonstrations.

The workers hooted the representatives from the Wafd and acclaimed at length the delegates from the C.G.T. and the Party. This exasperated the government. Furious, they swore death to the Communist Party, and since then, the persecutions have continued.

Those arrested have been living in the dark dungeons for over a month, and as there is no law to distinguish between political prisoners and ordinary criminals, the conditions of the comrades imprisoned are lamentable. Four of our comrades decided on a hunger-strike to obtain a transfer into better conditions.

The Communist Party of Egypt protests with all its might against these outrages, and appeals to the Inter-

national proletariat to raise its voice with it, and work with it to save our brothers and deliver them from the hands of their executioners. It appeals to the international proletariat to protest and show at the same time that it sustains by its sympathy the aspiration of the Egyptian people for the independence of its country, and that it is solid with the proletariat of Egypt—the sole defenders of this independence.

The Forum

THE HUMANE BUSINESS MAN.

Here is the bosses' latest stunt. To get pals with the worker and then bribe him to work harder in order to make more profit.

A new organisation called the British Humane Association has been formed "to aid civic self-development by spreading only ethical truth" (whatever all that may mean) "as we hold that creeds and politics are a man's private affairs." This quotation from the middle article of their propaganda organ, "The Humanist," is followed a little further on by a long diatribe against Socialism. "These so-called idealists" they say, "would hand over the government to the least educated section of the community." And yet, these business men are all against increasing the money for education.

But who actually are these business men and what do they really want? Their Board of Directors, magnanimously Honorary, includes Sir Peter Rylands, the strict, notorious ex-President of the F.B.I., Lord Invernain, Gordon Selfridge, and others of that sort. Their first list of Vice-Presidents they proudly state consists of a maharaja, six earls—and J. R. Clynes! We hope the latter feels at home when the V.P.'s meet.

The advertisement on the back page of this organ is written by Sir. Chas. Higham explaining in flowery language "Why Business Men should support the British Humane Association." "The B.H.A." he says, "believes in the great cause of humanity," which sounds well, no doubt. "That the humane spirit makes human beings happier, and *more efficient* as individuals, there can be no doubt." That is where the secret is let out.

Among their other articles is one by Granville Street. It gives the

whole show away. We are to be made as healthy and as fresh as possible—to get the boss more profit. "Fifty years ago," he says, "decent working conditions would have been dismissed as the imaginings of dreamers. To-day, they are seen to be profitable expenditure and sound business. But decent working conditions are the thin edge of the wedge of humanitarianism. Hate the word as we may, it means—profit!" No respect for the worker as a man—only a desire for a more efficient machine—and profit!

"If the business man will think a minute or two he will soon discover that the quickest way to greater success is humanitarianism." This man, Granville Street wants all employers to have a dentist on the premises (as an additional torture, no doubt) and to give the workers an afternoon cup of tea to get them fit again when they begin to get tired. Why not put us all in training like the Boat Race crews? Everyone in bed by 10 o'clock, and up at six. No drink, no smoke. We should be ever so much more efficient—and bring in more profit! Really, it would be too funny if it did not show a disgusting lack of the humane outlook.

The worker is a man who can think for himself, not a machine. The success of Henry Ford has meant a new line of attack on the worker. Capitalism in its craze for efficiency wants to make us literally its slaves. This B.H.A. seems to believe in the great cause—not of humanity—but of efficient, profit-producing machines.

We have now got to fight for something more than wages—our manhood. We have got to demand more, especially shorter hours, and, most of all, the control of industry. The workers who make the goods should control the making. We have got to show capitalism we are men, not machines.

S. P. THOMPSON.

SHALL WE COMBAT RELIGION?

Although it may be interesting, it is very pitiful to see that there are yet Communists like Comrade Baldwin, who, perhaps through no fault of their own, utterly fail to understand, that, according to Marxism, the "Idea" of God is all there is about it, and to try and sentimentally believe otherwise is to misunderstand the roots of Communism. The apathetic impartiality prevailing on this matter is really appalling.

Like all ideas, the idea of God originated at a certain stage of historical development. Behind it is nothing but ignorance, stupidity and misunderstanding. It is an abstraction, and if not curtailed and relegated to its proper place, that is, as material for historical study, will continue to warp the minds of future generations. No matter in what form it is clothed it will always be dangerous to progress, for progress depends on man's understanding and control of social phenomena, not on social phenomena holding man down to a state of mock worship. Its effect of deadening the mind of man is much more dangerous than some people imagine. All good Communists understand every kind of religion to be the "Opium of the People."

