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# THE TOILER

VOL. IV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1921.

No. 198

## Reaction in Italy

The Struggle between the Fascisti and the Workers

*William Z. Foster*

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## The Irish Situation

*William Paul*

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## In the Lower Depths

A Night with the Unemployed in Bryant Park

*V. Klimov*

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## *Documents*

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# To the Subscribers of the Western Worker

Beginning with this issue "The Toiler" will fill the unexpired "Western Worker" subscriptions. P. B. Cowdery, known to thousands of workers on the Pacific Coast, through his many years of loyal service in the class struggle, has agreed to act as western agent for "The Toiler" and to him, at 1744 Thirteenth St., Oakland, California, all western subscriptions are to be addressed.

"The Toiler" greets its new readers, former "Western Worker" subscribers, and earnestly asks of you all for "The Toiler" a continuation of the solidarity and untiring response you have shown Comrades Snyder, Cowdery and the "Western Worker."

A. B. MARTIN, Manager,  
"The Toiler."

Dear Comrades:

You are receiving this issue of "The Toiler" instead of an issue of "The Western Worker." It is our intention to continue to send "The Toiler" every week and are completing arrangements for this purpose.

"The Toiler" is the best paper that all forces operating in all parts of the United States and even in other countries, can provide for you. You have waited long for the time when our papers would combine. "The Toiler" will improve with every issue, and it will be only when conditions make it imperatively necessary that we will again print the "Western Worker"—only when local activities in the West make it advisable to print a paper on the spot. You will agree it is better now to print one paper and give you the best.

Your subscription continues just the same as if we had suddenly become able to print "Western Worker" every week and make it a sixteen-page magazine. We will circulate "The Toiler" just as persistently in Oakland, around the Bay, throughout California and the entire west as we have done the "Western Worker" and other papers out of which it has grown during the eighteen years past. We will call on you, if we cannot induce you to bring or send your subscription in and thus save the expense to the movement of hunting you up.

To send a paper like "The Toiler" to all our subscribers every week is a big undertaking. Every week must bring the cash—enough to cover the output. We cannot send "The Toiler" after your time has expired. It costs too much to print and bind a paper for that.

But you can afford to send in your money promptly!

Have you received extra "Western Workers" each issue? We cannot send extra "Toilers," unless you order them and pay something in advance.

De ask you each to become "Toiler" agents. Either get the subscription of your neighbor or subscribe for a regular standing bundle order and sell the copies each time. "THE TOILER" WILL SELL! Do both. Get some to subscribe and sell "The Toiler" to others.

This issue is sent to every "Western Worker" subscriber, but if your subscription has expired, it will be the last until you renew. To make sure, send a dollar at least and help us get started. If you have no money but will write, we will make an exception and send you a month's issues until you can remit. What we need to know is that you want "The Toiler"

As long as the famine exists in Russia or among the workers anywhere, famine exists with us. We are on a famine basis. It is as if our famishing brothers were our next door neighbors. You will not know and realize this unless you read "The Toiler." It depends on you to see that your neighbor reads it.

"The Toiler" has a large force of talented writers and some of the best cartoonists behind it. It is in direct communication with Soviet Russia and all European class struggles. It will feature American Industrial battles and keep you informed on all social and economic problems. We feel sure that this move to combine our efforts will be for the good of all of us as well as the great cause for which we all labor.

Expecting your continued support and cooperation, I am,  
Yours fraternally,

P. B. COWDERY.

Dear Comrade Readers of Western Worker:

We are combining our subscription list with that of "The Toiler." The western address, however, will continue as be-

low for the time being with Comrade P. B. Cowdery in charge of the circulation, while I will devote most of my time to seeking supplies for "The Friends of Soviet Russia," 225 Valencia Street, San Francisco, to ship to our famine-stricken Comrades in Soviet Russia. I will be subject to calls to fill lecture dates where it is possible to get people interested in the famine relief. Send for me!

We are going to expect each and all of you to get behind "The Toiler" and this campaign for food, clothing and money. For seven years I have been associated with most of you, while Comrade Cowdery has been with you for fifteen years. That association need not be broken at all. We have learned in that time to feel ourselves somewhat of a family circle. This move is what we might call, MOVING INTO A LARGER CIRCLE THE INTERNATIONAL CIRCLE—CENTRALIZING OUR EFFORTS!

For four long terrible years of counter-revolution and blockade, our Comrades in Russia have been expectantly waiting on us to come to their aid and it is certainly no credit to us that we, the workers of America, are just now awakening to the danger our Comrades are facing in Soviet Russia, when famine is added to capitalist treachery and Czarist plotting. NO! we have not waited too long if we act now!

Long ago Lenin and his associates warned us that they could not hold the lines of defense alone. At last we are heeding the warning and the glad news comes from every point of the globe that help is being rushed to the Soviet Government Red Cross Committee.

The supplies must keep going for the next two years at least, COMRADES. THEY MUST INCREASE IN VOLUME. RUSSIA MUST NOT BE MADE TO DEPEND ON CAPITALIST RELIEF EXPEDITIONS. TO GRASP THE FULL REALIZATION OF THIS, GO TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, GET THE WORLD'S WORK FOR JUNE, 1921. TURN TO PAGE 153 AND READ OF THE GREATEST BETRAYAL IN HUMAN HISTORY: "OVER-THROWING A RED REGIME." Let the workers of America repudiate this disgraceful act brazenly acknowledged by this tool of capitalism.

You will be pleased to hear that we can ship by boat almost direct from San Francisco to Soviet Russia. The Hamburg-American line in which, we are informed, Russia owns a part interest, will carry freight to Hamburg and deliver it to the Soviet Russian Red Cross Committee. The rates on dried fruits and vegetables run from eighty-five cents to a dollar while the rate on clothing is three dollar per hundred. The same goods shipped by train by way of New York would have cost four dollars and forty-two cents on dried fruits and six dollars and sixteen cents on clothing per hundred weight.

Western Worker readers have already sent through Friends of Soviet Russia two large boxes of clothing and have on hand, ready to ship by the next boat October 22, two more boxes of clothing and nearly two tons of dried products. More are coming in every day.

We can ship prunes, peaches, raisins, corn, rice, dried squash, beans, apples, and in fact any kind of dried product you have, in any quantity.

Comrade E. Backus and his brother have kindly loaned us a store room at 97 9th Street San Francisco, and will gladly receive packages brought in by local Comrades or sent by freight from the outside. Oakland Comrades can deliver supplies to our home, 1744 13th Avenue, Oakland.

Let us not be outdone by our Los Angeles Comrades. They have sent in 23 boxes of goods, 1100 new garments besides, and a large sum of money. The San Francisco and Oakland Unions have contributed in money up-to-date over two thousand dollars. Let us all unite for Soviet Russia. Let us resolve to save the day for the workers' republic.

Wishing you well and expecting your continued cooperation for "The Toiler" and the Cause, I am your Comrade,  
J. E. SNYDER, Editor.

WESTERN WORKER

1744 Thirteenth Avenue, Oakland, Calif. Phone Merritt 2018

PHILADELPHIA. Grand masquerade ball will be given by The Workers' Defense and Relief Committee of Pennsylvania on Saturday, October 29th, 1921, at 8 P. M., at The New Traymore Hall, Franklin and Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia. Admission 35c. Wardrobe 15c. Valuable prizes will be given to best masks.

# The Toiler

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VOL. IV. Saturday, Oct. 22, 1921. No. 193

Advertising Rates Upon Application

## WILL THE RAILROAD WORKERS FIGHT?

What will the railroad workers do? It is reported that the counting of the strike ballots is nearly complete, and that the result is solidly in favor of a walkout. For the benefit of those newspaper readers who do not know the attitude of the Brotherhood chiefs toward any kind of action and toward united action in particular, it is reported that the officials do not intend to take immediate action. Action at this date would be far from being immediate, unless time is measured geologically instead of as part of the workers' life-time. The wage reduction of July involved two million workers in a cut aggregating \$400,000,000. Of these workers 409,000 are members of the Big Four Brotherhoods and the Switchmen's Union of North America. There are a dozen smaller unions, and there are in addition the great unorganized. In facing these reductions the officials of the Big Five could not place class before craft even to the extent of agreeing upon one simple, straightforward form of strike ballot. They are quite incapable of recognizing the smaller craft unions and organizing the great mass of workers. This task, which is immediately necessary for the maintenance of even the present reduced standard of living of all railroad workers, from the engineer, depicted in the press as an American craftsman of a higher order, to the laborer, openly despised as an unskilled alien, cannot be left to officials.

The rank and file of the railway unions must act in the present emergency. They must form their committees to see that the ultimatum contained in the strike ballots is followed by action. The owners' policy has formerly been to avert a tie-up by offering tolerable conditions to the more powerful crafts. Today there is no further need for such concessions, for industrial stagnation enables the owners to use the whip of unemployment instead of the bribery of a fraction of the workers. The officials still think along

craft lines and regret the passing of the day when petty bargaining could bring peace and add to their prestige, but the industrial breakdown has brought unity of interests among railroad workers of all crafts or no craft. Unity of interest demands unity of action. The rank and file will act because they must. The big strike may be outlawed, and an outlaw strike will fail unless rank and file committees throughout the whole industry take charge of it and of all union policies.

## WORKERS' CANDIDATES OUTLAWED

The Workers' League, the only representative of the working class in the present municipal election in New York City, is meeting bitter opposition from the authorities. Its candidates for Mayor and President of the Board of Aldermen, Gitlow and Winitzky, now serving prison terms for their devotion to the interests of the workers, have been removed from the ballot by the Board of Elections on the ground that they have been deprived of citizenship by conviction for a felonious offense, and are furthermore residing at Sing Sing Prison and not in New York City. "It would be a pretty state of affairs," says the president of the board, "to allow felons and criminals to become eligible for office and take their places beside decent men and women."

