

## - INTERNATIONAL -

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## CORRESPONDENCE

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### Important Notice.

The English edition of the "International Press Correspondence" is sent free of charge to all labour and communist organs in England, America, India, South Africa, Australia and Canada. The editors urgently request that the articles be reprinted in the labour and communist press with the least possible delay. The object of the "Correspondence" is to supply the organs of the working class movements in these countries with reliable information and with points of view which are not found in the capitalist press and news agencies.

It is particularly requested that all editors; 1. print as much of the contents of the "International Press Correspondence" as possible; 2. send exchange copies of their respective newspapers and journals to the editors of the "International Press Correspondence"; 3. offer advice and criticism about the "Correspondence", and suggest articles on subjects which may be of special interest to their respective countries. The editors set themselves the task of acting as a means of information and a connecting link between the various branches of the international labour movement. All letters, requests and enquiries received will receive immediate attention. Members of labour and communist parties are also requested to send the editors of the "International Press Correspondence" the names and addresses of all their organs, so that copies can be sent to them.

### To the Rescue! For the Right of Political Asylum.

by R. Albert (Berlin).

The German police has just arrested two Spanish comrades at Berlin, Louis Nicolán and his companion Lucia Jonquina Concepcion. We are also informed that in Aix-la-Chapelle, in Berlin itself and elsewhere the police has made arrests of Spanish workingmen. Everywhere the Spanish comrades are being tracked. The Consulates of their country are simply police offices attached to the local police. Every Spanish refugee who passes is robbed, arrested, molested. It is always an "assassin" of Dato—since Dato's people have not assassinated him yet! Throughout Europe the policemen of Alphonso XIII.—forever stained with the blood of Ferrer—are carrying out their dark tasks. And already the French newspapers, denouncing Louis Nicolán as one of Dato's murderers, announce his pending extradition "as soon as the necessary formalities will be gone through".

Is it then only a question of formalities? What infamy is Ebert's Republic still preparing to commit?

The real author of the execution of M. Dato, Ramon Coranellas, found a refuge in Soviet Russia many weeks ago—a refuge all the democracies of the world would have refused to the punisher of one of the most reactionary ministers of our times. Twenty, thirty, or more Spanish militants are imprisoned in the *Carcel Modela* of Madrid, all of them "assassins of Dato", and they will all be assassinated without a doubt, if we do not turn a little light on the matter. What more? Are we going to tolerate their going to Berlin to search for Syndicalists who have escaped from the massacres of Melilla, from the torture-chamber of Martinez-Anido, from the revolvers of the "free labor-union", in order to give them up under various pretexts to the evil-doers of Montjuich? Will the European proletariat which, it appears, has just saved Sacco and Vanzetti at the other end of the world, permit the German

police to hand over Louis Nicolán to the abominable outlaws who sawed the skull of the Syndicalist Achs, and frightfully tortured Evelio Bual before finishing him off in a dark alley of Barcelona?

This must stop! We can well believe in the innocence of Louis Nicolán, knowing the very precise declarations made by Ramon Coranellas at Moscow. We have known for many years the rascality of the Spanish government. We have not forgotten any of the atrocities of Montjuich, of Alcala del Valle, of the Pueblos of Morocco, of Fernando-Po. Last year there was the shooting of innocent persons, clearly innocent, but Syndicalists. When the Spanish government asserts something, it means that it lies, that it wants to kill. Perhaps it asserts the "guilt" of the militants arrested by the German police. Let us admit that for the moment. Perhaps there are among the Spaniards detained at Berlin, some one of those obscure avengers who come out from the masses, in the tragic hours of history, called forth by the martyrdom of all the workers. Perhaps! But does not the right of refuge exist any more?

The jurisprudence of capitalist governments establishes it clearly. And we ought to keep watch in an emergency, to see to it that the governments respect their own international law. Neither deserters nor the authors of a political crime can be extradited. Before the Russian Revolution, the most servile governments inflexibly refused to the Czar the extradition of terrorists. They found refuge in London, in Geneva, even in Paris, in spite of the alliance of the small French bondholder and the "Hangman of all the Russias". The police of the Social-democrat Ebert doubtlessly intend an innovation. It is comprehensible. The rulers and capitalists of the world feel at present the need of a more active solidarity.

So be it. *Our solidarity will face theirs.* This is a call. The international campaign so well made for Sacco and Vanzetti must rebound in favor of the Spaniards held at Berlin, and against the extradition of all militants accused of "political crimes". The extradition of a single one will create the most dangerous precedent. This would be the infringement of the right of refuge, conceived in the middle ages to remedy, little as that was, the ferocities of the feudal lords. *This would be the infringement of the right of refuge, thanks to which the greatest leaders of the Russian Revolution were not hanged by Stolypin nor sacrificed to scurvy in Siberia—to which thousands of Hungarian Communists owe to-day their precious security.*

Not a day must be lost. Already the German Communist Party is acting. It is its honor to raise the first protest. The Deputies intervene in Parliament, the militants hold manifestations. Comrades of France, of Italy, of Spain, of England, of America! *The right of refuge for revolutionists is menaced.* Reactionary Spain dares to call for new victims. Help!

## POLITICS

### The Anglo-French Conflict in Europe and the Washington Conference.

by Karl Radek (Moscow).

As the unexpected decision on the Upper Silesian question was handed down by the League of Nations-Commission, the national German press asked why this shock was sent through the "innocent body" of the German Government which was given no opportunity to serve as England's or France's lick-spittle, and which was thus left to its fate unused. The "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung", Stinnes' organ, in its article entitled "Fair

Play" called Lloyd George's attention to the fact that not only had he openly expressed himself for the awarding of Upper Silesia to Germany, but that he had also given Germany distinct written guarantees on the matter. This newspaper seeks to base the altered attitude of England upon an attempt of the latter to sabotage the Franco-German agreement at Wiesbaden. This article reveals only one of the factors that brought about the English change of front; behind the scenes, however there is undoubtedly a much more significant contest going on.

In his speech of October 8th at St. Nazaire, Premier Briand pointed out that France could not possibly remain isolated, if it desires to maintain both the Peace Treaty and its own position in the World. He emphasized the necessity for real guarantees of the Peace of Versailles as a condition for disarmament. Noblemaire, the French representative in the League of Nations, delivered his speech in the same spirit. This speech is directed against the United States, which in the person of Wilson shouldered the responsibility of the Peace of Versailles in 1919, only to disavow it by a vote of the Senate. The immense interest which has been roused in France by the Washington Conference shows that France intends to make use of the opposition in the Far East to bring the question of guaranteeing the Peace of Versailles to the fore, (although at present France is not in a position to carry out an expansion-policy in the Far East, and although its possessions in Indo-China are not threatened by any one).

