The United States merely express openly and brutally what all imperialist States not only think but also practise. The fact that such a powerful State as the United States openly champions the employment of the gas weapon on all other States likewise to declare in favour of gas warfare. But there are plenty of other reasons sufficing to induce the imperialists of all countries to prepare for a gas war. The subventions afforded by all imperialist States to their chemical industries are significant enough. The gas experiments at Warsaw and other capitals are in accordance with experimenting of the imperialists. Since the end of the war, no fewer than 1000 new war gases have been discovered.

Thus all political and military facts may be said to speak a language very different from that of the hypocritical "declaration" of the International Gas War Conference.

The programme of the Brussels Conference included the comprehension of the Red Cross in gas warfare. It aimed at establishing the rôle and tasks of the Red Cross in this connection (that same Red Cross which in all countries has proved such a radically reactionary, and in Germany even a monarchical, body).

The question of anti-gas methods absorbed the main attention of the Conference. There are at present very considerable collective anti-gas methods, for it is only the collective methods that are efficacious. The Brussels Conference was probably occupied in considering methods of protecting the bourgeoisie against gas attacks; protection of the broad masses would hardly have been a matter of interest. It is thoroughly in keeping with the character of capitalism to seek to ward off the dangers of war from the bourgeoisie.

This programme and the treatment of this particular question again clearly show up the war preparations of the imperialists. If we insert these facts into the general political line of the social democrats (and particularly British) imperialism, we shall recognise that the Brussels Conference also plays a part in the war preparations against the Soviet Union.

Where anything is undertaken against the Soviet Union, the social democrats must naturally take part in it. De Broückère, a Belgian Social Democratic leader, also took part in the Brussels Conference. Thus the entire Social Democratic International cannot fail to be well informed as to what is on foot. Nevertheless, they do their utmost to represent this conference for "war preparedness" as having been merely an anti-gas conference. In this connection the "Vorwärts" is particularly eloquent, writing as follows on January 20th (copied from the "Social Democratic Press Service").

"Closely Brouckère has been confirmed by the Brussels negotiations in his opinion that the only possible solution lies in the concentration of all efforts on a total abolition of gas warfare.

This declaration of Brouckère's finds enthusiastic approval on the part of the "Vorwärts", which thus tally adheres to the general policy of the social democrats of representing all the imperialist war preparations as steps taken in the interest of peace. It is the object of the social democrats to deceive the workers as to the true state of affairs and as to the threatened danger of a new war.

Great Britain's "Little War" in the Sudan.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

"We have swallowed a juicy morsel; now we must see about digesting it", said Sir John Mauley-Loader, the newly appointed Governor-General of the Sudan, at a farewell banquet in London. Hitherto he has enjoyed a leisurely "luncheon break" from the burdens of the post. The Sudan of the "co-dominion" between Egypt and Great Britain in the Sudan, the latter has indeed been actively engaged in turning the country into a British colony. Here British capital has carte blanche for investments; there is plenty of good soil, natural resources, "the working-cattle" driven by hunger and misery, furnish cheap labour. Throughout the Near East the Sudan negro is looked upon as a worker that can be exploited to the utmost and is therefore often transported by contract to Egypt or even to Syria and Mesopotamia; it is therefore only a question of establishing British rule securely
enough for the economic exploitation of the country to be carried on without difficulty.

The domination of the Sudan has proved particularly profitable for British capitalists since Great Britain has been ruling there alone. This year cotton was already exported from the Sudan to Great Britain at a total value of three million pounds, thus enabling Great Britain to bring considerable pressure to bear on the Egyptian cotton prices; in the coming year the area under cotton cultivation is to be enlarged by a further 30 per cent, to reach a total of 175,000 acres (or an area equaling one acre). Rubber exports from the Sudan already exceed half a million pounds in value. The value of the British goods imported into the Sudan is almost two million pounds.

And all this is only the beginning. New roads are being made through the desert, opening up further regions of the Sudan to traffic and capitalist expansion. In the towns and in the mountains, electric plants set up, bridges constructed (e.g. the new bridge from Khartoum to Omdurman, which was recently inaugurated with much ceremony) and the Sudan is being developed into a favourable strategic basis for British troops, lest any complications should arise in Egypt.

And the requisite means? These are also being provided in part by the native population. The system of the British Governor is based on the taxation of certain regions and districts and the coercion of certain tribes and villages to labour, the result being that in the last two years the British administration has billeted on the Sudanese budget surplus.

There merely remains the question as to how the native population likes colonial domination. Schuster, Financial Adviser to the Sudan Government, has attempted to answer this query. Though misery and starvation reigns in the towns and entire tribes roam the countryside in the hope of finding food, he is of opinion that the Sudan population has a better life than the people in Egypt and even a better life than the British working class.

If this is not intended as a facetious hint to the effect that the Baldwin Government has brought the British worker to a level below that of a Sudan coolie, it cannot well be in keeping with social conditions in the towns and the mountains, rather it is in a state of continual fermentation. The imperialist ideal of a “pacification” of the Sudan has not been attained by any means.