The savage in his primitive state could not do otherwise but misunderstand natural phenomena, but when the Church came along with its priests and parsons to organise his ignorance for him, his chains became much tighter.

For modern civilised people who follow Lenin, and try to understand "supernatural" (whatever that may be), and to think there are "new facts coming to light on it," is beyond the comprehension of all intelligent people, except Communists!

Comrade Baldwin has evidently yet to learn that Communism represents a complete outlook on life, an outlook based on the scientific understanding and control of social phenomena, and, consequently, it will be the highest form of society we know. It will be a religion in which man will stand up and realise himself and his fellows, untrammelled by the neurotic ravings, pity and piety of the Churches and States. It will be the only *true* religion and the only *good* religion. It will not be foisted on man by burning him at the stake, or keeping him alive to pray to the holy ghost. It

will come only by man himself building it up with his labour in proportion to the increase of knowledge and the decrease of all other religions.

All Gods will then be relegated to their proper places for man to turn them up as an interested subject to study, as one might turn up a good book to spend a pleasurable hour. Jesus and Buddha will be known the same as Plato, Voltaire and Marx, that is, they will be known according to their relative importance to the accumulation of knowledge.

It must be the strict duty of all Communists to fight against all religions, until the advent of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, when the children will be liberated from the opium in the schools.

I don't think it is necessary for me to ask the E.C. to pass an amendment dealing with Comrade Baldwin's resolution.

D. C. CORRIE.
Late Paddington Group.

Dear Comrade,

With reference to Comrade Baldwin's letter under the above title in the April number, I do not think that any economic system can represent a complete outlook on life, but I have no doubt that, as Comrade Baldwin says, Communism will profoundly modify many other human activities.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that the main essential for obtaining a complete outlook is a clear recognition that religion—which in my view should be defined, as "belief in supernatural beings" (Tylor's definition) is intellectually untenable. The grounds for this statement are broadly (1) that science discloses to us a universe wherein the endless and inevitable chain of cause and effect completely discounts any "spiritual" agency, and, (2) that the whole structure of supernaturalism has been traced to its origin in the ignorance of primitive man.

Further, I am convinced that pre-occupation with supernaturalism—even when freed from all capitalist influences—will absorb a certain amount of human energy, which should be exclusively devoted to the reconstruction of life on this globe.

In conclusion, it is only fair to you and your readers to point out that I am not a member of the Communist Party, but merely a sympathetic reader of your literature, with a distinct leaning towards much of the Marxian philosophy.

H. W. DAVEY,

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND RELIGION.

Dear Comrade,

In the Forum of last month's issue of the *Communist Review*, I noticed a very misleading article entitled "Should We Combat Religion," criticising the action of the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern for attacking religion, and preaching Atheism in the interests of Communism. According to the writing, "it is not religion itself that our Party should fight against, but only the falsification of it in the interests of capitalist society."

For a Communist to hold such a confusing opinion is, to say the least, dangerous—both to himself and to the militant interests of the working class. The Christian teachings of the I.L.P. before the war, led to pacifism, which is, judging from the words of Christ, true Christianity, and pacifism lulls into inactivity the best fighting elements of the working class, thereby leaving them entirely at the mercy of the capitalist class, without the will or the means of resistance.

Would Lenin have accomplished the Revolution if he had adhered to the Christian doctrine of pacifism instead of waging the class war? Will the Communist Parties in the various countries overthrow capitalism by the Christian doctrine of love and gentle persuasion instead of by the use of force?

No, decidedly not!

No one can be consistently both a Christian and a Communist. A true Christian believes in turning the other cheek, resisting not oppression, returning good for evil. It would be madness for a Communist to adopt such an attitude towards the oppression of the capitalist class.

According to Frederick Engels, so surely does the acceptance of the materialistic conception of history lead to the exclusion of religion that the attempt to couple them betrays charlatanism, or lack of thought. It is indeed surprising that any member of the Communist Party who naturally accepts the materialistic conception of

history, which leaves no room for divine influence in the making of history should wish to introduce religion into the Party. If we adopted religion, the result would be disastrous.

I would advise Comrade Baldwin, and all wavering comrades to study Bishop Brown's "Communism and Christianity," price 1/-, published by the Communist Party, which ably describes the conflict between religion and Communism.

