

Special News of South African Strike.

Workers' Breadnought

FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM.

Founded and Edited by
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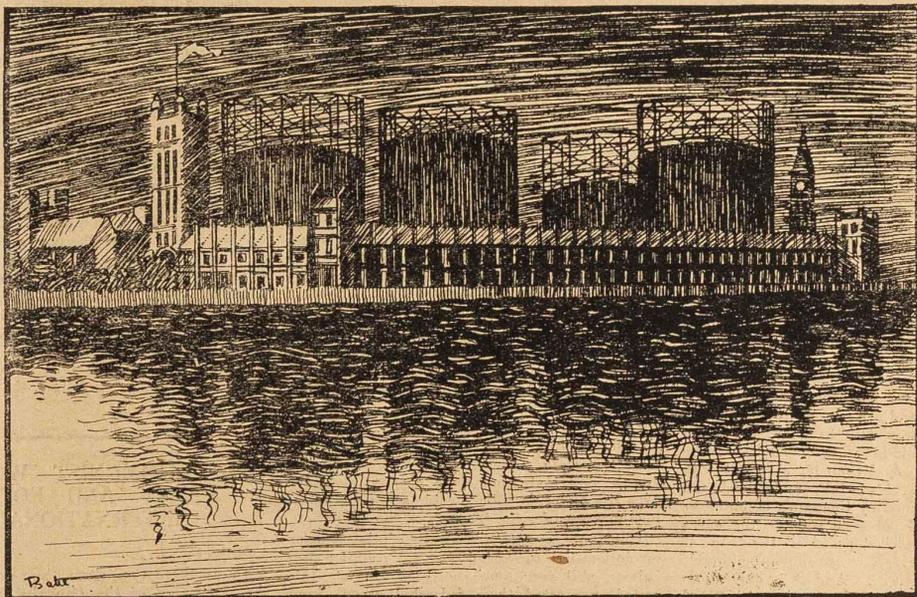
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[WEEKLY.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

NON-CO-OPERATION WITH CAPITALISM

IRISH WORKERS SEIZE MILLS AND CREAMERY.



THE WESTMINSTER GAS HOUSE SITS AGAIN.

The British exodus from Dublin Castle has not stopped the Class War in Ireland.

The tendency of Irish workers to develop a Sinn Fein policy of their own, and to refuse co-operation with Capitalism—British or Irish—still lives: it has not been extinguished by the Downing Street Treaty.

The workers employed by Messrs. Hallinan J. and R. Webb, Ltd., who own mills and creameries, at Quartertown, near Mallow, County Cork, struck against having their wages reduced from 52s. 6d. to 48s. 6d.

Having withdrawn their labour from the employer, the workers did not remain at home to starve, but seized the mills, formed themselves into a workers' council, appointed a manager, and proceeded to work the plant and market the produce.

The clerical staff, which had remained on duty during the strike, left when the workers took control. The workers therefore invaded the offices, ruled off the books of the firm, and began entering their own transactions. They give no credit, and sell all the goods for cash only.

If the South Wales miners of Ebbw Vale, who were idle because their employers have shut down the pits, were now to take control, they could send coal to Mallow, and the Mallow workers could supply them with flour, meal, butter, and other produce.

Seizures of their plant by Irish workers have occurred again and again during the last few years, the last occasion being at Brurrie, in County Limerick, in September, where a creamery was seized. The Mallow seizure is the largest yet effected. Seventy workers re-employed at Quartertown, and the output of the mills is about 20 tons a day. The same firm has

mills at Fermoy and Middleton, and workers' control is likely to spread there—why not all over Ireland?

The manifestations of independence by Irish workers grew up with the unsettled conditions which attended the Sinn Fein struggle to throw off British rule. The Limerick general strike of 1918, called the Limerick Soviet, was the first incident to draw general attention to the new spirit developing amongst Irish workers. The Limerick general strike was, however, a strike against the imposition of British military permits, and though it was regarded with distrust in some Sinn Fein quarters, it was supported on Sinn Fein grounds by numbers of Limerick employers and shopkeepers. That the Limerick Soviet was used by the workers to bring down prices and force up wages was a fact overshadowed by the military permit question.

The state of war that increased in Ireland from 1916 until the Truce last year, the occupation of the country by rival military forces, which rendered impossible effective control by either force, facilitated seizures of plant by industrial workers, and seizures of land by peasants and agricultural labourers.

The Sinn Fein Land Courts and Ministry of Labour endeavoured to check such seizures and to protect the property owners.

Doubtless the menace of a revolting proletariat was one of the strongest cards Sinn Fein had to play in the negotiations with British Capitalism's representatives at the Downing Street conferences.

Already the Irish struggle seems to be shifting from the contest between British Imperialism and Sinn Fein, to the contest between the Irish property owner and the proletariat.

The new Irish Government, which is clearly and inevitably on the side of the property owner, seems to be hesitating as to how far and how definitely it will intervene in the struggle: its tendency is to take an even more direct part in controlling Labour than other Governments; but apparently it is reluctant to begin the use of actual force against the workers.

Large contingents of the Irish Republican Army have arrived, fully armed, at Quartertown, and have been billeted in the houses of residents. Some of the soldiers are placed on guard at the mills, whilst the others are publicly displayed in their drill.

J. McGrath, the manager for the Mallow workers' council, has been notified by Commandant Moylan of the I.R.A., that he will be held responsible for any looting or damage to the mills. The workers' council is putting a guard of its own about the mills at night.