*What does France offer America for these guarantees?*

This question is answered in an article published by the Paris "Figaro" on the 8th of October, which appeared at the same time in the "Philadelphia Public Ledger". This article points out that in the near future America will possess the largest navy in the world, but that it has not enough naval bases on the African coast of the Atlantic and Indian oceans. In Morocco it has a base opposite Gibraltar, and in Djibute, at the mouth of the Red sea, one opposite Aden. Finally it has a base in Indo-China. Mention is also made of the French ports on the north coast of France and in the English Channel. The article proceeds as follows: "During the War the English Government never denied that it would have suffered defeat if the Germans had occupied Calais, although the latter had no allies bordering on that sea. How will the eventual Anglo-French war turn out, if France should possess all these coasts, large submarine and aerial fleets, and be allied with the United States which possesses a great navy? It is understood that this is only an hypothesis; and it suffices that this hypothesis only be mentioned, for us to see that it is unacceptable. *Is it even to be thought of, that Englishmen, a people with a developed common-sense, will be stupid enough to start a chess-game in which the position of the pieces condemn them to defeat from the beginning?* Japan has a strong navy but poor bases. It has not at its disposal the naval bases of the British Empire, whose colonies, it seems, refuse hospitality to the Japanese navy. Japan can hardly start a war against France and the United States, if England remains neutral. England of course must count with the master of the English Channel, which for a long time has been considered English, although its main coast is French.

This article in the "Figaro", a serious conservative French paper, shows that France has a new weapon against England. *She offers her aid to American Imperialism in the great contest for control of the Pacific, in exchange for French supremacy on the Continent.* This was to be expected. In the last number of the "Communist International", I wrote in an article entitled, "The Outlines of World-Politics" as follows: "If Japan is England's trump against the United States, France is America's trump against England . . . For the present the United States policy towards Europe is one of experiment. The outcome of these experiments depends first of all upon whether the United States will definitely make up its mind to extend its influence in Eastern Asia. Should the United States decide to do so, Germany at once becomes America's compensation-object in world-politics. Should it come to the first differences between America and England, the United States will leave this compensation-object to France, in return for aid in the struggle against England. The English capitalist press is fully conscious of the significance of its attacks upon French militarism, which threatens England more and more, and which may become more dangerous to her than the former German militarism. France is England's neighbour. With her submarine-fleet, her aerial-fleet, and her long-range guns developed to the present high degree, France could, with the support of the United States, not only blockade England, but even undertake an invasion of England".

The moment for France's first bids has arrived. The appearance of General Pershing and the American envoy Herrick, at the recent military celebrations in Paris, in spite of their reserved appearance, shows more convincingly than "Figaro's"

article that the diplomats are carrying on serious negotiations behind the scenes, on the question of Franco-American relations. It is only a question of how the English Government looks upon the danger of such an agreement. This question depends upon the estimate of Anglo-American relations with regard to the situation in the Far East. As is well known, the English press has attempted until now to represent the idea of a possible Anglo-American war as a fantastic conception. Recently however, this attitude, worthy of a Manilow, has disappeared. The English press begins to speak openly of the critical situation and of a possible solution of the Far East problem by resort to arms. An article in the well known English weekly, the "Nation" which also appeared in "Figaro" on the day that the French offers to America were published, sheds a characteristic light upon the change of front of the English press. In the "Nation's" article it was pointed out that no talk of disarmament was possible, unless an agreement between America and England upon the Far-East question were effected.

"Should that fail, Anglo-American relations will suffer a break, China will become the arena for economic struggles, the contest in naval-armaments will assume the features of our old fight with Germany, together with all the horrors and all the misery which it finally brought about". At this point the author of the article remarks that this comparison breeds horror, but that the Anglo-American relations correspond to the Anglo-German relations at the beginning of the 20th century, when both countries faced the alternative of a peaceful agreement or war. "The question of our relations with America", the "Nation" proceeds, "is essentially an economic one. Before the war America was a debtor. Its capital was employed mainly in its own country. Thanks to the war and to the orders of the warring nations, America wiped out its debts and has become a creditor. It is now in possession of surplus-capital which it wishes to export. Of course, this capital could very well be used at home, but then the profits would not be as great. Where then should this surplus be invested? The 'Mandatory system' offers no opportunity to any one but the mandate-holder, for the exploitation of the countries assigned to it. Turkey is already divided into spheres of influence. Very little value is assigned to Russia in America." The "Nation" is of the opinion that America foolishly underrates Russia. "The chaos in Central and Eastern Europe, and the risks of business, intimidate the American creditors who are afraid to be hit by coming events. China is the country to which all eyes are directed. It is clearly to be seen that the financial magnates who dispose of such affairs have decided to concentrate all their energy upon the Chinese question. The United States Congress has just passed a law which exempts American companies in China from taxation. This law directs American capital to China. This is a basic economic fact. America has become an exporting country. As a consequence of this economic imperialism, will there not arise an armament contest and finally a war? This depends upon us. But the situation is becoming worse than the question of our relations to Germany in its day. This year will be a year of decisions, just as the year 1901 was in the question of relations with Germany. But in 1901 we were not only France's ally, but also France's friend. Now, we are an ally of Japan. Furthermore, the Anglo-German naval-contest which was begun by the German naval program of 1901, never reached the bitterness of the Anglo-American naval competition. We were not then in danger of seeing the number of our adversary's ships reach that of our navy in any short period of time. Besides, America cannot make any progress in its peaceful conquest of China without coming in to sharp conflict with Japan, if Japan persists in its annexation and occupation program and in its attempt to establish a protectorate over China. We are in the midst of a situation which in a short time must lead to war. Americans do not like the expression 'Imperialism'. They reject the idea of political ambitions in China. We believe in their sincerity when they say that they only wish to do business in China, to help her develop her institutions. Were this business to consist only of the export of textiles and typewriters, there would be no danger. But here it is a question of building railroads, a question of mines and of big trusts, and we know what such things develop into."

"The Nation" concludes therefore, that England should decline an alliance with Japan, which up to now has furthered the imperialistic policy of this Far-East power. We know, however, that England does not want to decline such an alliance. This was shown by the policy of Lloyd George and Lord Curzon at the imperial conference, where they sought with all their power to prevent a break between the British colonies and Japan. It was also shown by the speeches of Lloyd George and Churchill, who flirted with the idea of an approach or alliance between England, America and Japan. "The Nation" is right when it considers such an idea as utopian, for, even if it were possible to affect agreements which would only postpone the conflict between

America and Japan, the interests of these two countries are *diametrically opposed to each other*. Taking into consideration its economic surplus, the United States does not want any territorial conquest of China; it only wants to exploit *the whole* of China. Japan is not able to maintain its position in China, in case of an economic struggle. That is why it finds itself compelled to pursue an annexation-policy. This situation reminds one of the difference in policies pursued by Germany and England with regard to Turkey, although there the territorial tendency of England was called forth not by any economic weakness, but by the necessity of uniting India with Egypt.

The acuteness of the question discussed at the Washington Conference compels the English government to take the question of Franco-American relations seriously. Were America to accept the offers discussed in "Figaro", it would mean great danger for England. But even if things have not yet gone that far, *and it is only a question of possibilities such possibilities alone must influence England's policy in the direction of yielding to France*. World-politics as well as the whole of capitalism are dominated by the tendency of concentration of interests in the sense that the great powers are forced to concentrate their energies upon the main object of their desires. In their fight against German imperialism, the English were always masters of the political art of concentration. After the world-war, England attempted to combat French domination on the continent, and at the same time to maintain its supremacy in the Near and Far East. Should it not succeed in these attempts, England will be compelled to leave Central Europe to be plundered by French imperialism, in order to defend its positions in India, on the Atlantic Ocean and in Central Asia. *England is primarily an Asiatic power*; that is probably it makes such a decision. There is also a new tendency in England's policy in the Upper-Silesian question, and in its somewhat different attitude toward Soviet-Russia. The careful observation and study of this tendency will necessarily influence our own foreign-policy in the near future.

