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ONE PENNY

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY.

Vol. X. No. 35. November 17, 1923. WEEKLY.

Free Women : A Discussion both Humorous and Grave

By Sylvia Pankhurst

The meeting at Tredegar was a lively one. A thousand people were crowded into the hall and it is said that as many more were turned away.

At question time someone asked: *"What would be the position of women under Communism?"*

I answered: "Women would be free."

A little woman at the back of the hall, who had previously shown considerable excitement, screamed:

"Women ARE free: we are as free as we want to be!"

Afterwards I was astonished to be told by Mr. Thomas that my reply: *"Women will be free,"* had been taken by large sections of the audience to infer that under Communism *"Women will be common property."*

I had thought myself that the people of the South Wales valleys were an advanced people.

How could Mr. Thomas, who was corroborated in his assertion by Mr. Oliver Power, imagine that the audience had gone away with such a very odd and extraordinary notion.

Had the study of primitive man through the medium of the C.L.C. classes befogged the minds of Mr. Thomas and Mr. Power and caused them mistakenly to see reflections of the ideology of primitive man amongst the present-day population of South Wales, or were traces of primitive savagery still lurking in those valleys in spite of the educative powers of modern industrialism, the Welsh Board of Education and the C.L.C.?

If such primitive savagery existed how was it that the Government inquiry into industrial unrest in South Wales had not discovered it with the aid of Mr. George Barnes, and the other able Labourists who had given evidence?

Make no mistake, the mentality which can imagine that the phrase *"women will be free"* means *"women will be common property"* has sprung, unmistakably, from the tradition of the barbarous marriage by capture and the possession of women as chattel slaves.

Could it be that Mr. Thomas and Mr. Power were seriously of opinion that such primitive thought had persisted in the South Wales valleys because the Welsh woman has not passed, like her sisters of Lancashire and Yorkshire, through the mill of modern industrialism, that she has remained secluded in her mountain cottage, whilst her man has gone out to labour for an employer? Could it be that in the opinion of these local students of evolution the Welsh woman, because, after marriage at least, she is not to any large extent employed in factory wage labour, is still surrounded, in her own eyes and those of her spouse, by the traditions of chattel slavery? Would these experts perhaps declare that I am an emancipated woman only because there circulates in my veins the blood of those Marsden women of Wigan who doubtless worked in the cotton factory and on the pit brow, and of that Browridge woman fustian-cutter who sent her husband to the battle of Peterloo, and of those Brownfield women of the potteries who doubtless turned the wheel for the thrower and trod the lathe for the turner. Perhaps they thought that even I also might fancy myself to be someone's private property if all my foremothers had lived in the shadows of those coal-dusty frowning heights.

To any who can imagine that the words *"women will be free"* mean *"women will be common property,"* it is evidently incomprehensible that women should be the social equals of men and that a woman should be mistress of herself and no man's property.

If such an opinion were really held in that Tredegar audience it would certainly be a revelation of the persistence of the conception of the slave and the slave owner!

If any people really made that so tragically humourous mistake in my meaning, apparently they consider that if a woman be freed from the dominion of one man she must inevitably fall under the dominion of many men.

To them apparently the husband is the slave owner, who protects his slave from the intrusions of other men, in order that she may belong to himself alone.

Assuming that such persons exist, do they regard all men as hunters, all women as their prey?

Or do they imagine the average woman, in spite of her outward quiet and domestic aspect, is actually pining to fling herself into the arms of all comers, and is only restrained by the fear of the master whose possession she is?

THE VERY PASSING SHOW!

Both these suppositions appear impossible. Modern workaday men and women are obviously such reasonable creatures that she cannot think such fantastic thoughts of them. Perhaps, however, our local students will tell us that the sub-conscious influence of the primitive tradition of marriage by capture and chattel slavery still persists, amongst sections of the South Wales population in spite of the beneficient influences of modern civilisation which our captains of industry have bestowed upon them.

It must be explained that when I innocently used the expression "Women will be free," I was not thinking of the woman of to-day as the sexual bond-slave of her husband; I did not think of her as though she were wearing one of those peculiar girdles into which the mediæval baron used to lock his spouse before setting forth on a journey in order to ensure that she should respect her matrimonial vows. I was thinking wholly of the economic position of the woman to-day.

I was referring to the fact that if the modern woman, the heir of the ages, goes without the requisite cash to the grocer, the baker, or the milkman, she cannot obtain the wherewithal to keep herself and family from starvation, be she never so virtuous, never so worthy. Therefore she is an economic slave of the private property system.

I was referring to the fact that the modern married working-class woman, burdened with a family of children, whose welfare is dearer than life to her, is the economic dependent of a wage-slave, as a rule of an ill-paid wage slave.

I endeavoured to observe, in the hubbub created by the outcries of an excited woman at the rear of the hall, that when the modern working woman becomes herself a wage-slave and goes to the factories of her native land to earn her bread, the very fact that she is a woman ensures to her the poorest paid and the most monotonous and distasteful work. The modern working woman, as everyone knows, is the sweated drudge of the capitalist world in which she and her brother are wage-slaves.

I credit the excited little woman who was shouting at the back of the hall, and all the other women in the audience, whether they agreed with me or not, with too much common sense to imagine that I was advocating or condoning the idea that women should be "public property."

The idea is too entirely unpleasant from the woman's standpoint for any woman to assent to it, even in theory. If women were "common property" they would not be free. On the contrary they would be slaves, the slaves of men as a whole and of whatever man wanted to make use of them.

The modern woman, the product of ages of natural selection is too fastidious, too individualist, too much a creature of personal affections and antipathies ever to assent to a position inferior to that even of animals in their natural state.

The people who propagated the silly lie about the nationalisation of women in Russia never themselves believed it. They knew it to be inconsistent with human nature.

Someone will ask here: "What of the prostitute?"

The answer is that the existence of the prostitute as of the man, or woman who commits murder for gain, is one of the many sad instances of how low men and women will sink in response to economic pressure.

Someone else asks: "What about Free Love under Communism?" The answer to that question must be given another day.

IMPORTANT!

We urgently suggest that comrades should endeavour to secure new subscribers to the "Workers' Dreadnought" and that they should collect at meetings and from their friends whatever is possible. However small the sum you can collect, it will be welcomed. Send it in stamps or postal orders. The "Dreadnought" is not self-supporting: the editing and managing is unpaid.

Spice

IN THE SACRED CAUSE OF TRADE.

Said President Wilson: "I have seen fools resist Providence before, and I have seen their destruction, such as will come again upon them—utter destruction and contempt. That we shall prevail is as sure as that God reigns."

Senator Glass gave point to the above words of his chief: "Isolation is bitterly accused of responsibility for America's diminishing commerce and menacing surplus."

* * *

A NEW I.L.P. HERO.

Mr. Fenner Brockway protests that the class-war will not be preached in rural districts and that the I.L.P. is "now completing details of a constructive agricultural policy, which justifies Lord Ernle, ex-Minister of Agriculture."

* * *

"ELECTION RUSHING."

Mr. Fenner Brockway's statements are literally tumbling over each other: pause a little, Mr. Brockway, to let the brew grow thicker!

