

# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

EDITOR :: WM. PAUL

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## REVIEW OF THE MONTH

### THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE.

**L**AST year, when the Labour Party Conference met at Edinburgh, the moderate leaders, by a dishonest manœuvre, got a resolution passed which had for its purpose to prevent the trade unions appointing Communists to any of the councils of the Labour Party. During the past year the whole bureaucratic power of the Eccleston Square machine has been used to enforce the Edinburgh resolution. In all the large industrial centres the rank and file trade unionists, who carry on the real struggle of the Labour movement, openly defied the national leaders by choosing Communists to represent them in the local councils of the Labour Party. Despite the bluster and threats of the E.C., to enforce the most drastic disciplinary measures against those local councils who dared to accept Communists as delegates, many unions and local councils actually defied the E.C., and sent Communists as delegates to the National Conference of the Party recently held in London. Certain people who imagined that the influence of the Communists in this country was very feeble, expected to see Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. MacDonald begin the London Conference by kicking out the Communists in grand style. There is no doubt that this is what the moderate leaders wanted to do. Instead of this, however, the Conference began by Mr. Henderson withdrawing the vital part of the Edinburgh resolution. What was behind this eleventh-hour capitulation of the E.C. of the Labour Party to the Communists? We can best explain the situation by reprinting what we said upon the subject last May when we showed that the influence of the Communists among the masses was much greater than the moderate leaders suspected.

The alarming results of the determination of MacDonald and Thomas to split the Labour movement in this country may be seen in the tremendous struggle that is going on within the Labour Party at the present moment. Because the Communists are active and courageous in the workshops, they are elected by their mates to represent them in the

local Labour parties—in the mine, the railroad, the factory, and the workshop—in the industrial trenches of the class struggle—it is there that the masses respect and honour the Communists; it is there that the Communists are chosen as Labour Party delegates, *and it is there that the real struggle regarding the Communist Party application to join the Labour Party and to solidify the whole working-class movement, from Left to Right, is being fought out.* It is highly possible that the dead-weight of dictatorial bureaucracy and red-tape, operated by the officials at the top, may prevent, for the time being, the official entrance of the Communist Party into the Labour Party. *But the main thing is that the Communist influence in the Labour movement is spreading from below upwards.* And because these active and respected workers, appointed by the rank and file, happen to be members of the Communist Party, the national leaders of the Labour Party insist upon the local groups refusing either to recognise or to accept them as *bona-fide* delegates. In the large industrial areas many local Labour Party groups are refusing to bow down to the ukase of the petty Tsars of Eccleston Square, and are recognising every worker as a *bona-fide* delegate who is elected by his trade union colleagues. In certain districts, where the Communist delegate is not permitted to represent his workmates, he returns to his trade-union branch and reports upon the matter; in most cases he is voted back upon the local Labour Party and is invariably reinforced with a declaration from his union that it insists upon choosing its own delegates in accordance with its own desires, and not to suit the political whims of the sectarian national leaders. This internal and regrettable conflict is bound to develop and to intensify in the measure that the Communist Party grows. The embittered war that the middle-class leaders of the Labour Party are waging against the Communists is creating turmoil in the working-class movement; their refusal to admit that the Communists are an integral unit in the struggle against capitalism is as intolerant as it is idiotic.

The significant point in the whole matter is that it is the rank and file masses in the mine, railroad, factory, and at the workshop bench, who are rallying to the support of the Communists and who are electing them to the local councils of the Labour Party; these rank and filers are doing this in spite of the Edinburgh resolution which was purposely drawn up by the timid Parliamentary leaders to exclude all Communists from the Labour Party. It is in the industrial trenches of the class war, where the masses are directly face to face with their exploiters, that the power of the Communists is growing. It is there that the influence of the Communists, in their policy of solidifying the proletarian struggle, will ultimately triumph over the small clique of professional careerists. . . .

Our readers will observe that in the above quotation we did not anticipate that the London Labour Party Conference would agree to the affiliation of the Communist Party. What we did contend was that the rank and file trade unionists most bitterly resented the application of the Edinburgh resolution against the Communists. The moderate leaders did not understand this; we were able to write as we did in May because the Communists are much closer to the masses than either Mr. Henderson or his colleagues.

Since the Edinburgh Conference last year the Communists have not been able to fight very hard for an official entrance into the Labour Party. The real fight of the past twelve months has been concentrated upon the right for trade unions to appoint any worker as a delegate to any of the local and national councils. The Communists realised that they could not very well fight, in the districts, for affiliation to the Labour Party when the Edinburgh rule made it impossible for any trade union to elect a Communist as a delegate. Hence the first step towards educating the rank and file in favour of the Communists entering the Labour Party lay in smashing the Edinburgh resolution. Rather than suffer an overwhelming defeat upon the matter, the Labour Party E.C. decided to withdraw the notorious B clause. It was withdrawn

because Mr. Henderson discovered that the rank and file had mandated their delegates to destroy it. He only made this startling discovery a few hours before the conference, while the delegates were arriving. Hence his amazing climb down.

Elsewhere, in this issue, in a special article dealing with the Labour Party Conference, Comrade Murphy shows how powerful the influence of the Communists has grown, inside the Labour Party, during the past year.

#### MR. FRANK HODGES AGAIN.

**T**HE main speech in the Conference against the Communists was delivered, as usual, by Mr. Frank Hodges. This polished charlatan—whose inspired blundering and cowardice has reduced the British miners, on his own admission, to a condition of famine—tried to show that everything the masses desired could be obtained within the confines of the present democratic constitution of this country and without taking up the policy of the class struggle as advocated by the Communists. Comrade Newbold, in this month's COMMUNIST REVIEW, presents our readers with a masterly and historical survey of the growth of the British parliamentary system. He shows that the greatest and most fundamental changes in the British constitution were accomplished by the propertied interests, *through armed force organised upon the basis of a class dictatorship*. But it is not necessary to waste good scholarship upon a conceited and shallow prig like Mr. Frank Hodges. In 1923, after the experiences of Fascism in Europe; after the defeat of the social democrats in Germany by the financial interests; after the use of the Ku Klux Klan in America, in which country several people, including Upton Sinclair, were arrested and imprisoned at Los Angeles for publicly reading out a portion of the Constitution of the United States; after the bloody regime of Horthy in Hungary—in 1923 Mr. F. Hodges comes along and tells us it is possible to destroy capitalism by using the very constitutional devices which the propertied interests have specially created to protect their social system. Mr. F. Hodges *knows* that the constitutional machinery of to-day cannot smash capitalism. He *knows* that his platform twaddle regarding democracy is sheer humbug. He *knows* that a Labour government, were it in power to-morrow, with all the machinery of the constitution in its grasp, would be under the control of the financiers. He *knows* that the British Constitution, in the hands of the Labour Party, could not carry out any measures to uplift the masses *in opposition* to the will of the banks. We repeat that he knows this as well as we do. Where is the proof, you ask? In this year's official report of the E.C. of the Labour Party, signed by Mr. Frank Hodges, there is a very lengthy statement opposing any reduction of the rate of interest on war loans. *The main reason why Mr. Hodges and his gallant colleagues are afraid to touch the interest upon war loans is because they are terrified to antagonise the financiers!* Even with Parliament in their hands they admit their impotence to deal with anything that matters to the proletariat if the financiers oppose them. Out of their own mouths the craven crew admit that with all the facilities that political democracy can give them the country shall still remain under the class dictatorship of high finance! Listen to their own words:—