## The Political Situation in the French Parliament.

by Paul Vaillant-Couturier.

The French Chamber of Deputies has resumed work in the midst of the greatest confusion. No definite orientation has made itself evident either in the premier's speech or in the interpellations of his majority. For the Briand ministry seems to recruit the greater part of its adherents at the moment of taking the vote from among those who appear to be its warmest opponents during the debates.

As Barrés has said: „Briand talks like a nationalist and acts as a Radical-Socialist.“

That is sufficient, and it is the very secret of the success of the present president of the Cabinet. Whether he speaks at St. Nazaire or before the Parliament, he says nothing. It is the last word of parliamentary eloquence. With an air of fatigue and boredom which hardly conceals the scorn in which he holds the dangerous imbeciles who are his masters and whom he is about to ridicule, he comes up to the tribune to enunciate his finest grave tones, and to display his poor but reverberating vocabulary. His force consists of governing with the petty bourgeoisie of the country against the Bloc National and at the same time with the Bloc National against the proletariat.

Whether it is a question of internal policy, of the trip to Washington, so dangerous to disarmament, of the Versailles treaty which he condemns and tries to apply, of Upper Silesia or Turkey, this renegade from Socialism always paints himself as a good boy who does what he can, and as he describes with details the difficulties of his task — behind which one divines astonishingly ramified combinations — he succeeds in causing uneasiness even to those who might aspire to succeed him.

And the composition of his cabinet corresponds to his policy. From Barthou to Vidal, from Bonnevey to Lafont, it is the typical cabinet of combine in government-profits and of inter-ministerial conspiracies.

In a word, the cabinet's situation corresponds to that of France. The Bloc National, no longer satisfying (and having never satisfied except by jugglery) the aspirations of the country, finds itself forced to accord its interested support to those who only partially enter into its break-neck politics. Not daring to implicate certain ones of its big leaders in serious attacks against the ministry, it gives this task to the policeman, the most hated man in France — M. Mandel. It applauds and then abandons him.

This is because a Party of the center, fearing the next elections, seems to have begun its veering to the left.

The great groups of the beginning are beginning to disintegrate.

Monsieur Arago, leader of the Democratic Union, the powerful group of Republicans of the right, considers his colleague Bonnevey very red since he has become Minister of

Justice and although, at the election of a vice-president for the Chamber, Puech, the candidate of the Bloc National, was elected against the candidate of the left, this vote looks more like an angry revenge than a symptom of the future.

The Royalists accuse Daudez of lukewarmness and try to discredit this demi-god of the right.

We cannot but—rejoice at the present situation. It accentuates, as much in the Chamber as in the Senate, the complete helplessness of the capitalist national representatives in face of the abyss which the capitalism of the war has dug. Doumer, the Finance Minister, unable to find the tens of billions necessary to cover the deficit of his budget can be certain that he will find no intelligent aid from among his parliamentary employers, preoccupied only with the personal gain of their industrial, commercial, or financial groups.

To the number of 379 (plus the deputies of Alsace-Lorraine) they are all the tools of the Union of Economic Interests, in other words the official representatives of the great Banks, of Industry and of Commerce in their most reactionary phases.

Now this all-powerful grouping has just called upon them to redeem their pledge, and to make good their signature.

Their whole financial program retains its unity with regard to taxes, that is in its fight against the tax on incomes and profits, in the maintaining of the tax on wages and the increase of indirect taxes. It is the plan for financial failure itself to which they have nominally subscribed.

As for their economic and political program, it comprises the suppression of labor-unions, the reduction of wages, the repeal of the law on the eight-hour day, the right of unlimited profits, the prevention of proceedings against profiteering merchants, and the repression of strikes.

It is clear that their foreign policy, with regard to Germany as well as to Russia is in uniformity with the corrections which a thirst for profits imposes upon hypocrisy.

If it is admitted that for the most part, those who have not adhered to this program and form the Left of the Assembly, represent the reformist capitalism which is nothing but another aspect of capitalist evil-doing or helplessness, it is easy to understand the growing dissatisfaction with the parliamentary regime which is spreading everywhere and especially in the country-places.

In order to fight against this dissatisfaction, the elected representatives of the bourgeoisie and of Free-Masonry, the Radical-Socialists, with their weak anti-clerical program try behind Buisson, Herriot and Painlevé, to set up the revived doctrine of nationalist reform capable of attracting the restless part of the centre and to bore from within the Social-Democrats in the Coalition of the Left which has finally been reconstituted.

In the Radical newspapers *Bonsoir*, *L'Oeuvre*, the *Rappel*, the *Dépêche*, the *Matin* (to which M. de Jouvenal seems to be giving a tinge of the Left), the non-committal formulas of Democracy appear again with economies and reduction of military expenses. And a whole program is unfolded, in which the whole coalition which calls itself "League of the Republic" implicitly admits the past failure of the statesmen who patronize it, in saying that it wishes "to realize, finally, the Republic". If one may judge by the parleys held between M. Mandel of the Bloc National, former chief of the Clémenceau Cabinet, and M. Escoffier, Socialist deputy of the North of France, — the man who failed to follow the Communists last December — and the applause with which, among others, M. Richard, the most revolutionary of the Socialist Deputies from Pas-de Calais, greeted the other day M. Briand's harangue, one is led to believe that the efforts of Socialism's liaison-agents will obtain the complete success wished for by the radical bourgeois.

The articles written by Paul Boncour and by many other Socialists leave no doubt in regard to this.

This evolution fits into the order of history, and the adherents of the Second International and the International Two and a Half will not escape the law which the other day threw the German Social-Democrats into the arms of Stinnes, and which make of our "Dissidents" at one and the same time champions of the bourgeoisie and the involuntary preparers of the Communist revolution which they detest.

It is therefore with a perfect serenity that at the resumption of political, parliamentary life we look on and see this series of compromises which prepare, as much at the right as at the left, the characteristic course towards the temporary realization of bourgeois equilibrium with the participation of the Socialists, to the greatest disillusion of the workers.

As for our Party, whose parliamentary action ought to be rigidly controlled and coordinated by its Executive Committee, after having passed through the months of regrouping after the Tours Congress, is preparing for active work, for the distribution of tasks, and for the organization of its action—a thing which is very new in a country where the phrase and the anxiety to get

votes has for a long time eliminated all real revolutionary activity.

The inability of the Chamber to do anything at all, the weakness of an equilibrist cabinet governing from one day to another, the growing deficit, the unemployment-crisis, the reduction of wages, the collapse of the Bloc National, and the comedy of the Coalition of the Left, will bring France into a period the arrival of which has been delayed by illusion of victory and where all conditions are favorable for a Communist organization possessing a firm leadership in the pitiless class-struggle.

## Australia and Communism.

by W. P. Earsman.

