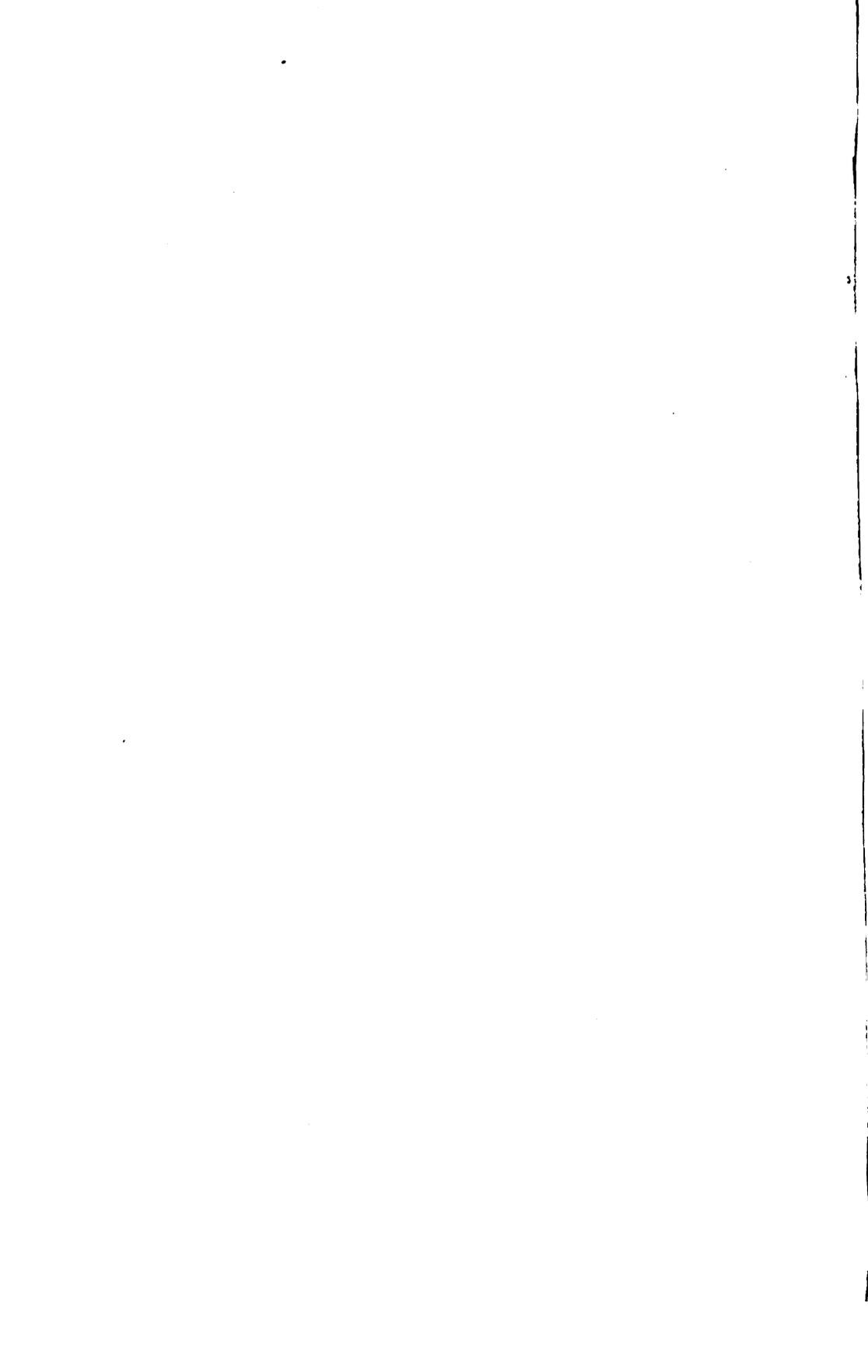


**THE
COMMUNIST REVIEW**



THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

Published by the Workers' Weekly Publishing Co.

Volume 7

AUGUST 1926

Number 4

C O N T E N T S

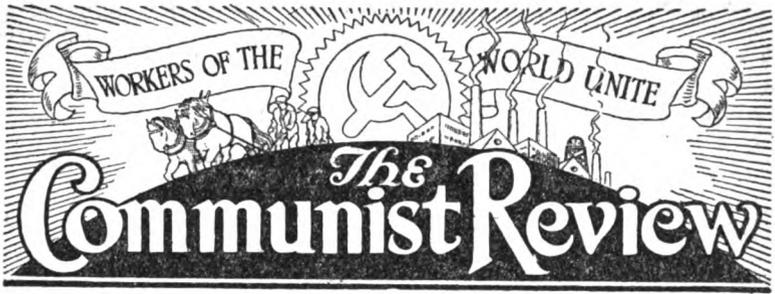
Editorial View	- - - - -	153
After Coal—Railways <i>George Forbes</i>	- - - - -	163
E.P.A. <i>Dr. Robert Dunstan</i>	- - - - -	171
Tasks Before the Party Congress <i>J. R. Campbell</i>	- - - - -	177
The Fight Against War <i>Agit-Prop. Dept.</i>	- - - - -	183
Building the Party—		
(1) " <i>Flying Osip</i> "	- - - - -	187
(2) <i>Tom Quelch</i>	- - - - -	191
The Official Labour Movement in the U.S.A.	- - - - -	195

All communications to be sent to The Workers' Weekly Publishing Co.
" COMMUNIST REVIEW," 24 High Holborn, W.C.1

Subscription Rates. HOME & ABROAD—Single copies, 6 months, 2s. 9d
postpaid. One year 5s. od. postpaid.

Bundle Orders. Home & Abroad, 12 cops. 3/- postpaid sale or return.





THE EDITORIAL VIEW

PREPARE TO FIGHT AGAIN!

THE miners are still fighting. In spite of everything—the propaganda of the employers, the hostility of the Government, the treacherous compromise-seeking Liberals in Labour's ranks, the weakening of their own leaders, the absence of a direct response to the appeal for an embargo, and, worse than all of these, the increasing pinch of misery in their own homes—the miners continue their heroic struggle. This remains the most important fact in the British situation to-day. It at once provides evidence of and further assists in the deeper decline of capitalism in Britain: it helps to bring out before the workers the true complexion of the ruling class: it provides, day by day, a clearer test of the workers' leaders and political parties: and little by little, overcoming all the official sabotage, it brings home to the workers the need for rallying once more in a united front against the capitalists, this time under new leadership.

The miners' fight does all these things because it strikes at the very nerve centre of the capitalist system in Britain—coal: willy nilly every section of society is forced thereby to take up a position, one way or another. In this way the lies and hypocrisy about the unity of society, the identity of interests of employer and employed, the State as "something "above all classes," "trust your leaders" as a substitute for working-class action, expose themselves in a practical and convincing fashion, a thousand times better than the best revolutionary propaganda ever did or could. True, the workers have got to learn these lessons: true, the apostles of surrender and cowardice (*i.e.*, of Liberalism) in Labour's ranks—the members of the General Council, the Labour Party Executive, the I.L.P. Executive—are all doing their utmost to obscure the lessons. But the workers are learning them all the

same, as they might have done in 1921. For the essential difference between 1921 and 1926 is the existence of a strong and experienced Communist Party, and a great Minority Movement, to take up the lessons and drive them home. That is why, we repeat, the miners' fight remains the most important fact in the class struggle in Great Britain.

* * * * *

Let us review rapidly the chief groups of facts which support this conclusion. *The deeper decline of British capitalism.* During the last few weeks the published comparative statistics show this beyond possibility of doubt. Foreign trade figures for April, May and June only continue the general downward tendency shown in the first quarter of 1926: shipbuilding is the same: the iron and steel industries are the same: the textile industries had begun to fall at the end of last year, as the export figures showed, and the General Strike hit them a shrewd blow even though the textile operatives remained at work: the coal industry, of course, needs no statistics. Even the boasted stability of the pound sterling, as compared with the dollar, has been achieved by the wholesale unloading of French, Belgian and Italian currency on the market—with disastrous results for the latter—instead of simply meeting bills in America with drafts on the British Treasury, as would have been done in pre-war days. For all the world knows that Britain's reserves in America have sadly shrunk since those days, and British Treasury Bills are not taken as seriously as they ought to be. These facts all point in the same direction—namely, that capitalism received a mortal wound during the war, and every effort has only opened the wound a little wider, and pushed capitalism as a means of production, distribution and exchange, a little closer to its end.

The exposure of the capitalist class. The hatred of the workers shown by every section of the capitalist world—Ministers, politicians, writers, priests, bankers, manufacturers—has opened the eyes of more than one wondering worker during the General Strike. But the practical steps taken or threatened during the last few weeks have been still more effective. The continuation of the Emergency Powers Regulations, at first excused by references to the "illegal General Strike," but now maintained in an industrial dispute pure and unmistakable. The active preparations being made by the Cabinet to limit the workers' rights, by legislation which includes (it is reported), the prohibition of mass picketing, the imposition of secret compulsory ballots in industrial disputes, the rendering of trade unions liable for losses inflicted on employers by strikes, the abolition of the political levy and the disfranchise-

ment of the worker who receives unemployment benefit. The removal of the West Ham Guardians and the appointment of three Government "commissaries," with strict injunctions to see that the relief granted does not raise the workers above starvation level. The eagerness with which the provincial Boards of Guardians with capitalist majorities have followed the lead of the Tory Government in cutting down relief to the miners' families, or in refusing it altogether. The Government's organisation of "trade facilities," to the extent of £3,000,000, for the import of coal (while trade facilities are refused to Russia), imports to keep going the iron, steel and other large industries, in which members of the Government, from the Premier downward, and the capitalist M.P.'s have been revealed to be personally interested. All these events of the last few weeks can leave little doubt in the mind of the most apathetic worker of the real nature of the Government—the executive committee of the capitalist class—and of the existence in this country of a capitalist dictatorship, which uses the machinery of Government as a means for keeping the workers in subjection.