It is officially stated that:—

- (1) Martial Law has not been proclaimed in Mallow by the I.R.A.;
- (2) I.R.A. have been drafted as a precaution against disorder;

(Continued on page 3)

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REVOLUTIONARY ESSAYS.

VIII.

But where shall we take this boldness of thought, this energy in work of organisation, when the people have it not? Do you not admit, yourselves—they will say to us—that if the force of attack does not fall the people, boldness of thought and eagerness for reconstruction have failed them? When a "chosen of the people" often failed them? But we do not forget the part of the men of initiative of which we shall now speak in closing our studies.

Initiative, free individual initiative, and the possibility of each making use of that force at the time of popular uprisings, that is what has always made the irresistible power of revolutions. It is this power that has made their grandeur, which has enabled them to march to the front, and which historians, always supporting authority, have taken great care to misrepresent. And upon this force we still count to undertake and accomplish the immense work of the social revolution.

If revolutions have accomplished something in the past, it is entirely due to men and women of initiative, to the obscure persons springing out of the crowd, not fearing to assume, face to face with their brethren and the future, the responsibility of their acts, considered madly rash by the time.

The great mass decides with difficulty to undertake anything which has not had a precedent in the past. We see this every day. If routine encrusts us with its mould at every step, it is because men fail to break with the traditions of the past, and boldly to advance into the unknown. But if an idea starts in some brain, although vague, confused, yet incapable of translating itself into reality, and if a man of initiative arises and sets himself resolutely to work, he is immediately followed by his work responds to these vague aspirations. And even if, worn out with fatigue, he retires, his work, understood and approved, is continued by thousands of imitators of whom he dared not even suppose the existence. This is the history of all the life of humanity—which everyone can prove for himself by his own experiences. And it is only those who have acted in opposition to the wishes and needs of humanity who have found themselves despised and abandoned by their contemporaries. Unhappily the men of initiative are rare in every-day life; but they arise in numbers at revolutionary epochs, and it is they, in reality, who do the enduring work of revolutions. In these are our hope and confidence in the next revolution. If only they have a just, and therefore wide, conception of the future, if they have audacity of thought, and do not seek to revive a dead past, if a sublime ideal inspires them they will be followed. Never, at any epoch of its existence, has humanity felt the need of a grand inspiration so much as at this moment, after having experienced a century of bourgeois corruption.

In these conditions there is no need to fear for their work from enemies paralysed by the decomposition which surrounds them.

But the envy of the oppressed themselves? Has it not always been remarked, and rightly so, that envy is the stumbling block of democracies? That if the worker submits patiently to the arrogance of a master in a frock-coat, he regards with an envious eye the personal influence of a fellow workman?

We do not deny the fact, nor do we shrink the conclusion of the argument, otherwise very correct, that avarice, always born in the conscience of a workman, once having acquired influence, he will employ it to betray his fellow workmen of yesterday, and that the sole means of annihilating and trampling would be to forbid a comrade, just as much as a bourgeois, the possibility of increasing his authority so as to become master.

All that is right; but there is more. We all, with our authoritative education, when we see annihilating it, and we forget that there are other means, infinitely more efficacious of paralysing influences which are harmful or tend to become

so. It is that of finding a better way of acting. In a servile society this course is impossible, and children of a servile society, we do not even think of it. A king becomes unbearable: what means have we of getting rid of him if not by killing him? A Minister who oppresses us: what is to be done, if not to seek a candidate to replace him? When a "chosen of the people" disgusts us, we seek another to compete against him. This goes thus; but should it always be so?

What could the Conventionalists do in the presence of a king who disputed their power, if not to guillotine him? What could the representatives of "La Montagne" do in the presence of other representatives, invested with equal power, if it was not to send them in their turn to the executioner?

Well, this situation of the past remains with us still, while the only truly efficacious means of paralysing a harmful initiative is to take, oneself, the initiative of acting in a better direction.

Thus, when we hear revolutionists concur with the idea of stabbing or shooting the governors who could take authority during the revolution, we are seized with terror in thinking that the faces of true revolutionists could waste themselves in struggles which would be, in effect, only struggles for or against the individuals who assumed authority. To make war upon them is to recognise the necessity of having other men possessing the same authority.

In 1871, one sees already in Paris a vague prementiment of a better means of agitating. The revolutionists among the people appeared to understand that the Council of the Commune ought to be considered a useless show, a tribute paid to the traditions of the past: that the people not only should not despair, but that they should maintain concurrently with the Council, their intimate organisation, their federated groups, and that from these groups and not from the Hotel de Ville should spring the necessary measures for the triumph of the revolution.

Unhappily a certain modesty of the popular revolutionists, supported by authoritative prejudices, still very much persisted in at this period, prevented these federated groups from totally ignoring the Council and acting as if it had not existed at all.

We shall not be able to prevent the return of these attempts at revolutionary government at the time of the next revolution. Let us understand, at least, that the most efficacious method of annulling their authority is not to plot *Coups d'Etat*, which would only bring back power under another form ending in dictatorship, but to constitute in the people themselves a force powerful in its action and in the revolutionary deeds which it will have accomplished, ignoring power, under whatever name, and increasing always by its revolutionary ardour and its work of demolition and of reconstruction.

