The Fight against the "Capitulations" in Egypt.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

Egypt is the only country, apart from China, in which there still formally exist capitulations, that is to say special rights and privileges for the citizens of foreign imperialist States. The origin of the Egyptian capitulations is to be traced to the capitulations which were enforced upon the Turkish Empire by the European States in the 19th century. And although Egypt was the first country to be freed from the "stark of Ottoman despotism" and to be converted into a protectorate of the great civilising power, Great Britain, nevertheless even under the English protectorate the regime of capitulations still continues. This was the compensation which England had to pay to her rivals--France, Italy and Germany--for the latter's recognition of the British protectorate. By means of their influence, not only the ruling English, but also more or less big colonies of other European powers exist as parasites on the living body of the Egyptian people.

This state of affairs was in no way altered when the Ottoman Empire finally collapsed after the world war. Everywhere in all provinces of the former Ottoman Empire the capitulations were abolished shortly after the conclusion of peace. With a stroke of the pen the special privileges of foreigners were abolished by the French mandatory power in Syria, and by the English in Palestine, Transjordania and Iraq. The English and French in these countries realised only too well to what an unbearable state of affairs, from the political and economic standpoint, the retention of the capitulations would be bound to lead. Apart from America, which also was granted certain compensations, there was no Power in these countries which have placed obstacles in the way of the abolition of the capitulations in these countries.

In 1922, under the Lausanne Treaty, the capitulations were also abolished in the territory of the newly-arisen national independent Turkey; nor did the rulers of Arabia think of granting special rights to foreigners.

Egypt alone remained burdened with the capitulation regime. The independence of Egypt was formally proclaimed; the country received its own king, its own government, a parliament and a Senate. But this independence was reduced to an empty formula, not only by the continued occupation of the country by British troops, the retention by British officials of all the most important administrative posts, but before all by the continued existence of the capitulations.

It is to be seen, therefore, that the fight for Egyptian independence is closely bound up with the abolition of the capitulations. All the efforts which have been included in their programmes demand the abolition of this institution which is so disastrous and humiliating for the country. But all attempts to abolish the capitulations have up to now been frustrated by the resistance of the interested Powers. England, France, Italy, Greece, Spain and the other countries plainly and emphatically declare that the British must be left free from taxation, to recognise only the Consular courts and to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the Egyptian courts.

It is in vain that the Egyptian government proves by means of statistics that the capitulations render Egypt a perfect paradise for foreign criminals, smugglers, swindlers, etc. It is in vain that it points out that the Egyptian economy, every year to Egyptian national economy by the capitulations. Equally vain are the attempts to bring about a temporary compromise solution, as for instance, extension of the jurisdiction of the so-called mixed courts (in which foreign and Egyptian judges take part), limitation of the jurisdiction of the Consular courts to exceptional cases, liability of foreigners to pay certain taxes. The Powers obstinately refuse to give way an inch in this matter.

It is characteristic how quickly Germany, whose capitulation rights were abolished in the war, has been able to recover by the same means, her position in the imperialist united front. The German representative refused the request of the Egyptian government that the capitulations be abolished just as emphatically as did the representatives of the other countries. Germany cannot alone renounce her privileges.

The view of the failure of the negotiations, the Egyptian press is pointing out more and more the necessity of using other means in order to force the obstinate foreign powers to give up their privileges. At the same time the Egyptian press does not fail to call attention to the Chinese example, and there are tendencies to continue the campaign against the capitulations with revolutionary means.

Directions to the Sections of the Communist International for the Economic Conference of the League of Nations.

1. If the original object of the Economic Conference planned by the imperialist States was rather that of propaganda in favour of the League of Nations, the aspect of affairs has now altogether changed. For Great Britain the Economic Conference, which is to meet in May, is a further factor in the anti-Soviet front which is being formed under British lead. There can be no doubt of this. It is confirmed by the growing interest of Great Britain in the Conference. When the first preparations for the Conference were being made, the British public took little interest in the preliminaries. The plans worked out by the French were regarded in Great Britain as Utopian and reactionary.