* * * * *

In this issue of the "Communist Review" we print two articles directly bearing on these two lessons of the present period: one dealing with the economic causes of an opposition in the N.U.R., the other analysing the possibilities and use already made of the Emergency Powers Act. Both give Communists a valuable illustration of how it is possible to use events of the day in order, by explaining the causes underlying them, to lead the workers on to considering the permanent historical lessons of current events. This is very necessary, because just now British Labour needs to be equipping itself with that deeper theoretical armoury of Marxism and Leninism which it has so lacked in the past. In the great struggles of which the General Strike was only the forerunner, the more equipped our class is in this respect, the greater its chances of victory. Luckily, at no time in the history of British Labour did current events supply the revolutionary vanguard with such clear and convincing illustrations of the truth of revolutionary Marxism.

* * * * *

Let us turn to the other lessons brought out by the continued fight of the miners. *A test of the workers' leaders.* Has there ever been a more classic test? It was clear from the very moment the General Strike ended that the one hope of the General Council was to induce the miners' leaders to share in their treachery and thus to participate in the blame. They hoped to repeat the manoeuvre of 1921, when the treachery was so well divided that the

workers had no centre round which to rally for a counter-attack. But they forgot that our Party, and still more the Minority Movement, had won considerable influence amongst working miners since 1921 : and they discovered to their disgust that, in response to pressure from the working miners, there were leaders at the head of the Miners' Federation who would not dirty their hands in the plot, and who remained true to the workers who chose them. Hence, after the pleading of May 12th, after the resolute silence of the first six weeks afterwards, the open attack on the miners' leaders by the Report of the General Council to the Conference of Executives summoned for June 25th.

The General Council kept their word to the miners by not publishing it officially : but the deficiency was repaired, with convenient "indiscretion," by Mr. John Bromley, who thereby finally ranged himself with Mr. J. H. Thomas as an enemy of the workers. The aim of the Report, and of its publication, was to excuse the General Council's action and to complete the isolation of the miners : but its real effect has been to expose, more vividly than ever before, the real character of the present leadership of the trade union movement. Any slander on the miners, any suppression of facts, any distortion of the truth (such as on the question of the repeated pledges of solidarity with the miners' three demands given by the General Council), anything to make it appear likely that the General Council was taking a proper course on May 11—12 when it endeavoured to bully the miners into accepting the Samuel Memorandum, which meant wage reductions and compulsory arbitration.

So much for the General Council : has its "Left" Section shown itself any more worthy of its position and its pretensions? The best answer is to be found in the columns of the Labour press. Have the last four weeks seen any further attempts by the "Left" Wing to dissociate themselves from the policy of treachery and cowardice? None at all—with one miserable exception. During the first weeks after the strike, the "Left" were terror stricken : then they ventured into the press, with weak and cowardly apologies, not merely for themselves, but for the General Council (the Swales-Hicks-Tillet manifesto, the Bevin-Findlay-Walker manifesto, both blaming it on to the wicked Sir Herbert Samuel who "deceived" the innocent General Council : then the Hicks and Purcell articles in the "Sunday Worker," waxing very bold and fierce about the *next* General Strike, but not saying a word about responsibility for the last one). Our Party did its bit by the working class in reminding these heroes that the workers wanted to know what they were going to do *now*. The result—a relapse into complete silence—the silence of cowardice and of bankruptcy. The

one miserable exception to which we alluded is Purcell's brilliant proposal for "overthrowing the Government"—by a march of miners on London! How terrified the Government must be of this fire-eater Purcell and his colleagues, who let the refusal of Russian money go by without a protest, helped in the unconditional surrender of May 12th, subscribed to the dastardly Report of June 25th, and have never dared to raise their voices in public for an embargo!

* * * * *

It has been said, and truly, that these "Left" Wingers bear a heavier responsibility even than the Right Wing for the betrayal. For why was it that the Right Wingers were afraid to fight openly the General Strike proposal on May 1st, when we know that they were against it? Because they feared the pressure of the masses. Whom did the workers look to as their leaders, whom would they have followed in the event of a sharp clash between Right and Left? The men who had led the General Council on Red Friday last year—the Left Wing. By capitulating, by remaining silent, by taking the side of Thomas, the Left Wing left the workers temporarily leaderless and voiceless—save for our Party and the Minority Movement. And this treachery, unexpected and fatal, was greater than the certain and expected treason of Thomas. Yet if we cast our minds back to the part played by the "Left" Wing at Scarborough—when they left all the fighting to the small Communist and Minority fraction—and last December, during the formation of the Left Wing—when they tried to disrupt the Left Wing because Communists were in it—we shall see that their treachery was not a sudden growth.

* * * * *

Of the other "leaders" of the workers—those at the head of the Labour Party—it is scarcely necessary to write. Their rôle has been a continuation of the part they played during the General Strike. In Parliament we have had pitiful appeals to Baldwin, reproof of the "uncultured" back-benchers who ventured to carry the workers' anger into the sacred shrines of Westminster, seizure upon every incautious statement by Smith or Cook which departed from the miners' original slogan of "No wage reductions, no longer hours." It was not until our Party and the Minority Movement had raised a vigorous protest that the Parliamentary Party was kicked into fighting the continuation of the Emergency Powers Regulations. Outside Parliament, we have seen numerous offers to the Miners' Federation to "put their case" in the country—but always on the understanding that it was to be the case for the Coal Commission's Report, *i.e.*, for surrender. There have been constant enquiries as to "what is the miners' policy": but never an

attempt to take their policy from their published statements and appeals : never any campaign, for example, either by M.P.'s or by the Party Executive, in response to the miners' call for an embargo—although the local Labour Parties and the thousands of weekend meetings afforded a wonderful opportunity for carrying the miners' message to the railwaymen, dockers, and other workers.

But, just as in the case of the General Council, the advanced workers knew what to expect of the MacDonalds, the Hendersons, the Herbert Morrisons. Even the new campaign of expulsions against Labour Parties which have refused to expel Communists is nothing surprising. The Communists warned the workers, ever since Red Friday, that they must prepare to fight on May Day : the Labour Party leaders, on the contrary, told them not to worry. The Communists supported the miners' slogan of "Not a penny, not a second" : the Labour Party leaders sneered at it as a "dogma," and assured the Tories that they had "nothing to do with General Strikes or Bolshevism or that sort of thing" (Mr. MacDonald in the House of Commons). The Communists are fighting to enlist the support of the whole of the working class behind the miners' fight against wage reductions, on the ground that the other workers' turn will come next : the Labour Party leaders are fighting for the acceptance of the Samuel Report, which means wage reductions, and urging the workers to give up strikes and "co-operate" with their employers (Snowden). No wonder therefore, that the Liberal leaders of the Labour Party are doing their best to expel, not merely the Communists, but all those who believe in fighting for Socialism.

Liverpool saw the beginning of a campaign against the Communists : Margate, as the Communist Party foretold, is intended to see the beginning of a campaign against all Socialists generally. The wreckers and disrupters are the Liberal leaders. How much longer will they be tolerated by the workers ?

* * * * *

Yet the most striking test of all those which the continuing struggle of the miners has imposed upon the "leaders" of the Labour movement, has been that of the self-styled "Left Wing" amongst them—the leaders of the I.L.P. Last month we had their letter postponing for a month their decision on our offer of a united campaign for the embargo. This month we have their reply. We Communists, the heirs and successors of the old Marxist parties of this country—the S.D.F. and the S.L.P.—have no illusions about the confused and often opportunist tactics of Keir Hardie : but we feel sure that he must have turned over in his grave at the cynical effrontery of the letter which his followers have replied to

a working-class party's offer of a shoulder-to-shoulder fight on a working-class issue.

"As you know, we support the policy of the embargo"! A lie! The I.L.P. leaders have done nothing to further the acceptance of the embargo by the trade unions: all they have done is to pass a resolution paying lip-service to the embargo—when they found the workers demanding it. Where I.L.P. branches have joined in the embargo campaign, it was in defiance of their N.A.C. "The embargo has been rejected by the unions"! The reply of the coward! For weeks the I.L.P. leaders sat in sloth and passivity, waiting for the unions to give them the excuse: and now that excuse is all-sufficient. The idea of fighting within the unions for a reversal of the decision never crosses their mind. "Your policy leads to isolated action by individuals"! On the contrary, our policy was to harness all the generous indignation of individuals into a great collective effort which would win the unions and the movement generally back into active struggle on behalf of the miners—and of themselves! "Your International tells you to struggle against the I.L.P."! What a pitiful excuse! Yes, we fight against the I.L.P. on a score of questions, political and tactical, within the Labour movement, because we believe that our policy is right and theirs is wrong, because we want to see the day when a majority of members of the General Council are Communists, instead of I.L.P.'ers. But here is an issue involving a fight between the workers and the capitalists: what is more, the I.L.P. leaders claim to hold the same views as ourselves. Why cannot we, differing on twenty points, yet combine to fight for the workers on one point where we agree?

The I.L.P. leaders have adopted all these pitiful and disgraceful subterfuges to avoid a fight: what can they claim to have offered the miners as a positive contribution? When the Coal Commission's Report came out, they welcomed it and advised its unconditional acceptance: the miners virtually rejected it, knowing that its whole purpose was to justify a decrease in wages. *Yet the cry at the I.L.P. Conference was "A Living Wage"!* When it became clear that the capitalists were going to attack, come what may, the I.L.P. leaders ran about wondering why they were so foolish, when all they need do is set up a "Selling Agency" and then no wages need be reduced, while the capitalist system could continued unimpaired. *Yet the I.L.P. Conference had declared in favour of nationalisation!* When the General Strike had been fought and betrayed, because the miners would not agree to the wage-cutting proposals of the Samuel Memorandum, the I.L.P. leaders came out and backed up the General Council by supporting the Samuel Memorandum. *Yet the I.L.P. Conference had passed*

an emergency resolution promising support to the miners! Ever since the General Strike, the I.L.P. leaders have been giving whole pages of the "New Leader" to wage-cutting proposals by Frank Varley, or to fantastic appeals to Baldwin to impose a levy on royalties (to Baldwin, mind you), or to artless appeals to the capitalists to solve the crisis "by their own characteristic means"—a Selling Agency (apparently not realising that the capitalists had long ago begun settling it by their "characteristic means," namely, an attack upon the workers' standard of living). For all this there were pages and pages: for the embargo, not a single article since the end of the General Strike! *Yet the I.L.P. Conference had spoken bold words of the need for an energetic attack on the capitalist system, in order to achieve "Socialism In Our Time!"*

To serious I.L.P.'ers, particularly to workers amongst them, these resolutions must now seem a mockery. But they should be also a warning. The I.L.P. leaders—and, to the extent that they continue to carry the I.L.P. members with them unchallenged, the I.L.P. as a whole—have become a terrible danger to the working class. The capitalists, and their open allies the Trade Union and Labour Party leaders, simply attack the workers, simply betray them when they are ready to repel the attack. But what part are the I.L.P. leaders playing? They are winning the confidence of the advanced section of the workers by loud words and Socialist phrases, and then leading them away from a fight and into blind alleys when the crisis comes. To withdraw the active elements of the working class in this way means to paralyse the workers as a whole. And that is what the I.L.P. leaders are doing: trying to paralyse the will, to poison and sap the energy of everything that is vigorous and aggressive in the working class. They avoid a fight for the embargo, they try to enlist the workers in an appeal to the bosses to save the coal industry "by their own characteristic means." We ask I.L.P. workers—is this the way to "Socialism in Our Time"—or to capitalist slavery?