A people who know how to organise the accumulation of wealth and its reproduction in the interests of society, no longer needs to be governed. A people which itself will be the armed force of the country, and which will know how to give to the armed citizens the necessary cohesion and unity of action, will no longer need to be commanded. A people which will organise its railways, its commerce, its schools, can no longer be administered. Finally, a people which knows how to organise arbitrators to settle little disputes, and of which each individual will consider it his duty to prevent a schemer from oppressing a weak citizen, without waiting for the providential interference of the policeman, will have no need for galley-sergeants, nor judges, nor jailers.

In the revolutions of the past, the people took upon themselves the work of demolition; as for that of reorganisation, they left it to the bourgeois. "Better versed than we in the art of governing, come, sire, organise us," our work; so that we do not die of hunger; prevent us from devouring each other, punish and pardon according to the laws which you have

made for us poor-spirited persons." And the middle classes knew how to profit from the invitation.

Well, the task which will present itself at the next uprising of the people will be to seize upon this function which has formerly been abandoned to the bourgeois. It will be to destroy, to organise at the same time as to destroy. To accomplish this task we shall need all the initiative power of all men of courage, of all the audacity of thought, freed from nightmares of the past, of all their energy; and we will take care not to paralyse the initiative of the most resolute among us—we will simply redoubly initiative if that of others fails, if it becomes dull, if it takes a wrong direction.

Boldness of thought, a distinct and wide conception of all that is desired; constructive force arising from the people in proportion as the organisation of authority dawns; and finally the initiative of all in the work of reconstruction—this will give to the revolution the power to conquer.

It is precisely these forces which the active propagandists of Anarchy tend to develop. Against the weak conceptions of little reforms, extolled by the bourgeois, they oppose the large and grand conception of reorganisation, and the necessary inspiration. And to those who would like to see the people end in a pack of hounds attacking the government of the day, but always held back at times by the why, we say: "The part of the people in the revolution ought to be positive at the same time as it is destructive; because this alone can succeed in organising society on the basis of equality and liberty for all. To remit this care to others would be to betray the cause of the Revolution."

THE COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY AND FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

Object:—

To overthrow Capitalism, the wage system, and the machinery of the Capitalist State, and to establish a world-wide Federation of Communist Republics administered by occupational Soviets.

Method:—

- 1.—To spread the knowledge of Communist principles amongst the people;
- 2.—To take no part in elections to Parliament and the local governing bodies, and to carry on propaganda exposing the futility of Communist participation therein;
- 3.—To refuse affiliation or co-operation with the Labour Party and all Reformist organisations;
- 4.—To emancipate the workers from the Trade Unions which are merely palliative institutions;
- 5.—To prepare for the proletarian revolution, by setting up Soviets or workers' councils in all branches of production, distribution and administration, in order that the workers may seize and maintain control.

With this object, to organise one Revolutionary Union:

- (a) built up on the workshop basis, covering all workers, regardless of sex, craft, or grade, who pledge themselves to work for the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of the workers' Soviets;
- (b) organised into a department for each industry or service;
- (c) the unemployed being organised as a department of the One Revolutionary Union, so that they may have local and national representation in the workers' Soviets;
- (d) to affiliate to the Communist Workers' International, Fourth International.

Those who subscribe to the above principles are invited to join the preliminary organisation. Membership card will be sent on receipt of one shilling to the preliminary committee of the Fourth International, at 152 Fleet Street, London, E.C.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

NEWS FROM GERMANY.

The Farical Political Crisis Ends as Usual In A Flimsy Compromise.

The Parliamentary-reform Communists have again suffered a hopeless fiasco in the speculative policy, which every section of the Third International is now absolutely bound to pursue at the expense of the Moscow wire-pullers, under the penalty of instant removal of any rebellious leaders—small or great.

As stated in my previous reports on the situation, the K.P.D. here has had a most "ingenious and crafty" dream as to how to obtain, swiftly and securely, a great unity front of the working masses, with the happy result of a "pure" Labour Government, consisting of all sections, from the majority Socialists to the K.P.D. The watchword was as childishly naive as the entire politics and tactics of this pro-capitalist party. The battle-cry which intended to rally the united Labour forces, was recently issued by the K.P.D. and its organ, the *Rote Fahne* (*Red Flag*). It was vigorously rebuffed by the Press of the Independent Socialists, and subsequently by the Party Conference of the latter.

"The mighty" call was: "The seizure of all property and gold values."—This is, plainly speaking, a proposed partial confiscation of property. This partial confiscation of property could at no time have become dangerous to the profit-mongers, as it was, in any case, to proceed from a Government pledged to the capitalist constitution; even if the unexpected had happened, and a "pure" Labour Government, including K.P.D. Ministers at the request of Moscow, had been formed by the two Socialist Parties and the Reform Communists.

Collapse of the Unity Proposals.

The hour for the great event of pushing forward the Labour claims, in order to save the situation, had not yet, however, arrived. The Capitalists-cum-Labourites' combine. The great mass of the workers in the Trade Unions and political Labour parties (Social Democratic, Independent Socialist and K.P.D.) were still too ideologically indifferent and docile to necessitate the last desperate weapon of suppression—a pure Labour Government. The Social Democrats therefore arrived quickly at an understanding with the Wirth Government after the Chancellor's great Reichstag speech. Instead of paving the way for a "pure Labour Government," as the K.P.D. childishly expected, the Social Democrats, quite on the contrary, consented to the Wirth Cabinet being farther extended to the Right, and to the Conservative People's Party being included in the Ministry.