“If the government could not raise loans to repay exist-

*ing debts except at usurious rates of interest, still less easily could it raise new loans for public works. The result must be that a Labour Government would find itself unable to carry out some of the most important of its proposals to improve the condition of the workers. To mention one matter only, a housing scheme on any scale worthy of the name would be a complete impossibility.*

*True as this is in the case of Government undertakings, the evil is still greater when we turn to municipal undertakings. Slum clearances, road improvements, public lighting, water and transport undertakings, drainage schemes, and many other matters in which municipalities may make life more tolerable for the mass of the people would become absolutely out of reach. These things involve loans (municipalities, unlike the Government, cannot create credit for such things), and such loans could not be raised except on terms infinitely more burdensome than the existing loans. These improvements, vitally necessary as they are to the well-being of the people, must therefore not be undertaken at all, or must be handed over to private industry." (Page 133, Labour Party E.C. Report, 1923.)*

All this may be, in the opinion of the E.C., a very effective reply to the Clyde rebels, who are demanding a reduction in the interest of the war loans, but it completely shatters every stupid claim put forward by people like Mr. Hodges on behalf of democracy. And yet Mr. Hodges thundered against the Communists, and declared that in this fair land of England dictators are not permitted. The above quotation shows that not only are dictators tolerated, but that Mr. Hodges and his colleagues are so afraid of them that they are horrified at the very thought of offending them. In a word, the above citation demonstrates what we have asserted in every issue of the REVIEW—that a Labour government entirely depending upon the parliamentary and constitutional resources, so dear to the heart of Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden, Hodges, and Thomas, etc., will be able to function only if it carries out the will of the propertied interests, and does nothing to offend them. Let it dare to oppose these interests, and the capitalists and landlords shall organise their class might and smash the pasteboard castle of Labour parliamentary control. Either the Labour government will organise the fighting resources of the workers and tear all economic power out of the hands of the propertied class, as was done in Russia; or it will go down in humiliating defeat, as it did in Germany, where the MacDonald-Webb parliamentary tactics were employed. At such a moment of crisis in this country, as in Russia and in Germany, the open class struggle will become one between the capitalists using their fascisti, and the Communists rallying and leading the masses to their emancipation over the heads of those Labour parliamentarians who had so sheepishly pinned their faith to overcoming capitalism by full dress debates conducted in the best constitutional manner.

Mr. Hodges, at an eventful stage in history, says Soviet Russia cannot teach him anything. We agree. Like the Bourbons and the reactionaries of all ages, he learns nothing and forgets nothing.

## THE SUSPENDED MEMBERS.

WE are pleased to put on record the fact that the I.L.P. members in the House of Commons for the Clyde have not, so far, succumbed to the puerile parliamentary fetish so abjectly worshipped by Mr. J. R. MacDonald and Mr. P. Snowden. The attitude taken up by our friends Maxton, Buchanan, Wheatley and Stephen, when they denounced the advocates of capitalist economies as murderers, was correct. In several parts of the West of Scotland, on town councils and boards of guardians, Communists have been suspended for adopting the same policy and for proving that the upholders of capitalism in their economy campaign were baby killers. Thus the Clyde members have only done in the national chamber something that already had been done in many local chambers in the West of Scotland.

It is easy to understand why Mr. J. R. MacDonald has been so angry at the conduct of his I.L.P. colleagues. First of all, the suspension scene took place only a few hours after Mr. MacDonald had pleaded, at the Labour Party Conference, that Comrade Newbold was not a fit and proper person to receive the Labour Party Whips. Secondly, the suspended members put up their fight upon a definite *class* issue. This, of course, cut right across Mr. MacDonald's favourite fallacy regarding the social co-operation of all classes harmoniously working together to uplift the community. Maxton, in a few terse sentences, smashed the nonsensical conception of class co-operation to shreds. He reduced to tatters the social theory which is the political guide of Mr. J. R. MacDonald and Mr. S. Webb. He demonstrated that the financial success of the capitalist class was based upon the deliberate murder of working-class children. And he forced the parliamentarians of all parties to observe the *class war* in action. This was a magnificent achievement and ranks as one of the cleverest pieces of working-class agitation ever carried out in the House of Commons. Just because it was a fight put up on behalf of the toiling masses it has caused grave concern to the middle-class Liberal theorists who at present control the Labour Party. Had Maxton lyingly insulted and abused the Communists *a la* Mr. J. H. Thomas; had he, like Mr. P. Snowden, poured out *Morning Post* slander against Soviet Russia—he neither would have been suspended nor called in question by Mr. J. R. MacDonald and Co. His crime, in the eyes of MacDonald, Thomas, Webb, etc., consists in having told the capitalist class a blunt truth and for having dared to fight for the common masses.

The suspension demonstration in the House of Commons appealed to the imagination of the working class; it has rallied more proletarian support to the Labour Party than all the parliamentary jugglery of Mr. J. R. MacDonald will do in a million years. The leaders of the Labour Party are hoping that by adopting Liberal and Tory parliamentary tactics they will win sweeping victories at the ballot-boxes. We predict that the Labour Party will never be voted into power by the workers until it shows that it can fight for them in the House of Commons. But the leaders of the official I.L.P., and the Labour Party, by their present emulation of Liberal methods, and by their attacks upon the Communists, may

secure the unstable support of the middle-class and the British fascisti.

The problem of the Labour Party, as indeed of every modern political organisation, is to appeal to the new and powerful factor that has made its appearance at the ballot box—the vote of the working-class woman. The political organisation that can successfully bring that power to its aid can successfully climb to power. Could the speech of Mr. Sidney Webb, at the recent Labour Party Congress, enthuse any proletarian woman? It almost sent the Conference to sleep; it made the “Reds” angry and it left the Right Wing cold; it was greeted with derision by the capitalists whom it was intended to pacify; it only succeeded in inspiring *Punch* to produce one of the wittiest political cartoons of recent years. When Mr. Webb is forgotten and his policy is wiped out by history, the brilliant caricature will be remembered and cherished. Could any of Mr. J. R. MacDonald’s orations on the virtues of parliamentary etiquette arouse the working women of the country to the need for taking their part in the struggle of Labour? Certainly not! In any case, the distinguished I.L.P.-er does not address himself to the masses; he is more interested in winning the approval of these middle-class, high-brow ladies popularly known to the women in the proletarian movement as the “pink parlourites.” On the other hand, when Maxton and Wheatley stood up in Parliament and charged the capitalist class with saving money at the expense of deliberately squandering the lives of thousands of Glasgow children—they struck a note which found a ready response in the minds of the working women of the Clyde.