* * * * *

Thus we see indeed that, as the weeks go by, the miners' struggle acts as an acid test for the Labour movement as well as for the capitalists. All the shams and pretences and treasons are being gradually forced out into the open. To paraphrase a somewhat ambiguous remark by comrade Trotsky in a recent article ("Communist International," No. 22): "The entire present superstructure of the British working class, including all tendencies and groupings with the exception of the Communist Party, the Minority Movement and the revolutionary Left Wing in the Labour Party, represent an apparatus acting as a brake on the revolution." And the workers are learning it.

Is this a mere fancy? Then why is it that the combined circulations of the "New Leader" and of "Lansbury's Weekly" have fallen to under 75,000, while the circulation of the "Workers' Weekly" has risen to over 80,000? Why is it that the increase in our Party active membership is now not far off 5,000? Why is it that the circulation of the "Sunday Worker," the organ of the militant Left Wing, has grown to over 120,000? Why—if not that we have now really and tangibly entered upon the time when the working class is testing all those who claim to be its friends, casting out the false and cleaving to the true?

The miners' struggle has done this. But the miners are only the first detachment of the working class to be attacked. The railway companies have never yet enforced the January Wages Award which Thomas so narrowly carried: they are waiting for the miners' fight to end. The dock employers have not forgotten the coal companies' complaint at the Commission about the high wages of the "sheltered trades": only coal trimmers have so far been attacked, but they are a beginning. The engineering and metallurgical employers have not conducted their campaign against French and Italian and American competition for nothing: they, too, are only awaiting their turn. The textile employers are turning this way and that, writing down capital and shutting down factories for three days a week, in their dilemma between loss of markets to Indian and German and Chinese cheap labour, and their fear of a struggle with the workers at home: but this, too, will last just as long as the miners' fight lasts. Baldwin's motto will yet be learned by the working class in letters of fire: "The wages of every worker must come down!"

To prepare against this menace, to profit by the lessons already taught by the miners' struggle, to reorganise the trade union movement and re-equip it with a new fighting leadership, is the urgent need to-day of organised Labour. Therefore every Communist and every revolutionary must do his utmost, even during the few days that are left, to get every trade union branch, lodge, district committee, trades council, and co-operative guild represented at the Minority Movement Conference on August 28th.

But this is not all. At home, as we have seen, the workers are faced with a heavy tide of political reaction: anti-trade union legislation, disfranchisement, consolidation of the power of the House of Lords, and so on. Abroad, the danger is equally great. The article which we print this month reveals the growing danger of war: every week, now, the newspapers tell us of fresh "incidents" warning us of the imminence of the war danger: fighting in the Balkans, attacks on British and American tourists in France, open anti-American agitation in the British press, direct menaces by Italian Fascism against Switzerland and France, and—of still

more sinister import—mobilisation by Pilsudsky, the Polish tool of British imperialism, against Lithuania and Soviet Russia. In the East, with the revival of the Nationalist cause in China and the victorious advance of the Canton People's Army, are heard new rumours of British intervention. Everywhere British imperialism is hard at work preparing the ground for an attack on its chief enemy in Europe—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The "lectures" in India, by high staff officers, about the "Russian menace to India" are not serious Army training; they are propaganda for British consumption, intended to follow up the notorious "Blue Book."

Against this war danger, it is useless to expect a spontaneous fight from Ramsay MacDonald and the present Labour Party leaders (just as it is futile to expect a spontaneous General Strike from the present General Council). The real hope of avoiding a new blood bath, as of fighting the anti-working-class legislation threatened at home, is to strengthen and mobilise all those elements in the Labour Party which are genuinely out to fight for Socialism, and which are prepared to answer capitalist war in the only possible working-class way—by revolution

The duty of every Communist and every revolutionary, therefore, is to use the lessons of the miners' struggle in order to win the Labour Party for the Left Wing. The first National Left Wing Conference, summoned for the beginning of October (immediately preceding the Labour Party Conference), is a great opportunity to take a first step in that direction. A new leadership for the Labour Party, like a new leadership for the trade unions, is a task common to thousands of workers still outside the Communist Party. While doing everything in their power to strengthen and enlarge their own Party—for thereby they are strengthening the working class—Communists will be ready to join with every honest Socialist and revolutionary worker in carrying out this task, so urgently necessary if the vital achievements of a hundred and fifty years of working-class struggle are to be preserved.

After Coal--Railways

Capitalist Decline and the Policy of Thomas.

By **GEORGE FORBES.**

LAST month's proceedings of the Weymouth Conference of the N.U.R. are of paramount importance to all workers who desire a militant working class policy. Let Left-wingers rail as they like, as to how it all happened. It would be foolishness to blink at the facts. The Conference was a decisive triumph for Thomas, though a glance at the voting on the respective questions discussed shows considerable gravel in the shoe. This Conference has given us an index of the grip Mr. Thomas still has on the railway workers. At the same time it indicates to us the magnitude of the task that lies before all railway militants who want to see a real forward movement amongst railwaymen.

Is there any need to be discouraged? Not at all. Thomas's star is set, soon it will fall. We will not follow the usual bourgeois test of a "victory" by looking at the majority of votes cast for Thomas's policy. What is of more significance to us is the fact that a not insignificant section of the delegates dared to challenge him in his own house. It matters not that they were hopelessly defeated in voting. The big thing was to make a drive for a new leadership. Time and circumstances are all in favour of a change. This, of course, does not mean waiting for the graveyard to come to our assistance. Only by perseverance in activity and organisation can a new leadership arise.

The Trade Union movement of this country has thrown up in its time many leaders who have worked hand in glove with the very employers the union was designed to fight against. Some of our readers will remember such types as Burt, Fenwick, Richard Bell, Shackleton and George Barnes—men who it was thought would never die. These men, like all Trade Union and Labour leaders reflected the period of capitalist development in which they lived. They, too, in their day were hailed by the capitalist press as the "sane" men of the movement. We can now estimate them at their true worth. They represented a transition period when Trade Unionism was striving to escape from its craft union shell, when, as yet, the policy of class collaboration received considerable

support from the concessions an expanding capitalist system was able to give to the workers from its imperialist exploitation.

But the cardinal mistake most railwaymen make to-day is in thinking that their relatively privileged position—privileged compared to shipbuilding and engineering workers—is due to the wisdom or wizardry of J. H. Thomas. Naturally, Thomas cultivates this belief. He obscures the obvious fact that while the railway magnates have a few tools amongst the railway workers to carry out the will of the railway shareholders, it is ridiculous to imagine that a representative of the workers can be an agent in the camp of the railway directors, working against the interest of the railway shareholders.

The policy of class collaboration is always one-sided. It has not given the railway workers their present standard of living. On the contrary this policy has rather been the device to restrain the demands of the railway workers. The elementary and obvious fact which railway workers have to bear in mind is, that wage conditions—and this applies to all other grades of workers—do not depend in their ultimate upon the skill of trade union leaders to negotiate, to grovel, or to make after-dinner speeches, it depends upon the ability of the companies to pay. Now this ability is not a matter of sentiment. It is a question of hard cash. Moreover, it is conditioned by the economic position of the industry which, in turn, especially transport, depends upon the conditions of capitalism in general.

The early stages of development in the railways is a story of disorganisation and confusion among the workers. The higher grade of skilled labourers, the drivers, firemen, guards, ticket collectors and station masters soon became an aristocracy compared to the knock-about porters and permanent way labourers. The workers generally were largely recruited from the rural areas, and coming from an impoverished class of labourers the difference in wage conditions, perquisites such as uniform, sickness and old-age clubs, privileged tickets, etc., help to soften their opposition to the railway companies. Meanwhile, the railway directors deliberately played one section off the other. But with the expansion of the railways concurrently with the developments of imperialism, the need for mass organisation of the workers soon broke through the obstinate hatred of the railway companies to labour organisation of any kind. The successful struggle for the All Grades Movement consolidated the railway workers in the 1912 strike.

It is in this period that Thomas finds his place. The expansion of traffic consequent upon the steady developments in the export trade, especially of coal, was Thomas's opportunity. The

railway companies needed a steadying hand upon the workers. They were not slow to see in Thomas the ideal Labour leader who was sufficiently pliable to bend to their will. And they encouraged him with little concessions from their enormous profits. Add to this the stereotyped conditions of railway management in the pre-war days, when the railway shops were looked upon by many workers as "Sanatoriums" and conditions of labour easy and happy-go-lucky, and we have the basis for the traditional hold of Thomas upon the railway workers.

But these days are gone, and with them are going surely the relatively privileged position of the railway workers. No longer does the British capitalist enjoy the monopolist power he once possessed in the world's markets. In the general crisis of capitalism, British capitalism has not escaped, imports and exports are rapidly falling. There is no longer the monopolist markets for British coal. Indeed, the coal crisis is part of the general slackness of capitalism in this country—a slackness which lies heavily upon the railways and transport industries generally.

Capitalism's barometer, the stock market, shows a decline in Home Railways ever since the early part of 1923, at first gradual, it has become tremendously accelerated since January, 1925. Since this date the quotations of ordinary and deferred shares, especially in the "Big Four" lines, have begun to toboggan. Great Western Stock, for instance, fell 21 points and L.M.S. 26½ points during the year.

These falls are directly due to the decline and depression in the "Heavy" industries.

Traffic on the Railways.