There is no law to support such action, according to Edward Lindgren, Secretary of the Workers' League, but laws figure little in the new capitalist dispensation. The Workers' League will, however, fight in the courts for whatever legal rights it may be granted by its enemies. In the meantime the workers of New York City would do well to ask themselves why the Socialist candidates are not denied a place on ballots. The name of Eugene Debs, though in prison, appeared on ballots throughout the country at the last election. The American capitalist state recognizes its predestined enemies, and the workers should not forget that, as the Hindu philosopher says: "The enemies of my enemies are my friends."

## EXCHANGE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The capitalist world is becoming more entangled in its own absurdities with each passing week. The conditions which have produced the present collapse of production and the world crisis are intensified day by day. Gold is flowing into America in a great stream until "her Treasury vaults must resemble, on an infinitely larger scale, those of King Croesus," says Professor Cassel in London. At the same time other countries are losing their buying power. The sensational decline of German and Austrian exchange within the last month has disturbed the monetary situation of all European countries and greatly intensified the distress and unemployment of all peoples and the bewilderment of the capitalists. The German mark, before the war 25 cents, is down to 4/5 of a cent. The Austrian crown, usually 20 cents, is worth practically nothing. The Polish mark is in even worse condition, and the currency of Czecho-Slovakia and the Balkans is gliding rapidly downward. America cries, "Gold! More Gold!" France says, "Bleed Germany further!" Great Britain says, "Cancel our debts!" The terrified bourgeoisie of all countries shrieks, "We are drowning! Save us from the Bolshevist shark!"

## A NEW SUPREME COURT

Compulsory arbitration is the threatening cloud on the labor horizon. Senator Kenyon, chairman of the Senate Committee which is investigating the West Virginia situation, has suggested legislation providing for a federal tribunal of industrial relations to bring capital and labor into more harmonious relations, a Federal "Supreme Court of Industry with decrees enforced by public opinion." The plan would include an industrial code defining unquestioned rights of both labor and capital and protecting non-union men from interference. A legalized open shop, supported by "public opinion," this is more than the employers dared hope for when they began their open shop drive. How can the workers meet such attacks? Only by a powerful and militant labor movement, only by scourging the money-changers out of the temple. Away with Gompers and Lewis, O'Connor, Conboy and Ricker and their rotten machine!

## ENTENTE DEVIL AND SOVIET DEEP SEA

The decision of the Supreme Council of the League of Nations to grant a large area of industrial Germany in Upper Silesia to Poland has produced an international crisis and again brought the problem of German policy to the fore. German capitalism, to save its own neck, has been ready to combine with Allied capitalism in sending the German workers under the yoke of the Treaty of Versailles. It has promised to the Allies impossible reparations to be carved out of the very subsistence of the German workmen. It has offered Germany to any taker, France, America, Great Britain. All that it asked in return was its own right to exist as a capitalist economic unit. That involved the right of German industry to retain the coal and iron on which its life depended. The Allies, under the evil inspiration of France, have foolishly rejected this bargain, which alone could preserve European capitalism for a time. In the Saar, in the Ruhr, and now in Upper Silesia, their policy has driven German capitalism to despair. Upper Silesia, in spite of the plebiscite which gave an enormous majority to Germany, has been given in part to Poland. Industrial Germany will be unable under these conditions to fulfil the reparation clauses of the Treaty or the Loucheur-Rathenau agreement recently concluded at Wiesbaden providing for the restoration of the devastated regions by Germany.

What will the German working class do in the present crisis? Will the last vacillating remnant desert the Socialists who have supported the alliance with Entente imperialism and aided the capitalists in their bloody suppression of the heroic efforts of the workers to throw off their yoke. The most advanced elements of the German working class were found in the German Communist movement at the close of the war. They were later joined at the Congress of Halle by the majority of the Independent Socialists, leaving a small minority with their weak leaders to drift back toward the Majority Socialists and their traitorous policy. The betrayal of German capitalism by Entente imperialism cuts the ground from under the republicans and socialists, and leaves the field to be contested by the two groups at the extreme left and right, which have defied and denounced the Versailles alliance. These two are the monarchists and the Communists. Germany can not long cling to the middle road. Monarchist and Junker reaction or Communist revolution and a Soviet Republic of Germany are the alternatives. May the great mass of the German workers see and act!

## Labor and Politics

The decision of the United Mine Workers' Convention to support the Farmer-Labor Party indicates a dawning realization in the ranks of labor that a new era of political activity of labor is here. The utmost efforts of the Gompers machine to keep the workers under the control of the capitalist political parties are too weak to counteract the influence of the present economic and political crisis. The intensification of the class struggle and the collapse of the capitalist economy are forces which are driving labor inexorably into militant action on a wide political field in spite of its own inertia and the obstacles placed in its path. All society and economic life is in the melting-pot, and the workers must mould it according to their own necessities.

The problem before the American workers to-day is no longer whether or not to undertake political action. The problem is rather what kind of political action to take. Tactics in the political field vary as much as those in the industrial field. From pure and simple trade unionism to revolutionary syndicalism is a far cry, but no farther than the chasm between labor party organization and revolutionary political action. Gompers unionism is being abandoned for industrial organization on a wide scale. So, too, in the political field the old tactics of independent labor action in politics for a national minimum must give way to the new mass movement of the workers for a revolutionary social change.

The Farmer-Labor Party was formed on the model of the British Labor Party and under the influence of the enormous prestige which that party acquired in American labor circles during the war. The British Labor Party seems to have been discovered by American labor about the year 1918, although it was already a well-grown institution in England. In England and America both, labor received a political recognition it had never before won in return for its support of the war. And American labor leaders opened their eyes to the influence and power which their English colleagues had achieved through the Labor Party. Among the mildly progressive elements of the American rank and file, too, a new political interest was germinating which crystallized about the labor party type of organization as protected and safe in a time of fierce repression. English and American capitalism drew together during the war and the British labor foresaw a decrease of its own influence in the new coalition unless a similar organization could be developed in the United States. Hence the great interest of the British labor leaders such as Henderson, Clynes and Thomas in the formation of our American labor party, and the visits to America of Thomas, Tom Shaw, Margaret Bondfield and others.

The American labor party is bound to develop along the lines of its British prototype, although it will never compare with it in power, intelligence or organization. Its policies, however, will be those of the British party, an effort at slow reform on purely parliamentary lines, an acceptance of capitalism with lip-service to state collectivism, a strictly national interpretation of labor aims and tactics, in a word an Anglo-American Labor Entente to correspond and co-operate with the Anglo-American Imperialist Entente. In international affairs the line-up will be with the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions and the League of Nations against Bolshevism and the Third International.

- Is this the kind of political activity which the American workers are seeking? When yellow collectivism and yellow unionism have shown themselves bankrupt in Europe, will the American workers spend years of effort in constructing them in America? The Gompers element surely will. It will soon be driven from its "non-partisan" holes and corners by the force of conditions, and will take refuge in a tame labor party where it will prepare the workers to eat out of the hand of capitalism as before.

And the new movement will profit by the support of the unintelligent, the inactive and the cowardly, those who are ready to seek small personal gain from an iniquitous alliance of allied capital and labor for the betrayal of the genuine international movement of labor.

The labor party movement, becoming constantly weaker and more corrupt as it is adopted by the official elements of American labor, will encounter the opposition of the more intelligent and militant elements among the American workers, will discover as many British workers discovered long before the war that a mere labor party is powerless to achieve even small reforms within the capitalist system, and that it can never lead them in the revolutionary struggle which is impending. And they will turn, as the militant British workers are turning, to a fighting political organization with an international outlook.

The revolutionary class struggle in America will soon find political expression in a genuine workers' party. The American Labor Alliance, which includes already a number of labor organizations prepared for militant tactics in the political field, will establish at its forthcoming convention a national party of labor, which will issue a challenge to the capitalist order and to the false prophets of the Labor and Socialist parties. The new party will tear the veil from parliamentarism. It will show the impossibility of expecting the salvation of the workers through the class state organized for their exploitation. It will rouse the masses to the need for courageous direct action for their own emancipation and will lead them side by side with the revolutionary labor movement of all other lands.

## Unemployment: a labor program

The program on unemployment put forth by the British Trades Union Congress and the British Labor Party, which we reprint elsewhere in this issue, is interesting not only as an attempt to deal with unemployment but also as an indication of the political standpoint and method of its sponsors.

The official elements of British labor with their cherished parliamentary methods have little or nothing to relieve unemployment in the present crisis. While the British workman pulled his belt in more and more tightly, the official labor conferences on unemployment met and passed resolutions, met and resolved again. Their legislative programs, worked out in great detail with the aid of "labor experts," have been treated by a cynical capitalist government as "scraps of paper." Having nothing, moreover, in their repertoire of tactics to rely upon except legislative programs, they have failed completely in expressing a strong protest against unemployment themselves, to say nothing of organizing the masses to protest.

The program on unemployment is a typical product of the Fabian mind. The British Fabian Socialist proceeds upon the assumption that the chief trouble with capitalism

is its stupidity, and that with the generous aid of socialists with brains to spare capitalism will become more and more intelligent, until one day it awakes to find itself socialism. This theory was amusing ten or twenty years ago. To-day it is a serious matter. For Sidney Webb and his brother Fabians are distributing ideas not only to the capitalist governments but to the organized workers. "Sydney-Webbicalism" is to-day not only the last resort of perplexed capitalism, but also the official creed of the British labor movement. Sidney Webb and G. D. H. Cole prepare the programs and manifestos which are issued by the British Trades Union Congress, they write the reports which are signed by Arthur J. Henderson and other official luminaries of labor.

The Fabians with all the officials of labor at their heels run to the rescue of their capitalist system and attempt to drag it out of the slough of unemployment. Their busy solicitude for the old order is well expressed in this program on unemployment. It is a catalogue of homeopathic remedies. There is a veritable medicine chest full of them, and they are guaranteed to cure, if only capitalism wants to take them, and will take them at their full strength and all at once. First comes adequate provision for maintenance of the unemployed and under-employed. After a bankrupt government has produced with ease and alacrity from the pockets of its capitalist supporters the billion dollars a year which on their own figures are necessary for maintenance of the unemployed, it passes on to still more constructive measures. Child labor, around which a mighty struggle has been waged for a century in England, can easily be further restricted as an emergency measure, if only capitalism is willing. Unemployed men and women are to receive vocational training. A matter of interest to capitalist employers, but why to labor parties? Working hours must be reduced to 44, wages must not be reduced. Although capitalism is at the present moment in full career in the opposite direction, with the assistance of the unemployment crisis! Houses and schools must be built, although the record of the Lloyd George government on housing is already a laughing-stock. Government contracts must be placed in the lean years rather than the fat years, and so balance the labor market—as if all years were not lean years in the new era.