The sensational Labour victories at the polls in the West of Scotland, last year, were secured because the working-class movement captured the proletarian women through its rent agitation. It made the rent problem a *class* issue between the workers and the landlords. Since the General Election the workers in the West of Scotland have been disappointed with the Labour Party. Its timidity, under the I.L.P. leadership of Mr. J. R. MacDonald, has resulted in an alarming apathy, among the masses, so far as the I.L.P. is concerned. The I.L.P. in the West of Scotland has had, therefore, to decide whether it loyally would follow Mr. J. R. MacDonald’s infantile and puerile policy of throwing Liberal bouquets at the capitalist class, or whether it would sweep over his head and get into grips with the enemy. Had it chosen to follow the official leader of the I.L.P., the party would have speedily collapsed and cleared the way for the Communists, who are growing in numbers and influence. To its credit, be it said, the bolder and more honest tactic of giving battle to the enemy, even at the expense of giving offence to Mr. J. R. MacDonald, was decided upon. The suspension of the four Glasgow I.L.P.-ers from the House of Commons, for putting up a fight on behalf of the children, has resulted in saving the Clyde I.L.P. from disaster, even at the height of its summer propaganda; it has liberated four of the best I.L.P. agitators from the drudgery of parliament and has rekindled a new and enthusiastic ferment in favour of the I.L.P. And, above all, it has had the effect of showing the working women of the Clyde that it is Labour alone that is prepared to fight for them and their children. Thus, Maxton and Wheatley have given Mr. J. R. MacDonald a brilliant lesson in working-class political tactics. But precisely because

these tactics are helpful to the workers, and must be centred around some *class* issue, these are haughtily rejected by the superior Mr. MacDonald.

We do not always agree with John Wheatley. But common honesty compels us to admit that his generalship of the I.L.P. forces on the Clyde before the General Election, and particularly in the recent suspension scene in Parliament, reveals him as a leader, always modestly operating in the background, but with more political acumen in his little finger than is contained in the combined heads and bodies of Mr. Snowden and Mr. J. R. MacDonald.

Many people who do not understand the strategy of the Clyde men have been suggesting that it would have been much better had all the West of Scotland I.L.P.-ers been suspended at the same time as Maxton, Wheatley, Buchanan and Stephen. It is easy to see that the militant Scotch group do not rely very much upon the official leaders of the Labour Party, even though some of them are members of the I.L.P. It is very necessary for their purpose to have some reliable fighters inside Parliament, because it may be necessary to call upon them, if need be, to raise some new issue and fight it out to the point of suspension. Nor must we forget that the militants had no idea how the moderate leaders of the Labour Party would deal with defiant members who put up a good fight in the House of Commons. It was necessary to find this out and also to see what support a fighting policy would receive. We all know what happened. The fighting policy was condemned, but the moderate leaders were afraid to compel the Glasgow rebels to apologise.

#### THE TWO I.L.P.'s.

IT would be futile to deny that the suspension of the four Clyde members from Parliament has brought to the forefront an internal struggle that has been going on, for some time, inside the I.L.P. The I.L.P., during the past few years, has been trying to play a double game. In Scotland it has never ceased to try and win proletarian support by proclaiming itself as a "Red" organisation with strong sympathies for the Left Wing. In England it has always been more or less middle-class and semi-Liberal. This is the reason why Mr. MacDonald, who is a pale "yellow" in England, tries to pose as a deep "Red" when he speaks on the Clyde. This also explains why the London *New Leader* is a twopenny edition of Mr. Massingham's *Liberal Nation*, whereas the Glasgow *Forward*, in comparison, is a typical proletarian journal. The attempt of the I.L.P. to face both ways is not unlike Low's famous Coalition donkey, which, with its two heads, was never able to get anywhere, in a straight line, because it had always to compromise with itself! Thus, while the Clyde I.L.P. has always consistently denounced the collection of an indemnity from Germany, in England Mr. J. R. MacDonald has played the imperialist game by drawing up weird schemes to show how Germany could pay such an indemnity. To denounce and expose the shallow indemnity economics of Mr. J. R. MacDonald was mere child's play to Tom Johnston, the brilliant editor of the Glasgow *Forward*. While David Kirkwood denounces the Union Jack as a rag, this banner of predatory imperialism was passionately defended by Mr. MacDonald during his Woolwich election. When the imperialists started the increased production campaign, a few

years ago, it was immediately repudiated by the I.L.P. in Scotland and enthusiastically endorsed by Mr. Philip Snowden in England. While the Glasgow I.L.P.-ers are suspended for fighting for the children of the masses, it was the London official I.L.P., led by Mr. H. Morrison, who were the most virulent opponents of Lansbury's policy in Poplar. While the Snowdens and Mr. MacDonald are England's most frenzied anti-Bolsheviks, in Scotland the I.L.P. have done good work to help Soviet Russia. We can easily understand why the feeble articles in the *Morning Post* by Mr. Philip Snowden, and the Labour Conference declaration of Mr. S. Webb, make the Clyde I.L.P.-ers angry. We can study that anger in the following quotation from the *Glasgow Forward*, which reads like a Communist criticism of Mr. MacDonald's parliamentary policy:—

We are becoming obsessed with the idea that next General Election will see us in power. To get that power we must not scare anybody—especially the middle class voter. Anything in the cargo we carry likely to frighten off a sympathetic *bourgeois* must be jettisoned; the *sturmruppen* must be hidden away with camp followers in the rear; the host that is to march forward to the destruction of capitalism is to be disguised as voluntary welfare workers with elastic-sided boots out for an excursion; we are to promise to do nobody any harm; every change is to be so gradual that no exploiter need be unduly worried; the kingdom of man is to come by stealth.

This dual policy of the I.L.P. has been in operation for many years. Keir Hardie always stood for an out and out proletarian viewpoint; he never forgot he was a miner. Mr. J. R. MacDonald has never been able to shed his Liberal skin; and he can never forget that he was once a schoolmaster. The early struggles of Keir Hardie to build up a purely proletarian political movement took place in the Clyde Valley. It was there he started a workers' weekly called the *Labour Leader*. The group he gathered around him in the Northern industrial centre contend that they are, to-day, carrying on the traditional policy of Keir Hardie and that they *do* represent the true spirit of the I.L.P.

Keir Hardie fought long and hard against the opportunism inherent in the policy of Mr. J. R. MacDonald. So long as Hardie was alive he completely over-shadowed Mr. MacDonald. When the old pioneer died there was no one in the I.L.P. big enough to take his place and continue his policy, and so the middle-class Liberalism of Mr. MacDonald permeated all parts of the I.L.P. and triumphed in England. MacDonaldism, however, has not been able to make very much headway in the Clyde Valley, because it cannot bite through the solid structure created there by Keir Hardie. And the I.L.P.-ers of the Clyde Valley dare not accept MacDonaldism, because the masses would at once rally, as they are doing, to the Communist Party.