Australia is the land of the reformist, operating through the political Labour Party. There are no reforms known but what have been tried, to satisfy the wants of the workers, and remedy the evils of capitalism.

### Early Developments.

Though Australia was first used by Britain in the latter part of the 18th century, it was not till 1850, that the country showed any signs of developing, and becoming a country of some importance. In that year gold was discovered which brought an influx of workers from all parts of the earth. In the rough and tumble of life in a new country, and especially a mining country, conflicts were expected, but no one dreamt that at the beginning of the development any serious conflict would arise.

In 1854, the miners of Ballarat fell out with the Government, and the outcome was that war was declared. The miners turned their camp into a huge stockade where they entrenched themselves and decided to give battle to the Government forces. This was met by soldiers being ordered to the scene to force the miners to give way. For several days skirmishes took place, but on the 4th December 1854, the government troops opened fire on the stockade, and attacked with all the forces they had at their command. The miners were defeated, the stockade destroyed and many dead and wounded left on the field. The first fight for working class freedom was over and here lay the foundation of the future working class activity.

In 1890, another outburst took place in which all unionists in all trades took part—the maritime general strike. Again this was a clearcut issue between the State and the workers. This time the officers of the maritime service decided to join with other workers and their activities, that is, to affiliate with the Labour Councils. This, the shipowners objected to in the interests of discipline, and the smooth running of the trade. A strike was declared and once more the Armed State was used by those who had the power, and the soldiery was used to shoot down the defenseless workers. The workers were again defeated, and returned once more to learn the lessons of their mistakes.

### The Workers Political Party.

In 1892, there was formed the Labour Party of Australia, the greatest influence in its birth was the defeats suffered in the industrial arena. The workers thought that by a strong political party capturing parliament, in conjunction with the Trade Unions, they would be able to carry out anything they desired. That false idea still exists to day, not only in Australia but in all countries.

It was not many years before the workers had accomplished their mission by capturing parliament, but still they found themselves enslaved just the same. Many laws had been passed to protect them, which failed in their objective. Many reasons, were put forward, one in particular for their ineffectiveness in parliament.

The country in 1859, had been divided politically into six (6) States; New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, West Australia and Tasmania, an island off the mainland. Each State had two Houses of Parliament, with autonomy in all state matters. In other words, the six States were like six different countries and acted as such. They fought one another over custom duties and other matters for several years.

With the industrial development of the country, and the organization of the workers, they set on foot an agitation for Federation or the linking up of all the states into one Federation.

### The Federation.

This agitation bore fruit in 1900, and in 1901, the first Federal Parliament was opened, under a liberal administration. In 1904, the Labour Party got control, and formed the first Labour Ministry. Since then the Labour Party has on four other occasions, had control of the Federal Parliament, together with control in all State Parliaments, except Victoria.

The legislation of this Labour Party, for the past seventeen years has been everything that one could desire in making capitalists palatable to the workers, but still they have failed and

the workers of Australia are faced with the same problems to-day as the workers of all other lands.

### Nationalisation.

For many years the panacea held up to the workers of all countries by labour parties and bourgeois socialist parties, has been that of Nationalisation. Even today in Britain we have those parties, in spite of the miserable failures in Australia and in Germany, still asking the people to believe that once they have the government reins in their hands, they will be able to drive the capitalist "State coach", along roads which will emancipate the workers of the country.

### Arbitration & Conciliation.

This has been the remedy, for all industrial troubles, put forward by those would-be emancipators. At first it was quite a success, and was welcomed by most unions accepting the principle. The mockery of either arbitration or conciliation between master and slave is recognised to day and the machinery is being scrapped by the unions.

### White Australia.

This policy means that all colored people are prevented from entering the country, unless they can pass an educational test in the English language. Should they pass this test, they are then treated as if they were lepers, and are not entitled to a citizen's rights, nor to the benefits of any legislation which may be put on the statute book. But this act is aimed at Britain's allies, the Japanese, and also at the Chinese, on the score that workers from those countries would reduce the white man's living standard. Further, the Japanese Government, is supposed to have designs on our fair country, and this legislation is to prevent them from organising inside the country. This has been one of the bogeys used to bluff the Australian worker.

Next comes compulsory military training for all boys between the ages of 12 and 26 years. That speaks for itself.

Maternity Bonus is the next piece of sweetmeat that is handed out by this Labour Party, stipulating that all white women who give birth to a child within the Commonwealth are entitled to the sum of £ 5. All that actually happens is that the medical man has a guarantee that he will be paid for his visit.

The latest achievement of this pseudo-working-class party, is its action in the late war. The labour party had control of the Government in 1914, when the war broke out and without the least hesitation waded into it up to its neck. The Labour Prime Minister, Mr. Fisher, (once a miner) declared on behalf of the Government that they would support the war to the "last man and the last shilling" and they attempted it, but failed.

Thus, it will be seen that Australia has had a fair share of all the good things of capitalism, and that the working class has not yet been emancipated, and in no way is it likely to be, until it recognizes the fundamentals of capitalism, until it recognizes what destruction must be wrought before it is possible to build up a state of society wherein all will be freed from economic slavery.

### Trade Unions.

The Trade Unions have played a very important part in the building up the country and all its institutions, much more so than in other countries. In 1850, the unions began to make themselves felt, and during the years which followed went through some very bitter fighting. They were able as a rule to maintain their conditions sectionally, but made no real progress. In 1890, after the big Maritime Strike, they turned their attention to political action, or rather parliamentary action. During the next two decades practically all the unions became affiliated with the Labour Party, and their activity placed their party in power. Time and time again this happened, until to-day the unions are recognising the futility of being attached to a reformist party.

This has been mainly seen in the economic battles which the workers have had to wage, often against Labour governments. Evidence is not wanting of cases where a group of workers have gone on strike in nationalised industries, in which the Labour government has used "Blacklegs" to defeat the workers. This has not been the rule, but in many instances it has happened. Only last year, the Labour government of New South Wales was returned to office, one of its platform promises being a bill to reduce the working hours from 48 to 44 per week. After several months in office nothing was done and the workers had to resort to direct action to accomplish it themselves. Not only did the government refuse to act but did all in its power to get workers to scab on those who were fighting.

This has brought many of the large unions to the point of breaking with the Labour Party and withdrawing their affiliation. Such unions as the Seamen, Dockers, Miners, Engineers and unions in the building trades have done so. It has become so serious that this year in June 1921, the Australian Labour Party called a conference of all unions with the object of requesting them to draft a program in keeping with their prin-

ciples, this to act as a program of action for the Labour Party in Parliament.

The Communist party was well represented at this conference, but we never expected to achieve anything like the success we did. The result of the conference was a series of resolutions, and a Council of action was elected to place them before the labour party congress. On this council of action, the Communists are rather well represented, and it is expected that the Labour Party will, once and for all time be driven to the extreme right, or come out on the left as a revolutionary party. There is little doubt as to what their action will be, as they will remain true to their masters, the bourgeois.

This brings us to the activities of the unions. Affiliation with the labour party, has not prevented the unions from using direct action in their economic fights, whether a Labour government had control of the parliamentary machine or not. This has been very advantageous because it has shown up the weaknesses of the structure of the trade-unions.