"If the Government has decided," he says, "to rush a general election on December 10th, a more scandalous misuse of power and a more flagrant denial of democracy can scarcely be imagined."

Yet Mr. Ramsay MacDonald says that Labour is "straining at the leash."

Haven't they finished writing up your canvass books yet, Mr. Brockway?

* * *

A BUSINESS GOVERNMENT?

The "Daily Telegraph" asks what it is to make of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's protestation that "The Labour Party desires to see the finances of the country handled in the way that a real business man would handle them."

We ask the same thing from the opposite point of view. "A business Government": surely that stunt has already been discredited.

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VOTE CATCHING.

The John MacLean "Scottish Workers' Republican Party" got 2,458 votes in the Glasgow municipal election. The S.L.P. got 327 votes amongst three candidates. If those votes could be taken to mean that 2,785 Glasgow men and women were ready for a Workers' Council Communist Republic we should call the number by no means discouraging at this stage.

We are sorry to say, however, that we have no proof that the voters have got so far as that even in thought. The vote really proves nothing; and in our opinion the election merely side-tracks the Soviet idea.

* * *

DELAYING PROGRESS.

"I rather regret, in looking back, to see that my efforts were responsible for delaying the creation of a proper sewage scheme in Stourport for nine months."—Mr. Baldwin, in receiving the Freedom of Worcester.

Such men as this are chosen for honours in the private property State.

Many men should regret their responsibility for delaying Communism.

"DREADNOUGHT" £1,000 FUND.

Brought forward, £1025 18s. 4d. E. Palmer, 1s. (monthly); L. A. Cahill, 10s. (monthly); W. Hall, 5s. (Bazaar); Tredegar meeting, £1 15s.; A. H. Holt, 2s. 2d. Total for week, £2 13s. 2d.

RATIONAL LIVING.

A radical, independent magazine for the workers, devoted to the teaching of rational methods of living in present society, always emphasising the social, economical industrial background of wrong living. Stands for prevention of disease, for conservation of health, for drugless healing, and against all swindles in the healing professions. Special price for the readers of the "Workers' Dreadnought," 1.50 dol. (7/6 for 12 numbers). Our famous book, "The Child and the Home," by Dr. B. Liber, on the radical upbringing of children, special price for the readers of the "Workers' Dreadnought," 1.50 dol. (7/6). Address: Rational Living, 61 Hamilton Place, New

SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS.

The campaign of the South African Mine Workers' Union to form a coloured section, so that natives on the mines might belong to the Union, is causing the Chamber of Mines great anxiety. The Chamber of Mines realises that the above native Union is the only thing which can endanger its power. Hence its fanatical attempts to stamp the S.A.M.W.U. out of existence.

According to the "Guardian" (Labour paper) the effort to organise the native workers is "one of the most important and far-reaching changes in industrial outlook that has occurred for many years."

It is the intention of the S.A.M.W.U. to discuss the question of organising the native mine workers at the annual meeting of the general council with a view to the constitution being altered so as to permit of coloured sections being formed.

At the monthly meeting of the central section of the Union, held at the Trades Hall, Johannesburg, the General Secretary reported:

"That a [coloured] mine-boy, representing himself as a delegate from his mine, called at the Union office with a request to be supplied with a quantity of membership cards for his friends, who were ready to pay in right away."

The report further mentions that one of the principal items was the serious reduction in the employment of white miners during the past eighteen months, and the indication that many more were likely to be discharged after March, 1924, when the 10.5 to 1 ratio comes to an end. Many men were reported to be working for wages less than December, 1921, rates.

The first effect of organisation is bound to be an increase in native wages. Too long have the white mine workers ignored and despised the coloured and native miners. Only when this is achieved will it be possible for the workers to prevent the Chamber of Mines playing off the white miners against the coloured and native miners. It has taken a long time for the Communists to make the white miners see that the coloured and native miners must take their part together in industrial organisation. The Communists advocated equal pay for equal work, and the acceptance of the coloured and native workers unreservedly and without restriction in skilled occupations.

Our aim, which is an international one and one aiming at revolution, is to organise the natives, not only on the Rand, but in the whole of South Africa, in order that they may join up with the proletariat of other lands for the overthrow of the present capitalist system to secure the emancipation of the workers.

ISAAC VERMONT.

The Crossing Sweeper

By TOM ANDERSON.

(Proletarian Schools.)

Last Sunday a man came to our meeting; just an ordinary proletarian. We had never seen him before. During the service he was deeply interested in every part of it. As the children repeated the "maxims" his eyes seemed to dance with joy, and at the singing of our songs I could hear a deep mellow bass voice blending in harmony with the children's. And so I looked to the part of the hall from whence came the harmony. And there I met the rugged face of the Crossing Sweeper. I knew he was not a "down and out," the face was too bright, his eyes bespoke that courage of men who live. Our lesson for the day was on "Making Work," and I cannot do better than give it to my readers. I read the lesson from our school magazine, "Proletcult."

MAKING WORK.

"Girls and boys," I said, "let me read you this short lesson on Making Work."

"They are going to make work for the men who are not working. They are going to get them to dig great big holes in the ground, the biggest holes you have ever seen; some of

them will be nearly a mile long and nearly that in depth. Then they will get all the school children to come and look at the great big holes that the workmen have made, and the children will clap their hands with joy and shout, and dance, and sing, and say it's a "topper"—nearly as big as the sea. Then after they have got all the holes nicely finished, and they cannot dig any more, one of the big men will come down and look at them, and they will have a banquet, and all the fine ladies will be there and they will say a lot of nice things; and they will look at the workmen who have made the big holes, and they will find that they are not working. So they will be greatly disturbed about the matter, and so the great men will hold a council in a place they call Parliament, and they will decide how much further they can give the workmen work. And it so happened on the day on which they were considering the matter in the great council that a very wise man rose from his place; he was one of those great leaders of Labour—and his hair was grey. Before he spoke he looked round the great council hall, and the light of God shone on his beautiful face. 'My lords,' he said, 'there is nothing better to keep the workmen working than that they should start and fill the holes up again. The workmen will think it is work; and as long as they do so, we are perfectly safe.' And the great council agreed that this should be done."

The Crossing Sweeper, at the finish of the lesson, clapped his hands ever so loud; he was so pleased with the story that many of the children looked round at him. You do not get many Crossing Sweepers with an outlook so keen as that; in fact, you get very few workmen that could understand the meaning of a simple story like that.

We concluded our service, as we always do, by the singing of "The International," and we all stand when we sing this song, because it is our battle-call. And one's battle-call must be sung with courage and reverence. At the finish of the song I said, as is my usual custom, "Good afternoon, girls and boys," and the children of the proletarians reply in no mistaken fashion: "Good afternoon, Comrade."

I then went right over to the Crossing Sweeper and said "Good day, Comrade. Did you enjoy our school?" A tear-drop fell from that rugged face, a tear of joy and sympathy, for emotion had taken hold of him. But he brushed the tear away and shook my hand firmly. Enjoy it? I gloried in it. I have walked four miles this morning to be at your school, because I had read of you in the "Dreadnought." What can I do for you.