2. Great Britain is consciously and consequently continuing its Geneva policy. At the moment its efforts are concentrated on Germany and Poland.

In the latter respect, we have the British promotion of the attempted approach between Poland and Lithuania. These problems contain the keystone of inclusion of Germany in the anti-Soviet front. Polish concessions on Lithuanian territory might afford Poland a new channel for navigation and a harbour on the Baltic. In this manner the question of the Danzig corridor would lose in importance in the eyes of Poland, and a settlement of the corridor problem in favour of Germany would become conceivable and possible.

For Germany there are two other questions which can only be solved by means of an understanding with the Entente: 1. the permission to keep a standing army, which would be one of the main presumptions for an effective imperialist activity on the part of Germany; 2. the question of colonies, which is likewise only to be solved by means of an understanding with Great Britain. As the price of an inclusion of Germany in the anti-Soviet front, Great Britain would doubtless consider the sacrifice of some of the less valuable trade areas.

Added to this, we have Great Britain's Balkan policy, which is also being genrally considered in its entente with the Soviet Union.

Both in the Balkans, i.e. in Albania, etc., and in Africa, Italy cannot advance without the support of Great Britain. Besides backing Great Britain's policy in the rest of the world, Italy has now confirmed its foreign policy in an anti-Soviet sense by the recognition of Roumania's annexation of Bessarabia.

That, in broad outlines, is the policy of Great Britain, which is bound to find its expression, more or less veiled, at the forthcoming International Economic Conference.

3. As the political side of the anti-Soviet bloc will doubtless not be broached openly at the World Economic Conference, the same tendencies will find expression by means of economic questions, in which respect we may distinguish between a direct and an indirect line of action.

The former will take the form of an attack on the foreign trade monopoly of the Soviet Union, based on the recognition that this is one of the most decisive economic weapons of the Soviet Union against the capitalist world. It will be pointed out that no reasonable commercial connection can be entertained with a country possessing a foreign trade monopoly. In the same connection it will be remarked that the European economic crisis can only be solved by an inclusion of the Russian market in the world's economy. Nor can the further trend be neglected of the British attitude as to the further trend of the Soviet economic policy. It is to be advanced. If the Soviet Union does not abolish its foreign trade monopoly, which it cannot very well do, there is nothing left but to limit the economic traffic with such a country to the barest minimum. This is the line of attack most likely to be taken up against the Soviet Union at the World Economic Conference.

It will be indirectly continued by the British attempts to effect a financial boycott by the capitalist countries in regard to the Soviet Union. In the first place it will be a question of preventing any long-termed goods credits, such as have been
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This state of affairs was in no way altered when the Ottoman Empire finally collapsed after the war. Everywhere in all provinces of the former Ottoman Empire the capitulations were abolished shortly after the conclusion of peace. With a stroke of the pen the special privileges of foreigners were abolished by the French mandatory power in Syria, and by the English in Palestine, Transjordania and Iraq. The English and French in the Levant live in a colonial existence, not in a national one as is realised only too well to what an unbearable state of affairs, from the political and economic standpoint, the retention of the capitulations would be bound to lead. Apart from America, which also was granted certain compensations, there was no Power in these countries which have placed obstacles in the way of the abolition of the capitulations in these countries.

In 1922, under the Lausanne Treaty, the capitulations were also abolished in the territory of the newly-arisen national independent Turkey; nor did the rulers of Arabia think of granting special rights to foreign powers. Egypt alone remained burdened with the capitulation regime. The independence of Egypt was formally proclaimed; the country received its own king, its own government, a parliament and a Senate. But this independence was reduced to an empty formula, not only by the continued occupation of the country by British troops, the retention by British officials of all the most important administrative posts, but before all by the continued existence of the capitulations.

It is to be seen, therefore, that the fight for Egyptian independence is closely bound up with the abolition of the capitulations. All the Egyptian parties have included in their programmes the abolition of the capitulations institution which is so disastrous and humiliating for the country. But all attempts to abolish the capitulations have up to now been frustrated by the resistance of the interested Powers. England, France, Italy, Greece, Spain and the other countries plainly and emphatically declare that it is not more and more the necessity of their interests to be free from taxation, to recognise only the Consular courts and to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the Egyptian courts.