Finally there must be an end to wars, and expensive imperialist excursions to the Near East on the part of the government must stop—while capitalism and imperialism continue. International capitalist free trade must revive, and chiefly through the instrumentality of its slayer, the League of Nations.

Such a program is at best a Utopian delusion, at its worst a trick to mislead the workers. There is a world of difference between impossible demands made as the slogan for revolutionary action and such demands made with the pretense and assurance that they can be fulfilled in the capitalist order. In the latter case they are either Utopian or insincere. Social reform and revolution have changed places since the war. In the world of to-day social reform is Utopia, while revolution is now the only true realism. Sidney Webb, all his life a sincere advocate of social reform, perhaps still believes that capitalism may be prepared and willing to swallow his sheaf of nostrums. The labor leaders know better. They know that the employers have no intention of providing fundamental remedies for unemployment, that they would not if they could, and could not if they would. The British labor leaders are attempting to mislead the workers with these well-sounding, unreal programs. Through cowardice or personal ambition they are throwing away the workers' only chance for real salvation from unemployment—the social revolution and the establishment of a workers' republic.

# Disarmament at Geneva and Washington

The Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva has just ended. Within a month the Disarmament Conference at Washington will begin. The two conferences represent an attempt on the part of the capitalist powers to divide the spoils of the great war and to establish some new form of world control to supersede the old balance of power. The total failure of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations to accomplish these ends is indicated by the open confessions of defeat made by the imperialist leaders at Geneva as well as by the proposal of the Washington Conference to throw the most important international questions open for discussion again. Geneva marks the collapse of the effort of international capitalism to solve its problems in the Atlantic, Washington its fear for the future in the Pacific.

The conference at Geneva was entirely unproductive and admitted its own bankruptcy at every turn. The modest proposal of Lord Robert Cecil for the formulation before the next meeting of the assembly of a program for limitation of armaments met with violent opposition from the delegates of France and Great Britain, the countries most directly concerned. France brought forth the old plea of the German menace to justify her army of half a million maintained at an annual expense of half a billion. The British delegate argued that the world was not ready to move so swiftly toward disarmament and that it was a matter for private agreements between the nations concerned, thus abandoning the very principle upon which the existence of the League was alleged to be based. The success of the Cecil resolution in committee means nothing because of the complete powerlessness of the committee in the Assembly, and of the Assembly in the League. The whole subject of disarmament was finally passed over to the Washington conference by the Geneva conference with a sense of relief from an embarrassing burden.

The proceedings of the Geneva conference were as futile as they were reactionary. The economic blockade was approved, and fortified as the chief weapon of the League of Nations, in the face of the terrible suffering which it had already inflicted in Germany and Russia. Dr. Nansen's plea for a credit of \$25,000,000 to save 20,000,000 Russians from starvation this winter served only to loose the flood-gates of vilification of Bolshevism. The British delegate considered the Soviet government the "greatest calamity which had befallen the human race on this planet," and the representative of White Guard Terrorism in Jugo-Slavia found that of the "two evils, famine and Bolshevism, Bolshevism was the worst."

Open covenants, apparently guaranteed on paper by Article XVIII of the League, which sanctions only treaties openly registered with the League, were abolished by the amendment of the article, the amendment procedure of the assembly being especially relaxed for this purpose. On the question of mandates which it had hoped to settle the League was balked by the recent note of the United States to the governments concerned demanding reconsideration of the whole mandate question.

The conference at Geneva may be said to have marked the final failure of attempts at European settlement through the machinery of Versailles under the leadership of England and France. The capitalist receivership has been transferred to Washington.

The chief result of the Washington Disarmament Conference thus far has been publicity for the coming war with Japan and propaganda for the necessity of increased armaments for the United States. The center of gravity in the imperialist struggle has shifted in the short space of two years from Europe to the Far East. Europe, bankrupt and near-Bolshevist, has lost its charms for American capitalism and its dangers as a competitor. The rich possibilities of China as a market for the export of American capital and goods bring the United States into direct conflict with the hitherto unchallenged supremacy of Japan in the Far East and her claim of right to the exploitation of China. In the Washington conference the United States will attempt to use her influence over the European powers because of their economic dependence upon her to force Japan to share with her the hegemony of the Pacific. For this reason all attempts of the European powers to free themselves from American domination by cancellation of their war debts to her or by stabilization of exchange will be resisted by America or their consideration postponed until after the conference.

Of disarmament there will be as little at Washington as at Geneva. Japan and America are now engaged in a gigantic race in naval armament that outruns that of Great Britain and Germany before the war. Japan, over-populated and comparatively poor, will not be able to continue the race indefinitely, and will be compelled to call a halt, not through disarmament but through war. Great Britain is building naval armament to the limit of her declining capacity, and will be forced at this conference into a closer alliance with the United States for the protection of her imperialist interests in the Far East, since she has been forced to abandon or at least suspend her former alliance with Japan.

The Washington Conference will thus make the world safe for the time being for Anglo-Saxon imperialism, and a new international alignment may be expected. Germany, repulsed by the Entente, is drifting toward economic combination with Russia whether from the Right or the Left. The people of China will be forced to take a position against the enormous capitalist expansion of the next few years and will inevitably be driven to look to Moscow for inspiration, as have the peoples of Central Asia. Japan itself, feudal capitalist nation as it is, begins to think of an approach to Soviet Russia as a makeweight against the western powers.

America now definitely assumes the economic and political leadership of the capitalist world. She proceeds without fear or remorse toward the next great slaughter. The next war will involve at least three great powers and will result in loss of human life, destruction and impoverishment far surpassing that of the Great War. The moment of the final liquidation of capitalism is rapidly approaching. The workers cannot ask or hope for disarmament, for the inevitable will be accomplished. Let them rather prepare themselves for the day when militarism will be compelled to sign its own death-warrant.

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An arrangement has been made whereby THE TOILER will be sent to all who have subscribed for "The Producer's Age," a periodical which was to be issued from Chicago. Subscribers to this periodical will receive THE TOILER for four months.

# The Reaction in Italy

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Turin, Italy, Aug. 28, 1921.

With the passage of the months it is becoming ever clearer that Italian labor men made a serious mistake in their handling of the famous metal workers' strike last September, and one that has sadly demoralized their movement and thrown it crippled to the white terror.

It was indeed a fateful day when the Executive Committees of the Socialist Party and the General Confederation of Labor met in joint session to determine their course of action in the acute situation caused by the metal workers' strike. The whole Italian working class was in a revolutionary mood. The metal workers had seized the plants all over the country. The peasants were confiscating the land. Red flags were flying from municipal buildings in a hundred cities. All the workers were on the *qui vive* and ready for a final battle with capitalism. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie was almost totally unprepared. Its government was paralyzed and dared not stir. It was an historic opportunity such as may never occur again.

In this critical situation the heads of the two wings of the labor movements met. The issue was clear and clean. Should the workers make a great effort to seize political power and undertake to put socialism into effect, or should the metal workers' strike be confined to the status of an ordinary wage struggle? It was the supreme revolutionary test of the Italian labor movement, and it found them dismally wanting. The representatives of the Socialist Party, backed by those of the metal workers' union, were for making a revolutionary attempt, but the leaders of the Confederation of Labor opposed it. They declared that conditions were not yet ripe, and that to make an attempt at the revolution would only lead the workers to useless slaughter. They proposed instead that the crisis be utilized to establish workers' control in every industry, the right of the workers to investigate and check up on all the intricacies of the productive organism.

The trade union leaders, headed by D'Aragona, prevailed. The motion to issue a call that was practically equivalent to revolution was voted down, and one demanding workers' control adopted. On this basis the metal workers' strike was settled. The men received an increase in wages. Prime Minister Giolitti expressed himself in favor of workers' control and created a commission to study the proposition and to bring in a project for its realization. And so the great revolutionary crisis passed.

Almost instantly all Italy knew that the workers had been overwhelmingly defeated. They had given up the greatest opportunity ever presented to the working class for the sake of a miserable increase in wages wiped out soon after by the advancing cost of living, and on the promise of a crooked politician to establish a reform which has never been realized, but is still being "studied" by the commission. As for the workers, they became prey to a profound pessimism and demoralization from which they have not yet recovered. Raised to the supreme heights of anticipation by their superb effort, they saw their beloved revolution peddled for a mess of pottage, and they fell into a slough of despond which has been deepened by the industrial depression.

By the same token the capitalists have been cheered and encouraged beyond measure. When they had recovered from their first fright at being held over the revolutionary

precipice, they launched a great offensive all along the line. They would take lasting revenge over their rebellious slaves, and make forever impossible the recurrence of such a revolutionary situation. One of their chief instruments in this onslaught, which is unexampled for violence and bitterness, is the organization of the Fascisti, notorious throughout the world for its atrocities.

The Fascisti are a national body, with regularly organized branches in nearly all the large cities and towns of Italy. It is officially reported that their membership totals 170,000, but labor men declare it is much larger. They have elaborate headquarters in many places, and a whole battery of daily, weekly and monthly publications. The organization does lip service to a rabid patriotism, but in reality it is merely an appendage for doing the dirty work of the country's big business interests. These exploiters finance it liberally and openly. The membership, especially the militant part of it, is made of ex-military officers, students, habitual criminals, and the hundred and one other degenerate elements who, through greed and stupidity, are always on hand to serve as white guards for capitalism. The name of the movement is taken from the bundles of rods or "*fasci*" the emblem of the old Roman empire, typifying the power that comes from close organization. The leading spirit is Benito Mussolini, a renegade Socialist. He is editor of *Il Popolo d'Italia*, national daily organ of the Fascisti. At a recent meeting of the latter's executive committee he was affectionately referred to as "the master and flame of our faith." In these days when European capitalists have a particularly dastardly attack to make against the workers, they always get some so-called revolutionist to lead it for them.