I clapped him on the back. "Just work the same as I am doing." But he said "I am only a Crossing Sweeper." "So much the better," I said. "By the God above and the gods below, what we want to-day is men and women who will work, Comrade." And so I have enrolled into our army a man whom the gods have made—only a Crossing Sweeper. And you who read these lines, what are you doing? Are you only digging holes? If so, give up. The harvest will only come as you sow and reap. God only knows them who make themselves greater than the beasts.

Unemployed Workers Organisation.

The mass meeting held under the auspices of the U.W.O. in the Town Hall, Edmonton, on November 11th, was a great success. It was said by many who attended that it was by far the best meeting held in Edmonton for some time.

Comrades Mummery and Soderberg put the case of the unemployed in a very efficient manner. Some very interesting questions were asked and a good discussion took place, which mainly dealt with the "split" in the unemployed movement. The questions were satisfactorily answered and I am sure a number were convinced of the justification of the U.W.O., its merits, and the useful work it is capable of achieving.

Poplar and Bow Branches were represented. The committee had arranged to take over some of the most active members, two motor lorries were hired and about sixty members went. This resulted in well advertising the U.W.O. and a very enjoyable evening for those who went.

Mr. Scurr failed to be present at Poplar last week, but he has informed us that he will come on Tuesday next, November 13th. If he keeps his word a full report of his speech will appear next week. It is very important, as he was the person responsible for the baton raid in Poplar.

On Thursday, November 15th, the U.W.O. is holding its first aggregate meeting, to take place in Poplar Town Hall from 10.30—5 p.m.

This meeting will be held to revise the rules, and if necessary, to alter or adjust the constitution. The U.W.O., being truly a rank and file movement, is leaving any alteration, etc., to the discretion of the members, who will have every opportunity on Thursday.

Comrade Robinson (late Secretary, Poplar), who was very seriously hurt in the baton raid, discharged himself from hospital last week. He is still in a very bad condition, but informs us that the other comrades who are still in hospital are progressing favourably.

Very large indoor meetings are being held throughout the borough, which goes to prove the interest that is being displayed by the workers in the U.W.O.

Any communication concerning the U.W.O. should be addressed: Area Secretary, U.W.O., Town Hall, Poplar.

J. T. BELLAMY,
Area Organiser.

Lessons for Young Proletarians

GEORGE STEPHENSON.

George Stephenson, the inventor of the loco. engine, and also of the safety lamp, was born of working-class parents. His inventions met with determined hostility from the engineers and scientific men of his day. To them he was an outsider, "not one of us." He had not received the education of a civil engineer, how then could he teach his betters.

Stephenson's parents lived in the colliery village of Wylam, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, in a two-storied four-roomed cottage divided between four families. The house stood on the road between Newcastle and Hexham. In one of the lower rooms George Stephenson and his five brothers and sisters were born and lived.

George Stephenson's father Robert, known as Old Bob, was a Scotsman who came to England as a gentleman's servant. Mabel, the mother of George, was the daughter of Robert Carr, a dyer of Ovington. She was a delicate woman: her neighbours said she had "the vapours," but described her, nevertheless, as a "rale canny body."

Samuel Smiles, in his "Life of George Stephenson," gives the following description of Stephenson's father, obtained from an old Wylam collier:

"Geordie's faather war like a peer o' deals nailed tegither, an' a bit o' flesh i' th' inside; he war as queer as Dick's hatband—went thrice aboot and nudn't til. His wife Mabel war a delicat boddie, an varry flighty. They war an honest family, but sair hadden doon i' th' wer'ld."

The father earned no more than twelve shillings a week, there was a shortage of food and clothing, nothing to spare for education: none of the children went to school.

"Old Bob" was a general favourite in the village and "Bob's engine-fire" was the most popular haunt there because of the wonderful stories that Bob used to tell to those who gathered round.

When George was eight years old, Old Bob's engine was pulled down and he had to move with his family to Dewly Burn to get work as a colliery fireman. The family lived there in a one-roomed cottage in a row.

George got work as a cow-herd at twopence a day. One Saturday night he went with his sister Nell to Newcastle, and as she was fifteenpence short of the money to buy herself a ship bonnet, George spent several hours holding gentlemen's horses to earn the required "siller."

Such is the education of genius under Capitalism.

In his spare time young George Stephenson, with his friend Bill Thirlwall, modelled engines out of clay from the neighbouring bog, using the hemlocks growing about it to make imitation steam pipes.

Later on George was set to lead the horses at the plough and to hoe turnips for fourpence a day, and later still he worked in the colliery sorting the rubbish from the coal at 6d. a day, raised to eightpence when he was promoted to driving the horse that pulled the coal tubs.

He was described then as "a grit growing lad with bare legs an' feet," "very quick-witted and full of fun and tricks: indeed there was nothing under the sun but he tried to imitate.

George's father was very fond of birds and George also loved them. He did not confine them in cages, but tamed them by kindness so that they would fly in and out of the cottage and roost upon the bed head at night. One of his blackbird friends would make its home in the cottage till pairing time, go to the woods to rear its young and then return to the cottage after its young brood had learned to fly.

At fourteen years George was appointed assistant fireman to his father at 1s. a day.

At length the coal at Dewley Burn was worked out; the Stephensons were obliged to leave their home to "fallow the wark."

They moved to Jolly's Close, Newburn, to work at a colliery owned by the Duke of Northumberland called "the Duke's Winnin"; and after to "Mid Mill Winnin." From there George went with a young man named Coe to work a pumping engine at Throckley Bridge. His wages were raised to 12s. a week and he told his companions: "I am now a made man for life."

At seventeen George was made plugman to an engine at Water-row, of which his father was fireman. Thus he was promoted beyond his father. He had applied himself to learn the construction of the engine and seldom needed to call the chief engineer of the colliery to his aid.

Stephenson could not read, but he used to get friends to come to read the newspapers to him by his engine fire. He listened with special eagerness to accounts of the exploits of Napoleon, then campaigning in Italy. Hearing from a newspaper that the Egyptians hatched eggs by artificial heat, he procured birds' eggs, placed them in flour in a warm place in the engine-room and turned them every twelve hours. They chipped and some of them had well-grown chicks, but they never hatched.

Stephenson still continued modelling engines. He heard of the wonderful inventions of Boulton and Watt and that these were fully described in books, but he could not read, he had not even learnt his letters. So he must learn: he went to a night school taught by a poor teacher, Robin Cowens. Stephenson paid 3d. a week for three nights' teaching. At nineteen he was proud to have learnt to write his name. In 1799 he went to another teacher, who was said to be very good at arithmetic, Andrew Robertson, and paid 4d. a week. Robertson was proud of his pupil, and when Stephenson was obliged to "fallow the wark" to Black Catterton, Robertson moved with him.

George had now a faithful dog who used to bring his dinner to him in a tin can tied round his neck. The other dogs used to run after the faithful messenger to get the dinner, but he always evaded them till one day a big butcher's dog fell upon him. There was a great fight. Stephenson's dog won, but though he still had the tin, the dinner had been spilt in the struggle.