It is in vain that the Egyptian government proves by means of statistics that the capitulations render Egypt a perfect paradise for foreign criminals, smugglers, swindlers etc. It is in vain that it points out the tremendous injury caused every year to Egyptian national economy by the capitulations. Equally in vain are the attempts to bring about a temporary compromise solution, as for instance, extension of the jurisdiction of the so-called mixed courts (in which foreign and Egyptian judges take part), limitation of the jurisdiction of the Consular courts to exceptional cases, liability of foreigners to pay certain taxes. The Powers obstinately refuse to give way an inch in this matter.

It is characteristic how quickly Germany, whose capitulation rights were abolished in the war, but were then given back by the Treaty of St. Germain to the Egyptian government, the united front. The German representative refused the request of the Egyptian government that the capitulations be abolished just as emphatically as did the representatives of the other countries.

Germany cannot alone renounce her privileges.

In view of the failure of the negotiations, the Egyptian press is pointing out the necessity of using other means in order to force the obstinate foreign powers to give up their privileges. At the same time the Egyptian press does not fail to call attention to the Chinese example, and there are tendencies to continue the campaign against the capitulations with revolutionary means.

**ECONOMICS**

**Directions to the Sections of the Communist International for the Economic Conference of the League of Nations.**

I.

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2. Great Britain is consciously and consequently continuing its Geneva policy. At the moment its efforts are concentrated on Germany and Poland.

In the latter respect, we have the British promotion of the attempted approach between Poland and Lithuania. These problems contain the key to the inclusion of Germany in the anti-Soviet front. By means of a German-Polish union Great Britain might afford Poland a new channel for navigation and a harbour on the Baltic. In this manner the question of the Danzig corridor would lose in importance in the eyes of Poland, and a settlement of the corridor problem in favour of Germany would become conceivable and possible.

For Germany there are two other questions which can only be solved by means of an understanding with the Entente: 1. the permission to keep a standing army, which would be one of the main presumptions for an effective imperialistic activity on the part of Germany; 2. the question of colonies, which is likewise only to be solved by means of an understanding with Great Britain. As the price of an inclusion of Germany in the anti-Soviet front, Great Britain would doubtless consider the sacrifice of some of the less valuable trade areas.

Added to this, we have Great Britain’s Balkan policy, which is part of its general policy of encircling the Soviet Union. Both in the Balkan itself, i.e. in Albania, etc., and in Africa, Italy cannot advance without the support of Great Britain. Besides backing Great Britain’s policy in the rest of the world, Italy has now confirmed its foreign policy in an anti-Soviet sense by the recognition of Roumanian annexation of Bessarabia. But, in broad outlines, it is the policy of Great Britain, which is Bound to find its expression, more or less veiled, at the forthcoming International Economic Conference.

3. As the political side of the anti-Soviet bloc will undoubtedly not be broached openly at the World Economic Conference, the same tendencies will find expression by means of economic questions, in which respect we may distinguish between a direct and an indirect line of action.

The former will take the form of an attack on the foreign trade monopoly of the Soviet Union, based on the recognition that this is one of the most decisive economic weapons of the Soviet Union against the capitalist world. It will be pointed out that no reasonable country can be entertained with a country possessing a foreign trade monopoly. In the same connection it will be remarked that the European economic crisis can only be solved by an inclusion of the Russian market in the world’s economy. Nor can there be any doubt as to the further trend of events should such a position be recognized. If the Soviet Union does not abolish its foreign trade monopoly, which it cannot very well do, there is nothing left but to limit the economic traffic with such a country to the barest minimum. This is the line of attack most likely to be taken up against the Soviet Union at the World Economic Conference.

As mentioned above, it is the case in the international trade that no trade can be conducted without a boycott. It is no use to imagine that the capitalist countries can be induced to effect a financial boycott against the capitalist countries in regard to the Soviet Union. In the first place it will be a question of preventing any long-term goods credits, such as have been