This collapsed the big "bogey" movement of the Parliamentary Communists and Independent Socialists to rally the workers to the formation of a unity front.

Social Democrats Declare Wirth Has No Real Opponents.

Joyfully Vorwärts, the organ of the Social Democrats, writes on the situation:—

"Chancellor Wirth can well be satisfied with the results. His policy has now no real opponents, if the small handful of Right and Left extremists are excluded. The German People's Party is ready to support his vote of confidence, or, at least, to refuse to support a motion of no confidence."

"The Independent Socialists seem somewhat annoyed at our compromise on the question of taxes; but it appears unlikely that, even if they could, they would seriously oppose a Government that, in the main, stands for their policy of universal peace and economic reconstruction. Apart from the monarchial German Nationalists and the few 'extreme' Communists, everybody in the Reichstag seems to be heartily glad that the shadow of the crisis has passed, and that the good ship of our Government has again entered peaceful waters."

The Parliamentary Centre block, which extends from the Social Democrats to Stinnes Party (German Peoples Party), have unanimously consented to the following compromise scheme of the Wirth Government:—

Wirth Compromise Scheme.

- (1) An increase of 200 per cent. on the property tax. At the same time, the raising of a compulsory loan of one milliard gold marks, bearing no interest for the first three years;
- (2) Taxes imposed after the war, that are not very profitable, to be abandoned;
- (3) The tax on the turnover of businesses is to be exclusively fixed at 24 per cent.;
- (4) The coal tax is to be, in principle, 40 per cent., but with the possibility of adapting it to the demands of the world-markets;
- (5) The sugar tax is to be fixed at 25 marks per cwt., considering its large consumption and the imposed taxes on turnover and coal, also the importance of sugar, as regards the nourishment of young children;
- (6) The duty on coffee, tea and cocoa is to be fixed according to the finding of the Government Trade Board;
- (7) With regard to the beer tax, the decisions of the first reading of the Bill are to hold good;
- (8) The uniformity of the entire Bill relating to taxation is to be established by legislation, including the conditions for the compulsory loan.

The K.P.D. Lament

The absurd dream of a unity front and a "pure" Labour Government, cherished by the Parliamentary Communists, even if it had been realised, would only have meant the continuance of economic slavery for the workers, under the nominal political guardianship of a Labour Ministry. Now that its hopes have been shattered, the K.P.D. and its organ, the *Rote Fahne*, indulge in ludicrous lamentations over their sad disappointment thus:—

"The clamour of the masses, demanded the seizure of property and gold values. Then all Socialist Parties solemnly pledged themselves to stand or fall by this minimum demand. To-day the decisions of Stinnes and his satellites prevail. The Social Democratic leaders have again shirked the fight. This surrender to Stinnes should cause the masses led by the Social Democrats to fight still more determinedly for seizing the values, 'seeing that the Stinnes politics have not even brought them a PARTIAL RELIEF in their distress.' The Independent Socialist Party has also failed to do anything to mobilise the masses against the compromise on the tax question. Surprisingly and indirectly supporting the Wirth policy, they have backed the Social Democratic leaders in their aid to the Government proposals. The Independent Party leaders have violated the findings of the recent Party Conference and are responsible for the lack of rebellious feeling among the duped Social Democratic masses."

In conclusion, the *Rote Fahne* again appeals tearfully to the working masses to break with all Coalition politics, to stand by the need of seizing the values, to fight against the indirect tax, and to struggle for a Labour Government!!!

MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL.

The children of the Ferrer International Modern School, 62 Fieldgate Street, Whitechapel, aged from seven to fourteen, commenced, in December, a Magazine of their own, which does them great credit.

The Magazine is written and produced entirely by the children. It records that in December lectures by Labour College students were given at the school, on the life of Peter Kropotkin, Ancient Village Communities, and Tales from Aesop; that an Esperanto Class is held on Tuesday evening at seven o'clock; and that the children of the school will in January hold a concert and produce Materlinck's "Blue Bird."

One of the pupils gives the following account of the school:—

"In the present circumstances I am compelled by law to attend an elementary school, which, unfortunately, is not to my liking. We find the discipline of the elementary

school very strict; it is not so in the International Modern School. Our discipline is our self-respect; that is, we do not run about like hoodlums, knowing the teachers can do us no harm. By doing no harm, I mean that they do not cane us."

"Some of the subjects taught in the International Modern School are: clay modelling, astronomy, natural science, drawing, absolute freedom."

"In the Council schools we are taught to be patriotic; but in the International Modern School we are taught to be lovers of freedom."

NON-CO-OPERATION WITH CAPITALISM—Contd.

(3) I.R.A. has no legal right to prevent men from walking into the mills, and will not interfere unless damage to the mills or looting starts;

(4) The local commandant is waiting instructions from the Dail Minister as to future action.

The last two points are interesting; they show that the Irish Government has not determined its line of action; but if the workers take to seizing their employers' establishments on an extended scale, the I.R.A. and the Irish Government are certain to intervene against the workers.

Major Hallinan, of the mills, was recently kidnapped, and his motor car and other property removed. There seems to be a mystery about this: the I.R.A. declares that it had no connection with the kidnapping, and that it is searching for the property, which it hopes to return.

In the Irish Labour movement: in the ranks of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, and in the Irish Trades Union Congress, two marked tendencies are manifest: one is towards conciliation with the employers and harmonious working with the Irish Government; the other is towards a more determined prosecution of the class war.