The largest users of the railways—the coal, iron and steel industries—despite reductions in tariffs and exceptional treatment, have not shown any improvement. At the beginning of 1926, the railways companies renewed their contracts for the carriage of coal at reductions of 3s. to 4s. per ton and for iron and steel at 5s. to 10s. per ton. These reductions, which bring tariff rates for these industries to approximately 20 per cent. above 1913 rates, must of necessity, with the curtailed production in those industries, reflect itself in further reduced railway earnings during the present year.

The tonnage of goods and minerals carried by the railways in Great Britain showed a decline of 6½ per cent. in 1925 as compared with 1924, a total tonnage reduction of 20,000,000 tons. In 1925, the total tonnage carried was approximately 326,000,000

tons, whereas the total tonnage carried in 1913, was estimated at 366,000,000 tons. On this basis the freight traffic of 1925 may be estimated at 87 per cent. of the pre-war year.

Export Trade and its Effect on the Railways.

As we have said, the crisis in the coal industry has had a marked effect on the railways. The carriage of coal to the seaports for bunkers and exports show an increasing decline. Coal production in 1925 showed a reduction of 20 million tons less than in 1924 and 40 millions less than in 1913. The reduction in 1925 is represented largely by losses in the export trade, which has been saved from greater reductions in volume by a continuous process of reducing F.O.B. prices. The figures for export during the post-war years are as follows:—

Year.	Exports including Bunkers.		
1913	94,424,000 tons
1922	85,013,000 „
1923	97,608,000 „ (Ruhr Occupation)
1924	79,338,000 „
1925	67,225,000 „

Inland consumption fell from 185,913,000 tons in 1924 to 176,143,000 in 1925, a reduction of almost 10 million tons.

Iron and Steel Trades.

Taking 1913 as an indication of pre-war standards, we find that there has been a reduction of about 4,000,000 tons in the quantity of pig-iron produced in British blast furnaces while steel production has declined by 250,000 tons.

The following table shows exports of iron and steel manufactures in 1925 compared with the figures of previous years:—

Year.	Exports			
1913	4,969,224 tons
1923	4,317,537 „
1924	3,851,435 „
1925	3,731,023 „

The decline in the relative rates of British production to European and world production in iron and steel also shows a progressive decline.

A very important factor in the prosperity or otherwise of railways is the shipping tonnage engaged in overseas trade. The past year is reckoned to be the worst of the whole five years' depression. The main causes are to be found in the heavy falling off of exports and the increased world tonnage:—

Year.					Clearance at British Ports.
1913	...	...	...	...	67,820,000 tons
1925	...	...	...	...	62,311,000 ,,

Owing to excessive competition due to the lessened trade and the increased tonnage, the standard of freight rates is now only about 1 per cent. over 1913 levels.

Take again, engineering exports. While a certain improvement has been apparent in the exports of machinery, a considerable leeway has to be made up before exports reach the standard of 1913.

Exports of Machinery.

Year.					
1913	...	...	...	...	689,349 tons
1925	...	...	...	...	515,896 ,,

The most active branches were the motor industry and the electrical industry which made up for the falling home demand by increased contracts secured overseas.

The decline in exports far out-balances the increase to be recorded in some branches of industry. Coal naturally is the worst feature, being 35 per cent. less than in 1913, and showing a progressive decline during the past three years.

The Board of Trade calculation of the volume of exports of U.K. production in 1925 compared with 1913, shows a decrease of 24.0 per cent., taking 100 as representing 1913, 76.0 represents 1925, and a further decline by 8.7 per cent. of 1925 figures has been manifest in the first six months of 1926.

The Finances of the Railways.

The foregoing figures relative to the decline in trade have their corresponding relation in the receipts of the railway companies in 1925. After the third year of working under the new system laid down by the Railway Act of 1921, whereby all lines were grouped into four large companies, heavy declines in traffic and receipts are shown. The four companies' returns for receipts show a reduction of £4,144,000 in 1925 as compared with 1924. Not only so, but when the dividend announcements were made, it was confessed that large amounts were again being withdrawn from the reserves, the aggregate amounting to £6,626,000 as against £5,100,000 at the end of 1924.

The companies since their reconstitution, have withdrawn £12,876,000 from their reserves. That this source of revenue is being gradually exhausted is seen from the balance sheet of the

L.N.E.R., whose Government compensation fund has been reduced in three years from £15,269,000 to £5,080,000. The earnings of the L.N.E.R., during last year, fell short of the amount required to pay preference dividends by no less than £1,670,000. The net receipts for the L.N.E.R. fell by 13.6 per cent. in comparison with 1924. This is due to the fact that the L.N.E.R. is dependent to the extent of 57 per cent. of its revenue upon heavy goods traffic. For the whole railway systems there was a total decline of 6.5 per cent. of the 1924 figures.

The Course of Railway Wages.

It is most instructive to compare these facts with the history of railwaymen's wages.

From 1914 to the beginning of 1920, all grades of traffic workers had been granted flat rate increases, which at the latter date totalled 38s. a week.

Early in 1920 rates of wages were standardised and two sets of rates were agreed upon. One set (A rates) represented the pre-war rates plus 38s., the total being subject to variation under the cost-of-living sliding scale.

The other set (B rates) were roughly double the pre-war rates and represented amounts below which there was to be no reduction, however great the fall in the cost of living. These B rates gave the same percentage increase over pre-war rates to all the workers, and, therefore a greater money increase to the higher paid than to the lower paid grades.

Consequently, the balance between the A and B rates available for the reduction under the sliding scale was comparatively small for the better paid men. These were therefore the first to reach the B rates as wages fell from 1921 onwards. At present 45 per cent. of the higher paid workers are in receipt of the B rates.

The remaining 55 per cent. are receiving a bonus ranging from 1s. to 8s. a week. Under the existing arrangements this bonus will not be entirely eliminated unless the cost of living index falls to about 35 per cent. above pre-war level, but as from February, 1926, no bonus will be paid to new entrants in any grade.

The following are examples of the A and B rates for a few grades in which a bonus is still payable:—

(a) Porter—Grade 2	A Rate	B Rate
London	48s.	42s.
Other Districts	46s.	40s.
(b) Goods Porters		
London	51s.	47s.
Industrial Areas	50s.	44s.
Rural	47s.	40s.

(c) Permanent Way Men

London	... ..	... 52s. to 53s. ...	48s. to 50s.
Industrial Areas	... ..	... 50s. ...	44s.
Rural	... ..	... 48s. ...	40s.

The principal grades, i.e., drivers, firemen, guards and ticket collectors, are all in receipt of wages under the B rates—that is to say that they have lost all their cost-of-living bonus.

The final shilling of the cost-of-living bonus paid to the higher grades came off on 1st June, 1925. Mr. Clower, at the National Wages Board, November 17th, 1925, admitted the drop in the war wage under the cost of living scale, the railways between 1921 and 1923 having shown an actual reduction of £55,000,000.

In commenting on the B rates, the Wages Board expressed the opinion that they did not find those an irreducible minimum. This may be regarded as preparing the way for further encroachments on the higher paid workers and, apart from the cost-of-living reductions, will mark the first breach in the higher paid wages since 1920.

The negotiations of the past four years have been mainly concerned with the A rates, but the case presented by the railway companies at the last National Wages Board shows quite clearly their intentions regarding the more permanent rates of wages. This is foreshadowed in the minority report of the National Wages Board, which reads:—

“ While fully accepting the decision of the Board, we cannot sign the report. In our view the present conditions in the railway industry justify the claim put forward by the railway companies for a substantial reduction in the level of wages of railway conciliation and dock grades. We regard the present burden of labour costs as being economically unjustifiable. We further regard the continuance of the present burden of labour costs as calculated to hamper the development and limit the activities of the railway industry, a condition which in our opinion, is detrimental to the public interest.”

Signed. R. L. WEDGWOOD,
H. G. BURGESS,
J. H. FELLOWS.

The Perspectives for Railway Workers.

What then, does the future hold out for the railway workers? We have shown quite clearly the process of economic decline of the basic industries in Great Britain. To retain even their existing standard, the railway men must fight.

Since 1920 a policy of attrition has operated quite successfully through the operation of the cost-of-living sliding scale. The policy of deflation and the return to the Gold Standard has further reflected itself in the pressure against workers' wages and standards. It is extremely interesting to note that the last reduction under

the cost-of-living scale for the higher paid workers in June, 1925, should coincide with the demand of the companies for reductions of 4s. and 6s. per week in the wages operating on the agreed B scale drawn up in 1920.

The creation of two grades of workers at unequal wages, i.e., new entrants without cost-of-living bonus, tends to drive a wedge between sections of workers.

The situation following the General Strike with the humiliating conditions imposed on the railway workers, and the large number of men who have been suspended as a result of the coal lock-out, demonstrates quite clearly the intention of the companies to put into operation the Baldwin policy of "The wages of all workers must come down."

The rising star of J. H. Thomas, which appeared in the pre-war period, reflecting the importance of the railway workers in the economic life of Britain, began, as we have said, to be manifest in the All Grades Movement of 1912, when a successful strike consolidated the railway workers. During the period of the war, the importance of the railways provided an excellent medium for the policy of class collaboration. But the improvement in the conditions of the railway workers was conditioned upon the importance of the railways for industry and not upon the class collaboration policy of J. H. Thomas.

In the revolutionary period following the war the railwaymen were able to stabilise their gains, but the fodder basis on which the agreement of 1920 was based has now in the course of events operated against the railway workers. **£55,000,000 reductions between 1920 to 1923!**

The process of decline shows itself in the increasing distrust of J. H. Thomas and the rising anger of the rank and file against the policy of class collaboration. Now, no longer is the star of Mr. Thomas in the ascendant. The economic facts of British capitalism are such that they preclude the possibility of a trade revival and the railway workers who fetch and carry for industry in general will have to face the fact that only by an increasing struggle against the encroachment of the railway companies can they hope to hold their meagre wages, and prevent them from being further cut.

That a policy of struggle is abhorrent to Mr. J. H. Thomas will not alter economic facts, and we can safely leave the whole situation to the rank and file railwaymen to deal with. Mr. Thomas will go the way of previous leaders who wanted to have a foot in both camps.

As capitalism declines in Britain, so will the light of the class collaborators grow dim; and J. H. Thomas, the brightest luminary in the constellation, will be eclipsed with the rest.

E. P. A.

A MASTER CLASS WEAPON.