The I.L.P. in the North are hoping they can capture the South and thus compel the party to become more militant. Mr. MacDonald counter-attacked and made several ineffectual attempts to bring the West of Scotland to his side. He has only received support from Scotland when such support was necessary for the prestige of the I.L.P.—as, for example, when they voted for him to be the leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party and thus the figure-head of the Opposition. They hoped that this would make the I.L.P. an important political organisation and that their support of Mr. MacDonald would strengthen a Left Wing tendency in the parliamentary



party and prevent the leader from relying too much upon Henderson, Thomas and Co.; they hoped, too, that their support would prevent Mr. MacDonald from casting wooing glances at the young middle-class Liberal intellectuals who are beginning to realise that there are little prospects for a political career for them under the banner of Mr. Asquith. The events of the past few months have shown that Mr. MacDonald has moved rapidly to the Right. He has attempted to lock and bolt the door against bona fide proletarian elements, like the Communists, but he has opened wide the French window for the Young Liberals, of the Moseley type, to enter the Labour Party. We can understand, therefore, why Mr. MacDonald is angry with his I.L.P. colleagues for creating scenes in Parliament. A continuance of such displays, by the West of Scotland I.L.P. members, may endanger Mr. MacDonald's leadership in Parliament and may open the way for Henderson, Thomas, Clynes or some other trade union official to tread the greatly sought for path that leads to the Premiership. Thus, the problem confronting the Clyde I.L.P.-ers is whether they ought to fight for the workers and sacrifice the career of a very ambitious man, or betray the masses and make it safe for Mr. MacDonald to attain the Premiership. We hope, and we believe, they will stand by the workers.

The dual policy of the I.L.P. raises a personal tragedy for Mr. MacDonald. Although he is a passionate exponent of the theory that persuasion can attain anything within the present democratic framework of society, he knows deep in his own mind that *power*, as always, is the only driving force in politics. Unlike Thomas, Henderson, Clynes, etc., he has no trade union backing. Standing alone in the Labour Party he would cut a small figure unless he knuckled under to the trade union bureaucracy. Mr. MacDonald requires an organisation to back him up and to give him some semblance of power. He needs the I.L.P. much more than it needs him. That is why he dare not openly repudiate his I.L.P. colleagues when they cut across his timid parliamentary policy. Like many other ambitious men before him, he must bury his wrath in his own heart and curse his fate in silence.

Whatever be the final outcome of the struggle within the I.L.P., we fervently hope it will mean a triumph for the militant elements. Meanwhile, the class war grows more intense, and the influence of the Communist Party among the masses sweeps forward with silent and giant strides.

#### TO BE OR NOT TO BE.

**I**T is very interesting to study the attitude of the whole Labour movement as to whether the four suspended members should apologise or not. The prevailing feeling among the Liberal-ethical school in the Labour Party, led by Mr. MacDonald, is that an apology should be duly offered because a wrong has been committed. Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Webb have set out to conduct a political Socialist movement without hurting the feelings of their opponents. The only people whom they think it is necessary to attack, irrespective of any feelings, are the Communists both in Russia and in this country.

There are other sections, as, for example, the Glasgow I.L.P.-ers, who are equally emphatic that as the truth is always the truth, and as the four suspended members spoke the truth, they must not, under any consideration, offer an apology. Thus the problem

is rapidly becoming one based upon ethics and etiquette. It is necessary to cut through all this twaddle by remembering that in the Labour movement we are part and parcel of the class struggle. Viewed from this, the only standpoint that really matters to the workers the solution is simple. If the conditions of the class struggle demand the presence of a suspended member in the House of Commons, then he should immediately apologise and appear in sack-cloth and ashes if necessary. If, however, the nature of the situation is such that the workers' struggle would be helped forward by a refusal to offer an apology, then, in such a case, help the struggle by withholding the apology. The sentimental Labourist of the MacDonald-Webb school derive their conception of ethics, etiquette, honour, etc., from the prevailing standards set up by the propertied system. The well-poised member of the working class who does not enter the movement to find an easy career, but who takes his place there in order to struggle against capitalism—he speedily realises that just as the propertied system sets up ethical standards, so also does the class struggle create an ethical code for the masses in their war against their masters.

It is necessary for us to drive home this point because at the moment of writing a most scandalous betrayal of the workers is taking place. The whole case of the Dockers' Union leaders against their members who are out on the strike, is that the strikers are dishonourable for breaking an agreement. The history of the class struggle demonstrates that the only thing that counts is *power*. Agreements, etc., have only been enforced when it suited the interests of the more powerful body. The history of the capitalist class, in the political and industrial field, is one monotonous sequence of broken promises, betrayals, and smashed agreements. When their interests demand it the capitalist class knows neither honour nor truth. It is useless to pretend that the propertied interests can be overcome with either logic or appeals to their sense of justice. In propertied society justice is the interests of the strongest class; and the administration of justice, as Anatole France has shown, is the administration of force—of class power. Trade unions and proletarian political organisations are not debating societies for discussing the ethical pros and cons of the verities of agreements or the sanctity of contracts. Trade unions are fighting organisations; at least, they ought to be.

The moderate trade union leaders are not prepared to lead the workers in their everyday struggles for bread. These gentlemen receive large salaries for very little work, and they have no desire to be disturbed in their easy-moving life of comparative luxury. Like Mr. Booker Washington, the negro leader, who began life with a bitter struggle, who gradually became comfortable and became a sort of society pet; from this he concluded that the lot of the negro *race* had much improved. People like Mr. Bevin forget that when a good meal compels him to loosen a button, the dock labourer may be forced to tighten up his belt for lack of food. The events of the past few years have cruelly shown that the trade union bureaucracy has become a dangerous parasitic growth upon the workers' movement. One of the indispensable conditions for the rebuilding of the trade union movement is a spring cleaning of the luxurious officials who have been so doped with capitalist comforts

that they are neither able nor willing to fight for bread for their unfortunate rank and file dues-paying dupes.

1914—1923.

**L**AST month, in analysing the farcical make-up of the Hamburg International, we showed that the first crisis would reveal its cowardice, its confusion, and its bankruptcy of policy. We contended that at the first move to restart the world war the tragedy and betrayal of 1914 would be repeated.

At the Labour Party Conference, Henderson and the other imperialist leaders spoke on the need for armaments. As always, Mr. J. R. MacDonald did a double shuffle. Writing in the *Daily Herald*, the latter gentleman had an article entitled "Back to War." Nowhere in the whole statement is there one working-class idea regarding a united mass policy to prevent war. Mr. MacDonald does not say anything that has not been more brilliantly said by that clever Conservative journalist, Mr. J. G. Garvin. The article by Mr. MacDonald was followed by a series of observations, in the *Herald*, from well-known Labour leaders. Not one of them shows that there is any solid constructive idea in the Labour Party or trade union movement to prevent war. Mr. Frank Hodges said:—"There is a real danger of war. The voice in Europe crying for peace is feeble; that voice is great Britain." This may be meant to be serious, but perhaps there is some subtle joke in it. The idea of Lord Curzon crying for peace is as difficult to imagine as Mr. Hodges fighting for the miners. Mr. Clynes, who pledged the Labour Party to intervention in the Ruhr, is very bold, and says "that the leaders who have cultivated the war spirit could be driven from power." Yes! but how? On this point, which is the thing that vitally matters, Mr. Clynes is silent. Out of a whole bunch of writers only two leaders give any indication as to how something could be done to prevent another holocaust. Mr. R. Williams said truly that "the unity of the working class is the only means of preventing war." Mr. Williams ought to have developed this theme and shown how a united working class must organise to be able to *enforce* its will upon the imperialists. Mr. G. Hicks contended that a national conference must be called to make war on the war-mongers, industrially and politically. Very good, but where is the plan?