Stephenson now desired to become a brakesman to the winding engine. He learnt the work from his friend Bill Coe, but his advance was opposed by a banksman called William Locke (father of one of the same name who afterwards became M.P.) Locke used to stop the working of the pit when Stephenson was called in to the brake and pretend that the fault was Stephenson's. But his friend Bill Coe exposed the position to the manager, and at 20 years of age George was appointed to the responsible post of brakesman to the Dolly Pit.

(To be continued.)

Workers' Dreadnought

Founded 1914.

Editor: SYLVIA PANKHURST.

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All Matter for Publication — To THE EDITOR
Business Communications — To THE MANAGER.
WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT,
152, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

SUBSCRIPTIONS. Post free.

Three months (13 weeks) ..... 1s. 7½d.
Six months (26 weeks) ..... 3s. 3d.
One year (52 weeks) ..... 6s. 6d.
Subscriptions can start from any week.

Vol. X. No. 35. Saturday, Nov. 17th, 1923.

Our View.

THAT HOLLOW SHAM, the general election, is upon us in all its old-time trappings. Tariff Reform versus Free Trade is the very issue on which the professional politician most dearly loves to fight, because it is an issue that will never be finally settled, whilst buying and selling lasts, and because it does not touch the fundamentals of the economic system. This election will be as futile as any that has been held since the days of our grandfathers.

The General Election

The Labour Party, lacking a definite policy, will not be able to prevent Free Trade versus Protection being a main election issue, although the workers care nothing at all for the issue. Mr. MacDonald, in his speech at the Caledonian Baths, declared:

"I am implicitly pledged to fulfil a policy that is going to give Europe a new heart and a new sanity."

What that policy is Mr. MacDonald has never explained, though he has given it to be understood that it will be more independent of France than the policies of the late Governments have been.

The Capital Levy is also a plank in the Labour Party programme, but some of the Labour candidates are afraid of it and will thrust it as far as they can into the background. Mr. Philip Snowden, entertained by the Delphian coterie at the Cannon Street Hotel, declared that the time for proposing the Capital Levy is not so favourable as it would have been three or four years ago.

In any case it must be recognised by all thoughtful people that the Capital Levy would make no fundamental change in the economic position.

Mr. MacDonald made a principal plank in his declaration of Labour Party principles at Caledonian Baths: "Work or maintenance for the unemployed."

It is interesting to remember that Mr. MacDonald not long ago bitterly attacked the organised unemployed for demanding "work or maintenance at Trade Union rates."

* * *

THE BEST WAY for Communists to use the elections is to hold Communist meetings and distribute Communist literature exposing the futility of the elections. Do not be entrapped into supporting propaganda of which you disapprove, merely because it is uttered by the candidates and their parties, even though you may think one party a few shades less harmful than the others.

How to Use the Elections

Remember that the only thing which will count in the long run, is the spread of Communist thought. Those little crosses on the ballot papers recording the mistaken faith of deluded workers in futile palliatives will all find their way into the waste paper basket of old Father Time. The teaching they reveal will have to be unlearnt.

Show faith in your principles, comrades; do not try to induce your fellow strugglers in this hard world to believe in dogmas which you have outgrown; help them to set out on the highway to the knowledge you have gained.

* * *

THE ELECTORS ARE SUPPOSED TO DECIDE the tariff issue. Ostensibly the General Election is being held precisely for that object, but the Imperial Conference has declared for tariffs and imperial protection, whilst the Prime Minister has appointed a committee to advise him on the proposed duties. We suspect that there will be some new tariffs with imperial preference to please the Dominion capitalists whichever Party wins the election. That is a bold prophecy to make and many will dissent from it. Our answer is: "Wait and see."

Tariffs Being Arranged

* * *

THE COMPOSITION of the Advisory Committee is interesting: the notorious Tory reactionaries, Lord Milner, Lord Kylsant (a shipper), Sir Algernon Firth (who has been President of the British Chambers of Commerce from 1912), Sir Peter Rylands (a steel and iron magnate who has also been President of the Federation of British Industries), Sir William Ashley (joint author of the Unionist S.R. Committee Report on Industrial Unrest), Mr. Hewins (chairman of the Tariff Reform League), and Mr. Arthur Pugh (General Secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and of the British Iron, Steel, and Kindred Trades Association). These represent a formidable array of the forces of privilege and reaction.

The Advisory Committee

* * *

THE COMEDY of Hitler, Ludendorf, Von Kahr, Von Knilling and Von Lossow came to an absurd stop when their fellow comedians turned upon Hitler and Ludendorf and put them under arrest. Hitler is apparently out of it, but Ludendorf may yet be given a position of power and pomp under the reaction. Reaction is in control of Germany, but the various reactionary factions are sparring amongst themselves. The Military and Court Party feels jealous of the industrial magnates of more or less plebeian origin, whilst amongst the monarchists the supporters of the ex-Kaiser, the ex-Crown Prince and Prince Rupprecht have also their rivalries.

The Munich Comedy

Meanwhile the capitalist system holds and the people suffer, chaos grows.

The Soviet Government could have hastened the break-up of the existing system by promising wholehearted support of the German workers' revolution. It seems that in Russia there are discussions as to rendering assistance in food; but there seems to be no clear promise that there will be food from Russia for the revolution; no food from Russia for the reaction.

* * *

THE STORY that not only the Crown Prince but also the Kaiser has been granted passports to return to Berlin gives rise to all sorts of speculations. It is even predicted that the German Monarchy will be re-established on December 4th with either the ex-Kaiser or his eldest son on the throne. The Allied Governments are officially supposed to oppose such a restoration, but upholders of the Monarchy in this country would have no objection of principle to the restoration. To them it is merely a question of the political tendency of whoever is to control the policies of the German State.

Will the German Monarchy be Re-Established?

The Royalties of this and every country will of course hope for Germany to be again a monarchy, because it will make their own thrones seem secure.

For our part we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that monarchy, or no monarchy, Germany is held down by a reactionary dictatorship, in which the people are cruelly bled by the capitalists and persecuted in their attempts to agitate or organise for an egalitarian society.

AFTER SAXONY it was obvious that the Stresemann Government would attack Thuringia, because Thuringia, like Saxony, had a Social Democratic Government which was Socialist enough to prefer a coalition with the Communists to a coalition with capitalist parties. The troops of the Reich, as was expected, have occupied Weimar, and in restoring an order which had not been disturbed they killed and wounded about 80 civilians. The Communist movement is being systematically suppressed.

Thuringia

The Communist-Socialist Coalition, having made no plan to meet such violence, merely submitted. Such is Parliamentarism, an affair of resolutions. An overwhelming proportion of Saxon workers was supposed to support the Socialist-Communist Government; yet no industrial or other action was used to check this reactionary violence, which was illegal even according to the standards of Capitalism.

* * *

THE POSITION in Germany is obviously one of great confusion. A babel of political quacks are voicing conflicting schemes. A clear Communist outline of the life to follow the nightmare of Capitalism, a clear course of action for the masses to follow in order to attain that life, are the great needs in Germany, as everywhere. The subtle intriguer who insists that grey is white because he fears the people may prefer black does but befog and complicate the situation where it is a paramount necessity that all shall be clearly understood by the people.