The Fascisti organization is of comparatively recent growth. It originated from the scattering groups of fanatical "patriots," *a la* D'Annunzio, that sprang up immediately after the close of the great war. They won their spurs in April, 1919, when, during a riot cooked up by themselves, they burned the Milan offices of *L'Avanti*, the revolutionary paper. The movement lingered, however, weak, inconspicuous, until after the metal workers' strike. Then the terrified employers seized upon it as just the weapon they needed, forced it into a mushroom growth, and launched it in a deluge of blood and iron upon the devoted heads of the workers. Thus they inaugurated one of the most astonishing campaigns of bloodshed and violence in modern history.

The method of the Fascisti is calculated, organized terrorism. They aim to paralyze the workers with naked fear and to destroy every semblance of organization and independence among them. Murder, arson, rape, kidnapping, and the systematic violation of every right, human and civil, of the workers are the tools they use in their work of destruction.

A favorite tactic is the so-called "punitive expedition." For some fancied grievance the Fascisti will decide to punish the workers in a certain town. To this end they assemble their cohorts from all the surrounding country and make an armed automobile raid in force upon the ill-fated community, shooting and beating men, women and children, and destroying working class property, until their fine patriotic instincts are satisfied. In this fashion scores of workers have been murdered and hundreds of labor tem-

ples, co-operatives, newspapers, plants, etc., sacked and burned.

The Fascisti are bold and insolent beyond imagination. They think nothing of going in a body to the homes of Socialist mayors and aldermen and forcing them to write out their resignations. Thus the Socialists have been driven from office in dozens of towns, even where they control nine-tenths of the vote and have been in power for years. The same system has been used in the unions and co-operatives. Often the officials of these bodies are compelled at the point of a revolver to quit their posts and to turn the books and funds of the organizations over to the Fascisti, who then see to it that their own creatures are put in office. With such methods the Fascisti have gathered some remnants of organizations, literally carved out of the body of labor, and have developed their own "patriotic" trade union and co-operative movements.

Mere details in the day's work of the Fascisti are complete suppression of free speech and assembly for the workers, ordering dealers to stop selling revolutionary journals and compelling workers to cancel their subscriptions to them, forbidding the nomination of socialist candidates in the local elections. Thousands of these outrages have taken place all over Italy, with the burden of the storm striking the industrial north. The worst sufferers have been the smaller towns, especially in the districts where the agricultural workers are strongly organized, but even in the larger cities such as Turin, Bologna, Milan, Florence, Modena, Parma, many labor temples and other working class institutions, often the fruit of years of work, have been ruthlessly destroyed.

Far from attempting to stop this reign of terror, the government has openly aided it. Time and again its police and soldiers have joined hands with the Fascisti in their depredations, and then arrested and punished the outraged workers. They see to it that the latter, under the severest penalties, are kept unarmed, while the Fascisti go about openly everywhere armed to the teeth. This attitude of the government explains why the minority of Fascisti are able to tyrannize over the majority of workers. The big Socialist fraction in the Chamber of Deputies has complained bitterly about the Fascisti outrages but in vain. The whole situation indicates the collapse of parliamentarism.

In the face of the terror the attitude of the workers' organizations has been one of passive resistance. Stating that Fascism is an after-war phenomenon that must soon pass away, the leaders have counselled the rank and file to hold firm and not to allow themselves to be provoked into acts that would call forth still greater violence. Where here and there the workers have fought back against their tormentors it has usually resulted only in added "punitive expeditions" by the Fascisti. Militants whom the latter know to be in active opposition to them are often called to their doors in the middle of the night, usually on the pretense that it is the police knocking, and given a bullet in the brain. Or they have been spirited away from their families and ordered never to return.

A peace pact has been drawn up between the workers and the Fascisti within recent weeks, as is generally known. Various reasons are ascribed for this. Some people say that it was made because the saner elements among the Fascisti fear that the present excesses will inevitably result in similar ones by the workers once they rouse themselves to action again. Others declare that the big employers refuse longer to meet the tremendous expenses incurred by the Fascisti and are insisting upon retrenchment. Whether the fact will produce even a semblance of peace remains to be seen. Certainly the expected peace has not arrived yet. A few days ago just as I was passing through that

section, a serious clash occurred in the Parma district. A body of Fascisti attacked some local Communists and carried home two dead for their trouble. In Milan I found a number of police drawn up to "protect" the splendid big local labor temple from possible Fascisti attacks, and in Bologna, before the office doors of the famous Italian Railroad Workers' Union, there were stationed several soldiers for the same purpose.

The peace pact has brought about a crisis in the ranks of the Fascisti and is threatening to split them. A powerful element, consisting of those fanatics who are for utterly destroying everything of a labor character, look upon the pact as a betrayal of the interests of their beloved Italy, and want war to the knife against the hated Socialists. Their flaming posters, couched in most violent language and calling upon the faithful *Fascisti Italiani di Combattimento* to rally against the internal enemy, are plastered literally everywhere in many northern Italian cities. I never saw the like of it for a poster campaign.

These dissentient elements have raised so much disturbance that Mussolini, Marsiglio, Rossi and Farinacci, all prominent officials of the organization, have handed in their resignations. Desperate efforts are being made to prevent a split, but opinion is divided as to the outcome.

As a consequence of their leaders' timidity in the critical September days, the Italian workers' organizations have suffered morally and physically. To what extent this is true I could not learn, but that it is considerable can be readily seen from events among the metal workers themselves. These militant workers have lost their shop committees, the bodies that executed the famous occupation order, and it is only a few months since they broke ranks in a lockout at the famous Fiat works and flocked back to work upon the employers' terms. From a near revolution to a lost strike over a petty grievance is a sad come-down in the course of a few months. Prominent Italian labor men assure me, however, that despite the depression of the workers and the attacks of the employers, the trade union movement as a whole has not been seriously injured. I hope this is true.

The great lesson of the present Italian situation is that the labor movement cannot safely monkey with the revolutionary buzz-saw. The seizure of the metal works was a revolutionary act. Either it should have been followed by a general drive of the workers for political power, or it should not have been ordered in the first place. But it was ordered, the necessary follow-up moves were not made, and the inevitable debacle resulted. Unless I am mistaken D'Aragona and the other trade union leaders responsible will soon have to give place to men who will not flinch when the next great crisis comes.

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# The Irish Situation

By WILLIAM PAUL

Many people are perplexed at the recent dramatic turn in the Irish situation. The problem is as tantalizing as it is complex and subtle. To thoroughly grasp it a whole series of factors must be carefully analyzed and coordinated.

## The Capitalist North

In Ireland there are as many conflicting political currents at work as there are different economic interests. It is in the North where there is the greatest opposition against the policy of separation in any form from Britain. Economically, the North is dominated by an imperialistic group made up of great land-owners and industrial magnates, who have enlisted the political services of legal luminaries whose careers have been conspicuous only in their venal vassalage to the propertied interests. The linen and engineering products of the North are not sold in any quantity in the Irish market. These are in the main exported to those markets which are under the protection and domination of the Union Jack. Thus, the economic interests of the capitalists of Ulster are inseparably entwined with the imperialist interests of Great Britain. The economic needs of the predominating political groups of the North are identical with the needs of British finance-capital.

Finance-capital can only expand its control and extend its interests by means of the State power of the Empire. Finance-capital thus demands the support of a large Empire State to advance its influence, and, likewise, every Empire State demands the support of finance-capital to maintain its power. It is this indispensable and mutual relationship between finance-capital and modern Empire-States which explains why the wealthy political elements in the North of Ireland enthusiastically proclaim their loyal devotion and adhesion to the union with imperialistic Britain.

The purely economic basis of the political attitude of the North has been obscured by religious fanaticism. An examination into the temporal ground-work of religions clearly shows that they reflect definite economic forms and respond to particular class interests. Thus, capitalism, in a general way, presupposes Protestantism, whereas systems of land tenure tend to show a striking partiality for the Catholic Church. While, on the surface, the Irish question would seem to be a conflict between two religious forms, it is in reality a determined struggle between definite economic interests. Men tend to idealize their economic interests and aspirations. Many an Irishman today is fighting heroically and honestly on behalf of a certain religious creed, even carrying its fundamental tenets to the ballot box, without imagining that any other motive is prompting his actions. It is in the North, where Capitalism is most highly developed,

and where, therefore, the potentialities of the class struggle are greatest. It is there that the propertied interests have used religion as a political factor in blinding the working class; and they have used it to create a psychology which finds expression in extreme reaction and blind bigotry.

Whatever compromise takes place regarding the situation between Britain and Ireland, the imperialistic groups of the North will do their utmost to prevent any settlement which will cut them off from the interest of what they call "The Mother Country." But in the North the class struggle cuts across the political and economic interests of the capitalists.

## The South

In the South of Ireland Capitalism is relatively weak, while large financial magnates are scarce, small business men are prolific, particularly the small farmer. These middle-class elements have a traditional hatred for England. And small wonder! It is questionable if history can match the centuries of ruthless outrage which has been the normal conduct of England towards Ireland. The ruling class of Britain became proficient in the art of subduing and crushing native races through the practice which they got by their policy in Ireland. The historic manoeuvre of the English merchant class, ever since the days of Cromwell, of ruining other countries by relentlessly paralyzing their trade, has been consistently applied against Ireland for hundreds of years. The geographical situation of Ireland gave it many points of vantage for building up considerable commercial relations. It also contained a virile and industrial population living on a fertile land. But every endeavor of the Irish to launch into overseas commerce or to develop their trade was promptly strangled by the jealous propertied interests of England who moulded that country's policy towards Ireland. Not only were Ireland's commercial potentialities crushed, but the pitiless attitude of Britain reacted upon agriculture and practically ruined it, thus causing untold suffering to the peasant masses. It is, therefore, easy to comprehend why the people in the Southern districts of Ireland have been passionate in their hate against England. But this hatred created a psychology which manifested itself by producing an ultra-nationalist movement. Hatred of England reacted by creating a passionate devotion to Ireland.