Here we have the spectacle of a workers' daily journal, the official organ of the trade unions and the Labour Party, realising the immediate possibility of war, throwing open its columns to the most important leaders to contribute their ideas on the coming war, and not one concrete or practical proposal is made to show the masses what the first organised step should be.

Since January we have criticised Mr. MacDonald for refusing to fight the British imperialists who are desirous of picking a quarrel with France. Instead of courageously struggling against Curzon, the most dangerous war maniac in the world, the leader of the Labour Party has strengthened the British jingoes by patriotic outbursts against Poincaré. The way to have assisted the workers in the Ruhr was to have responded to their call for a united front of the international proletariat and to have settled upon an organised plan of attack upon the imperialists of all

lands. Mr. MacDonald paid no heed to the agonised call of the organised masses of the Ruhr. He has fomented so much feeling against France that when the bugles call for an assault against that country many workers will readily march as a result of his policy. His method of working up proletarian feeling against France was carried a step further by Mr. J. Ward at the recent conference of the General Federation of Trade Unions. Mr. Ward wanted to know:—

“Whether the democracy of England, which armed itself to destroy one bully and succeeded, is going to allow another bully to take its place.”

As a result of the policy inaugurated by Mr. MacDonald, the imperialists inside the Labour movement are beginning to use the identical language towards France in 1923 that was used against Germany in 1914. France is now the “bully” of Europe, and Poincaré takes the place of the Kaiser. Already we see the imperialist Labour parliamentarians lining up behind Lord Curzon and Mr. Baldwin. Thus the new anti-Communist International goes into action—behind the banners of imperialism.

### LABOUR AND THE CROWN.

**L**AST month, in anticipation of the Labour Party Conference, we drew attention to the weakness of the moderate leaders, who are afraid to antagonise the spineless middle-class electorate by adopting a definite and courageous policy against the reactionary political activity of the Crown. At the conference the Labour Party E.C. put up Geo. Lansbury to treat the matter in a frivolous manner. Lansbury is much better informed upon the subject than his humorous speech would indicate. We admit that he has always adopted, in action, a much more dignified and proletarian attitude towards royalty than the craven clique of Labourists who opportunely seize every chance to reveal their servility to capitalism by cringing before its crowned puppet.

Lansbury was, no doubt, put up to pooh-pooh the resolution directed against the Crown, because he is the one parliamentary leader, outside of the West of Scotland contingent, who has won the confidence of the masses. His heroic conduct on the Poplar policy, in opposition to the official I.L.P. and Mr. J. H. Thomas, and his more recent uncompromising attitude in the House of Commons, has marked him out as a more capable leader for the Labour Party than Mr. J. R. MacDonald, whose greatest function in politics is to show Asquith and Lloyd George how cleverly a Labour statesman can perform the celebrated parliamentary art of sitting on the fence. Despite the fact that Lansbury has no clique working on his behalf, he wields an enormous influence over the rank and file of the movement. It is a fortunate thing for Mr. J. R. MacDonald, and a few others, that Geo. Lansbury has no personal ambitions to become the parliamentary leader of the Labour Party.

Inside the Labour movement, at its present stage, Lansbury would be well advised to remember that he has a much more important task to perform than that of saving the faces of the royalist right wing leaders. At the most critical moment in the Poplar crisis it was the Buckingham Palace Labour flunkeys, like Mr. J. H. Thomas, who were the most malignant and ignorant critics.

While it is true that Lansbury, at the Labour Party Conference, candidly declared himself a republican, he did not meet the argument, regarding the opposition to royalty, advanced by the left wing. He said he did not believe that the financial maintenance of the royal family was the cause of the poverty. This merely begs the question. The case against royalty rests upon an entirely different basis. Apart from the monarchy being an obsolete and worthless remnant left over from feudalism, like every social institution which has no useful historical function to perform it can only survive by becoming an organ of political reaction. And, as Newbold proves elsewhere in this month's issue, the Crown wields dictatorial powers which, in reality, reduces political democracy to a farce and reveals Mr. Frank Hodges as an historical ignoramus. The Crown is thus a most important buttress of the capitalist system, and as such directly perpetuates the poverty of the masses. These political powers of the Crown are a menace to the emancipation of the workers, and ought to be and must be removed.

#### TIKHON'S TIP TO CANTERBURY.

**W**ITH the recantation of the Tikhon, the one-time head of the reactionary Russian Church, we get a most dramatic reply to the snuffing clerical hypocrites who organised their campaign against Soviet Russia. The Tikhon has admitted that he did participate in armed and counter-revolutionary plots against the Soviet Government. He was arrested for this, and the Archbishop of Canterbury organised a mammoth protest against the "persecution of religion" in Russia. All the political and clerical humbugs, from the Archbishop himself down to sundry Labour leaders, joined in lamentations over the fate of the Tikhon. The only name we missed from the list was that of Mr. Horatio Bottomley. Unfortunately this gentleman, who was accustomed "to hear a voice from heaven," could not join in the campaign because, unlike many other Soviet critics, he had been found out.

The recantation of the Tikhon is easily explained. Like many archbishops in English history, he was opposed to the advent of a new class wielding political power in his country. And like these archbishops, he did everything he could to destroy the political supremacy of the new class in order to assist the old governing class to return to power. In England, such archbishops were very speedily punished; some of them received special facilities to propel them to their celestial home. But the new government always beat down the opposition of the reactionary archbishops. It has taken the Tikhon a long time to learn the lesson that political power, backed up by the whole resources of a country, must always triumph over political reaction organised from behind a patriarch's surplice or the apron of an archbishop.

The Tikhon has had his lesson. He now publicly avows defeat. As the present Archbishop of Canterbury seemed to be unduly interested in the career of the Tikhon, we can only hope that he, too, has had a little lesson. In his ample leisure he should study the result of the Tikhon's reactionary political activities. Such a study is necessary for the Archbishop because Labour in this country is swiftly advancing to power.

WM. PAUL.

# Five Years' Struggle

By VICTOR SERGE

§I. 1917

**D**AYS of exaltation at Petrograd and Moscow. Crowds adorned with red, singing the *Marseillaise*. Ascending from the peaceful outskirts and pushing towards the palaces. Financiers, wise politicians, fat factory-owners, to whom killing is a profit, and who long for the Dardanelles, resolve: "We are the Government of the Republic."

"You are the Government of the Republic," echo in chorus two great Socialist Parties.

Democracy. War to the finish. Until complete victory. Order. Property. Social reforms, Citizen Kerensky pronounces a great speech. . . That clamour from a crowd of a hundred and thirty millions of workers and peasants—wafting up: *Bread, the land, Peace!* We'll keep 'em quiet with machine-gun fire. Artillery in action against the Kalouga Soviet. Lenin; "German agent," black with coal in the stokehold of a cruiser, awaits the hour. Korniloff proclaims himself Dictator *in the name of penalty of death to the Armies*. . . The Socialist Revolutionary Party is governing!