The Great Needs

* * *

THE SUMMARY of the Imperial Conference decisions is an important document because it indicates the direction in which the capitalist interests ruling the British Empire are travelling. The statement is ominous that if the Allies fail to agree on Reparations and the German situation "the results would be inimical both to the peace and to the economic recovery of the world." The review of Britain's warships arranged for the Imperial Premiers was no mere pleasure spectacle: it was intended to stiffen their backs in case the Dominions be called on for warlike co-operation.

The Imperial Conference

The proposal that if the Allies fail to agree on Reparations Great Britain should itself call another conference "to examine the financial and economic problem in its widest aspect" is an indication of economic war if the Empire fails to get its way and a promise of further Imperial Protection to benefit the Dominions.

The Imperial Conference of course declared against any break-up of the German States, both for fear the seceding States might come under French influence and to maintain a Germany strong enough to prove a counterpoise to France.

Rooted determination to prevent the real independence of Egypt was subtly conveyed by expressing satisfaction that an advance had been made towards "a pacific settlement of this complex problem, which will safeguard communications between several parts of the Empire."

It was decided that a Treaty signed by representatives of one part of the Empire will only commit that part of the Empire, and if the Treaty affects other parts of the Empire they are to be consulted. The object of this is ostensibly to give greater power to the Dominions to make them equal partners in the Empire, and remove the predominance of the Mother Country, and to make the Imperial Government at Westminster no longer an Imperial Government. As a matter of fact, however, the tendency will gradually be to commit the Dominions to expenditure and war preparations made in Westminster, with the assent of the Dominion Premiers given without the knowledge of the Dominion peoples.

Another object of the resolutions is probably to bolster up the claim of the British Empire to an overwhelming vote in the League of Nations on the ground that the various Dominions are separate nations.

* * *

THE MOST SERIOUS DECISION of the Conference, the one which will produce reverberations in other countries, is that each portion of the Empire shall be responsible for its own local defence.

Empire Defence

The intention is clear that while the Westminster Government has increased its expenditure on Army, Navy and Air Force far beyond pre-war standards, and proposes to spend much more, the Dominions, who used to rely on the Imperial Forces organised from Westminster, are now to develop naval, military and air forces of their own.

The Conference gave its blessing to the Singapore naval base and declared it necessary for Great Britain to maintain "a Home Defence Air Force of sufficient strength to give adequate protection against air attack by the strongest air force within striking distance of her shores." That of course means the air force of France.

* * *

THE SOLEMN FARCE of pretending that India is one of the so-called self-governing Dominions, like Canada or Australia, was played throughout the Conference. The Indian puppets assisted in playing the game by making appropriate speeches of gratitude for being allowed to be present, but they found the farce rather tragic when the status of Indians in other parts of the Empire came to be discussed, and no hope was raised that the colour bar raised against all classes of Indians would be abolished by the boasted democracies of the "British Commonwealth of Free Nations." Not only were the Dominion Premiers hostile. The Duke of Devonshire, on behalf of the Imperial Government, made it clear that, though the Conference had agreed to a committee to discuss the question, the colour disabilities applied in Kenya represent the settled policy of the Government and are "the very best" it is prepared to do for the Indians.

India as a Dominion

* * *

THE CONFERENCE decided that a married woman must continue to take the nationality of her husband whether she will or no, unless the married state has to all practical purposes come to an end. In that case she may be readmitted to British citizenship. The United States permits a married woman to choose her nationality. Under Communism nationality as a legal status will disappear.

Nationality of Women

Karl Liebknecht's Letters.

APPENDIX.

An Appeal for the abolition of the Prison System

Spring, 1918.

An endeavour should be made to associate prisoners with other men, to unite them to society. Instead of which they are completely separated from their fellows, excluded from society, exiled from their family. They should be brought to serve the general interest, made part of it, and, on the contrary, they and their acquaintances are kept strangers to each other; they are divided from the interests of humankind by a strict and artificial isolation. No news is permitted to reach them from the outside world as regards their immediate personal interests; no newspapers (except those giving war news during the war). Ideal interests should be made more accessible to them, infused into them, and instead all intellectual occupation, reading, etc., is granted only as a favour, while it should be looked upon and adopted as a most important means of education and reform. The hours of freedom, not less important for education than the hours of labour, are so short, and are curtailed as much as possible.

Prisoners should be accustomed as much as possible to independence ("excite" the feeling of independence; compare the 16th verse of the "Years of teaching of 'Master William' of Goethe"); and what happens instead is that those who have any spirit of independence are crushed, and bent, and are driven irreparably towards secret and underground dealings, towards the lowest regions; and any good instincts they may have are corrupted, perverted, poisoned.

The prisoners should be accustomed also to have free intercourse with capable educated men, should be encouraged to feel the necessity of such intercourse, while, on the contrary, they are left to the evil influences which they exert on each other, mutually ruining each other, and in general looked upon as "things"; the easiest way is still to let them follow their own impulses. The officials, with few exceptions, do not trouble about them, and are mostly incapable of it from the educational point of view. They are scheduled, kept under military discipline, instead of receiving the individual treatment they need. There is suspicion and distrust at every turn, instead of confidence. What good there is in them should be carefully brought out and fostered by openness and trust. But they are taught underhandedness, forced, by a too rigid system, into hypocrisy and obstinacy, into a spiritual life of subterfuge, even their external life rendered false, and poisoned by secrecy. Instead of a regular plan for creating and protecting in them self-confidence, there is an organised system of crushing and destroying all self-confidence out of them. Instead of individual treatment and education, systematic oppression and stultification. Instead of a mode of life which should inculcate a wholesome and regular way of living in a state of freedom, subjection to a daily round which, apart from work, is altogether abnormal and impossible, destroying all genuine desire for usefulness, suffocating all desire for improvement, and which, by obliging them to go to bed early and to remain many hours in darkness (during the war artificial light was saved altogether) excites every undesirable instinct imaginable.