It should be the duty of every member of the Party to read this book, written to a Christian Socialist by an American bishop converted from orthodox Christianity to Communism, from which the following is a quotation—

"The contradiction in terms known as the Christian Socialist is inevitably antagonistic to working class interests and the waging of the class struggle. His policy (that of the Christian Socialist) is the conciliation of classes, the fraternity of robbers and robbed, not the end of classes. His avowed object, indeed, is usually to purge the Socialist movement of its materialism, and this means to purge it of its Socialism, and to divert from its materialisms to the fruitless chasing of spiritual will-o'-the-wisps. A *Christian Socialist* is, indeed, an *anti-Socialist*."

I will conclude with the memorable words of Comrade Trotsky—

"And therefore, we adopt a ruthlessly irreconcilable attitude to anyone who utters a single word to the effect that mysticism or religious sentimentality might be combined with Communism. Religiousness is irreconcilable with the Marxian standpoint.

"We are of opinion that Atheism, as an inseparable element of the materialist view of life, is a necessary condition for the theoretical education of the revolutionist.

"He who believes in another world is not capable of concentrating all his passion on the transformation of this one."

Yours fraternally,

LESLIE MASON,

(Barrow Branch.)

Review of Books

One Union for Railway Workers: (A Suggested Basis for the Discussion), by P. R. HIGGINSON, with a foreword by G. H. D. COLZ, I.L.P. Information Committee. Price 2d.

The author, realising that the grouping of the British railways into four company combines is a progressive step on the part of the railway magnates whereby they will be able to wage war, in a more efficient manner, on the existing conditions of the railway workers, considers the time opportune for a fusion of the unions, now catering for the railwaymen, and a complete re-organisation of structure; as an alternative to academic theorising he outlines a suggested draft, which, in his opinion, should be the constitution of this proposed One Union.

No one will disagree with that expressed view, or will fail eagerly to scan the pages to see what definite plans he offers to attempt to solve the Shopmen's problem, involving as it does about fifty odd unions. When the reader finds that the mechanics and their mates are to be entirely ignored, so far as this one union is concerned, he will, if he is a practical railwayman, unceremoniously hurl the pamphlet into the firegrate with disgust. Re-organisation without attempting to tackle the question of the shops

appears to be unwarranted timidity.

To achieve "self-government in industry," "industrial control" is the aim of the author and he selects the R.C.A., A.S.L.E. & F. and the N.U.R. as the ground work. Utilising twelve pages to outline the constitution of the One Union. This he appears to have done within an atmosphere created by a comfortable armchair before the parlour fire, and as a consequence arrives at a position that would make official bureaucracy rampant and the machinery cumbersome.

Realising that there is harmony in the workshop between the various grades, irrespective of the union to which the men belong, the scheme provides for the formation of branches—outside the depots or shops—of no less than 500 with a maximum of 1,000; how the rural districts would fare he does not state.

The governing body would consist of a congress of 350-400 members with national officers and the executive committee (a gathering of the clans); the author does not visualise any confusion from such a crowd. Though he only offers this scheme as a suggested basis for discussion, he appears to be very concerned with what name it shall be christened.

W.C.L.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Russia's Counter-claims*, by W. P. COATES. Published by Hands Off Russia Committee. Price 6d.
- Socialism and the Mining Industry*, by EMRYS HUGHES.
- Socialism and Finance*, by PETHICK LAWRENCE, M.P. Price 6d. Published by I.L.P. Information Committee, 11, Adam St., Strand, London, W.C.
- One Union for Railway Workers*, by P. R. HIGGINSON. Price 2d. Published by I.L.P. Information Committee, 11, Adam St., Strand London, W.C.
- The Remaking of Russia*, by KURT WIEDENFELD, with Introduction by Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy, M.P. Price 3/6 (Paper Boards). Published by the Labour Publishing Co., Ltd., 38, Great Ormond Street, W.C.1.
- The First Time in History*, by ANNA LOUISE STRONG. Price 6/- (Paper Boards). Published by The Labour Publishing Co., Ltd., 38, Gt. Ormond St., W.C.1.
- Socialism for Women*. By MINNIE PALLISTER. Price 6d. I.L.P. Information Committee, 11, Adam St., W.C.
- One Union for Railway Workers*. Price 2d. By P. R. HIGGINSON.
- Labour and the New World*. By Mr. PHILIP SNOWDEN. Price 5/- net. Cassells & Coy., Ltd.
- The National Debt*. By F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE. (Cloth, 2/6. Paper 1/-). Labour Publishing Coy.

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