Up until recent times, the political activities of the Southern Irish were in the hands of the Middle Class Nationalist Party, better known in England as the United Irish League. The members who were sent to the English Parliament were drawn from the middle class. They neither understood or sympathized with the labor problem in Ireland. They sat for years in the English House of Commons, and although generally opposed to the

Government were extremely unsuccessful in their policy, based as it was upon political compromise.

### The Middle Class in Politics

The middle-class political leaders of Irish nationalism displayed that universal weakness which may be seen in every political movement in the world dominated by the petty-bourgeoisie. The middle class, in the structure of Capitalism, occupy a peculiarly unfortunate economic position, inasmuch as they are continually vacillating between the capitalist class and the proletariat. Suspended between the upper and lower class, and yet being neither one nor the other, there is created for them a situation of appalling insecurity. This economic insecurity is of a different character from that which haunts the wage worker. Whatever disasters overtake the average laborers—in the shape of unemployment, strikes or lockouts—these neither alter their economic status nor their class relationship under Capitalism—they remain proletarians. But the economic insecurity of the middle-class man rests upon the fact that any minor industrial crisis may hurl him into another class—into the proletariat. Such an occurrence transforms both his economic status and his class relationship within Capitalism. The result of this vacillating economic position produces a peculiar mental outlook—the petty-bourgeois outlook. The most significant thing about this outlook is that it views every aspect of the social question, which deals fundamentally with class interests, in an irresolute and wavering manner. This explains why the middle class, and all those inspired by their ideas, are the greatest compromisers, *par excellence*.

As a class the petty-bourgeoisie stand in history the acknowledged and unchallenged masters of political compromise. And unless this is clearly understood it may be difficult to grasp the influence it is at present exerting upon the Irish situation.

### The National War

Even the rise of Sinn Fein in Ireland did not mean, in the beginning, the inauguration of a bold or heroic policy. The leaders like Arthur Griffiths, undoubtedly very brilliant men, had to rely too much upon the middle class to get action of a daring character. Up until the beginning of the war, the Sinn Fein movement was not very powerful. During the transport workers' strike in 1913, many of the Sinn Fein leaders were opposed to the demands of the strikers, but the strike introduced a new spirit into the Irish situation. It showed clearly for the first time in Ireland, that, in addition to the national struggle, there was above all—the class struggle.

There were occasional outbursts of fierce class conflict in Ireland prior to the transport workers' strike, but these never gave the masses a vision much greater than that of mere land redistribution. With the building up of the Transport Workers' Union there was a new ideal

placed before the Irish proletariat. This was mainly due to the magnificent communist agitation of James Connolly. He ruthlessly exposed the hollow pretensions of the Irish middle class leaders who were striving to get Home Rule. He showed the Irish workers that Home Rule, in itself, could only mean the exploitation of the Irish worker by the Irish capitalist. Connolly did not minimize the importance of the Irish workers agitating for national independence but he was always careful to show that their final aim would have to be for an Irish Workers' Republic. He, therefore, encouraged a vigorous agitation for national independence because he was a clever tactician and realized the value of always creating some ferment of revolt amongst the masses; and he saw the need for continually harassing Great Britain which to him was the symbol of world imperialism and reaction. Connolly grouped round him a band of dauntless men, who did not quail during the bold bid for power which was made during the Easter rising. The execution of Connolly opened the flood gate of enthusiasm for Connolly's ideals, and impelled the Irish workers along the path of Communism. The brutality of the English Government towards Ireland, immediately after the Dublin rising, made thousands of Irish workers realize the truism preached by Connolly, that the imperialist class of Britain would submit to nothing but force. Nor do these workers to this day forget that the English Cabinet which executed the men of Easter week, was led by the notorious Asquith, and that one of his Cabinet colleagues was Arthur Henderson, one of the leaders of the Second International.

The heavy mailed fist of Britain, which has been so much in evidence in Ireland during the past few years, drove the workers, who had been influenced by Connolly, into a working agreement with the more militant elements in the Sinn Fein movement. This was an act of necessity imposed by the sheer need of self-preservation. It gave the Sinn Fein organization a backbone. It was the proletarian rebels who, in the main, supplied the fighting force, which became the driving power in the Irish Republican army. Here again the influence of Connolly may be seen. It was he who first recruited the workers into the Irish Volunteer army, which he organized as a counter-blast to the armed and bombastic threats of the capitalists of the North.

The fusion of the revolutionary workers with the Sinn Fein movement made it a more vigorous organization than it had hitherto been. The fusion also transformed the Irish movement for national independence from a respectable middle-class organization into one pregnant with revolutionary possibilities. Within the space of a few years the old reactionary Nationalist Party—which used to adorn the benches of the House of Commons under the leadership of the late John Redmond—has been swept aside and has been replaced by a new vigorous element which scorns the idea of begging for freedom in London, but which has resolutely set itself the task of working out its own emancipation on Irish soil.

When the Irish rebels set out to build up their own

political and governmental administrative organs, which were to replace the institutions that the British State had enforced upon Ireland, they actually created a revolutionary crisis. No government dare allow any rebel group to destroy its administrative institutions, because this means that two powers are seeking to govern the country. The State can only maintain its prestige by being the sovereign and unchallenged authority in the land.

Bit by bit, the British administrative institutions were replaced by those created by, and administered through, the Dail Eirrean in Dublin. This struggle in reality led to open war. The British government viewed it as civil war, the Irish middle class viewed it as a national war, in which they were attempting to expel a foreign invader. Viewing it as a civil war the British Government drafted in troops, organized their "black and tan" murdering and plundering brigades, suppressed free speech and the press. They outlawed active rebels and brutally enforced martial law. The history of Ireland during the last few years is the final reply to those labor leaders of the Second International who still fatuously prattle about "democracy." Because it must be remembered that in Ireland the democratic majority of the voters gave their support to the policy which the British State has dismally and ingloriously failed to suppress. Viewing the struggle as a national war, and looking upon England as an alien invader, the Irish rebels set up their army and set up their institutions, in order to drive the imperialist usurper from the land. And they adopted a system of tactics which ranged from the dislocation of all English institutions to the deliberate destruction of the Dublin Custom House building.

#### The Class Struggle in Ireland

In addition to those in Ireland who viewed the conflict as a national one, there are great numbers among the masses, influenced by Connolly, and inspired by the recent rapid spread of Communist ideas, who see in a national war against British Imperialism, a splendid means of also conducting a class war against the propertied interests at home and abroad. These elements are striving to free Ireland from all forms of class enslavement. Their ultimate object is not so much an Irish Republic, as it is an Irish Workers' Republic. They are influential and have taken their stand beside the dauntless band of heroes who lead the fight in the Republican Army—the Republican Might—which has compelled the proud British Government—armed with its tanks, aeroplanes, bombs, and other democratic instruments of persuasion—to seek a truce with the leaders of the Irish Republic. The Connolly section in the Irish struggle has responded with magnificent courage to the defence of Ireland, and have placed their services at the disposal of the Republican leaders. But they are jealous lest their confidence be betrayed, or that the Republican figureheads compromise the situation. The Communists are growing more powerful every day, and it may happen that the petty-bourgeois groups in the Sinn Fein movement will yield to British Imperialism rather than yield to the revolutionary demands of the Irish workers. In the measure that the

revolutionary proletariat grows strong in Ireland, so in the same measure the middle-class Republicans, fearing that the governmental power may pass from their hands, may be tempted to seek some sort of compromise alliance with the British Government. Many middle-class elements are losing courage, but the cry of the workers to De Valera is "No compromise."

The history of Ireland during the past few years does not seem to suggest that there is a powerful and determined labor movement in the country. This is due to the revolutionaries carrying out their plan that the immediate needs of the class struggle can be best served by throwing all their strength into the national struggle against the British reactionaries. The moment, however, that they realize that the interests of the working class are much more urgent and more important than the national war, then we shall witness a new development in the Irish situation by the workers resolutely opposing those who are now their middle-class allies. At present, however, the biggest and most dangerous enemy is the British government.

When the class struggle actually begins in Ireland, it not only will surprise many moderate Sinn Feiners in the South, but it will certainly startle the large capitalists of the North, who fondly imagine that their workers are the most docile and superstitious creatures in the world.

Whatever may happen in the future, there can be nothing but praise for the clever and courageous policy that De Valera and his colleagues have carried out, up to the present time, in their wonderful stand against all the savage measures enforced against Ireland by the most brutal and callous government of recent times. Their present peace parley with the British Government is in reality a triumph for them in so far as it enables the Republicans to rest and re-invigorate their brave forces and to continue, if need be, the most heroic struggle ever waged by a small nation against a cruel and swaggering despotic imperialism.

Lloyd George does not intend to give Ireland peace. If he does, it will be because the slaughtering of the Irish will be too expensive to suit the anti-waste maniacs of the middle-class union, who see ruin for themselves in the increasing burden of taxation. Never, in his long and tortuous career, has Lloyd George ever taken a strong stand upon any political principle. Being typically middle-class, he meets every problem, not with a view of solving it, but of trying to discover the best way to avoid it. And he meets every demand of labor, and of Ireland, by granting only enough to blunt the edge of their grievance.

No! The British Government will not grant freedom or independence to Ireland; no one knows this more clearly than the rebel proletarians of Ireland who realize that whatever they get will only come as a result of seizing it from the blood-red fist of a rapacious imperialism. They do not forget the words of Connolly, who said:

"Tis Labor's faith that Labor's arm  
Alone can Labor free."