The Irish Flour Milling Association recently proposed a reduction of 4s. a week for country mills, and 6s. for city mills. A ballot of the workers, in which only half the workers voted, resulted in a small minority for acceptance.

The Cork, Middleton and Buttevant workers refused, however, to accept the decision. A National Conference of employers and employed was then held in Dublin with the then Minister of Labour (Countess Markievicz in the Chair). The Transport Workers' Union representatives suggested the adjournment of the controversy for consideration by the Minister of Economics. This move shows the tendency existing amongst certain Irish Trade Union sections, to co-operate with the Dail administration. Those sections fail to realise that the Dail Government, though revolutionary in opposing British rule, stands for the interests of the Irish employers against the workers, because it stands for the preservation of Irish Capitalism.

The Flour Milling Association refused the Transport Workers' suggestions, but proposed arbitration by the Dail, as to the wages to be paid to the workers, the basis being solely the fall in the cost of living. The Transport Union declined.

The milling employers now began reducing wages. In the Midlands they did so successfully; but when Hallinan's attempted it in the South, the workers at Middleton and Mallow refused, and the Clondulane workers were only willing to accept if the scale of reduction were arbitrated by the Dail.

The firm merely gave a week's notice to reduce wages; the workers struck on January 14th. Commandant Moylan induced employers and employed to meet him at Mallow, but no settlement was reached.

The Mallow workers, who are carrying on production and securing the proceeds, are teaching a lesson to their brothers and sisters throughout Ireland and over here in Britain. At present they are selling the produce as the employer sold it; if the workers of all Ireland had seized control together, they could set us an example in real co-operation.

At present they are feeling their feet with workers' control and the elimination of the capitalist.

Good luck to them! May their example spread!

The claim for Pensions and Allowances, which is nearly double that for Devastation, Mr. Keynes regards as "contrary to our engagements and an act of international immorality."

It is peculiar that anyone should approve Germany to pay for destruction to property, and regard forcing her to pay for destruction of human beings as immoral; but that is part of the mental astigmatism of Capitalism, from which bourgeois politicians suffer. Mr. Keynes, of course, argues that pensions were not mentioned in the Fourteen Points, but if he were to become indignant at every breach of the Fourteen Points, he would be indignant over the whole business, which does not seem to be the case. In appealing to the Fourteen Points, only on this question, Mr. Keynes seems to be straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel.

How President Wilson Wobbled.

Nevertheless, the story that he tells of how pensions came to be included in Reparations is interesting. The American delegates to the Reparations Committee objected to the inclusion of pensions under the head of damages, and called to President Wilson, then at sea, for support in maintaining their position. He replied that they should dissent, and, if necessary, dissent publicly, on the ground that it "is clearly inconsistent with what we deliberately led the enemy to expect." The British and French delegates then contended that Germany must pay for the war pensions as part of the damage done to the civilian population. General Simts prepared a memorandum to prove that "after the soldier's discharge, he rejoins the civilian population, and as, for the future, he cannot (in whole or in part) earn his livelihood, he is suffering damage as a member of the civilian population, for which the German Government are again liable to make compensation."

At this absurd argument President Wilson clutched, and announced that he would support the proposal to force Germany to pay for pensions. American delegates protested that "all logic" was against the decision. "Logic! Logic! Logic!" exclaimed the President. "I don't care a damn for logic. I am going to include pensions!" So he decided to do what he originally had declared to be dishonourable. This was the man whom British official Labour hailed as the World Saviour!

It is an interesting fact that the Reparations Committee has assessed Germany's entire mercantile marine, the loss of which caused so much heart-burning at only 755,000,000 gold marks! The forced surrender of it will therefore only meet one month of the interest that Germany has to pay on the Reparations bill of 188 milliard gold marks. This clearly shows the crippling nature of the vast Reparations extortion.

Keynes' Own Plan.

Mr. Keynes' own view is that, on a fair estimate, the Reparations bill should be, not 138 milliards, but 110. He would further deduct the amount claimed for pensions, thus bringing the sum actually paid by Germany down to 36 milliard marks.

He summarises his proposal thus:—

(1) Great Britain, and if possible America, too, to cancel all the debts owing them from the Governments of Europe, and to waive their claims to any share of German Reparations;

(2) Germany to pay 1,200 million gold marks (£20,000,000 gold) per annum for 30 years, and to hold available a lump sum of 1,000 million gold marks for assistance in Poland and Austria;

(3) This annual payment to be assigned in the shares, 1,080 million gold marks to France and 180 to Belgium.

This, he says, would be in the interest of France. He believes it would also be in the interests of Britain, but in order that Britain might get something for herself out of the settlement, he suggests that "she might seek a partial control over German industries, or obtain the services of German organisation for the future exploitation of Russia."

That these are diabolical suggestions does not seem to occur to their author, though, on the whole, he prefers the plan without them.

He hopes that France, in return for having her debts overlooked by Britain, will reduce her naval and military establishments, and, above all, her submarines, that she will "forget her dangerous ambitions in Central Europe, and will limit strictly those in the Near East."

Quite so; keep out of Britain's way! The old Adam of Imperialism is still very strong in Mr. Keynes!

He concludes by the plea that Germany would recognise the payments he would impose upon her as "not unjust," but, of course, he is intelligent enough to be obliged to make that remark with his tongue in his cheek.