#### Industrial Unionism.

In 1917, in New South Wales a strike commenced on the railways, which after a few days, spread to the factories of private enterprise, also to the States of Queensland and Victoria. Its dimensions were soon beyond the limits of all previous strikes and though not a general strike, it had that effect. For eight weeks this fight took place, the workers standing pacifically in the streets, while the Government acted and fought the leaders of the unions to a standstill. The result of course was inevitable, the workers returning to work once again defeated. This was caused more by the inaction of the trade union leaders, than by the cleverness of the government or its henchmen. The trade union leaders had failed to understand and grasp the situation, and by the bankruptcy of their intelligence the day was lost for the workers.

The aftermath of this fight brought about a serious consideration of the whole position of Trade Unionism, and the Sydney Labour Council took the matter up, and appointed a committee to draft a scheme for the better organisation of the workers in the economic field.

The scheme which was finally adopted, was one for Industrial Unionism in the form of One Big Union. Since then several conferences have been held, the majority of unions throughout the Commonwealth accepting and subscribing to those principles.

In February of this year a conference of the Coal Miners, Saemen, Dockers, Railwaymen and Agricultural Workers took place, and the whole preamble and principles of industrial unionism were accepted. Later, arrangements were made to place the whole matter before the rank and file, and it is expected that early in the year 1922 any obstacles which may have been in the way will be removed and industrial unionism placed on a sound footing.

The part played by the Industrial Workers of the World in the country has been of immense value in propagating the ideas of Industrial Unionism. In fact up to 1917, this organisation was the only body which carried on this work, and its activity brought it to the notice of the Government. Then the persecution commenced, ending with twelve of the leaders getting sentences from 10 to 15 years in gaol. Finally the organisation was declared illegal, and the Labour Party subscribed to this in Parliament. After this the organisation died out. In 1920, ten of the leaders were released and to day a majority of them accept the Communist principles.

#### The Task of the Future.

Besides the Labour Party, we have the Socialist Labour Party in New South Wales and the Australian Socialist Party, also operating mainly in New South Wales. The Communist Party of Australia is the only other party operating in all the States, and though it was only formed in December 1920, it has made good progress.

The Executive Comitee of the Third International after reviewing the whole situation, has ordered that all the revolutionary working-class parties must immediately meet and make arrangements for one United Communist Party. The machinery has been created whereby this may be accomplished, and I hope that by the next congress we will be able to report that there is a United Communist Party in Australia.

This is our immediate task, and one that I have no doubt we will be able to accomplish.

## ECONOMICS

### The drop of the mark and its results

by E. Ludwig (Berlin).

The dollar worth in peace time 4.20 marks. was quoted on

sian grenadier, lost its stability with the defeat of Prussia's imperial army upon the battle-field. The ever greater fluctuation of its value, with a steady tendency toward a decided fall, betrayed, as a fever curve, the serious illness which is ravaging the body of German capitalist economy.

The low value of the mark in February 1920, before the "Kapp-putsch", about 108 to the dollar appears now as a dream of a happy pact. After a slight rise during the summer of 1920, when the dollar reached a value of 55 to 65 marks at a time of increasing industrial depression, a new drop began in June 1921, and is still in progress.

The value of the mark in the chief foreign markets amounted to:

1921	Jan. 3	Jan. 27	April 1	July 1	Oct. 1	Oct. 15	Oct. 17
Holland:	2307.70	1855.00	2162.00	2468.00	3910.00	4910.00	5400.00
Switzerland:	1123.80	877.50	1085.00	1262.50	2137.25	2820.00	3090.00
Paris:	432.25	400.50	438.00	601.00	871.00	1060.00	1180.00
London:	260.32	213.00	245.50	279.50	454.00	564.50	627.50
Italy:	253.25	210.00	256.50	366.50	495.00	595.00	630.00
New York:	74.30	55.25	62.50	74.25	123.25	147.00	165.00

(Cable)

The fulfillment of the London ultimatum of May 10th, was the first push which started the mark on its downward course Germany could not pay the billion gold marks on the 31st of August out of its available foreign credit. Not only did it have to send 70 million marks in gold from the Reichsbank to New York for the redeeming of the Entente's treasury-notes; not only had the silver which the State treasury possessed in foreign countries to be mortgaged, but also the remaining millions had to be obtained through large foreign banking houses at a rate as high as 14 per cent. Most of these notes became due on the 30th of September. Their redemption resulted in a mad demand for foreign currency which in September drove the dollar above the 100 mark line for the first time since 1920.

The Upper-Silesian decision was the second push which accelerated the mark's drop. The dollar had stood between 115 and 125 in the middle of October. From the 15th to the 17th of that month, it rose from 161 to 193.

There is no doubt that the large banking establishments and the small brokers, as well as the wild speculators, have used the financial and diplomatic difficulties of the Wirth-regime all the more shamelessly for their speculative purposes since the government raised no hand to stop the gambling on the exchange. The speculators thus grew fat at the expense of the working masses.

There is no doubt however, that these hyenas of finance could not have made use of this political and financial distress for their gain, if underlying the whole situation there were no deeper politico-economical causes.

The fall of the mark, compared with the dollar, expresses the change in the productive capacity of American and German capital as brought about by the war. During the war the producing power of American business increased enormously, while in Germany the industries were losing ground. In spite of the crises in America, England, France and Japan, this gap has not been narrowed because the German bourgeoisie as a class has a deep interest in the maintenance of this condition and its intensification, for the depreciation of the mark is to the middle-class a means of self-enrichment as well as of loading upon the shoulders of the working-class the burdens of the war.

It is no accident that the new drop of the mark occurred just at a time when price-reduction in England, the United States, etc., caused by the present crises, brought German prices more nearly to the level of those of the other nations, and made the latter dangerous competitors of German industry for the world market.

The depreciation of the mark, following the London ultimatum gave German enterprise a new opportunity for "Valuta-dumping". Their move succeeded; with the further depreciation, unemployment vanished, exports increased, and prices rose as never before.

Germany's exports grew. The frontier between Baden and Switzerland had to be closed recently for the trade in textiles, for otherwise, foreign buyers would have purchased the clothes off the backs of the German people. In the reconstruction area of Northern France the cost of materials is as follows:

Lime—75 to 85 francs; Portland cement 130 fr., plaster of Paris—70 fr. per ton; bricks—150 fr. per 1000. That is, reckoned in German marks:

Lime—580 marks to 670 m.; Portland cement—1100 m.; plaster of Paris—625 m.; bricks 1025 m.

In Germany those self-same articles sold for:  
270 marks for lime: 430 m. for Portland cement: 360 m.

One can easily imagine what enormous profit German enterprise makes, thanks to their "dumping", even when their prices by far underbid those of their foreign competitors.

Together with this increase in the German exports, the price of their bonds and stocks has taken an unbelievable jump upwards. Jumps of from 400 to 500 per cent are daily occurrences. The exchange brokers instituted a 24 hour day to take care of their orders. From January 1921 to the middle of October, the value of stocks has about tripled. The price of industrial stocks is greatly inflated on the stock-exchange. Capital in goods, which retain its "gold-value", remains untouched in the hands of the contractors, while captains of industry, bankers and speculators make colossal profits out of this inflation of the stock value.