Enough. These assemblies of workers and soldiers, this Party of shamed sectarians—their bodies for toil, their flesh for the cannon, and their brain—invincibly desire bread, the land, peace, and yet more: freedom for all those who toil. The consciousness and will of a class live in them. They rise up. On the 25th October, date fixed in advance by the Bolshevik Party, a new crash of collapse in the silence of the European trenches, in the deafening roar of the guns, *and it is Capitalist Democracy that is ending.*

§II. 1918

Will the country revive for labour, peace, and liberty, and to remain the shining example? No. Five hundred thousand intellectuals cunningly sabotage the vital daily task. The chanceries of the whole world are active. The embassies and military missions in the capitals intrigue, spy, plot, and sap. From all parts of Russia what remains virile in the bourgeoisie and nobility is preparing to "restore order." Korniloff, Kalédin, Dutoff, Alexéieff, Denikin, Koltchak, Skoropadski—and in turn, the Germans, French, British, Greeks, Americans, the whole clamjamfry of the old régime, all the soldiery of the International Bourgeoisie get ready to throttle the Revolution.

But what defiance! The land socialised. The factories—expropriated without indemnity. The secret treaties divulged. The loans—abolished. The banks—nationalised. The Jew, the woman, the child, the soldier, the prisoner—free, free! Peace declared to all peoples without annexations, without indemnities. Finland free, Poland free. The Red Flag on the cities, the Red Flag in the trenches.

The Constituent Assembly. Eloquence:

"Democracy, representation of the people, socialisations, fidelity to the Allies. . . ." The sailor Jelesniakoff leans gently towards the president: "My men are weary, clear out of it!"—and there is no more parliamentarism in Russia.

" . . . They are criminals, dreamers, and lunatics!" says the pot-bellied bourgeois folding his newspaper. "Thank God we'll soon see 'em hanged!"

For the German armies tighten up their vice. Brest-Litovsk amputates from Russia the corn-abounding districts of the Ukraine, and the precious Donetz coal. For the Czecho-Slovaks cut the Siberian roads, for Democratic Socialism shoots the Proletariat of Samara, Saratoff, Kazan. For the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries rise against their brothers. For the flames of Yaroslav are burning. For the British are at Archangel, the French at Sebastopol, the Japanese at Vladivostok, the Whites everywhere. For a miserable "revolutionary" has just landed a couple of bullets in Lenin's chest.

" . . . Bolshevism is tottering!"

You believe so? You believe that one can kill a whole class--conscious, standing up? The worse for you!

The revolution which proceeded without hate, has returned with a double-edged sword: Red Terror, Red Army; blood has not stopped flowing? but that of the poor is not running alone, and has not been shed to enrich the rich! Just as another revolution in 1792 threw the King's head to the Monarchist Coalition, so the Russian Revolution casts to the Capitalist Coalition the corpse of the last Tsar.

### §III. 1919

Year of war, of famine, of fabulous possibilities. Horses dying from hunger in the roadway, pedestrians wan and inflated, scurvy, typhus, cold, hunger—treason—expectation. Soviets in Bavaria, Soviets in Hungary, the *Internationale* sung by two-thirds of Europe. The blockade and no miseries matter. Will there remain any frontiers to-morrow?

Yet the work of hate is progressing. Thirteen states, all the great powers among them—declares Churchill—are leagued against Bolshevik "barbarity." Eleven thousand workers have just been massacred in Finland. Rosa Luxemburg, Liebknecht, and Joguichès have been killed at Berlin. They've shot Léviné at Munich. They hang Korvin at Budapesth. Jeanne Labourbe is killed at Odessa. Koltchak, supreme ruler—with General Janin—reigns over Siberia. Denikin holds all the south. Yudenitch—with General March—is at the gates of Petrograd. Around the Russian Commune is formed a circle of steel. From the Caucasus to Finland, the Arctic Ocean to the Crimea, the Urals to the Baltic, not an outlet! International reaction uncoils its barbed-wire, raises its gallows, vibrates throughout the world its Hertzian waves, spreading absurd lies that are to dishonour the Russian proletariat—on the point of being strangled.

Communist commissars, Red commanders, trained in six months on leaving the factory, midshipmen, sailors, young lads, students, workers in red caps, no longer does one doubt that there is breath in your lungs, thought in your brains, force in your fists. One learns suddenly that you are invincible, when the revolution—of which you are the body and soul—smashes underfoot in the October days of the second year, three victorious armies of reaction at the same time.

You are the only revolted remaining standing in ravaged Europe,

where reign the hangmen. And you convene your brothers of all countries to found the Third International of the workers.

#### §IV. 1920

Will there be peace at last? The old world has understood that it will not succeed in killing this people. The appeal issued from Smolny and the Kremlin has resounded in Paris, London, Buenos Ayres, Tokio, in San Francisco, Sydney and the Cape. Anarchists, syndicalists, socialists; all schools, all sects, all workers, all men devoting themselves to the future, have understood that although in the greatest of pain and direst of throes, it is really the birth of a new world.

The terror has ended. Peace treaties are signed. The blockade is broken. A world congress is sitting at Moscow. The Communist edification is about to commence. The food communes recuperate, the factories are reviving. Money is abolished. All is for all. Rational unified plans of production. Workers' Universities. Proletarian culture. Electrification. Transferring of production to the Trade Unions. International.

No, comrades, we are not so near our goal. Too much indifference and not enough consciousness are still paralysing those who should finish the work you have commenced. You are still alone, in spite of the great enthusiasm millions of workers show towards you.

And since you are alone, they are going to try and beat you once more. Start the terror again, become once more the Red Army—not the army of labour! France has recognised the Crimea of Wrangel, the Poles have entered Kieff.

#### §V. 1921

The long winter of famine after the war. Nerves at the last stretch. The guns of Cronstadt. Sailors and peasants risen against the Communist Revolution because after such suffering they can do nothing, understand nothing, and wish for nothing but one thing; cultivate their land and sell what they produce to appease their hunger. . . This peasant people needs repose. It has bled too much. Too many of its most clear-sighted sons have gone, dead, or expecting too much from a wavering mass. A halt is necessary. Another nightmare having passed, Lenin gives the signal.

Yes, a halt is needed. Nothing is moving in Europe. Two Socialist Internationals and one Trade Union International vegetate there, following the old, old tracks with short paces. Moreover, after the flux and reflux of the civil war, a torrid summer has burned the Volga plains. Thirty million peasants, including five million children—will die slowly of hunger if some prodigious effort is not accomplished in order to save them.

Be it so! The revolution will cede ground, without renouncing anything. In preserving all its strength. In remaining the Proletarian State, ready to support the workers of whatever State it may be who will rise up in their turn to fulfil their historic task. In retaining all its libraries, its schools, great socialised factories, its Red Army. In penetrating each day into the fields, awakened to a higher life. In guarding its militant Party, ready for any devotion. In remaining the centre of the International.



# Under Kemalist Rule

By ERIC VERNEY

**T**HE monotonous political life of Constantinople was recently brightened by an event of sufficiently thrilling and melodramatic to distract provisionally the attention of the bored populace.