These poor individuals, weakened and rendered incapable of governing themselves by unhealthy social conditions, should be strengthened, encouraged, reinvigorated, and instead, they are corrupted and their self-respect completely destroyed. Instead of developing in them a feeling of independence, they are so crushed, that when they come out of prison they behave like great foolish children, and use their liberty to vent their long-repressed instincts. Even their work is often nothing better than an incitement to mean rivalry instead of being a regular and instructive apprenticeship. Every effort should be made to keep them in touch with their family, but, on the contrary, they are almost entirely separated from it, and instead of being allowed to work and provide for their family, it practically ceases to exist for them. The social instinct should be roused and strengthened and the feeling of human solidarity instilled, and on the contrary by a crippling atmosphere of small meannesses and trivialities the worst and grossest kind of egoism is encouraged. All roads, all doors should be thrown open to the released prisoner, the one repentant sinner in a hundred welcomed (there is more joy over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine just men)—and what happens: they are branded; no work can be found for them, the workers often refuse to work with them. Even the "institution for the assistance of ex-prisoners" is an evidence of the utter indifference of present-day society to the crusade against evil; it fetters and stigmatises; in its actual form it is a social cancer; a chain which the ex-convict drags about for ever, very little better than police supervision; it generates hypocrisy, bigotry, falsehood, fawning; it does not produce a character, which can only be developed by training and effort, not by softness and kindly benevolence; by softening down stubbornness, not by breaking of bones and relaxing of sinews; by regular useful work, not by contemptuously granting work as a favour; by positive treatment, not negative; by working a revolution so to speak in the individual himself. How much might be done by making use of the prisoner's own initiative, of their very organisation? How much might be done by fighting against the causes of crime! In short, the weakness of the social ties which should bind these poor creatures to their fellows, instead of being helped and strengthened, is often increased irreparably through the destroying and weakening influences of this system, and also through the destruction of the family, left without means of support, the vicious circle of our prison system, and especially the effect of solitary confinement upheld by Krohne, Finkelberg, and others, often sensible men enough otherwise. And lastly add the effects of the dirt and the bungled and useless work. There is no question of regular technical training for a future trade or business; indeed it often happens that any inclination for work, or any aptitude already acquired is lost for want of practice; this is particularly pernicious in the case of the younger prisoners who are not yet proficient in any trade and who, when they leave prison, find themselves utterly without means of supporting themselves, and also for the elder men who have almost reached the age limit for social usefulness. They are forced to work in prison, but in such a way that their work, instead of being a relief to them, is a weight and a torment. They are paid only after three years of work, and at the rate of one mark a month! So that their work has no value to themselves, and payment is given as a reward, not as a right. Disciplinary measures: chains and flogging. Provision for medical treatment or isolation in case of sickness: not the least idea. They are forced into an unnatural and painful regularity of life which may or may not continue as regular habit after release. In fact, this so-called "order" is generally abandoned immediately after release and is looked upon as a chain which must be borne. Certain bad habits are restrained, but not in such a way that the restriction comes from the awakening of free will in the individual himself. Some means should be taken to prevent the continuance of evil habits and inclinations, but in fact what generally happens is that not only the sinner himself but all his family are thrown into the abyss, and the prison itself is often a first-class breeding place for criminals, and all the vices and defects of the weak, the oppressed and the spurned are cultivated and nurtured as in a well-manured field—servility and cunning, spying and diffidence, envy and falsehood, destroying all incentive to improvement in those who have been wrongly directed from the start. By treating the criminals as instruments in the hands of others and depriving them of all free will and initiative, all power of controlling their own actions, or desire to do so, all possibility of developing the strength of will necessary for improvement is lost. So that every effort to render the criminal fit for society by means of imprisonment is not only vain and hopeless, a forlorn hope destined to failure, and at the best a pious wish of humanitarian visionaries, it is in reality a vicious circle from which there is no escape. All attempts at reform by this means cannot prevent the evil from spreading from the guilty to the innocent, who being plunged into misery and contumely, become an easy prey to crime and prostitution. Crime as a social phenomenon cannot be isolated, but must be studied in relation to the other social phenomena from which it is derived, a running sore in the actual unhealthy condition of human society. It can only be treated by social means, that is, by eliminating the causes, drying up the sources, fighting poverty and misery in every form, destroying poverty and neglect and inculcating a spirit of independence, of individual freedom and the realisation of Self. All psycho-spiritual education so-called can only have any real and lasting result when we have created the social conditions necessary to that end.

THE LAST NOTE WRITTEN BY LIEBKNECHT.

Berlin, 10th January, 1919.

My dearest,

I hope you are all well and are not anxious on my account. You will soon see me, and shall have news of me every day. Was not Helmi at home this morning early? Much love and many kisses to you my darling.

YOUR CHARLES.

Kiss the children for me. Kind regards to Hilma and the rest.

PROLETCULT.

A monthly magazine for boys and girls, edited by TOM ANDERSON and published by the Proletarian Bookstall.
39, Shuttle Street,
Glasgow.

ONE PENNY.

A Review of the Struggles of the Catering Trade Employees

By W. McCARTNEY

(Late Vice-President, United Catering Trade Union.)

Let us now consider the position of the cooks and carvers. Take first the roast cook. Joints are weighed before being put in the oven and again when taken out. Then they are returned to the carver, who receives a cheque for each portion sold. Those cheques are counted and the remains of the joint are also weighed.

For the joints he receives each cook writes out a cheque, which is signed by the chef and taken to the stores, and everything required is weighed or counted.

Every cook in the majority of places has to find his own white uniform, and pay for its washing out of his wages.

Wages for cooks (men) to-day, excluding chef, run from £2 to £3 per week, and in many cases less than £2, less insurance. Supplying and keeping clean the uniform makes a great drain on wages, thus: White coat to buy, 6s. to 10s.; ditto to wash, 8d. to 10d.; white cap to buy, 1s. to 1s. 6d.; ditto to wash, 3d. to 4d.; white apron to buy, 1s. to 2s.; ditto to wash, 3d. or 4d.; trousers to buy, 5s. to 6s.; ditto to wash, 1s. to 1s. 6d.

A cook's laundry generally consists weekly of one pair of trousers, 1s.; three coats, 2s.; two caps, 6d.; six aprons, 1s. 6d.; total, 5s.

The cook must also supply his own knives, etc. The only personal utensil some places supply is a cloth or two called a rubber for holding hot dishes, pans, etc.

Sometimes these are so badly worn that burns and scalds are the result. But still the management refuses to buy new rubbers, in spite of the complaints about the rotten state of the old ones.

I know some large catering firms where on your engagement you are given a paper which generally runs something like this:—"I agree to terms of engagement, re wages, paid up to the time of leaving. No notice given or required.—Signed, So-and-So."

Although this may sometimes work out to the advantage of the kitchen worker who has got another job, one never knows at what moment he is going to get the sack, and sometimes one does not know what it is for.

I have seen four persons sacked at different times in the same day in the same kitchen, and no reason given.

One instance I remember. The manager sent the man's wages up the lift in a sealed envelope, with a message, "Tell him to clear out"; and that was all.

Several large catering firms owning many restaurants and hotels, before the "great war" employed all men in the kitchen. During the war they employed women in several grades of work. Now, after the war, there is hardly a man employed in a large number of their kitchens, simply because women are cheaper than men.

Women to-day make the fires, clean the kitchen, fetch the coal, cook the food, clean the silver, wash the pots and pans. It is hard laborious work, fit not even for men under existing conditions.

Women are doing this work for a miserable wage, bad conditions, and disgusting, indigestable "food," and we are told by Sir George Newman, Chief Medical Officer of Health to the Board of Education, that forty per cent. of school children have physical defects, whilst there is definite malnutrition, heart disease, anæmia, deformities in about one hundred thousand children.

What else can we expect when women, young women, both single and married, work for ten and twelve hours per day in the hideous conditions described.

I have often seen women faint from the heat of the stove. I have rendered first aid to many who have either fallen over the refuse on the kitchen floor, or been taken ill from standing working over the washing-up tanks till they dropped from sheer exhaustion, or were overcome by the foul smells.

Where are the sanitary inspectors? A large number of these kitchens are dens for breeding diseases, but they are allowed to carry on.

If human comfort, health and happiness were the first thought of Society, these places called kitchens would at once be pulled down.

Some places make attempts to keep down the rats, mice and cockroaches that infest the kitchens by making contracts with firms of vermin-killers, but these are as bad as ever a day or two later.

I have seen cockroaches fall into a tank of water where the cabbages were put ready for cooking. I have emptied sacks of potatoes with mice nests in them.