Throughout his book he ignores the fact that Britain has already had the lion's share of the war plunder in territory. "It is not for the British to speak of being jockeyed out of their claims."

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR THE "WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT" £500 SPECIAL EFFORT FUND? MAKE IT £50 THIS WEEK.

FROM SOUTH AFRICA. SPECIAL NEWS OF THE STRIKE. By A. B. Dunbar.

The strike of miners (gold and coal) has been in progress seven days; engineers, drivers, moulders, and blacksmiths are all out. Trauma men have voted a general strike by ten to one. Building workers, by eight to one; and there is every possibility of a complete shut down on a scale never known in history.

Police are also showing signs of unrest. It is reported a good many are locked up. Authorities say it is only a little trouble over food—we know differently.

The anti-Parliamentary Communist Party, (Fourth International) meeting is the centre of gravity; even the Third International section was there in force.

The miners' Council of Action was also present. We had about four thousand people, and, although not too well, I managed to keep them for an hour, after which the crowd cheered the strikers and the anti-Parliamentary Communist Party.

I had to promise to hold a meeting every night at eight o'clock. The Third section has not held a meeting since I last wrote to you. They are finished, and they admit that now.

Johannesburg workers like good revolutionary speeches and will listen to sound economics for hours. Labour and political Socialism has no attraction here. There are hundreds of men here who can pull the speakers of these doctrines to pieces. When questions of policy cannot be agreed upon by the miners' Councils of Action, the questions are put to us for our advice.

I am sending their manifesto "Slaves whose photo you will see on one page, along with the others, resigned from the Third section after our meeting on Sunday.

The Trade Union officials are in conference yesterday and to-day. They are afraid of their lives at the magnitude of the upheaval, and, as they have not a single man who can speak in the open air, they are helpless and hopeless when it comes to handling the mass.

When we in South Africa settle down to a general strike, usually the first thing to be done is to put up barricades and, instead of a strike, we have a war. The Government forces are weak this time, and none too reliable at that.

The papers are advising the Public (?) to support the Government.

The Trade Union leaders are being wretched and if they go back on the workers this (and there is a possibility), they are finished so are their Unions.

Crawford, who is secretary of the Federation, has been found out with his arbitration scheme and is not allowed to take any part in settling this time. He was in rather poor circumstances some years ago when he was advising Socialism; he is now well-off, and attends the League of Nations conferences. He is pronounced anti-Socialist, and "can see no sides of the question"—at least, he says so.

He always held to cope with the growing power of the Master Class and fosters a state of affairs which allows one set of Workers to be pitted against another set of Workers in the struggle for better conditions; moreover, the Trade Unions of to-day mislead the Working Class into the belief that they have interests in common with the Masters.

The preamble is here vitally incomplete, because it fails to state clearly that the object of the Trade Unions is to secure improved conditions under the capitalist system, whilst the object of the League is to abolish Capitalism.

A pledge to work for the abolition of Capitalism should be the primary condition of membership of any revolutionary industrial organisation. The same conditions can be changed only by a scientifically organised Industrial Union, for the workers must be organised not only for the every-day struggle with the Masters, but also to carry on production when Capitalism shall have been overthrown.

By organising industrially, we are forming the structure of the new Society within the shell of the old.

Here, again, is the same defect: the failure to assist on the revolutionary basis of the organisation. "The workers must be organised, not only for the every-day struggle with the masters, but also to carry on production when Capitalism shall have been overthrown."

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REARNOUGHT "AT HOME," AND LITERATURE SALE

A successful gathering was held at Leonard's, Leytonstone, on January 29th. Collected literature sales amounted to £2 6s. 6d.

INDUSTRIAL PROPAGANDA.

In our issue of January 29th we published the constitution of a new organisation, the Revolutionary Industrial Union Propaganda League, and said that we should comment upon it in a subsequent issue.

In this preamble, the League declares that the struggle between the working and employing classes will continue until "the workers will abolish the wages system and set up a world-wide Workers' Industrial Commonwealth." It then states:—

"The trend of Capitalism makes the Trade Unions unable to cope with the growing power of the Master Class and fosters a state of affairs which allows one set of Workers to be pitted against another set of Workers in the struggle for better conditions; moreover, the Trade Unions of to-day mislead the Working Class into the belief that they have interests in common with the Masters."

The preamble is here vitally incomplete, because it fails to state clearly that the object of the Trade Unions is to secure improved conditions under the capitalist system, whilst the object of the League is to abolish Capitalism.

A pledge to work for the abolition of Capitalism should be the primary condition of membership of any revolutionary industrial organisation. The same conditions can be changed only by a scientifically organised Industrial Union, for the workers must be organised not only for the every-day struggle with the Masters, but also to carry on production when Capitalism shall have been overthrown.

By organising industrially, we are forming the structure of the new Society within the shell of the old.

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ESPERANTO.

The following children's playlet, "Justice in a Nutschell," is reproduced by kind permission of the British Esperantist Society, 17 Hart Street, W.C.1.

JUSTECO EN NUKSOSELO.

Kvinnimutta Teatrajeto por Infanoj. De J. BARB. SENEJO.—Kampara vojeto tra arbareto, lalunge de kiu promeneas da knabinoj.

ROBULO.—Tra knabinoj (at da knabinoj kaj unu knabo), kiuj uzas siajn proprajn nomojn.

Jonjo. Ho, Manjo, rigardu! Kio estas tio, kuisanta sur la tero?