Just recently, this silent fermentation has given rise to an open anti-British eruption. In the “happy Sudan”, Great Britain has a “little war”, which is naturally carried on with all the cruelty of colonial wars.

It started with the assassination of Captain Ferguson, who was commissioned to collect the cattle tax of one of the mountain tribes, that of the Nuer. This was the signal for a rising which embraced several tribes, the “spearmen”, starting in a distant part of the Sudan. Military expeditions and punitive expeditions were sent out for the punishment of the rebellious tribes. Aeroplanes of the Royal Air Force prepared the way for this punitive expedition by a bombardment of the villages, which in many cases were so completely destroyed that nothing was left for the troops to do.

In a wild panic at the approach of “civilisation”, the Nuer tribes with their families fled into the interior of the country, into a region of swamps which could defy the attacks of the airmen. From this position they were able to inflict considerable losses on the British troops, so that reinforcements had to be sent from other districts. Though the British troops, while reducing the isolated villages andoperations, just as it had done in the eighties, when the British suffered one defeat after another and were finally obliged to call in the aid of Egyptian troops. Now again, auxiliary forces had to be raised, and that even among the Sudanese population itself.

These troops, however, are unreliable. The Cairo paper “Ahram” reports of friction between the British and auxiliary forces of a nature highly characteristic of colonial warfare. The British commanders are said to have ordered the Sudanese mercenaries into the foremost ranks. The natives, however, refused, arguing only to fight under equal conditions with the British; for they would try a British officer and several soldiers were killed; but was peace restored until the Sudanese demands had been fulfilled.

Since such “incidents” are by no means rare, the war in the Sudan will presumably be of long duration. One British paper has satisfaction in stating that such colonial wars afford a welcome opportunity to test the qualities of Great Britain’s arms and war munitions for greater wars in the future.

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**UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS**

**The Facts Regarding the Results of the Grain Campaign.**

By J. B.

Thanks to the united efforts of the bourgeois, Social Democratic, and “ultra Left” press, the new campaign of calumny and agitation is now directed against the Soviet Union.

Thus, only a few days ago, the bourgeois “Börsenzeitung” of Berlin published on its front page a contribution from Charkov under the heading “A Struggle for Bread in Russia.” Naturally the inventions of the bourgeois “Börsenzeitung” were taken up by the whole chorus of Social Democratic and Trotsky-Menshevik publications. The “Socialistische Presse” of the organ of the Russian Mensheviks, which is always in the “vanguard” on such occasions, hastened to tell its readers in the very first number of the year 1928 that Bolshevism was approaching its end, since the problem of the peasantry was sticking in its throat and would, it was to be hoped, soon cause it to choke itself to death.

Elaborate though they may be, however, the announcements of the “Börsenzeitung” in regard to a “struggle for bread” were nothing but a barefaced lie. From the beginning of the grain-purchasing campaign down to January 15th, i.e. in the first four months of the agricultural year, the State and Co-operative organs of the Soviet Union bought up more than 200 million pounds of grain (i.e. more than 61 million tons — as compared with the January 20th, 1928). If it is borne in mind that the total town population of the Soviet Union amounts to 26 millions, it will be obvious that the spectre of a “struggle for bread” in that country could only have originated in the half-distorted brain of a bourgeois writer. All along, the supply of grain to the towns of the Soviet Union has been made without the least interruption and, as appears from data to hand, it can be considered guaranteed for the whole twelvemonth.

It is obvious that the task of the grain-purchasing campaign is not exhausted by the creation of a grain-stock sufficient to cover home requirements. The Soviet Union exports grain; indeed, grain exports are one of the main constituents of the total export trade of the country. The measure and facility of such exports greatly contributes to determine the possibility of importing industrial apparatus and those industrial raw materials the production of which within the Soviet Union is at present insufficient, as, e.g., cotton. The growth of the grain-export fund is one of the main presumptions for industrialisation and the economic and social development of the Soviet power. In this connection there certainly have been difficulties to overcome, and it is these difficulties which obviously served as the basis of the forgeries of the “Börsenzeitung.”

A whole number of circumstances both of an “objective” and of a “subjective” nature have until quite recently hindered and impeded the rate of development of grain exports. In the first place we must here make mention of a factor which, at the present stage of development of an agrarian country like the Soviet Union, is very hard to eliminate. The growth in the purchasing power of the village is distributed most unequally throughout the year. In the autumn months, i.e. at the time of the realisation of the harvest, it registers a sudden leap upwards, with which the industrial production and the supply of industrial products cannot keep pace. A certain divergence between the demand of the rural districts and the supply of industry is therefore more or less inevitable in the early winter months. It can only be reduced by the accumulation of adequate stocks of grain.

But in spite of the very considerable growth in industrial production (by 20 per cent.) the extent of supplies was smaller than usual. The reason lies in the fact that the danger of war, which was particularly great in the summer of 1927, after the rupture of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union and after the murder of Comrade Vojkov, called forth a special demand, such as is usual immediately before a war, a demand which contributed not a little to the depletion of the stocks of the Soviet Union commercial organs.