At this point we must also consider the increase of the capital stock of almost all industrial organizations, made possible by this very depreciation of the currency. This increase often amounts to four and a half and six times the original investment. In the second quarter of the year 1921, 799 businesses increased their capital 4,493,000,000 marks; in the third quarter 714 establishments, 4,048,000,000 marks. In this way shareholders are reaping millions.

German goods are conquering the world market by their low price. On the other hand, foreign capital conquers in Germany. German business believes it is capturing the world market for itself; in reality it is itself being taken possession of by foreign capital. Foreign capitalists, thanks to the high value of their currency, are taking control of German production more and more; they are buying German factories, they are acquiring German industrial stocks, and in that way are obtaining the control of German industry. The German captain of industry is becoming merely a manager for Entente capital.

At the same time the German working class is becoming the slave of world-capitalism. Out of its work, its hunger, its wretchedness, come the enormous profits which are made in Germany, and which make foreign capital envious of German profits.

Due to German exports, prices are rising not only to the advantage of the manufacturers, but also to the injury and burden of the German proletariat. The price for a ton of rye has risen from 3460 marks on the 23rd of September to 4577 marks on the 7th of October; wheat, during the same period, from about 4433 m. to 5810 m. Since then, with the further drop of German money, the price of grain has further risen.

The wholesale price index for the main necessities of life, like grain, meat, groceries, textiles and metals, shows a rise from 1425 in July to 2067 in September, i. e., not less than 65 per cent.

We already see the effects of the fall of the mark. Strikes for wage increases are flaming up. The employers are answering with lockouts. The newspaper magnates of Berlin have thrown their workers into the street, because they demanded a living wage. But no increase of wages, no struggle will be of use to the working masses, so long as the bourgeoisie is in control of the means of production, and is able through its brokers to influence the value of the mark, and then to throw all the disadvantages caused by the mark's fall, upon the proletariat, while it reaps the profits and stuffs its own pockets.

Should the depreciation of the mark continue, German capitalism will be attacked by the same cancer from which Austrian capitalism is to-day suffering, and which has already infected the Austrian working masses. If the German workers do not wish to rot away together with German capital, they must at once decide to conquer positions of power for their class in the process of production. This can be done through acquiring control of production, and fixing of prices. Such position of power will enable them to ward off the catastrophic effects of the mark-fall.

## Foreign Exchange Problems in Soviet Russia

by E. Preobrashenski.

As soon as the necessity for a complete financial reform became clear, "projects" sprang up from all sides. These projects fall into two categories—one utopian and unacceptable, and the other comprising such as are capable of being carried out, but equally unacceptable.

First of all we will consider the first category. Most of the projects originating in bourgeois financial circles, though presenting variety in certain respects, all boil down to the same thing, to a re-valuation. A re-valuation of metal money has been proposed without an annulment of existent paper-money. A re-valuation is effected as follows: The government determines, according to the present value, how much our billions in circulation are worth in gold based on the average exchange-value.

The government issues a corresponding sum of roubles at full value, let us say one hundred million new roubles. These roubles will be guaranteed in their full face value by a gold reserve, and they will at all times be exchanged into gold roubles. The population is summoned to exchange all old currencies before a fixed time-limit, for instance, 20,000 old roubles for one new one (the rate in old roubles will be determined according to the market-price of gold). All the former currencies not exchanged before a fixed time-limit will be considered worthless. The result is that instead of billions in depreciated paper currency the population will possess a small sum (one hundred millions in our case) in roubles at full value, or in gold coins.

Why is this measure impossible of execution now? Because it becomes possible only with the supposition that our budget carries no deficit. This fortunate situation can only be brought about through economic prosperity. For the present the deficit still continues. Furthermore, such a measure presupposes a gold-reserve in the government's possession, sufficient for this operation. We possess no such gold-reserve. And finally and most important, these measures do not guarantee a sound currency.

As a matter of fact, in case of a deficit in the budget, which will have to be covered by new issues of paper money, the gold will disappear from commerce and only the paper money will remain in circulation. This money will always continue to fall in exchange-value to the rate-level of the new issues of paper money. The gold will accumulate in the banks of those who possess the most ready paper money and, as a consequence, can change it into either new paper money or into gold (there will be no such block-heads as will not exchange the new paper rouble for gold). In this way the whole reform will come to this, that, instead of the existent currency, with a falling exchange-value for the rouble, we will come into possession of another, with an exchange falling just as much. For this pleasure we will pay with an exhaustion of the republic's gold-reserve in favor of the usurers and the speculators.

As for the issuing of metal-money without nullifying existing money, this is what will happen. This money will be in circulation at the same time as the paper notes, and the metal-money will not obey our orders and will flow into the banks. The paper notes will always remain in commerce. To be sure, the paper money will not fall in value if we do not "support" it by means of new issues. But since the renunciation of new money-issues in case of a deficit is an utopia, we will have the old situation as a result, namely, a falling exchange. But though this measure does not offer a sound currency, it is at least not so vicious as the first. In fact, the government will not give the metal money for nothing, but will pay workmen's wages with it and will buy goods. This measure is sensible only if the government wishes thereby to dispose of a surplus of metal, and in that case it would be to its advantage to exchange this metal-reserve in the domestic market for a set quantity of goods. But the aim of the author of this project was a sound currency, and not *this*.

As for the projects which are not utopian, but simply impossible of execution and partly harmful, they comprise such proposals as co-operatives' bonds, salt taxes, receipts for goods' securities, and so on. The authors of these projects aim in this way to create a sound currency established on a goods-basis. But apart from the weakness of this basis, they forget again the most important thing—the deficit in the budget, and the necessity after a time, to resort, to new issues of paper-money. As long as these issues have to be made, every other currency except the new one, will only undermine the latter, and rob the state of sources of revenues which the authors of the projects also consider indispensable. Those who claim that it is possible to do without an emission of paper money are mistaken. (They do not suggest any reasonable plans by which those above-mentioned sources of revenues can be replaced by others though just such plans would interest us.) Furthermore, were it possible to do without new emissions of paper-money, that would be well suited to bringing about a sound currency, and it would be a much better and quicker way to its accomplishment. This way is plainly the suspension of issues of paper money. It is possible to state with absolute certainty, that at present, as a consequence of the revival of small industry, and increase in the turnover of goods, and, as a result of the increase in the money which is in circulation, we would obtain a rise in the exchange-value of the rouble after a suspension of emissions. Thus rise would occur of itself without putting into operation any financial plan whatsoever. As for the creation of a sound but depreciated currency, through a sound but altered money-token (let us say, one new rouble instead of 40,000 old ones), such an operation would be very simple to carry out. It would be an ordinary episode in financial history. No sort of bonds are necessary for that.