Manjo. Kio?

Jonjo. Jen, tie. Ĉu vi ne vidas ĝin? Ho! mi kredas, ke ĝi estas broto. (Sin klinas por ĝin levi, sed tuj sin retiras pro timo). Ho, ho!

Manjo. Ni, kio estas al vi, Jonjo?

Jonjo. Ho, gardsi vin! Ne alproksimiĝu! Ĝi estas besto—ia rampena, aĉa besto. (Manjo pliriskema, sin klinas por esplori). Ho! ne tusu ĝin, Manjo. Jen ĝi ekmovas sin. Ĝi chle via modeloto.

Manjo. Stultidino! Ĉiam vi timas tajn aĵojn. Ho, ĝi tute ne estas besto! Ĝi estas nukso, kaj kiu belega nukso ĝi ja estas! Nu, vudu, kion vi maltrafis, timemulnieto (suprenlevas la nukson allogi). La instruistino, kiel vi scias, ĉiam diras: "Kiu ne riskas, tiu ne gajnas."

Jonjo. Donu al mi mian nukson, Manjo (provas ekpreni ĝin el la mano de sia amikino).

Manjo. Via nukso! kia argoanteo! Ĝi estas mian nukso. Mi levis ĝin.

Jonjo. Sed ĝi estas mian nukso. Vi, avida knabino, donu ĝin al mi.

Manjo. Vi, sendube, la unua vidis ĝin, sed mi levis ĝin, kaj kiel vi scias, "Kiu trovas, tiu tenas." Do, ĝi estas mian, kaj mi intencas teni ĝin.

Jonjo. Sed mi trovis ĝin, kaj tial ĝi estas mian. Se mi ne estus elmontrinta ĝin al vi, certe vi estus preterpasinta ĝin.

Manjo. Kaj se mi ne estus levinta ĝin, vi estus forkurinta de la "aĉa besto," kiel vi ĝin nomis.

Jonjo. Ho, vi malnobla terura aĉulino! (ekploras). Ĝi ja estas mian nukso. (Eniras knabo ad tria knabino).

Knabo. Bonan matenon, amikinoj. (sursprico). Kio! Ĉu vi malpacas? Onste kiel knabinoj! Ili neniam povas interkonsenti, kaj vi, Jonjo, ĉu vi ploras? Ho, kia infaneto!

Jonjo. (Ĵornisante larmon kaj denove provante ekpreni la nukson).

Manjo. Ĉu ne estas ĝia nukso. Mi trovis ĝin.

Jonjo. Vi nur levis ĝin. Mi trovis ĝin, ĉar mi la unua ĝin vudu. Donu ĝin al mi. (pied-trapaceas kolere).

Manjo. Sed vi timis levi ĝin, timemulnieto.

Jonjo. Sed—

Knabino. (interrompante). Ĉesu malpacu, knabinoj! Mi decidu la aferon. La situacio estas, laŭ via diro, jene: Estis vi, Jonjo, kiu la unua ĝin vudu, ĉu ne?

Jonjo. Jes, mi—

Knabo. Kaj estis vi, Manjo, kiu levis ĝin, ĉu ne?

Manjo. Jes.

Knabo. Nu, estas evidente, ke ĝi apartenas al mi. Kaj ne dividu ĝin?

Jonjo. Mi ne volas dividi ĝin. La tuta nukso apartenas al mi, kaj mi ne donigos ĝin.

Manjo. Timemulnieto ne meritas ĉe donon. Ĝi tuta estas mian.

Knabo. Nu, donu ĉi tiun mirindan nukson al mi. (prenas stonon, kaj per ĝi rompas la nukson).

Manjo. Nu, donu ĉi tiun mirindan nukson al mi. (prenas stonon, kaj per ĝi rompas la nukson).

nulson e vduonojn kaj eliras la kernon). Nu, Jonjo, vi la unua vidis la nukson, ĉu ne?

Jonjo. Jes.

Knabo. Jen (transdonante al si unu donon de la malpleto ĵeto) via parto; kaj, Manjo, jen mian, ĉar vi levis la nukson; kaj (monante la kernon) jen mian, ĉar mi decidis la disputon. Bonan tagon!

Jonjo kaj Manjo. Ki—a mal—just—ajo!

Manjo. (Ĵornisante kun Jonjo, brakoj ĉe lundo). Ne ĉirkaŭgu, Jonjo. Ni perdis mian nukson, sed mi ricevis lecionon: Ĉiam ĝivdu mian plezuron kion aliaj; ĉar tre ofte okazas, ke, kion oni celadas konservi por si, tion oni entute perdas.

NOTE.—Copies of this playlet can be obtained from the British Esperantist Association, 17 Hart Street, London, W.C.1, at the rate of 2s for 6d, post free, or through the Dreadnought.

THE UNEMPLOYED.

Though he is certainly a reactionary, Major Hammond Foot was right when, at the Caxton Hall Unemployed Conference, he said: what the unemployed need is a policy.

There was a sense of reality and utility, also, in his effort to turn the attention of the workers to the land and productive work.

Further than this however, we cannot approve him. We cannot find any virtue in his suggestion that the Government should lend money to the unemployed to enable them to work the land, charging them 2½ per cent. interest, and expecting them to pay the principle back in 24 years.

Small landholding usually fails to pay in this country; but, in any case, we are opposed to all proposals tending to perpetuate the capitalist system of buying and selling and usury. The suggested interest, by the way, is higher than that which the Government pays on the money deposited by working people in the Post Office Savings Bank.