By Dr. ROBERT DUNSTAN.

THE Emergency Powers Bill was introduced in the House of Commons and read a first time on Friday, October 22nd, 1920. The Bill received the Royal Assent on the 28th of the same month and so within seven days became an operative Act ready for the use of the Master Class for the defence of the Capitalist State in case of adverse Working Class action. Its rapid passage demonstrates how efficiently the Parliamentary machine will work when it is a question of forging a weapon for the use of the capitalists against the exploited masses; and this month (July, 1926) the same efficiency has been shown by the swift progress of the Coal Mines (Eight Hour) Act, designed to aid the coal owners in their attack upon the hours and wages of the miners. The passing of E.P.A. marks the date at which the capitalist Government realised the growing strength of the Labour movement and the dangerous power of organised industrial action. The ruling class looked ahead and took steps to anticipate the coming of the General Strike.

THE RUSSIAN CRISIS.

In order to appreciate the position correctly it is necessary to step back to the month of August, 1920, when the Coalition Government were threatening a war against the Workers' Republic of Russia. This threat roused the Labour movement and a widespread agitation forced the leaders of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party to form a **Council of Action**. A hastily summoned Committee of these bodies passed a resolution stating that:

“ This Joint Conference feels certain that war is being engineered between the Allies and Soviet Russia, on the issue of Poland, and declares that such a war would be an intolerable crime against humanity. **It therefore warns the Government that the whole industrial power of the organised workers will be used to defeat this war.**” (August 9th, 1920.)

On August the 13th a special Labour Conference assembled in London and confirmed the setting up of the **Council of Action**,

and also declared for resistance to “ **any and every form of military and naval intervention against the Soviet Government,**” and announced that “ **any and every form of Labour withdrawal which circumstances require** ” should be the means of enforcing the will of the workers upon Mr. Lloyd George and the British Cabinet. It is interesting to note that Mr. J. H. Thomas, no doubt with his tongue in his cheek, stated that the resolution “ did not mean a mere general strike, it meant a challenge to the whole constitution of the country.”

A GOVERNMENT SURRENDER.

The immediate effect of the setting up of a **Council of Action** and the threat of a General Strike was to bring the Government to its knees. The Prime Minister declared for peace and abandoned his concerted action with the French Cabinet against the Soviet. That war was intended is clearly shown by the fact that the French recognised the notorious Wrangel administration in South Russia as a *de facto* Government.

There can be no doubt but that the British Cabinet were taken by surprise and were not at that time prepared to accept the challenge of the workers, any more than they were in July, 1925. The true import of the surrender, however, was not lost upon them, as will be seen from the speech of Mr. Bonar Law in moving the second reading of the Emergency Powers Bill in the House of Commons. For the moment they contented themselves by denouncing the unconstitutional action of the Labour leaders and in publishing the evidence of the gift of Russian gold to the “ Daily Herald,” which in those days was a fighting working class paper attracting the attention and abuse of the capitalists.

THE EXPLOITERS PREPARE.

Nevertheless the master class looked ahead and lost no time, forewarned is to be forearmed. They took the excuse of the Coal Crisis (October, 1920) to introduce the Emergency Powers Bill. It was pleaded by the Government that the Bill was “ **not intended to apply and could not by any possibility apply to any ordinary industrial dispute** ”* and it was further stated that the need for such a measure was shown by the fact that the Defence of the Realm Act (D.O.R.A.) had been found useful in defeating the Railway Strike of 1919. Every effort was made to give the Bill an innocent appearance but the true motive was disclosed by Mr. Bonar Law, who said when moving the second reading:

* The value of this promise can be measured by its present application against the miners in spite of the admission of Cabinet Ministers that the Coal Struggle is “ an ordinary and legal industrial dispute.”

“Just consider what is the position. Suppose a great widespread emergency . . . arise and suppose to make it worse that action is taken, as it would have been by the Railwaymen, not to forward their own interests but out of purely sympathetic motives. **Suppose the issue is a clear one, as to whom the power in this country rests, for that is what the issue would be . . . the Government has taken a particular line, if that line is to be upset by direct action by anybody, however important, the power of this country is changed.**” (October 25th, 1920.)

The then leader of the House of Commons whilst speaking of the Coal Crisis and the possibility of sympathetic strike action was really thinking of the successful Labour push in August when his Government had to abandon their “particular line” of war against Russia in face of the threat of the workers to use their organised industrial power and Lord Robert Cecil in the course of the debate went out of his way to warn Labour leaders against unconstitutional action by saying:

“I venture to submit to my friends on the Labour benches that it is a matter for their very careful consideration whether a general strike is really consistent with the action of a constitutional party. You can be a constitutional party or you can be a revolutionary party, but you never can be both, and if you try to be both the only result will be that you will lose the confidence of the people as a constitutional party and you will not be effective as a revolutionary party.”

These passages clearly show the origin and nature of the Bill, it was not one to deal with the immediate emergency of the Coal Strike but one proposed in preparation of a greater threat by the revolutionary-minded rank and file of the Workers’ movement. The Emergency Powers Act was passed as a master class weapon, in order, as Mr. Bonar Law put it, to prevent power from passing from the ruling classes to the organised workers of this country.

DICTATORIAL POWER.

The wording of the Act itself needs little attention. It provides that His Majesty may under certain circumstances declare by proclamation “that a state of emergency exists” and empowers His Majesty to make regulation for “securing the essentials of life to the community” and various other objects, including the “preservation of peace.” Once a State of Emergency is declared, ordinary government gives way to dictatorial power. Parliament passes into the background and the Cabinet with its minions rule the country under the Emergency Regulations,

backed by the armed forces of the State and the class-biased occupants of the Magisterial Benches.

THE EMERGENCY REGULATIONS.

Under the regulations widespread powers are given to the Executive, including power to take possession of land, railways, docks, road and canal transport and food supplies; naturally compensation is provided for in respect of any property taken and from the capitalist point of view this interference with the rights of private property was welcomed as necessary for the suppression of the revolting workers. The real bite in the regulations is in those sections aimed at working class propaganda and strike activities. The powers of the police are enlarged to an arbitrary degree, arrests are allowed without warrant and on mere suspicion, premises may be entered by force, if need be, and searched on the order of a Chief Officer of Police, and any constable is given power to stop any person or vehicle.

Whilst powers are taken by the Executive to augment the police force and to use police outside their usual districts all working class activity is curbed with an iron hand. The regulations carefully secure that no arms shall pass into the hands of the masses even to the extent of making it illegal to have a stone or other missile in one's possession. It is made a crime to approach any mine, railway or dock, even if no injury is done and a conviction can be secured on mere suspicion based on the "**known character**" of the suspect. To be a striker, a strike leader, or still worse, a Communist, is quite sufficient for an average magistrate to convict. Drilling is forbidden as far as Labour Defence Corps are concerned but the right is preserved for His Majesty's naval, military, air and constabulary forces. An important section allows the employment of soldiers and sailors on strike-breaking work and enjoins obedience on "every person subject to the Naval Discipline Act, or to Military Law or to the Air Force Act." Other sections are aimed at the publication of working class papers and at the holding of meetings and processions. After the offer of funds to the General Council by the Russian workers a regulation was framed to prevent international working class aid by laying an embargo on funds coming from abroad.

It is in these sections of the Regulations that the true class character of the Emergency Powers Act is to be seen. Whilst the Capitalist State could arm, mobilise special constables and use the forces of the Crown generally, the workers are prevented from drilling or arming to the slightest degree and their rights of picketing and of propaganda are limited and suppressed by arbitrary police action.

THE POLICE AND MAGISTRATES AT WORK.

The utmost advantage has been taken of the Emergency Powers Act by the Government and the police authorities. Thousands of working class men and women were searched, arrested, fined and imprisoned. It is stated that between the 3rd and 12th of May alone, more than two thousand arrests were made in connection with the Strike. Many well-known Labour and Trade Union leaders were thrown into prison for courageous leadership of the strikers and it is a significant fact that though the Communists number but a one-thousandth part of the organised workers, no less than one-tenth of those arrested belonged to the Communist Party.

Needless to say there is no place for trial by jury under this Act. Summary jurisdiction is given to the Police Courts to deal with offences under the Regulations and in the majority of cases the prisoners were brought before an ordinary Bench of Magistrates. In the past the "Great Unpaid" have been notorious for their severity and partiality where the rights to property have been in question but in the prosecutions under E.P.A. innumerable working class defendants have been "tried," insulted, fined and imprisoned by their class enemies in a way which will long be remembered by the masses. Even the Home Secretary had to reprove (a clear case of Satan rebuking sin) Justices of the Peace for delivering themselves of political utterances, but a magistrate who is foolish enough to disclose his class prejudice is not nearly so dangerous as one who can conceal his bias and give the appearance of fair play.

The following examples of a few cases selected from a mass of similar ones will illustrate the type of "justice" meted out to the workers prosecuted under the Regulations:

Gateshead Police Court. May 20th, 1926.

A miner, Rowland Hills, was charged with distributing the "Northern Light." He was in fact selling this working class propaganda sheet. A police sergeant stated that the prisoner was a member of the "Communist League." This was denied by the defending solicitor who also without denial asserted that the defendant had an unblemished record. The Chairman of the Bench in sentencing the prisoner to three months' hard labour referred to this worker as a "hooligan" and said—"Why . . . don't you go off to Russia . . . I personally would subscribe willingly to get rid of the whole lot of you."* ("Blyadon Courier," May 22nd, 1926.)

* A full report of this case is to be found in the June number of the "Labour Monthly."

Pontefract Police Court. June 12th, 1926.

William Birkhead, coremaker of Bradford, was given three months' hard labour for a speech in which he attacked the Trade Union leaders and called the army, navy, police force and the civil authorities "tools of the capitalists." ("Manchester Guardian," June 15th, 1926.)

Doncaster Police Court. May 15th, 1926.

Thomas Pulvis, a miner, was sentenced to three months' hard labour and fined £100 for statements made to the police in his own house. The prisoner had produced the Mons Star, Service and Victory medals and seems to have tried his hand at propaganda with his visitors. The Chairman, without any apparent evidence to support the suggestion, coupled the defendant with other cases before the Court a few days before, and after calling prisoner a "very dangerous man," passed sentence.