# In The Lower Depths

(A night with the unemployed in Bryant Park)

By V. KLIMOV

A few days before the November revolution in Russia I happened to see Gorky's famous drama, "In the Lower Depths," as played in the Moscow Art Theatre. The impression of Stanislavsky's admirable presentation was overpowering. I perceived the grim reality of those living symbols of the decaying world which we usually pass without notice. "There is the last phase," exclaimed my companion after the performance, "Our present system can sink no lower. When men with energy and enthusiasm, men who have offered society their blood and their muscle, their ability and their devotion, are condemned to perish miserably, what remains for the future? The great change is bound to come. The old world must be wiped out. The day is at hand when all these at the bottom, all the wretched outcasts, will rise to avenge themselves upon society and make an end of this terrible social system." This remark impressed itself upon my memory and recurs whenever I see those at the bottom, those who have been forced by capitalist society into the lower depths.

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A few days ago I went to Bryant Park with some American comrades. It was rather late in the evening. Fifth Avenue was swarming with automobiles filled with self-satisfied men and women in evening dress. The side-walks were crowded with richly-clad pedestrians just emerging from various places of amusement. One of my comrades said, "Here is wealthy New York enjoying life to the full without ever realizing or giving a thought to the fact that not one block away there is the misery of people in rags, without a roof over their heads, starving."

Almost at once we were in Bryant Park, and I encountered a scene such as I had never imagined could exist in the heart of New York. Scattered about on the turf worn thin by human feet, were heaps of muddy white. They might have been piles of dirty snow about to melt, yet these were human bodies covered with old newspapers. Some were sunk in heavy slumber, some were lying with wide-open eyes looking into the clear sky overhead. One of those awake noticed me and remarked bitterly: "Newspaper reporters, eh! Want to make a job, coin an extra couple of dollars out of us?" Other eyes followed us with a blank, weary expression as we moved on.

Not far away a group of men were sitting under a lamp-post playing cards for buttons. They were so absorbed in the game that they did not even notice us. Some one called out "Joe, don't forget us," and the man named Joe came up grinning, and explained "When you've got no coin and you want your rebellious stomach to shut up you have to gamble on the buttons from your own rags." I offered Joe a cigarette. It was evidently an event for him as he clutched eagerly at it. As he inhaled he remarked, "I hadn't smoked for five days now, and I need fifty a day. Can't do with no less. It's become a habit, y' know."

Joe was clad in nondescript rags, which might originally have been men's or women's, clinging to his body in shreds. The shoes exposed his naked toes black with mud. His bare breast was in no better shape. He wore no shirt, no socks. Owing to his unkempt hair and his rough face, which had not been touched by a razor for weeks, it was impossible to tell whether he was young or old. In the dim light one could only see his eyes glowing as if in fever. We offered

him some sandwiches which he proceeded to stow away with such beastly greed that I turned away. It was painful to look upon the voracity to which this man had been driven by hunger. He seemed to have forgotten all about his surroundings. Only his loud munching was to be heard, and we felt ashamed, ashamed for our own satiated selves—ashamed for humanity.

A little later, seated on the bench beside him, we learned that Joe was an ex-service man. His home was in the far West, where he left an old mother and sister. They both depended upon him for their support. He had worked in a shoe factory, but it is six months now since he lost his job. He sold all of his scanty possessions, left nothing for himself and sent the money to his mother. Now he is absolutely penniless. Six weeks ago he was thrown out from the cellar, where he was living with several others, because they could not pay the five dollars rent. He doesn't care much about himself, but he thinks of the old mother and little sister. What will they do? The tears came into his eyes when he talked about them. He had turned to the American Legion but in vain. "You can bet," he said bitterly, "that before I die of hunger like a dog somewhere under a fence, I shall get even with those fakers at the Legion. And I am not the only one who has got that notion. Look at the boys here; they all say they're going to do the same as the Bolsheviks did in Russia. They're the real guys, them Bolsheviks. When we get down to business, we will send Rockefeller to sleep in this park and we'll take rooms in his house. Wait till winter comes. We've got nothing to lose, anyhow. Ha, ha, ha! Aint I right?"

"See here," and Joe resumed his speech after some moments of silence, "there is a feller over there among the papers, that skinny one with the long hair and the lady's jacket. He's an Italian. He's been with Mr. Ledoux in Boston, at the slave auction. Well, nobody cared to buy him, there's no flesh on his bones. Bones, that's all there is to him. He won't hold out very long now. He has not been able to earn a penny for eight months. He used to be a tailor. Well, he's always talking about the Bolsheviks. He says we would be better off if Honorable Lenin was here. Never mind, boys, we'll show them what we can do first, then we'll get Honorable Lenin to come here and fix things up. Say, Willie, come over here. Quit your game."

Willie rose from his place and came toward us with the others. There were ten of them. All of them were ex-service men and Americans. Willie was the only immigrant, but he talked a fluent English. They all looked alike, haggard, unkempt, with feverish eyes. They eyed us suspiciously but Joe reassured them. Never mind, they're all right, no sleuths." I asked, "How do you know that?" Joe replied without hesitating, "Never mind, I can tell a spy a mile away. These skunks can't fool me. Why I'll bet you're Bolsheviks yourselves."

The slender Italian gave us a look as if to say: "That's all right, we understand each other." However, Joe seemed to be in a good mood and wanted to do all the talking himself. "Well, boys," he said. "Some concert in your bellies! Its fiddling there just as in Caruso's throat, as Willie would say, eh?" They all smiled, wanly, as sick children might.

We gave them what money we had and Willie went to

get some sandwiches and cigarettes. Now they all started to talk. And when I listened to their talk and looked at them, I thought I was seeing Gorky's "In the Lower Depths," played this time in English in the open air. Here they are, these living symbols of the decayed old world. What is it that keeps them alive, what are they waiting for, what are they hoping for? I hear the answer in Willie's sick voice coming from the depths of his bare, thin chest.

"Steal! Why, everything belongs to us. These skyscrapers, this library, it's all our sweat that made it. And we! We've got to lay here in the parks, and it's a favor that they don't turn us out. But we'll pay them for all their favors. We'll give them a lesson. Never mind!"

The others nodded their heads. Joe returned with the cigarettes and sandwiches. The threw themselves upon the food like a pack of hungry wolves. We stepped aside and listened to the noise of their munching jaws. A policeman appeared and examined us mistrustfully, then walked away as if satisfied that there was no "revolution" in sight.

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We left the park at daybreak. In the first rays of dawn the skyscrapers had the air of ghosts waiting for the unveiling of a mystery.

The New York of the Rich is sound asleep. All is still. But it is a sullen stillness. For Bryant Park never sleeps. Bryant Park is never quiet. A storm of hate and bitterness is gathering there among the homeless and starving denizens of the parks which will break one day and sweep all before it. They curse their fate and the society which has brought it upon them. Like the cripples and hunchbacks of Sholom Asch's tale they go, "without flags, with no songs. Only a curse is folded in their rags, is heard in their weary steps, the most terrible curse to our civilization, a curse which makes the old world shrink in a paroxysm of terror, in an agony of death."

## Letters from the Miners' Convention

### Miners Vote to Help Soviet Russia

Indianapolis, Ind., Sept. 28, 1921.

The proposal that the miners donate a day's pay to help the starving workers in famine-stricken Russia was adopted at to-day's session of the convention of the United Mine Workers, following an address by William Z. Foster.

Foster told the delegates the story of the years of war, civil war, revolution and attempted counter-revolution, which the Workers' Republic had endured. He told of the blockade which had increased and intensified the results of the fighting upon the industries of Russia.

"But the workers of Russia had finally defeated their enemies and secured peace. They were allowed for the first time to turn their attention to rebuilding their economic life," said Foster. "A whole series of new laws had been passed, calculated to stimulate production. The machinery of production was being rehabilitated. All depended upon the harvest this year. If the grain yield was large the workers would have bread, the machinery would speed up, the revolution would be safe. Every one was watching the weather reports with breathless interest. Then came the drought. The great grain producing sections were almost burned to a crisp. Even the seed-corn for next year's crop is threatened. And the Russian workers are forced to turn to their brothers for help in this crisis. They turn to the United Mine Workers of America. They ask you to join with the labor unions of Europe, and the Machinists' Union, the Amalgamated Garment Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, and other unions of the United States, in helping in the relief of this famine. Many organizations are collecting a voluntary donation of one day's pay from their

membership for this purpose. I think that this convention can do no less to show their international solidarity with the workers of Russia, and to help these helpless workers now in the grip of famine."

Upon motion of Delegate John Brophy of Pennsylvania, the Convention decided: "That this convention go on record endorsing the appeal of the Russian Red Cross for voluntary aid for the famine-stricken workers of Russia." This action of the Convention will be transmitted to the local unions, which will have charge of the collection of the one-day's pay donations and such other assistance as may be offered.

### The Convention Summed Up

Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 5, 1921.

The United Mine Workers of America have held their convention. The noise is over, the dust is beginning to settle. What have been the results, and what are the lessons to be learned?

The "business man" administration retained its power. Lewis, Green & Co. completely dominate the national organization. The problems of the coming struggle next spring, when the present contract expires all over the country, have been put off for a reconvened convention next February. The administration disciplined Howat of Kansas and Farrington of Illinois with the consent of the convention. After Lewis had won his fight against Howat, and after Howat had left the convention to begin his jail sentence in Kansas, the convention turned around and elected Howat as one of its International Delegates!

The convention rejected the report of Lewis regarding salary advances made in the past year. This was a distinct defeat for the administration.

In the field of international affiliations, the miners rejected the proposal to join the Red International of Labor Unions. Less than 300 delegates were for it, and no roll-call vote was secured. Delegates were elected to the International Miners' Conference, to which the British miners among others are affiliated, and the report from the last International Conference was adopted.

There were some brighter moments, however! Relief for Soviet Russia was endorsed, and the request of the convention that the miners to donate one day's pay for this purpose was adopted without opposition. Resolutions were adopted calling for nationalization of the coal mines, amnesty for political prisoners, closer affiliation with the railroad workers, endorsing the Non-Partisan League of the Dakota farmers, approving a national Farm-Labor Party.

Now that the convention is over, what do these facts indicate? What can we learn from a calm study of the miners' convention?