It remains, finally, only to repeat what a stabilization of our finances can accomplish. Under all circumstances, large industry must be accelerated. If the production in 1926 were inferior to that of 1920, but if the cost production were lower, we should in this way be able to offer more goods to the needy land, and to replace the emission by means of other sources of revenues. We must continue to establish profitable enterprises which will work in the interest of free commerce, and which will yield us something. We must increase the taxes and in this connection return to the worker the part which comes from his wages. We must have economy and just distribution. In the end: the rouble will rise, independent of our action, through the general growth in the exchange of goods. Thanks to the combined influence of all these factors the exchange-value of our rouble will doubtless attain a certain firmness. This can also be attained through a systematic emission on condition that this emission will be balanced by the above-mentioned factors. All these are not miracles, or illusions, no quack remedies but the right and natural path to the re-establishing of our currency.

These measures do not exclude other subordinate ones which can be carried out and will support those mentioned. These measures might contribute to the creation of the first economic budget for Soviet Russia.

## The "Gold Mortgage on Industry" in Germany.

by A. Friedrich.

While the cabinet problem and the decision on Upper-Silesia are stirring the German people, German industrial, commercial, banking and big property-owning interests are busy behind the scenes with a plan for a credit-union. Nothing reveals more clearly the strengthened position of German capitalism within the country than this. And when in the eleventh hour the German "Volkspartei" made the "broad coalition" impossible, and declined the ministerial chair, it did so only because it knew very well that compared with itself, the state machinery is growing more and more powerless, and is becoming a toy in its hands. That is why the German "Volkspartei" found it unnecessary to take part in the "anti-national government of assent."

The above-mentioned "credit-union" has for its purpose the much talked-of "credit-action" of German high-finance. The German government was able to raise the first billion gold marks only because at the very last moment it borrowed 400 million gold marks from Dutch capitalists at the rate of 14 per cent interest. Now, German Capital according to the capitalist press, is volunteering to lend to the German government the necessary foreign funds, for the further gold-payments it has to make. Underlying the "credit-action" there is really quite another motive. As was reported in the "Börsenzeitung", the "Vossische Zeitung" and other capitalist sheets, the underlying motive is the desire to make the so-called gold mortgage on industry impossible. This mortgage was planned by the right-socialists and independents, in order to get hold of the enormous profits of German capital, for maintaining the State and for fulfilling the reparations-conditions. In order to do away with the circumstance that even to-day, actual capital, industrial plants, land, and supplies of raw-material are taxed in part at pre-war rates, the participation of the government in all capitalist enterprises partially by means of a compulsory issue of new stock partially by means of compulsory mortgages was planned.

Naturally the government never openly came to the fore with its plan which reached the German press only by secret paths and in fragmentary form. Of course, German Capital at once raised a cry against such a plan, first of all because it feared that the shifting of the burden to the proletariat would no longer be an easy matter, and secondly, because such a step would have meant an encroachment by the state upon the power of the individual capitalist. The cunning answer of the latter was therefore the propaganda for the "Credit-action".

How alluring to the German capitalists, was the fact that the government had to pay 14 % interest on its loan in Holland! Why not pocket these 14 % themselves? No wonder then that the capitalist press proclaimed to the wide world that their government could get no credit either within the country or abroad. It was thus made very clear to the German government that it could expect aid only from German capitalists, and that it was in fact absolutely dependent upon them. In order to carry out the plan for obtaining foreign currency, a "credit-association" will be founded according to the decisions of the Reparation committee in the Government Economic Board. Nothing is yet known of the rate of interest to be charged. The form which this loan assumes it that of a pre-payment of taxes, that

is, the Government does not get a cent more than it would get according to the tax-laws which are now in force, and which so carefully spare the capitalists. The only advantage is that it gets this sum sooner, in order to pay interest to the capitalists.

The German state-finances will therefore not be cured by the "credit-action", which only affords good business to big-capital.

The effects of this "credit-action" are far-reaching. Through it, the government becomes interested in the obtaining of foreign currency through an increase in the exports of its industries; in other words, it becomes interested in the growing sale of Germany, an occurrence which is designated even by the official "Reichsarbeitsblatt" as a "continual pauperization of German state economy", which is chiefly reflected in the increased misery of the German working masses.

On the other hand, the "credit-association" of German capitalists wants to be assured of the security of the capital which it invests. It will therefore strive to get control of the state-finances in order to insure payment of interests; it hopes to do away with all expenses which are not directly in its own interests—the unemployment benefit, for instance. It will take care that state institutions, as the railroads and the post-office, which are now working with deficits amounting to billions, get into the hands of private-owners. Finally, the capitalists demand as reparation for the "sacrifice of the credit-action", the revision of the tax-laws, only as far as capital is concerned; furthermore they demand the removal of all social and political obstacles which to-day interfere with a thorough exploitation of the proletarian masses; as such are named the eight-hour day, the right of coalition, and the factory-council law.

The consequences of this "credit-action" as far as the German proletariat is concerned, will be not only worse working-conditions but also poorer living-conditions. The tax-pressure will increase, and the actual wages of the German worker, which to-day amount to an average of 50 % of those of the pre-war times will sink still lower. With the further transformation of German industries into export-industries, which is made possible only by the fact that the German worker gets 25 % of the wages of a Belgian worker, and only 12 % of those of an American worker, the German worker becomes Europe's Coolie. This however, works to the disadvantage of the proletariat by the capitalist offensive in all countries, by causing wage-reductions, longer hours and protective-tariff laws.

The struggle which the German proletariat will have to carry on to maintain its existence, will first of all be a defensive one, namely, a struggle for the maintenance of those social and political conditions which the capitalists are trying to do away with, and a fight for a living wage. In order to insure a lasting victory, however, these struggles will have to be coordinated with the struggle of the proletariat for the gold mortgage on industry. It is assumed that this mortgage will yield such enormous sums that the working masses will be freed from the burden of taxation. Secondly, guarantees are necessary, in order to make a shifting of the burden by the capitalists upon the proletariat impossible. The only guarantee possible is the control of management in the individual trades, the control of entire production, and its application to the needs of the working masses instead of its exportation. This control is to be affected through the labor-organizations, employees', officials' and small-peasants' organizations.

The German bourgeoisie has begun the fight for the control of the state-machinery quite openly, it is striving for unconditional dictatorship over the proletariat. The German proletariat will accept the challenge in this fight for State-control. It will fight against the transfer of the railroads and post-office into private hands; it will fight against the "credit-association" which will paralyse the government into helplessness, it will fight for the revaluation on a gold basis, for the benefit of the state. For the moment the proletariat begins to fight for the state in its own life-interests, in order to tear it from the claws of capitalism, this state ceases to be a capitalist state, and an organized power of the bourgeoisie for the exploitation and oppression of the proletariat, but becomes an instrument of the proletariat.

## HELP FOR RUSSIA

### The Reality of the Famine

by Victor Serge (Moscow).

The Famine.—It has been talked of for months—every day. In terms often earnest, stirring, with figures, with theoretical and convincing demonstrations! I have read in the "*Petit Parisien*", which for a long time approved of Pichon of the

blockade and of Noulens of Jaroslav \*, that "Lenine and Trotzky have done their work well". For months the bourgeois press of the universe has been repeating this, which in its imbecility surpasses infamy. For months we have been answering, have fixed the responsibilities, have shown the extent of the cataclysm, have appealed for aid. But every time that I read in any workers' paper in the world, these four terrible words: "The Famine in Russia", I cannot help doubting whether they know what these words mean, what heinous, unspeakable, inhuman things they mean. Words are lacking. I fear that the workers, even the comrades, become used to this "heading". These words are pronounced at table, in the cafés, in a chance conversation as ordinary words. Certain it is that they signify something formidable and painful—one knows that—but something far away and abstract.