Frederick Warson, a lodger in the same house, was sent to prison for a month for saying—"I will back him up, we are all friends." The simple fact that he had moved to Pulvis's dwelling was held to be evidence implicating him in the charges brought against his fellow working class prisoner. ("Doncaster Gazette," May 21st, 1926.)

A London Police Court. May 12th, 1926.

A boy of fifteen who had "expressed his opinion" by writing across a Government Poster was told by the Magistrate that "a good horse-whipping would do him more good than anything else." ("Manchester Guardian," May 13th, 1926.)

Sufficient has been written here to show the Class character of the Emergency Powers Act and the Regulations put in force on the outbreak of the General Strike. When the pretences of "democracy" have been swept away and the workers come to power this Act will form a useful precedent and guide for dealing with the reactionary capitalist minority remaining in the Workers' Republic of Great Britain.

Tasks Before the Party Congress

THE PARTY AND ITS PROBLEMS.

By J. R. CAMPBELL.

WHEN our Party Conference, which assembles in October, reviews the work of the Party since the Glasgow Conference, it will be reviewing the most exciting period in the history of our Party.

The renewal of the capitalist offensive, the repulse of the Government and the mineowners on Red Friday, the Scarborough Trades Union Congress, the Right Wing attack on the Communists at Liverpool, the attack on our Party and the arrest of the leaders, the mining lock-out, the General Strike, the mass recruiting for our Party are but a few of the landmarks on the strenuous road over which the Party has travelled—a road in which its judgment no less than its courage and endurance has been fully tested.

The Party can look back with pride on its tactics during this period. Here and there slight mistakes have been committed but on the whole the Party lead has been as correct as the leads of other parties claiming to represent the working class have been wrong and dangerous.

This is a fact which we would do well to emphasise a little more. The enemies of our Party are constantly asserting that we are merely a small and bellicose group of political mimics, destitute of any understanding of British conditions, subsisting upon foreign political ideas, “relaying the latest noise from Moscow with an extraordinarily bad transmitting apparatus” as the “New Statesman” put it. Yet on every recent issue in British politics, on which predictions were made, the Communist Party supposed to be incapable of understanding British conditions has been correct and the big Right Wing which prides itself on its deep understanding of British peculiarities has been entirely wrong.

Why we were Correct.

Our ability to predict correctly rose from our close and careful analysis of the situation in Great Britain.

The majority of our opponents in the Labour movement make no attempt to understand what is happening around them. Political events are treated by them as events happening in isolation from each other. The various actions of the Tory Government, which to the Communists are but the unfolding of a carefully thought-out class war policy, are according to many people due merely to the deficient intelligence or courage of Mr. Stanley Baldwin or the inherent ferocity of Mr. Churchill. To see events in isolation like this, to refer to them as purely personal causes (Mr. Baldwin's "opinions" or Mr. Churchill's "temperament") is to fail to grasp the significance of events in the most extraordinary manner. Take the programme of the Labour Party as elaborated at Liverpool. What relevance had that programme to the situation of Government preparation to smash the workers, which was in existence when it was elaborated? None whatever. What reference has it to the present situation? Its insistence on compensation for royalty owners makes it a millstone round the necks of the working class in the present struggle. It may be even doubted if a certain section of the Labour Executive who participated in drawing up the programme thought it necessary to understand the trend of the development of the class struggle before drawing up the programme. To them the problem simply appeared to be "Here is capitalism, here are certain measures which have been suggested from time to time to improve the workers' conditions under capitalism and to clear the way for its transformation to Socialism. Let us discuss them in isolation and afterwards assemble them together and then we will have a programme." Surely a brilliant example of how not to do it.

Is Capitalism Stabilising Itself?

Naturally the first task of the next conference will be to examine the world situation, particularly in relation to its reactions on this country.

Is capitalism stabilised permanently? Is it developing on sound and progressive lines, gradually solving its manifold problems? Is it giving fresh hope to the workers everywhere of gradual improvements in their conditions? Or is the "stabilisation" merely temporary and already beginning to break down?

It is barely two years ago since the Dawes Plan was ratified. The nett result is that after a short period of increased activity, German industry has collapsed, the unemployed army has increased to two millions and unemployed and police have been in conflict in a number of centres. To-day not only are the "stabilisation" plans which were applied to the vanquished capitalist countries breaking down, but also the chief of the victorious powers on the European mainland—France—is in the throes of a financial and political crisis of such a character that the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Labour Government, Mr. Philip Snowden, suggests administering to "victorious" France the same medicine as was administered to "vanquished" Germany two years ago, viz., the Dawes Plan.

Truly the stabilisation of capitalism is only "relative."

Is Britain Declining?

Naturally a considerable section of the thesis on the national and international situation will be devoted to Great Britain. I hope a concrete analysis of the factors in the economic decline of Britain will be undertaken. What is the rate of decline, how does it affect the different classes, or different section of the same class, how does it express itself in the politics of the day, what weight have we to give to the various factors, such as the loss of Britain's industrial monopoly, the effect of the shrinkage of the total world trade on a country whose main industries live by export, the industrialisation of the Dominions and Colonies, the revolt of the colonial peoples? A correct estimation of the situation in Britain is not an intellectual exercise for highbrows, but a question of vital Party importance.

It is necessary that the Party should devote special attention to this question, especially in view of the tendency of certain continental comrades to grossly exaggerate the rate of economic decline in Britain and therefore the revolutionary potentialities of the present situation.

The General Strike and its Lessons.

Naturally, one of the most important theses will deal with the General Strike, its lessons and the future policy of the Party arising therefrom. It may be asked, of course, can anything new, interesting or instructive to be said about the General Strike? We

believe so. Every day new materials are accumulating. Leading members of the General Council are beginning to express their point of view. Trades Councils are beginning to compile and tabulate their experiences. Our Party districts and locals are discussing their experience of the Strike in greater detail.

The thesis on the General Strike which will be presented to the Congress will, as the occasion warrants be more theoretical in character than previous Party pronouncements and will consider in the light of our Party experience the various commentaries on the Strike published both in Britain and abroad.

Naturally the thesis of the General Strike must take as its background the facts of capitalist decline in Britain. It will try to show how this decline has affected the various classes of society and what has been their political reactions towards it. In this connection it is essential to deal with the important question of how far the decline has affected the large middle class in Britain and the large commercial proletariat who are intermixed with the property owning middle class. The attempts of the Government and the employers to win over these strata and the role which they played during the General Strike will be touched upon.

The dynamics of the Strike will be dealt with. The effect of the workers' action on the Government. The effect of the Government's action on the workers and the leaders and the question of the effectiveness of strike-breaking in relation to the various industries will be touched upon.

In the section of this thesis dealing with the future of mass strikes the Party's trade union and general political position in relation to mass strikes will come up for review.

A concluding section of this thesis will deal with the theory of the General Strike in the light of the British experience.

Most of the work of our Party since the last Congress consisted in helping to prepare the workers for the struggle which we saw impending and this will probably be presented in an appendix to the report on the General Strike.

Is it a Plot?

The Left Wing of the Labour Party will be dealt with in a thesis which will lay bare the causes of the rise of the Left Wing in the Labour Party and will define the attitude of the Communist Party to this Left Wing. This thesis will expose the brazen impudence of the Right Wing statement that the revolt of the rank and file workers in the Labour Party against their " Liberalising " policy is really a wicked Communist plot.

The thesis on imperialism will deal with the specific problems arising in the British Empire and the tasks of the Party in relation to these problems.

The Mass Party.

One of the most important discussions at the Congress will be that on the question of the creation of a mass Communist Party in Great Britain. A good part of this discussion will naturally centre around the question of retaining the new members which our Party is making. This is an old problem in British Socialism. The late H. M. Hyndman used to declare " There is more floating Socialism in Great Britain than in any other country in the world " —meaning by that that a large number of workers were continually passing through the various Socialist organisations. The problem is not entirely new, but the circumstances in which our Party is struggling to-day are new to a certain extent and we must not assume that our Party cannot establish itself on a more solid basis than former Socialist organisations.

There is one aspect of the question of recruiting which the writer would like to see discussed in greater detail, namely the question of recruiting for the Party the thousands of Left Wing trade unionists who are in sympathy with us. There we have to recognise that it is difficult to recruit many of these men for the Party because of the extra work which they believe it entails. Numbers of them are working from two to three nights a week already in the trade union apparatus and are not disposed to devote any more time to the Labour movement. If we could get them to understand that we desire to get them into the Party so that their trade union work can take an organised Communist form, and not to pile fresh work upon them, I am confident that we could get a considerable influx of new members from amongst them.

The above outline of our Congress Agenda will, we are sure, convince Party members that our next Congress will be one of the most important in the history of our Party and it is their duty to see that in the number and ability of the delegates it is one of the best.



The Fight Against War

Some Notes for Party Propagandists in Anti-War Week.

War as the outcome of Imperialist Rivalry.

THE history of Europe from 1870 to 1914 was the story of an unscrupulous struggle for control of the dissolving Turkish Empire in Europe and Asia and for the partition of the African Continent. This struggle marked the decline of Great Britain as the dominant world power. During it the different capitalist groups manoeuvred for positions in view of the coming struggle; now France, now Germany, being England's enemy. Germany did not finally pass into the enemy's camp till 1904 and Russia remained hostile till 1908, when England ceased to regard her as a menace to the Indian Empire and Persia.

Imperialist Rivalry is Preparing New Wars.

But out of the last war a new menace has arisen for the workers—the rivalry of American Imperialism with British. The U.S.A. refused to recognise the League and the Versailles Treaty which divided up Europe in such a way as to make its exploitation by American Imperialism uneconomic.

The scene of Imperialist rivalries has shifted to the Pacific, especially to China, which is now the scene of constant strife and civil war, as Turkey was when she became the victim of Imperialism before 1914.

Dawes Plans as the Seeds of New Wars.

At the same time America has enslaved Europe by lending money and selling war material at huge profits. She now demands the repayment of these debts by the Allies, whose currency has become terribly inflated. The British capitalists also participate in this plunder when the bankrupt States are unable to pay, and England and America invent Dawes Plans for stabilising them—that is they assure large profits for the banks of London and New York at the expense of the workers in the "stabilised" countries, on whose backs the capitalists of these "colonised" countries place the burden.