It is safe to say that a large majority of the delegates were at least what can be called progressive, that they wanted active union policies, aggressively directed against the coal operators and the government. But most of them had feared the results of such a policy. The threat of the government's strong hand was brought before the convention every day. The United States Courts chose the moment when the delegates were deciding between Howat and Lewis to serve papers in the most dangerous attack yet made by the government. Lewis promised them peace the government threatened war. This pressure was on the convention in every issue where the administration won.

This conflict of progressive desires with fear of the government can be traced throughout the convention. In everything that means immediate action and immediate policy, Lewis wins. Other things which have to do with the more indefinite future, the progressives carry. They can even elect Howat as International Delegate at the close of the convention!

The great lesson to be learned from the miners' convention is the necessity for organization of the opposition. The business man officialdom of the miners had a machine, they were organized, they acted as a unit. Therefore they won. The opposition had no machine, they were unorganized, they acted loosely and without co-ordination. Therefore they lost. The convictions of the delegates were not the important factor. Emotion and sympathy produced lots of cheering and noise, but the votes were controlled by the best organization.

EARL R. BROWDER.

# International Documents

## UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY AND THE BRITISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS

(Section III of Report of Committee of Inquiry condensed.)

A practical programme to cope with the situation must deal with the problem in its two aspects:—

- (1) It must make adequate provision for the maintenance of the unemployed and under-employed.
- (2) It must make comprehensive proposals for the restoration of normal production.

There is no need to emphasize the obvious duty of the community in the matter of preventing conditions of poverty which must impair the health and vitality of the whole working-class population and lower the morale of the workers.

In the second place, to stand aside from active measures for stimulating industry and commerce on normal lines is to prolong the tragedy of unemployment and postpone the revival of healthy economic activity.

Before proceeding to outline our proposals, we wish to emphasize as strongly as we can the fundamental importance of throwing the whole energies of the nation into the immediate task which lies before it. The nation must take the same serious view of the war which it is now waging against poverty and economic paralysis as it did of the war with the Central Empires. Personal considerations must be swept aside in a great effort to overcome the enemy which is at the gate. The proposals which we put forward are made on the assumption that the people of the country are prepared to take a broad view of the present situation and to support a comprehensive policy, for nothing short of this will be adequate to prevent the degradation of great masses of workers and their families and to secure the speedy restoration of normal production. We believe that, given the will, our programme is one which will achieve its purpose. But clearly everything depends upon whether the Government, the House of Commons, and the whole community will make a whole-hearted attempt to cope with the situation. The responsibility for introducing the necessary votes and legislation is with the Government, which is called upon to face a great crisis with courage and determination.

### EMERGENCY MEASURES

In a sense the whole of the recommendations are emergency proposals, but some of them are capable of being put into operation more quickly than others. The whole of our suggestions fall under two heads:—

- (1) The maintenance of the unemployed and under-employed;
- (2) the provision of work.

Organized labor has consistently advocated the alternatives of work or maintenance. If we place maintenance first among our proposals, it is because hundreds of thousands of workers and their families are at this moment slowly starving, and maintenance is therefore an urgent need. But we wish to make it clear that the labor movement has always put maintenance as an alternative to work. Its demand is that opportunities of employment should be provided, and that failing such provision there should be adequate maintenance.

### (I.) MAINTENANCE

#### (a) Unemployment Benefit

The present unemployment benefit is miserably inadequate. With such meagre rate of benefit, the unemployed workers and their families must sink into semi-starvation or worse, whilst the home trade must dwindle still further and extend still further the field of unemployment and under-employment. Clearly, the first need, whether from the point of view of common humanity, industrial efficiency, or the prevention of further unemployment, is a substantial addition to the present rates of unemployment benefit.

This additional benefit ought to be a direct charge upon the national revenue. It is obvious that the imposition of contributions upon employers and workers at the present time would tend to intensify the present situation. The wage-earners can ill afford any additional burden; indeed, they need the means to meet the cost of the necessities of life. To throw any additional charge upon employers would tend further to restrict employment and to raise prices.

This additional benefit should have regard to the unemployed

workers' obligations. The out-of-work donation scheme, which was instituted after the Armistice as a temporary measure, provides a precedent. In addition to a flat rate, unemployed workers received an additional allowance for dependents. This course should be adopted in the present crisis. It is, we think, obvious that the operation of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1920, should be extended so as to apply to all workers.

We recommend, therefore:—

(1) That a person for whom no work is available at the Employment Exchanges, or through his or her Trade Union, shall be entitled to maintenance; and

(2) That the rate of maintenance including benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act, shall be at least 40s. per week for each householder, and 25s. per week for each single man or woman above the age of 18, with additional allowances for dependent.

Almost immediately numbers of members will fall out of benefit. As the period of depression drags on, more and more wage-earners will exhaust the benefit to which they are entitled under the present Act. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that the payment of benefit should be continued so long as a person remains unemployed.

#### (b) Under-Employment Benefit

With the rapid extension of short time, it is essential that adequate provision should be made to prevent widespread semi-starvation. We have considered the best means of making such provision, and have come to the conclusion that the only practicable method is to adopt the procedure suggested for the addition to the unemployment benefit, viz.: to put the burden upon the State. The under-employment pay should be based upon the amounts suggested above as unemployment benefit.

#### (c) Training Schemes for Women

It is important that every possible step should be taken to provide better equipment for women workers by means of training schemes. During the war large numbers of women were attracted into occupations which were swollen to meet the needs of war, but which cannot offer permanent employment during times of peace. The present situation is complicated by the fact that the process of transference from war industries to more normal employment has not been completed. It is essential that the needs of post-war industry and the possibilities of women's employment should be explored, in order that training schemes might be developed, not only in the way of domestic education, but also for the purpose of preparing female workers for new kinds of employment.

#### (d) The Training of Male Workers

A period of unemployment offers opportunities to men to become more proficient in their own occupations by a course of special training. During their enforced idleness many workers in the wood-working, engineering, and other industries would, we believe, be willing to take advantage of any opportunities of this kind, and we think that local education authorities, backed by grants-in-aid from the Exchequer, should be encouraged to make provision for courses of training for unemployed workers.

The broad principle which we think should be allowed is that, when there is unemployment among adults, the entry of juvenile workers into industry should, as far as possible, be arrested, provision being made by means of an adequate system of maintenance allowances to prevent the family suffering from the loss of their earnings. Children leaving school stream into the labor market at the average rate of rather more than 50,000 a month. It is clear that if these streams of entries were stopped more work would be available.

### II.—PROVISION OF WORK

No amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act can possibly do more than relieve immediate distress by maintaining to a certain extent the purchasing power of the workers. But what is finally wanted is not doles, but work, and though we have no use for the policy of getting men to dig a hole in order that they may fill it up again, we are of opinion that there are a number of directions in which the Government could assist in the provision of socially necessary work. The revival of trade must necessarily be gradual and depends in

part upon questions of foreign policy, with which we deal later in this report, but at home much can be done immediately. Moreover, it is important that the available volume of employment should be spread as widely as possible.

(a) **Withdrawal of Juvenile Labor**

We have already suggested that steps should be taken to prevent the flow of new labor into the labor market during the continuance of the present depression; that juvenile workers already in industry should, as far as possible, be withdrawn and provision made for educational training. These measures would do something to relieve the congestion and increase the opportunities of employment of adult workers.

(b) **Legal Reduction of Working Hours**

We have explained why, in our view, the working of short time is not a remedy but an aggravation of the evil. This does not, however, apply to a legal shortening of the working week. . . . We therefore demand the immediate passage into law of a Bill, on the lines of the Trades Union Congress Bill, fixing the legal hours of work at a maximum of 44 per week without reduction in wages, and drastically regulating overtime, so as to limit it to the indispensable minimum which in each industry the employers and Trade Unions concerned agree to be necessary.

(c) **Work, not "Relief Works"**

We have made no attempt to disguise the fact that any measures effective in relieving the present situation must involve a considerable immediate outlay from national funds. We recognize that the insensate policy of the Government during the last two years, both in home and foreign affairs, has brought the nation to the point at which wholesale relief is the only alternative to wholesale starvation, and that those who suffer by it must be provided for directly out of the pockets of those more fortunately situated. But we realize that the efforts of the nation must also be directed to restoring the fabric of trade and industry so as to reabsorb those out of work and make possible a sane reconstruction. In this direction little can be done without a drastic reversal of the foreign policy of the Government on the lines set out later in this report. But we feel it necessary to insist that where work is provided by public effort for the unemployed, such work should be of a socially productive character, carried out as regular wage-earning employment by workpeople belonging to the respective trades. . . .

(d) **The Organization of Government Contracts**

It is important that the Government should review its programme and probable requirements for, say, the next decade, with a view to putting in hand new work of a productive character to increase the volume of employment during the present depression. The principle of concentrating upon the lean years work which would relieve the pressure during the fat years of trade is one which has been continually urged by the Labor Movement upon this and previous Governments, and while it amounts in fact to no more than the foresight commonly exercised by an intelligent housekeeper, it would have no inconsiderable effect in stabilizing employment in the trades engaged in supply. Departments of State and public authorities. We think that the plan of anticipating orders should also be pursued by Local Authorities and other public bodies throughout the country.

(e) **Other Government Work**

The making and repair of roads should be carried on at the present time on a much larger scale than heretofore. . . .

Similarly, the immediate possibilities of afforestation and foreshore reclamation; we think that all the available schemes should be pressed forward with all speed. Both forms of employment, like the construction of roads, are desirable from the national point of view.

(f) **Housing**

We demand that the Government shall forthwith compose its differences with the building Trade Unions by giving a guarantee of an adequate minimum housing programme for the next five years at least, and by meeting their reasonable claim for safeguards against unemployment. This will immediately make possible the employment of a number of additional workers upon housebuilding. No one who has even the smallest knowledge of working-class housing before 1914, and still more since the war put a stop to all forms of housebuilding, can doubt that a Government which was really concerned with housing the workers of this country could with confidence guarantee not 5 but 10 or 15 years' employment to the members of the building trade.