Well then, this must no longer be. We must know all the reality, all the truth. Precise pictures are needed, to make hearts bleed, to torment the imagination, to bring forth the will to combat and aid. If the worker of Paris or of Rome, who returns home every evening through lighted streets where wealth and luxury are evident, could see with his own eyes the horror of Samara or only the feeble reflection of it that we have in the large cities of Red Russia—what rage would seize him—and how he would to-morrow become more powerful, more deeply devoted to the work of aid, more hostile to the class enemy, the rich.

Our newspapers are filled with things more frightful than anything Edgar Allan Poe has written. Nightmares haunt us everywhere. You have often read "Twenty million human beings die of hunger....". But you don't know what that means. It is impossible for you to know it; the number and these facts are beyond our imaginative faculties. Three entire Belgiums, half of France in agony. What agony! Do you understand?

Little as it might be, I would want to visualize this reality for you. During a whole winter (1919) when no one spoke of aid for Russia, but when, on the contrary they were making speeches in the Parliaments of Europe, on how to tighten the blockade—I have seen in the streets of Petrograd passersby, old men and women, shrunken for the most part, stopping suddenly in the snow, at the threshold of some house. They would set down, with a trembling hand, the small receptacle containing some tasteless gray soup, that they were bringing to their homes; they would sit down there, broken in two, the breath short, the eyes moist, seized with dizziness. Lamentable faces, wrinkled, swollen, cadaverous, half dead. Sometimes they would vomit, or else a fainting-fit would suddenly calm their features. They would be carried away. Other passersby with cadaverous faces, would hasten their pace saying "Golod—the Famine". The third or fourth time they fell, they would die of slow starvation.

The official statistics very conservatively acknowledge several thousands of these deaths in Petrograd. But the most trifling sickness would usually carry off the famished person before he died of simple starvation—a thing which statistics do not take into account.... No matter. The animals also perished. On Nevsky Prospect, or on Tverskaia, coming home in the evening I saw thin horses, lying on the hardened snow, beating the ground weakly with their heads. They would rise a little and with head turned towards some distant lantern they would try to rise at the sound of steps; death was already in their large eyes. And their suffering has often seemed to me so like, so near to the suffering of man.

That was the blockade. M. Clémenceau was giving a moral lesson to the Bolshevik bandits. But that was merely the beginning. I have recently seen fugitives from the Volga arriving at Moscow and at Petrograd. Not far from the bright monastery of Smolny, women in rags passed in the streets, their bare feet covered with a layer of filth and dust—a number of mothers. By what miracle were their infants yet alive? These little saffron-colored faces with reddened eyes, snapping desperately at flabby breasts. The flies tormented them. One of the women on being questioned, said, "The two older ones died". At her skirt clung a little blond being, of whom one could only see the head—too large for the shrivelled neck—and eyes filled with a vague animal supplication.

Famished ones—more fortunate—arrive by cart, having traveled six hundred to a thousand kilometers, living on the way on the meagre aid which other starving ones, less famished,

\* It is to be remembered that the white uprising at Jaroslav in 1918 which ended with the destruction of that city, was started through the instigation of M. Noulens (Witnesses were René Marchand and former members of the French military mission in Russia).

could offer them. The big cities draw them. They do not know that, at bottom, it is modern civilization which is killing them, and that no one is harder or colder of heart than the petty-bourgeois of the large cities. Their little horses covered with dust can hardly remain standing. A moujik conducts them. He is pensive, and sullen and he looks back from time to time seeking under the cover of the cart the thin faces of several astonished and sad youngsters. Under the cover in the shadow, there is almost always someone lying down—someone sick—often someone dead.

I was told that in entire provinces these carts covered the road as far as the eye could see; and that they surrounded the cities on their passage with an improvised camp, dying, dying in myriads. And they brought the cholera in their wake....

But that is not all. Let us open these "Letters from the Famine-Stricken Regions". \* "Men and horses eat grass—it nourishes a little. Or else earth—one dies of it, but with a little less suffering." In order not to see them succumb they abandon their children. Samara is at the centre of the devastated territory. When one arrives there the following is what is seen at the railroad station: "One immense pile of human dirt and excrement. Even near at hand one cannot make out a human form. The flies above form a cloud. The air is suffocating from the bad odor of carrion mingled with the smell of sweat and excretions. Approach and you will see here and there in this heap, a face, eyes...." The surroundings of the station, as far as the eye can see, are thus covered by a crowd which has the immobility of death.

"Samara is a dead city. Children in the streets, lying on the sidewalks, thin and mangy dogs, coffins—rags, filth, stench. The horror...." These children are abandoned. With their little fingers they search in the dung of horses for the remains of badly digested hay.... "The Soviet takes them in charge. But it has no beds for them, nor place to sleep, nor blankets, nor medicaments. Nothing. For the typhus patients, as for the others, it has nothing but the meager rations of a roll made of hay and a herring. Lice infest the refugees—here where warm water is wanting on account of lack of wood, lack of horses for transporting the wood.... The glass-panes are broken; with the first cold weather, death will enter by these windows to claim the little ones who might have been saved from the Famine.... But perhaps aid will come in time. Some obscure heroes work on the ground with the Soviet. Right now they are building a bathhouse, truly an exploit.

Before the coach of the witness (K. Spassky) a graceful young girl about sixteen years old is lying on the ground, her eyes closed—dying. The eyes open for a few moments and look up fixedly. They offer her bread and milk which she refuses with a hardly perceptible movement.... Too late. When they try to carry her away, she fixes on the people a distracted look which no longer understands and begs that they do not trouble her death, already begun.... They leave her. They would like to close her eyes.

Let us close these letters. Do what one may, one can never tell the thousandth part of the reality. "Twenty millions human beings are dying of hunger".... Is it not true that on getting a glimpse of things from far, this little phrase acquires a new significance? Now to hear "These twenty million famished are really very dangerous criminals. They belong to the people which has made the first social revolution." M. Dimitri Merezhkovsky, poet, novelist, philosopher, a highly advanced intellectual—the wretch—has written that "Every grain of wheat sent to the famished will serve Lenine's cause." ("La Cause Commune", Paris.) Further—the industrial crisis is raging in America. The business world is uneasy. There is too much wheat — prices are falling. There are too many machines and manufactured articles. Merchandise is disposed of too slowly. The canned goods are not sold. The millionaires decide that they have to discharge their workers. The ship-builders do not know what to do to exorcise the crisis in shipping—there are too many ships, you understand. Ten million tons of shipping are lying unused in the world's ports.

While Chicago, New York and San Francisco overflow with riches which workingmen have produced and the barren accumulation of which, by an absurd recoil, throws millions of workers out of work, Famine is depopulating the east of Russia. The enormity of this single fact should suffice to condemn present society. But it is not enough to state it. Immediately and with all energy at high tension, the peasants who are dying at the Samara railroad station must be succored! —And to intensify the effort at relief the horrible reality of the Famine must be known.

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