We consider it exceedingly desirable that the unemployed should look to the land, and that those of them who are suitably constituted for the work, should go to the land and should work it, together with those already labouring there.

It is also desirable that the industrial workers, whether at present employed or unemployed, should look to the industries, should take control of the industries and should work them.

Moreover, it is desirable that the workers on the land and in the various industries should send their surplus products to each other, and that all should produce according to their capacities, and consume according to their needs, without fee or reward, without money or bartering.

If the unemployed should proceed to settle upon the land, and to grow grain and vegetables, and to raise cattle and sheep and pigs and chickens, and to produce milk and butter; to have and to hold in common; and to use for the common weal; if they should extend the invitation to do likewise to the miner, the spinner and weaver, the saddler and shoemaker, the hui der and engineer, the transport worker and the seaman; then we should give and collect to support them till their work prove fruitful, with a gladness we could not feel in giving to any palliative charity; and we should struggle to protect them against aggression as we should never fight in any nationalist struggle or any capitalist war.

It is strange that the miners, starving besides idle coal pits in South Wales, have not already re-opened the closed mines, and issued a call for the co-operation of the railwaymen and all sections of workers for a Communist movement of non-co-operation with Capitalism.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To TOM ANDERSON.—Many thanks to you and the Proletarian Schools for donation to Press Fund. Glad to hear you are starting a children's monthly magazine: hope it will really be for Children, as the youngsters do not want a stodgy, grown-up magazine palmed off on them. Fill it with stories and ban all articles, except of a concise, informative character; even the grown-ups like the stories best. We shall be glad to help you in every way.

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THE WORKER'S WAR STILL RAGING

Ireland is called a Free State now: Michael Collins and Sir James Craig are discussing boundaries questions. Arthur Griffith is busy preparing himself to officiate as President of the Free State, and De Valera is forming an organisation to develop the culture of the Irish race. The Irish patriots are having the time of their lives, Fellow Worker; but the Irish workers are outcasts, as of yore.

At Quarters County Cork, the millers and dairy workers have been setting us all an example by showing they know how to form a Soviet, that they can carry on production without the assistance of the boss, and that they are not afraid to set about it.

In the West of Ireland people are dying of starvation. It is said that their plight is worse than it has been at any time since the famine of 1847. The Irish famine is not popular enough for it to be said that the Irish are eating each other. Yet, nevertheless, they are literally starving. The Star reports that children are to be seen clad only in sacks with a hole for the head and arms, and that women are half naked. Dr. Seamus O'Brien, for many years dispensary doctor in Connemara and the western islands, says he has never before witnessed such destitution, or seen a people "so utterly paralysed from want."

If any serious friction arises between the Free State Government and the British Government, the miseries of the Western people will be brought into the limelight and made much of: it will then probably be reported that they too are eating each other.

Between ourselves, Fellow Worker, people who are suffering from actual starvation cannot eat animal flesh, let alone the flesh of their human neighbours. People who are starved suffer pain when they begin to take any kind of food again; even if it be given in small doses of carefully prepared liquid. Even strong and healthy people would die if they eat the decomposing corpses from the graveyards and mortuaries, as it is alleged the Russians are doing.

In the German Republic a great strike has again broken out in Berlin. It began with the railway workers: it has spread to the municipal employees, and Berlin is left without buses, trams, light, and water, as well as without trains. The strike is affecting also Kiel, Hamburg, Stettin, Magdeburg, Bremen, Elberfeld, Cassel, Frankfurt-on-Main, Hanover, Dortmund, the Ruhr, and Munich.

The German strike is mainly a desperation strike: the workers have been driven to revolt by economic pressure, the threat of withdrawing the eight-hour day, which they believe will increase unemployment, and the fear that the right of Trade Union combination will be taken from them.

The demands of the strikers are very mild: they only ask for a small revision of wages, in order that the differences between the higher and lower scales of pay may not be too glaring, that any revision of hours shall apply to all workers, and that the Railway Hours of Labour Bill shall be withdrawn.

The German Government has declared that the railwaymen are not entitled to strike, because they are Government employees, the railways being State owned. All German workers regard this as the thin end of a wedge which will affect their own right of combination; hence their sense of solidarity with the railwaymen is aroused. Yours would be, let us hope, Fellow Worker, under similar circumstances. Nevertheless, the Trade Union leaders are showing themselves as reactionary as ever: the officials of most of the other Unions are condemning the strike and supporting the Chancellor's declaration that the success of the German Government's policy is dependent upon the world's reliance on German order: that no one will negotiate with an anarchistic Germany, and that if the German railways are not made economically sound, by denying a proper subsistence to the workers, Britain, France, and the Entente will step in to control them.

Strike and railway Union officials have been placed under arrest, the police have seized the money at the Railway Union offices, and have closed the Union's banking account. The Government states that the Union funds will be kept under control till the strike is over.

Yet the smug officials of other Unions and the Parliamentary leaders do not rise. The general strike drove out the Kapp monarchists; it could stop the crushing of German Trade Unionism; but the German Trade Unionists are supporting the Government. Vorwärts, the organ of the Social Democrats—the Trade Union-Labourists—says that the policy of the Wirth Government has no opponents.

J. H. Thomas, J. R. Clynes, Henderson, and the rest are playing the same game here.

THE SEARCHLIGHT.

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