(g) **Building Guilds**

Secondly, all restrictions at present imposed by the Government on the expansion of the Building Guilds must cease, and the local authorities be encouraged to accept satisfactory

tenders made by the Guilds. The unwise and fainthearted announcement of the Ministry that only a very small number of Guild contracts will be sanctioned is having an effect on the building workers far out of proportion to the numbers which it has actually affected so far. When the offer of a group of Trade Unionists to supply the public's direct need at their own responsibility without profiteering is summarily rejected, they are likely to conclude that the Government has a direct interest in maintaining the profits of the private employer.

(h) **Control of Materials**

We are in possession of a considerable amount of evidence to the effect that the capitalist combines in such trades as cement-making, brick-making, and light castings are restricting production, creating an artificial shortage in order to keep up their own profits, and generally holding the community to ransom.

It is high time that the Report was in the hands of the public. In the meantime, however, we are of the opinion that where raw materials and other necessary supplies for the building trades are being restricted and held up in the manner suggested above, the Government should take drastic steps to compel the production of these essential materials in the required quantities.

(i) **Railways, Roads, Waterways and Harbors**

It is not only Government Departments which could assist in the provision of work by undertaking work which is long overdue. There is an enormous amount of railway work which ought to be no longer postponed—the building and repair of locomotive engines, railway coaches and trucks, the repair of the permanent way, the renovation of railway stations, sheds, and warehouses, and similar work, for which the necessary means are available in the fund allowed by the Government to the railway companies for deferred repairs and renewals. If this necessary and desirable work were undertaken now, it would provide employment to a wide range of skilled and less skilled wage-earners, both in the railway service and in private employment.

A large amount of work could be provided by the development of the road system of the country in view of the growth of motor transport.

Moreover, the waterways of the country—one of the essential means of transport—stand in sore need of extensive repairs, to make good the deterioration due to neglect during the past few years. The longer such work is delayed, the more expensive relatively will it be when it is decided to undertake it. The repair of river and canal banks, dredging and general repairs would absorb a considerable number of workers in the aggregate. . . .

(j) **Provision of Schools**

The Government has seen fit to discourage local authorities from proceeding with the erection of schools. The present school accommodation (practically unchanged since 1914) is inadequate even for the present number of pupils. Elementary, secondary, and technical schools are full to overflowing, and the pressure on the existing accommodations is such that the limit of educational facilities has been reached in many places. Even apart, therefore, from the developments of the educational system which are deemed to be essential, a considerable increase in the existing accommodation is urgently required. We hold strongly that the Government should reverse its mistaken policy of retrenchment on education, and urge local authorities, with the assistance of adequate grants from the Revenue, to undertake a bold policy for the building and equipment of educational institutions. . . .

(k) **Restrictions on Borrowing**

At the present time local authorities are embarrassed by high rates, and during a period of unemployment such as that from which we are now suffering, the local authorities with a low rateable value and in great financial difficulties are often those in whose areas unemployment is most serious. . . .

Local authorities can build neither houses nor schools, nor anything else, without money, and the policy at present pursued by the Treasury of hampering borrowing by local authorities is throttling their initiative. We recommend the removal of the Treasury embargo on borrowing by local authorities, and suggest that the Government should put the credit of the State at the services of the local authorities by raising and advancing money to them through the Public Works Loan Board, or otherwise.

(l) **Land Cultivation**

One of the most vital branches of "useful work" seems, as far as we can see, to have been practically neglected. Development of agriculture, and the stimulation of the home production of food, are forms of work which might well absorb a great deal of surplus labor, but which demand national foresight and forethought if they are to be adequately planned.

### III.—MEASURES FOR THE RESTORATION OF OVERSEAS COMMERCE

We are convinced that the measures outlined, if put into operation without delay, would gradually provide a widening field of employment in productive work. We have not made a single proposal relating to the provision of work which is not essentially productive in character. It is vitally necessary, however, to extend the principle of stimulating normal productive activity to foreign commerce generally, for whatever policy may be adopted for the restoration of trade within the borders of this country, there is a limit to its scope. The root problem lies in the revival of industry and commerce abroad. Until the countries of the world, and particularly the impoverished nations of Europe, are able to re-establish their economic life, the world's foreign trade will be seriously restricted. The British Government must be compelled to face the issue. It can no longer be allowed to shirk a clear and unequivocal decision. It must be pressed to devote itself now to the task which it was its duty to undertake two years ago.

We realize that the resumption of normal trading relationships between the countries of Europe and ourselves cannot be achieved by any wave of the magician's wand. But we assert that working agreements could be negotiated and put into active operation within a few weeks if a determined effort were made to re-establish trading relations on a satisfactory basis at the earliest possible moment. It is, indeed, to the advantage of the European countries and ourselves that normal industry and commerce should be rendered possible on the Continent. Our proposals are directed towards this end.

#### (a) An End to Wars

The disastrous situation confronting this country today has been largely created by the prolongation of old wars and the prosecution of new wars.

Clearly, the first need of the world is peace. Peace cannot, it is true, be secured in a day, but its realization could be assured by steps which must sooner or later be taken.

We therefore call for an immediate cessation of the vast expenditure, and of the wanton and unnecessary acts of military and economic imperialism, by which a considerable part of the sorely-needed resources of this country is still being frittered away, month by month. Immense damage has been caused by reckless military expenditure in Mesopotamia and Persia, to say nothing of the support which we have accorded to the filibustering expeditions of the enemies of Soviet Russia. Labor demands that there shall be no more such military adventures, and that the policy of fomenting international discord and closing the door to effective economic relations which this country has so far pursued, shall immediately give place to a policy framed with the object of sweeping away all barriers to international economic co-operation and facilitating by every possible means the full resumption of international economic and political intercourse.

#### (b) Trade with Russia

There must be an immediate resumption of trade with Russia, and of normal political relations with the Soviet Republic. The Russian Government is prepared to supply large quantities of timber, hides, flax, platinum, and gold in payment of extensive orders to make good the wastage of the years of war and blockade, and to re-establish the economic life of the country. Russia needs railway equipment, means of transport, agricultural machinery, and implements of all kinds, clothing, including boots, and a thousand and one other commodities which could be supplied by British labor. The effects of placing orders for these requirements in this country would be cumulative. The reaction upon industries not directly concerned with the fulfilment of Russian contracts would be far-reaching.

Negotiations for the conclusion of a trading agreement between this country and Russia have been proceeding with infinite delays for many months. It is time the treaty was agreed upon and put into operation. Almost immediately employment would be provided in some of our staple industries and the process of slowing down production would be retarded and perhaps reversed.

#### (c) Restoration of Trade with other Continental Countries

In dealing with this question it is necessary to take a long view; short-range action designed to produce immediate effect is likely to have very dangerous reactions. In other words, the only sound policy will be one directed towards assisting Continental countries to recover a healthy condition of industry and commerce along normal lines. More harm than good would in the end be produced by using British Government credits and guarantees to bolster up schemes for assisting manufacturers in this country to unload on insolvent Con-

tinental countries goods which under normal circumstances those countries would be making for themselves. Any action taken must be designed primarily to meet the needs of the countries in question, and not for the sake of getting rid of surplus products of this country. We shall in the end reap a much surer benefit from their revived prosperity by exporting to them the goods for the supply of which they normally look to us.

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We may now proceed to enumerate our proposals.

#### (i) Fix the German Indemnity

One of the most immediate questions is the fixing of the German indemnity at an amount which is both reasonable and practicable. No intelligent person now believes that it is possible to "make Germany pay for the war." This cherished ambition, fostered by the speeches of Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues, after doing irreparable injury to the restoration of real peace and trade, has now vanished into thin air, and the hard realities of the situation must be frankly faced. We think that the British Government should no longer be the tool of French imperialist policy, but that it should make its position known by clearly asserting that, in the interests of the whole world, the German indemnity should be fixed at a figure which it is within the power of the German Republic to pay, in order to end the prevailing unsettlement and uncertainty, and encourage the re-establishment of normal production.

#### (ii) Provision of Credits

It is clear that credits must be provided to assist the restoration of industry in several European countries. We think that the provision of such credits should be conditional on the removal of any unreasonable barriers on trade with other States. The abolition of restrictions on foreign trade is of special importance at the present time. In the case of the Danubian States free commercial intercourse is an imperative need. The break-up of Austria-Hungary and the development of a spirit of intense nationalism in the nations of Central and South-East Europe has destroyed an economic unit which it is essential to restore.

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The general principle is to assist the revival of healthy economic life in the impoverished countries rather than to create an artificial and temporary market for our own manufactured goods.

#### (iii) Trading by Government

But it seems unlikely that any organization for extending credits to private traders will, in itself, secure immediate resumption of international exchange of commodities on a sufficiently large scale. Any one manufacturer or trader finds a difficulty in adopting the expedient of barter; and bands of financiers in all countries are eager to seize on opportunities for profiteering by the cornering of goods and the manipulation of the exchanges. What the situation demands, in our opinion, is the bold intervention of the Governments themselves in order to arrange, on a large scale, the barter of whole stocks of surplus commodities. . . .

#### (iv) The Organization of Transport

One of the most serious obstacles to the resumption of international trade on the Continent is the defective condition of the transport services. It is clear that its improvement must take some time, but a vigorous policy, if immediately set in motion, would rapidly begin to show beneficial results. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the reaction of an improvement in transport facilities upon the economic position of Europe as a whole. The mere provision of credits without a simultaneous policy of transport reorganization could not achieve the desired results because of the difficulty there would be in delivering raw materials and finished products. We think, however, that such a policy cannot be left to the individual States concerned. It is essentially a matter for international co-operation, and could be undertaken, we suggest, by the institution of a measure of unified control of the railway systems lying between Germany and Russia under the League of Nations or a Commission set up under the auspices of the League.

#### (v) Co-operative Trading

Until the establishment of stable relationships and the return of more normal currency conditions, every encouragement should be given organized barter for the interchange of goods. In this connection, the fullest possible use should be made of the co-operative movements of the various nations of Europe. . . . We are convinced that, given encouragement, the co-operative movement in Europe would be a powerful factor in assisting the return of normal economic conditions.