This was nothing less than a Communist plot. About fourteen Communists were arrested, while half-a-dozen more managed to evade apprehension. Those arrested included Dr. Thefik Husni, leader of a small group of intellectual Marxists who had founded a journal *Aidinlik* (*Clarté*), and also one or two of the leaders of the "Union International de Travail,"—Greeks, Armenians, etc. The evidence in the hands of the police comprised various Communist tracts and leaflets printed for the first May demonstrations, and exhorting the workers to down tools as a protest against capitalism. Also, the very existence of the Communist Party (which had been formed recently by the amalgamation of different scattered revolutionary groups) was in itself declared to be an act constituting a menace to the security of the country. The local gutter-press naturally howled the usual clap-trap about subsidies from Moscow, the perpetual cry of Levantine speculators. When the process opened before the court-martial, it was already evident that the case for the prosecution was very weak. The accused were charged "under Article 12 of the Law on treason to the country for having wished to propagate the subversive ideas of Communism throughout the land, and modify the form of Government . . ." A counter-process against the prosecution for illegal arrest and detention, has already been lodged by the ex-prisoners who were all released after three days' sitting of the court. The jury naturally declared that it was incompetent to pronounce a decision—the process being based solely on accusation of political activity; and so, with the release of the arrested Communists, the plot bubble exploded.

It might be remarked that the whole affair is so insignificant and farcical that it does not justify being written about, but it is necessary to illustrate how the Kemalists are prepared when the opportunity arrives, to suppress at the very root any revolutionary movement that may spring up.

In view of the very small number of industrial workers in Turkey, the bad organisation of the Unions, the meagre infusion of socialist ideas, and the inherent nationalist and religious prejudices, the workers movement is still only in its embryo form. It is for this reason that the Constantinople authorities realised on second thoughts that the local Communists were negligible and impotent, and that it would be better to release them, than to attract the attention of the workers by keeping them in prison. As soon as there are any signs of a compact and efficient revolutionary movement coming into being, there is no doubt that it will be immediately suppressed. The Communist Party at Angora was at least considered dangerous, and therefore the Kemalists did not hesitate to throw all its members (including deputies) into gaol. At least one result of the Constantinople "plot," was the official suppression of the International Builders' and Woodworkers' Unions, as being "illegal organisations."

Although the Allied Police had previously suppressed the revolutionary syndicalist movement among the Greek workers, including the paper *Neos Anthropos*, organ of the "Union International de Travail"—which adhered to the R.I.L.U.—there had been no methodical suppression of the Communist movement until the taking over of the administration by the Kemalists last autumn. This coincided with the carrying out of instructions from the Fourth Comintern Congress, aiming at the merging of all revolutionary elements in Constantinople and Anatolia into a united Communist Party.

Before there is any chance of successful propaganda of Communist ideas among the workers in Turkey, it is necessary that strong unions be built up. With the development of industry, after the signing of peace, and the full enjoyment of national independence, more and more petty street-traders, shopkeepers, market gardeners, peasants, etc., will be forced on to the labour market, and there will then be greater opportunities for Union organisation than at present, when workers of one nationality are pitted against others on the competitive wage bourse. Increased national fanaticism following the Kemalist victories, naturally hinders Communist propaganda, and it is thus difficult at the present juncture to count on the proletarian solidarity between Turkish, Greek, and Armenian workers. The few Trade Unions that do exist are mostly led by reformist "Socialists" of the most reactionary and chauvinist type, but in spite of this, the fighting capacity of the Turkish workers has several times been disclosed by spontaneous strike movements (tobacco workers, tramway employees, etc.).

The dumping of surplus stocks prior to the Allied evacuation, and the increasing tendency of Constantinople trade to become that of a transit and transshipment centre, had even caused a slump in the few scattered industries that at present exist in Turkey—leather, cement, etc.—and therefore wages have again dropped in spite of the high prices resulting from the fluctuation of foreign exchange values. How far the abolition of the capitulations will remedy this state of affairs remains to be seen, but there is no doubt that the Turkish workers are worse off now than they were even under the reign of Abdul-Hamid.

Like good Mussulmans the sweated toilers of Stamboul and Anatolia are all voting for Kemal Pasha (and Allah) at the current elections. The Committee of Union and Progress, being the only organisation running self-respecting opposition candidates, there is an open field for the worst reactionary and imperialist elements.

Meanwhile, the American concessionaires are employing cheap Russian labour (White emigrants) on their Anatolian enterprises, and Kemal's revolutionary Beys and Pashas are flirting at Lausanne with the meretricious denizens of Standard Oil and Shell, at the expense of the blood and sweat of the Mosul toilers. When the Kemalists needed Bolshevik help against Lloyd George and his Basil Zaharoff, they posed as super-Communists. Now that they are enmeshed in the lobster-pots of the capitalist ramp, they are disclosing their capacity for exploitation by "mutual understanding." Naturally, Marxists appreciate the value of revolutionary nationalist movements, but only up to a certain point.

# The English Parliament: its origin, growth and functions

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD, M.P.

[A lecture delivered in the Zinoviev University, Petrograd.]

## THE BACKGROUND.

**S**TUDENTS in this University of Zinoviev who are taking a course of lectures in European history, and who are, as I understand from your teacher, at present considering the period which marks the conclusion of the Middle Ages, i.e., from the 13th to the 15th century, albeit they may be of the feudal order in Germany, a country both nearer to Russia geographically and traditionally, than is my country, will doubtless be interested to learn something concerning that institution of Parliament which, in precisely that epoch, struck its roots into the insular life of England. They will be the more interested to hear from one who is himself a member, a Communist member, of Parliament what was the origin, what was the course of development, and what were and are the primary functions of that characteristically English institution. They will expect from him, not merely a statement of facts as to the main events and crises in the growth of that institution, but that he will elucidate, in the light of the Marxian theory of historical materialism, the underlying causes of those events.

Now, it is particularly important for Communists, disbelieving as they do in parliamentarism as a means of proletarian emancipation and the future vehicle of expression of the social will, that they should make a study of this form of political institution as manifested in its traditional country of origin, viz., England. It is important for them, whether they are Communists whose lot is cast in England or outside of it, at any rate, if they aspire to take an intelligent and active part in formulating or interpreting the policy of the International. England has, certainly, exerted a very considerable influence on the development of representative government in all parts of the world, and has been looked to by reformers of all grades of bourgeois political ideology as a source of inspiration and a fountain of instruction. The French Constitution of 1875, like the constitution of the present régime of the Third Republic, was modelled upon the English system of so-called parliamentary sovereignty. The Constitution of the United States, however erroneously those who framed it interpreted the fundamentals of the English system, was an endeavour to reproduce it. Exponents of bourgeois representative government have come from all over the world to study or, at any rate, to observe this prototype of their ideal assembly, the English Parliament.

The greatest authority on the Procedure of the House of Commons, was an Austrian scholar, Josef Redlich. His book, recommended and lent to me by the Speaker (or President) of the House, lies before me and therein I read these words so characteristic of the fetishism of English "parliamentarismus."

"The parliamentary system of England is not only the pioneer and type of all modern representative constitutions; it remains to this day (1907) the ripest, the most spontaneous and the most stable realisation of the great conception of representative self-government."