It is a common sight to see rats running along the pipes, mice along the floor. Cockroaches are all over the place and sometimes fall on your head on the table where you may be working or eating your food.

One can understand what effect these conditions of working must have on the life and health of the kitchen worker.

Before leaving the kitchen workers for the waiters and waitresses let us sum up the charges against the owners of the kitchens. These are: Excessively low wages and hours ranging from 10 to 14 per day, fraudulent keeping back of wages, bad food, bad light, bad dressing-room accommodation or none, unhealthy, dirty, small, underground kitchens, insufficient cooking stoves and utensils, old and worn utensils which cause accidents, bullying by chefs and managers, class distinctions amongst the kitchen workers. Add to these fraud and extortion by the agents.

What wonder that the kitchen worker is, generally speaking, undersized and white-faced, that his eyesight is bad, that he is poorly clothed and suffers from chest and stomach complaints, or that he is too tired to read, think or act to alter his conditions?

Nevertheless, as has always been the same right through history, some arise in spite of their environment and protest and fight and work to alter the conditions, to abolish the evils existing at the time. Some have done their best for the catering trade worker. Some have given their lives to agitation and have been victimised.

Reward of the Faithful Labourer

The North-East Hants Agricultural Association has just held its autumn show at Alton. This association is representative of the three classes ENGAGED in agriculture: the landlord, the farmer, and the labourer, and a newspaper report says that at a luncheon held in connection with the show "the goodwill of all classes of the agricultural industry towards each other was apparent." In other words, this is the beginning of the new era of the Capitalist Co-operative Commonwealth.

In connection with the show there was of course a prize-list and the longest section was headed "Labourer's Rewards." I started at the beginning and read:

"LABOURER WHO HAS MAINTAINED THE LARGEST FAMILY RESPECTABLY.—1, Daniel Cook (11 children, entered by Mr. T. A. Chalcroft, Alton); 2, William Rowell (11 children, entered by Mr. W. Brock, West Worldham)."

These are not cattle "entered" by the farmers mentioned, but heroes—men who have brought up eleven children respectably! Brought them up on the wages that fill the pockets of agricultural workers every week. Not only do these workers get sufficient wages to keep 11 children respectably, but rewards come to them for doing it!

Next follows a list of LABOURERS (married, single; shepherds and cowmen) WHO HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED FOR LONG PERIODS WITHOUT INTERMISSION ON THE SAME FARM, OR WITH THE SAME FARMER. G. Spiers, with a period of 51 years to his credit, was entered by Major-General G. D. Jeffreys, Burkham; Wm. Dewey (42 years) by Mr. H. Lillywhite, Bentley; J. Clifford (24 years) by Colonel W. G. Nicholson, M.P., Basing Park; B. Newman (9 years) by Mr. A. Besley, Medstead. And there are others. May I suggest that these lengthy periods of service with one employer show that decent cribs under Capitalism are by no means infrequent even among rural workers.

Let me pass over special prizes to hop-dryers and come to the following: "LABOURER, ABOVE 60 YEARS OF AGE, OR NOW DISABLED COTTAGER, WHO WAS AN AGRICULTURAL LABOURER, WHO SHALL BEAR THE HIGHEST CHARACTER FOR HONESTY, INDUSTRY, AND SOBRIETY.—1, George Pacey (80 years 10 months, entered by Mr. C. E. Brock, East Worldham); 2, J. Cannons (80 years of age, entered by the Rev. W. G. Cazalet, Bertworth)."

Just a few more entries from this entrancing list:—

FARM CARTER WHO CAN BRING THE BEST CHARACTER FROM HIS MASTER FOR SOBRIETY, LENGTH OF SERVICE, WITHOUT INTERMISSION (NOT LESS THAN SEVEN YEARS), AND GENERAL ATTENTION TO HIS DUTIES.—1, James Knight (32½ years, entered by Exors. of the late Mr. J. Twitchin); 2, George Annells (22½ years, entered by Exors. of the late Mr. J. Twitchin).

UNDER CARTER, UNDER 20 YEARS OF AGE, WHO CAN BRING THE BEST CHARACTER, FROM HIS MASTER, SIMILAR CONDITIONS.—1, G. Sherfield (6 years, entered by Mr. R. B. Eggar, Bentley); 2, R. Newland (5½ years, entered by Mr. R. B. Eggar).

OF CROSS-BRED LAMBS, IN PROPORTION AND WEANED THE GREATEST NUMBER

SHEPHERD WHO SHALL HAVE REARED TO THE NUMBER OF EWES, SUCH FLOCK ON DECEMBER 1st BEING NOT LESS THAN 100.—1, Daniel Cook (183 lambs out of 155 ewes, entered by Mr. T. A. Chalcraft, Amery, Alton).

SINGLE WOMAN OR WIDOW, ABOVE THE AGE OF 55, WHO IS, OR HAS BEEN CHIEFLY EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURAL LABOUR OR FARMHOUSE OCCUPATION. — 1, Jane Marshall (56 years, entered by Mr. T. F. Dingle, Empshott, Liss).

I suggest most respectably to my Socialist friends (I have still some Socialist friends in spite of my new sympathies with Capitalism) that they have arraigned Capitalism wrongly.

Capitalism possesses innumerable examples of loyalty between classes which Socialist advocates, with their innumerable schisms and professing belief in brotherhood and a classless society, can hardly equal.

We want peace! Let us have more of the spirit of the N.E. Hants Agricultural Association, with its happy linking up of the classes, and all will be well!

If I were not writing in a Communist paper as I am (thanks to the generosity of a broad-minded editor), I should conclude by writing out in full the text of

"GOD SAVE THE KING!"

B.E.F.

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The German Situation

(From the I.W.M.A.)

Since the Government has given up passive resistance in the Ruhr, the condition of the workers of Germany has become even worse than before. Economic misery is on the increase, and political and social reaction has been strengthened by the declaration of an "Exceptional State" similar to martial law and the investing of the Government with dictatorial powers. It is no exaggeration to say that under the conditions thus created the revolutionary elements of the proletariat are the worst sufferers: industrially, because they are the first to be doomed to unemployment; politically, because they have to bear the brunt of the reaction. . . .

The champions of the State idea from the extreme Right, as well as from the extreme Left, Fascists and Communists alike, all vied with each other in denouncing the Syndicalists and charging them with having "played into the hands of the French. . . ."

The "Perliner Tageblatt," the mouthpiece of the industrial barons of Germany, in its issue of September 6, wrote:

"France has a new ally in the so-called Syndicalist movement. It may properly be said that the disgruntled at any price, the disturbers, the lazy and the foreign elements have all gathered in that movement. Its political program, which may be called anarcho-communism, and which is antagonistic to Moscow "centralism," plays but a small role. But the more intensively does it propagate impossible economic demands, and it strives to exploit all the dissatisfaction that has inevitably accumulated among the miners. The Syndicalists without exception favour French work, and for this purpose they make use of the bitter feeling entertained by the forces of occupation against the mine owners. All the Syndicalists favour the secession of the Rhine and of the Ruhr from Germany."