Germany, Austria, Belgium and Poland have already been "colonised" in this way by Anglo-American finance. Now a plan is being prepared for France, whose attempts at resisting foreign intervention are causing the fall of Government after Government. England and America are determined she shall accept credits and so lose economic independence.

In this turning of Europe into a field for exploitation by foreign capital there are seeds of new wars; not only in the rivalries which will arise between exploiting countries, but because the exploited countries will in time find the burden unbearable.

The Armaments Race.

The position of the world powers at the moment is one of manoeuvring — comparable to the position till 1908, after which Europe was divided into two armed camps preparing for war. America, like Germany once, is now working **with Great Britain**, but when the period of manoeuvring is over she will be **against Great Britain** and the world will be divided again into two armed camps, as before 1914.

The race in armaments is going on more keenly than ever before. The "Daily News," July 9th, reports "Britain's great Armada" in the Mediterranean where 87 new and powerful war-ships are concentrated. France has 82, Italy 95 and Spain has just voted £32,000,000 for the construction of new cruisers. Great activity is going on in all the Dockyards of the Mediterranean in preparation for eventualities. The building of the great Pacific base at Singapore is being intensified. The Air Pageant at Hendon showed the possibility of laying great cities in ruins, almost without warning, in a few hours. Already the apologists for poison gas like Prof. Haldane assure us it is a more "merciful" weapon than the explosive shell. They do not neglect to add that it is more deadly, and that in the next war every civilian will be equipped with a gas mask. But already gases are being experimented on which will make masks useless.

The Results of War.

In the last war 10,000,000 workers were killed, 18,000,000 wounded (British Empire, 942,000 dead and 1,600,000 wounded). In France alone 594,000 dwellings were destroyed, 20,000 factories and 5,000 kilometres of railway lines. From wounds, famine and disease many millions of the civil population died in Europe. Yet all this is a trifle compared with the certain results of another war waged by gas and aerial bombs. Lloyd George said on the 20th

July "The last war is not the greatest. The most horrible, the most devastating is yet to come."

Little Wars and Colonial Revolts.

There is no such thing as peace under capitalism. War is always going on—just now there are "little wars" in Morocco, Syria (where Damascus, one of the most historical cities of the East, has been laid in ruins), and China. Chamberlain and Mussolini are arranging to partition Abyssinia, while in South America war is threatening between Chile and Peru.

In China the conflict is acute. The British and Japanese bourgeoisie finance rival military leaders to fight the national revolution, while America tries to buy up the Right Wing of the revolution.

Soviet Russia Shows the Way Out.

Out of the chaos of the world war arose a great new power, that of the first Workers' Republic in Soviet Russia. There alone has imperialism been overthrown and peace and freedom won by the workers. In the East the oppressed peoples everywhere look to Soviet Russia for salvation and the Canton Republic in China is the first sign that the workers and peasants in the East are ready to fight imperialism to the death.

The workers of the West, crushed down by unemployment and falling wages, also look to the Soviet Union and the Communist International. The Soviet Union in their eyes means Peace and Freedom for the working masses. Imperialism, i.e., war and slavery cannot allow the Soviet Union to exist. The Locarno Pact is the first step in a new move to blockade the U.S.S.R. as a prelude to intervention.

The Futility of the League and Disarmament.

Capitalism cannot avert the catastrophe of the next war. The Washington Conference did not stop competition in naval armaments—it rather increased it by producing more powerful and deadly types of small vessel—cruiser, submarine and destroyer.

The League Disarmament Conference at Genoa has been a farce and Viscount Cecil ("Times," 10th July, 1926) admitted it had not gone beyond referring to technical committees the question of a definition of the word Disarmament! In any case in modern warfare the best armed country is not the one with the most soldiers but the one with the strongest industries.

The Illusions of the Labour Party.

The Communists warn the workers against the leaders of the Labour Party's policy of "continuity" and "inevitability of gradualness." This policy cannot stop wars. We have seen the MacDonald Government using troops against the Indian workers, bombing the natives in Mesopotamia and Christian Pacifist Ministers ordering new aeroplanes and new cruisers. Under the Labour Government warships were sent against the workers' anti-militarist Government of Canton. Under MacDonald's policy the only thing "inevitable" would be the gradual approach of war.

The Communist Party is the only party honestly against war. It believes that the only war which interests the workers is the war against their exploitation. In this fight the soldiers, sailors and airmen are the allies of the workers. The workers do not provoke violence—the Government's array of tanks and soldiers, and the baton charges on peaceful demonstrations during the General Strike proved who are the real preachers of violence.

The Policy of the Communist Party.

The workers are against war. They alone have to make the biggest sacrifices. Against the preparations of the capitalists they have one weapon—fraternal working class unity, national and international.

But a strong militant political party is needed to lead the fight against war. The Communist Party of Great Britain alone fights against war. It appeals to all workers who hate war to join its ranks. A mass Communist Party will be the best guarantee against another imperialist slaughter.

AGIT-PROP. DEPT.

Building the Party

1.

THE PARTY INFLUX.

A contribution to the discussion on the Party organisation and the successful retention of new recruits.

By "FLYING OSIP."

THE General Strike has presented the Party with thousands of new recruits. Its confidence in the workers has been completely justified. Their answer to Baldwin, J. H. Thomas and A. A. Purcell is ominous. The article of Comrade Brown is an indication that the Party is not merely enrolling recruits, but is in a position to absorb them.

What is the secret of Communist organisational success? First a clear understanding of the dialectical connection between *organisation* and *politics*.

The Theses of the Plenum of the Comintern make this perfectly clear. In the section devoted to "Bolshevisation and Organisation Questions" it is laid down that—

The most important premise of Bolshevisation is a correct Bolshevik policy enabling us to capture the masses. No organisational forms will be of any avail without a correct Bolshevik policy capable of guaranteeing first and foremost correct relations between the Party and the entire class—between the Party and non-party workers. But on the basis of its revolutionary experience, Leninism has elaborated a *whole register* of views on various questions, including questions of organisation, which are of the utmost importance for the Bolshevisation of the Parties.

The main difference between a fighting democratic Party organising the daily struggle and the obsolete propaganda society is now, we venture, fairly well understood. Our Party consciously organises on the basis of Factory Groups. But mere mechanical organisation is insufficient.

Our Parties must not forget that this re-organisation by itself is not by any means complete Bolshevisation. It is only part of it. They must, above all, bear in mind that the organisation of factory and workshop groups is only a first step, for the Party must *imbue* these groups with *political* life.

Here is a practical example of the connection between politics and organisation. The necessity of imbuing new groups with political life and knowledge, which is one of the chief tasks of the Party Staff.

The Organisational Principles of the Comintern.

The problem thus becomes for us one of popularising and explaining the basic organisational principles of the C.I., which, though organising, is also political work. This is not merely a

question of pumping C.I. decisions into new recruits, but rather a question of the *preparation* of the Party, and especially its organising cadres for the work of applying Communist principles to the Party influx.

Where are those principles to be found? In the most important organising document of the C.I., viz., the Third Congress resolution on organisation principles, which embodies the basic principles of Communist organisation, and therefore answers the organising problems with which the Party is confronted to-day.

One of the most important paragraphs of this resolution is that which deals with the necessity to conduct work in such a way that every rank and file member of the Party and the entire Party apparatus should gradually draw in as many rank and file Communists as possible into its work.

Instructions and Democratic Centralism.

In this connection Comrade Brown makes a particularly good point on the question of "arbitrary instructions."

Is it correct that a member of the C.P. blindly accepts the decisions of higher organs? It is not, and those Party officials who issue such instructions (especially to new recruits) are guilty of an abuse of organisational principles.

Democratic centralism, the basis of Communist organisation, is probably one of the least understood questions in our Party.

To-day it is particularly important that it be thoroughly understood.

"Under all circumstances," declared the E.C. of C.I., "the C.P. must preserve a certain amount of freedom of internal Party criticism, must inculcate a spirit of equality among Party members. This will facilitate the bringing into activity of the masses of the Party and secure the co-operation of the lower bodies and all the groups in the political and organisational life of the Party and help to arouse the initiative of the workers in the Party. Iron proletarian discipline is one of the most important premises of Bolshevism . . . discipline which it takes years to acquire . . . For Bolsheviks it is not a case of reiterating several democratic phrases about the advantages of discipline, but rather of making workers realise that without exercising the strictest Party discipline based on ideological unity it is impossible to . . . achieve political power."

This wrong attitude on the question of "instructions" is also reflected in the "intellectual snobbishness" referred to by Brown. Comrade Lenin called it "Communist priggishness," a smug self-conceit which is one of the most dangerous enemies of a Bolshevik Party. Self-criticism must be a regular feature of Bolshevik organisation.

There is no rank and file in the C.P. Every member has his specially allotted work and responsibility. This is the secret of retaining recruits. But the work allotted the new recruit must be with his full knowledge and enthusiastic co-operation.

“The members of the Communist Party are disciplined soldiers, but they are also conscious soldiers, they are leaders in turn, and they must understand the issues of policy and the reasons for the Party’s decisions in order to be able to support and explain them.” This is one of the aspects of centralism in our Party which needs explanation, namely its democracy, the disciplined carrying out of instructions based on intelligent understanding and co-operation.

Further, the Third Congress resolution declares—

“The organisation of the Communist Party is the organisation of Communist leadership in the proletarian resolution. To be a good leader—the Party itself must have a good leadership. Democratic centralism is the antithesis of the I.L.P. method of an active officialdom and passive rank and file.

Regular participation in the daily work of the Party is the first condition for carrying out the Party programme.

The art of Communist organisation lies in the ability of making use of each and every one for the proletarian class struggle—of distributing the work among the Party members, and it must hold the direction of the whole movement in its hand, not by virtue of its might, but by its authority, energy, greater experience, greater all-round knowledge and capabilities.”

These are truly golden words for every Party official at the present time—and we would suggest that every Party official should devote great care and attention to a thorough study of that remarkable document of Bolshevik organisation—the Organisation Resolution of the Third Congress.

We are convinced that any steps which could be taken by Party Headquarters to assist in popularising this fundamental document would be extremely valuable in the Party’s work in assimilating its new recruits.