"The French hoped for the aid of the Communists, with a view of gaining the support of a certain element of the Party, namely, the "Ruth Fischer wing." But the attitude of the latter was so prejudicial to the position of the whole Communist arty in the Ruhr that at least officially they stood for a united front against the French."

As a matter of fact, the Communists served the interests of the nationalists and of the Capitalist Government. During the whole occupation of the Ruhr the attitude of the Communists was such as to turn the workers over to the Nationalists. And after the Government suspended passive resistance the Communists exerted themselves to the utmost to prove that they alone are the true defenders of the German "Fatherland." They lost no time in declaring that the giving up of passive resistance was "treason to the German people." In this regard the Communists are in entire accord with the Nationalists, the "Deutsch-voelkisch" (reactionary) and the Fascists, all of whom declare in favour of the continuation of the policy of passive resistance. One of the most prominent leaders of the Communist party in Mannheim, Remmele, in a public meeting recently declared: "The Ruhr must remain German. The German Fatherland must stand united and in its full power."

The same Remmele, while developing his plans for German unity in a Fascist gathering in Stuttgart, received the enthusiastic approval of the Fascists present there, and the chairman of the meeting—a member of the "Deutsch-voelkisch" party—said at the conclusion of the meeting that "Comrade Remmele" spoke as if he himself were one of the "Deutsch-voelkisch"!

. . . . We quote from the "plan of work" of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany:

"A. Establishing direct connections. In reference to A., for the present to try to get in direct touch with higher (military) officers that are known for their Nationalistic sentiments but who do not belong to Facist organisations. Thus with men such as Lettow-Vorbeck (notorious murderer of workers in Hamburg), who recently refused to participate in the "inner front" struggle against the Communist Party. The purpose of the negotiations with such men should concern the possibility of a joint political program. In this connection, the difference of opinion due to the theoretic views of our Party should be ignored as much as possible, while mutually acceptible points emphasised, such as the fight against Poincare and against the Centre in Germany. The tone of such conferences to be most courteous (using "Excellency," etc., in addressing) and amiable. No Marxist quotations to be employed. On the whole, behaviour should be as little as possible Party-program-like.

B. Indirect connection through propaganda. This refers less to important persons than to the entire mass of officers. . . . Further, not only the Reichswehr (Republican Army) and police officers, but chiefly former Army officers to be drawn into the radius of the work. Not to be connected with the propaganda already accomplished among soldiers, which has an entirely different significance and purpose. Special purpose: general work among the mass of officers; organised creation of a favourable sentiment by means of which (1) the lower mass will exert influence upon the higher personages with whom we are negotiating directly; (2) whenever possible to win over already existing military organisations without expressed Fascist character, but with Nationalistic, anti-French sentiment, as organisation for active sabotage in the Ruhr.

In this connection, besides political means also those of personal influence are to be employed; thus promises of high military position and honours for the future, and in general exploit ambition, but not clumsily."

When this "plan of work" was published in the press of Germany, the central organ of the Communist Party of Germany, "Rote Fahne," could offer but the following lame explanation:

"We Communists state frankly and freely to the whole working class of Germany: "We will do everything to win those officers and those petty bourgeois elements . . . to the side of the proletariat and thus save Germany. . . . We Communists say without reservation to these officers: All those honest elements among you who want to free Germany from French militarism must fight on the side of the proletariat. The Russian Soviet power has won hundreds of former Tzarist officers for the cause of the workers who faithfully are serving the interests of the Russian proletariat."

This whole attitude of the Communists proves that they are on the side of those who are fighting for the liberation of Germany for "national freedom," but that they have deserted and betrayed those who strive for emancipation from capitalism, from the State and oppression.

The Communists are a State-supporting Party. If they have so far not succeeded in winning over the elements of the former Prussian militarism, it is surely not their fault. The Fascist reaction, known in Germany under the name of "Deutsch-voelkisch" movement, has meanwhile become so strong that it hopes to achieve its ends by its own means and declines the aid of the Communists. The only answer that the Communists received to their advances to the reactionary circles is that an Excepional Law had hoped to rope in the Nationalists, but in attempting that they have been roped in themselves.

First, the Government of Bavaria proclaimed the State of Siege and set up a Dictator, thus suspending parliamentery government. Then the Government of the Reich followed suit. The declaration of the State of Siege throughout the whole of Germany and the transfer of the entire executive power into the hands of a few generals was equivalent to a complete military dictatorship.

The military dictatorship immediately became active against the labour movement. First of all it was the workers' publications that fell under the veto of the Generals. Even the "Musenchener Post," the organ of the reformist social-democratic party, whose ministers in the Government and representatives in the Reichstag favoured the State of Siege, became a victim of the reaction.

The social democracy and the reformist labour unions were presently overwhelmed by the spirits they had helped to call into being. The "Muenchener Post" was suppressed, and the social-democratic "defense divisions" were disbanded. On the other hand, the military units of "Deutsch-voelkisch" party were permitted to continue, and, indeed, they now were especially favoured by the ruling military clique. And since then in Bavaria, as in many other places in Germany, no meetings organised by the F.A.U.D. can take place.

Thus Fascism is preparing in an entirely legal manner its ultimate triumph. The employers also are not missing the opportunity: by economic and political methods the workers are step by step robbed of the advantages they had fought for and won through long years of struggle. In the Ruhr and on the Rhine the eight-hour day is to be abolished and the law regarding workers' industrial councils (in itself of very little importance) is to be suspended.

For this purpose the workers' purchasing capacity is being systematically reduced by the continuous devaluation of the mark, so that now the proletarian has about reached the lowest level of living conditions. One factory after another is being closed, the workers are being discharged or put on half-time. The result is such terrible conditions of existence that the people are driven to desperation, which expresses itself in disorder and looting, and thus gives the military forces an opportunity, aided by the State of siege, to shed the blood of the workers.

Two Minutes to Go

Great Silences, it seem, are promoted by much the same means as bucket-shop companies and swindles generally. Credulity and falshood are the essential factors: the trustful simplicity and sublime stupidity of a mass of purblind proletarians on the one hand, and a handful of war-mad egomaniacs on the other. A poppy coloured glamour of rubbish sentimentality is likewise a necessary ingredient in the manufacture and maintenance of the ignorant mass psychology peculiar to the capitalist system and possible in no other scheme of life or thought whatever.

Paid at the rate of two shillings an hour (in terms of an extravagant estimate, its nominal value being by no means equal to its purchasing power), the value of the two minutes' silence works out roughly at one penny. A rather insignificant fact, you will observe; for if the employing class can afford to sacrifice the workers in the interest of profit, they can well offord to give them a whole two minutes' holiday to commemorate the anniversary of the greatest sham yet recorded in the bloody book of history—and the cost is only one penny.

And the reason of it? The creation of that turgid and slushy atmosphere and outlook upon life symbolised by the inglorious and doubtful art of the Cavell memorial and the Cenotaph; the perpetuation of the fag end of the Lord Mayor's show; the parade of all the power of destruction; the Boy Scout and the Girl Guide ideals and the emptiness of mind

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Published by E. Sylvia Pankhurst, at 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4, and printed by the Agenda Press, Ltd. (T.U.), at 10, Wine Office Court, London, E.C. 4.