The “Type” of New Recruit

It is particularly important to carefully estimate the quality of the new recruits. The information furnished by Comrade Brown is extremely illuminating. We regard it as a guarantee that these recruits will not heedlessly leave the Party. They have entered the Party at a time when there is no individual or personal advantage to do so. A comparison of this enrolment with previous ones—not only in our own Party, but in others—is valuable. Typical instances may be taken from the German and Russian Parties. In the case of the Russian Party it is well known that it operates under entirely different conditions to our own—that its discipline is of the strictest kind—while its periodical “cleanings” are a by-word.

There have been several famous enrolments in our Russian brother Party, the most famous of all being the Lenin enrolment, but equally interesting for our special purpose is that insistence by Trotsky in his classical exposition on Terrorism, in which he

describes the Party recruitments during the most trying times of the Civil War.

“Two or three times a year our Party mobilises a high proportion of its members for the front. Scattered over a distance of 6,000 miles they die and teach others to die [another example of Bolshevik organisational methods—F.O] And when in hungry and cold Moscow, which has given the flower of its workers to the front, a Party week is proclaimed, there pour into the ranks from the proletarian masses, in the space of seven days, 15,000 persons.”

On the other hand, in 1920, in Germany, when the Spartacist outbreak was daily expected—when German capitalism was reduced nigh to impotency, it is well known that a tiny handful of Spartacists increased their numbers a hundred-fold. Branches of fifty or sixty suddenly numbered thousands.—Why?—Because of an expected successful rising. These new vacillating and unstable elements left the Spartacists as soon as they were defeated.

What can we learn from these experiences? Our Party enrolment has taken place under E.P.A., when thousands of class fighters are paying heavy penalties for working class activity. Those who join to-day join in full consciousness of the necessity of unflinching struggle against Labour's enemies.

“A Bolshevik is not one who joins the Party when the revolutionary wave is at its height. A Bolshevik is he who takes part in the work of building a C.P. in the course of years, and, if need be, of decades in years of slow development of revolution.”

We therefore are of opinion that our new recruits may be justly considered worthy of the title of true Bolsheviks, who but need the training and experience of the Party to transform them into Communist working class leaders.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, we may summarise as follows:—

1.—The retention of the new recruits is the Party's responsibility. If it fails to do this it is not a truly Bolshevik party. It is no use to blame the new recruit.

2.—Therefore the Party must get a clearer understanding of Communist organisational principles, which is a pre-condition to, and a guarantee of, success.

3.—A thorough understanding of these principles presupposes the correct carrying out of the main propositions put forward by Brown, viz., Party training, correct allocation of work to new recruits, correct direction of work, and, above all, a correct attitude to the new recruit—without “Communist priggishness”—because of a clear political understanding of the Party's tasks and obligations to the new recruits.

2.

By TOM QUELCH.

WE are rapidly moving towards the development of a mass Communist Party in this country. There can be no question about that. Events—the onward sweep of economic forces—the rapid advance of the engine of history—are helping us tremendously. To those events we must apply the keenest possible understanding of the psychology of our class, and the conditions under which our class lives and has its being—and relate them basically to our work of party building.

It is not merely a question of discovering and applying the appropriate agitational issues and slogans. We can have much agitation with very little concrete result. Did not old Hyndman say there was more “floating Socialism” in Britain than in any other country? Always we must seek to obtain organised results from agitation, and to give a definite organised basis to our work. I would say that our principal tasks lie in giving discipline and correct organisation to our class. Macaulay says somewhere that “a few thousand disciplined soldiers can overcome and hold in subjection millions of people in the nation’s capital.” We have got to learn to the full the lesson contained in that remark.

The best immediate approach to building the Party lies in the careful planning of the work of the Locals. We ought to arrive at some general conception as to how the Party Local swims in its particular locality. I use the word “swims” to convey the idea of constant activity in a continuously resistant element.

The Party activities are conducted in the working-class, amongst the workers, against all manner of currents, in a realm of constant friction. It has to carry on against these currents and to overcome this constant friction. In every locality the two classes—the working class and the capitalist class—are roughly defined. The Party Local should conceive of its mission to so “swim”—to so act—in the locality as to be able to mobilise the *entire working class*, organised and unorganised, men and women,

and the youth of both sexes, around the Party and in active support of the Party and its policy.

The Party Local is not merely an open propagandist organisation after the style of the Socialist Parties we have had in this country. It is infinitely more than that. The Party Local aims at creating a network of ramifications inside the local factories and industrial concerns, the big tenement buildings and crowded streets, and in all organisations where bodies of workers are gathered together.

It could very well be likened to an octopus, with tentacles reaching amongst the workers in every direction. It aims at establishing Party groups in all the local factories, workshops, pits, mines, mills, or railway stations. It aims at forming Party groups—particularly groups of working women—in the large tenement buildings and crowded streets. It aims at forming party fractions in the Trade Union branches, Co-operative Guilds, workmen's clubs, in the local Labour Parties, in the Trades Council, and so on. No organised body of workers must be neglected, because the Party is determined to become the *leading Party of the working class*.

The job is not merely to be able to mobilise the workers, but to change their ideology, to win them for Communism, and to lead them into the struggle for Communism. But even to be able to mobilise them these organised ramifications—these constant active contacts—are necessary. We *must* be in the position to mobilise the workers if we are to do anything at all, *i.e.*, to hold meetings or demonstrations, to conduct electoral struggles or strike movements or rouse them in regard to any issue.

Let us look into this a little closer. I think it would help if each Local made a careful survey of its locality, based upon a map, listing the factories and industrial establishments, the large tenement buildings and most important working-class dwelling districts, and exhaustively examining every local working-class organisation. A picture could then be obtained of the ground to be covered: of the organisational tasks confronting the Local. It would be known where it was necessary to form factory groups and women's groups and where fractions must be organised. There an intelligent start would be made. Obviously, in making that start, the *largest* and *most important* factories and industrial establishments, the *largest* tenement buildings, the *most important* working-class organisations, would be specially selected to begin with.

The Party Local has many tasks to perform, and it has only a limited amount of time and human energy and intelligence with which to perform them. It is usually easier to get a factory group going where there are a large number of workers than where there are only a small number of workers. Then a factory group organised in a large factory has a wider field of activity, and can immediately exercise more Party influence over a larger number of workers, than a factory group organised in a small factory. The same with fractions organised in Trade Union branches, Trades Councils, etc.

We know it is easy to make suggestions and much more difficult to give practical effect to them. And the Locals have so much to do that it is frequently difficult to strike the right balance in the performance of work. Then, Locals vary in size and personnel, and localities are very dissimilar in their industrial complexion. Yet, notwithstanding all these differences, we believe that a general method of approach can be adopted towards Party building in the localities. One thing we must guard against, and that is, ineffective dispersal of effort. *Concentration* on the large factories, the workers in the basic industries, and the most important working-class organisations would be a good guiding line.

I especially desire to urge in regard to fraction work the importance of strong fractions on the Trades Councils. The Trades Councils hold the key positions in the localities as far as the organised working-class movement is concerned. They provide a *gateway* into, and a means of influencing, all the affiliated organisations.

So much has been said and published, and so much, I am confident, is going to be said and published, about the work of factory groups and the work of Party fractions, that I do not propose to deal with those matters here. I merely desire to present a general idea of the Party Local in its relations to the working-class. I visualise the Party Local as being an ever-increasing body of sincere, patiently dogged, active workers, conscious of our objective, fixed in their determination, who are busy all the time indrawing more workers into the Party, carrying on the public work of the Party and building up the circulation of the Party press, forming factory groups to serve as the *leading factors* amongst the workers of the factories and industrial concerns; and forming fractions in the Trade Union, Co-operative, political and social working-class organisations to be the *real driving forces* in those organisations, and transforming those organisations so as to serve more effectively the ends of the class struggle.

Following along these lines, the Party Locals will become the most potent forces in their respective towns and districts. The Party Local says in effect: Here is the working-class of this locality; here are factories and workshops where the workers are compulsorily gathered together; here are big tenement dwellings and crowded streets where the workers dwell; here are numerous local working-class organisations. We must so spread our members amongst the workers, we must so penetrate into and organise within the working-class movement as to be able to *give effective leadership to all the workers on all occasions.*



The Official Labour Movement in the U.S.A.

To the Editor, the "Communist Review."

Dear Comrade,

Allow me to call your attention to certain inaccuracies in relation to the American Labour movement which appeared in your May issue. I feel that this is necessary, because they touch upon a point which is vital to any proper understanding of the problems of the revolutionary workers in the United States.

The figures given of the number of wage workers in the U.S. (on page 11), including all categories, sums up a total of 32,700,000, of whom 28 millions are designated as "organisable workers." This is extremely inaccurate. The most authoritative statement on the subject, contained in "Growth of American Trade Unions, 1880—1923," by Leo Wolman (published 1924 in New York by the National Bureau of Economic Research), gives the total number of wage earners at 26 millions. If the same process is applied to this figure to ascertain the number of "organisable workers" as that used in the article in your May issue, then we find this latter category amounting to 18½ millions, which will include 2½ million agricultural workers. It may be noted that the investigations of W. I. King, another authority on the subject, substantially agree with Wolman's figures.

But more important than this error of 6.7 millions in the census figures of 1920, is the statement which reads :

" There has been a tremendous expansion since that time in the groups listed due to the expansion of American industry "

Now it is true that *industry* has enormously expanded since 1920. But it is precisely the fact that the number of *workers* engaged in that industry has *not expanded*, that constitutes the principal characteristic of the period after 1920. Unless this is fully understood, then it is impossible to understand the changes that have taken place or are still going on in America.

It has been true for all the period for which statistics are avail-

able, that production has increased at a faster rate than the numbers of workers involved. It is precisely in 1920 when this difference in degree became a difference in essence—the difference in quantity became a difference in quality—and the truly enormous expansion of production began to be accompanied by a positive reduction in the number of workers employed.

U.S. Commerce Reports index of production, 1920, equalling 100, had reached in October, 1925, the figure of 132. Employment of workers, on the contrary, sharply declined; average employment for 1920 being an index figure of 90.8. Expressed in percentages, this shows that :—

From 1920 to 1925, the number of workers engaged in manufacture decreased by 17.4 per cent., while in the same period production increased by 32 per cent.

I will not impose upon you by drawing the implications from this revolutionary fact—at least not in this letter. But it is of such fundamental and far-reaching importance for any understanding of the problems of America, that I felt it absolutely necessary to send you this information, and ask you to pass it on to your readers.

With Communist greetings,

(Signed) EARL BROWDER.