Therefore, let us not consider it time unprofitably spent which we give to an examination of an institution in which I have the dubious honour of being the first elected representative of the Communist International, and whose demise I sincerely hope to witness in the not far distant future. The Parliament as it exists to-day, comprises the united parliaments of England and the neighbouring, and now united, Kingdom of Scotland, and the pitiful "loyalist" remnant of those formerly sent to parliament from the other united Kingdom of Ireland, now divided between the State of Northern Ireland and the Irish "Free" State.

I cannot attempt in a study such as this, and, in the time at my disposal, to discuss the historical difference between parliamentary forms in Scotland and England before the two countries achieved parliamentary union in 1707. Suffice it to say that they are to Marxists, very interesting and illustrative of the influence of material development upon political institutions. The relative immaturity of the Scottish parliament was the direct reflection of the social simplicity and economic under-development of the Scottish Kingdom. I might, moreover, say in passing, that the comparative study of social and political forms, which is possible in the history of the different parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, affords a great field of enquiry for our Marxists, which, I regret to say, we have failed adequately to appreciate and to utilise.

I am going to confine my remarks to the portrayal of the rise of parliamentarism in England. It would not be in any sense correct to say that my country was the home of the bourgeois economy from which it spread out into other parts of Europe and the world, and yet it is true to say that it is the home of the typical form of bourgeois government. The reason for the early development and the continued existence of parliamentarism is to be found in the geographical fact of insularity, which secured to the English bourgeoisie the opportunity, without interruption, progressively to evolve their economy unhampered by invasion, and their political liberties free from the checks of those strong executive powers, which, in continental countries exposed to land warfare, everywhere grew up nurtured by and to defend the bourgeois economy, triumphant over the manorial or mark system of wealth production. Neither did the English parliament take its origin merely from the period when the capitalist economy asserted itself as against the earlier economy of production for local consumption within the mark, or by the lord and his tenants. It ante-dates the bourgeois conquest of English feudalism, although it did not become effective in its typical guise until the exchange of agricultural and handicraft products for money had proceeded some considerable distance.

#### PARLIAMENTARY ORIGINS.

Now, the English parliament consists of three parts—the Crown, i.e., the King or Queen, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. These three together constitute Parliament whose correct designation is "the Most High Court of Parliament." Unless all three participate, either actually or nominally, there can be passed into law no "Act of Parliament." Each of the three parts constitute a corporate entity and is co-equal with each of its fellows. In the beginning was the King. It is not essential that I should

explore the intricate details of Anglo-Saxon history to explain how the separate and petty Kingships and chieftainships were eventually consolidated into the Kingship of "the Sovereign Lord" of all the other lords whose free tenure of considerable estates, gave them political pre-eminence in the primitive English propertied society. Enough to state that some time between the eighth and eleventh century, England became a realm, having at its head a single monarch, from whom, in legal theory, all others held their land. The King in England, thanks to the fact that by the Norman Conquest of 1066, all the land was forfeited to the new ruler, managed to establish the theory, effective also in practice, that all sub-tenants, i.e., tenants of his immediate tenants, i.e., owed loyalty to him and not merely to their immediate over-lord. This was of the greatest importance in checking, at the earliest stages, the tendency to particularism which the great lordships of the German Empire and the Kingdom of the Capets in France so conspicuously displayed, and which, centuries afterwards, led in the one country to extreme territorial autonomy and disunity, and in the other, under the Bourbon despotism, due to a straining after the maximum centralisation of governmental functions in the person and entourage of the monarch.

England, from the eleventh century, had, inherent in its system of land tenure and the political settlement thereon reposing, a factor which was to determine the whole course of its subsequent evolution towards constitutionalism. The King was, both in theory and in practice, required to maintain his kingly dignity out of the revenues of his own estates, supplemented by certain feudal charges customarily laid upon his chief tenants, certain very limited charges upon the very few commodities entering or going out of the realm, and by living at the expense of his subjects when moving about the country. He could call upon those who held their land direct from him as over-lord, to come, supported in turn by their tenants, and follow him to war for a period not exceeding forty days. His subjects must each come furnished at his own expense, and, in return; they asserted that they had the right of attending upon him and tendering him advice. They maintained stoutly, and asserted by armed assembly over a stormy period of several centuries, these privileges, especially contesting any attempt of the King to interpret his traditional authority so freely as to introduce new taxes as new sources of revenue, whether from increased rent on land or profits on trade, when these came into being with the expansion of economic development.

This assembly of the tenants, holding their land direct from him, was called the *magnum concilium regis* or "great council of the King." It was a body at once deliberative, a *parliamentum*, and in the nature of a court of appeal wherein the King, assisted by lords, passed final judgments in all matters in dispute between freemen or between freemen and the King or his deputies. It would seem, in fact, that this "great council" was a court for deciding what was the customary law of the land before it became a place for formulating new laws, i.e., for making statutes or acts of parliament. This "great council" was the beginning of the whole institution of parliament. It was the beginning of the central law courts; the law courts of the Crown and the beginning of the

institution known as the Privy Council, out of which, in the seventeenth century, grew the Cabinet.

In customary and legal theory, every freeman—i.e., every man who held his land as a tenant of the King, and owed neither to him nor to anyone else, a labour service of any kind—was entitled to attend upon the King in the great council of the realm. Each and all, they were entitled to a summons to attend upon their sovereign lord and to approve or express disapproval of his actions. No one, however, who owed service to one of these free tenants of the King, or tenants-in-chief, as they were called, had any right to come to court, nor had the King any customary right to call him to his presence.

The King had, as his tenants-in-chief contended, no right to interfere in their freedom to do what they liked with their own, or on their own estates, or in their own lordships. The King, had, they claimed, no right to interfere with the administration of the customary law as it prevailed and had prevailed from time immemorial, in their own manors (i.e., marks under their lordship). Freedom was something that pertained only to him who held his land subject only to military service. Freedom was not an attribute of any man or woman who rendered labour service to a lord.

"Liberty" in England is an abstraction which has developed historically out of "liberties;" and these "liberties," says Professor Pollard, the latest writer of distinction and importance on the evolution of parliament in England, "were definite concrete privileges, which some people enjoyed, but most did not." In church and state, he says, in the Middle Ages "liberty was an adjunct, almost a form, of property, and it was prized for its material and financial attributes. The liberty of a baron (a lord's consisted in his authority over others) in the court he owned, and in the perquisites of his jurisdiction." Thus, we had in England, in the beginning, a King, with a council of free-holders, each of whom—or most of whom—had a right to sit as a local Kinglet with a council of his own tenants in so far as they yielded no labour service—or who ruled as a local despot over his servile tenants.

But the King of England was not content that such a system should become in any sense accepted in his realm. In Saxon times and in the ninth and tenth centuries he had made a beginning and divided the tribal areas out of which his realm was taking shape, into more or less arbitrary areas of administration known as "shires" or "parts cut off." Over each of these, he had set his representative, the shire-reeve, who sat in a shire-court, his court, side by side with the territorial chieftain, whom blood ties or landed property relations gave priority in the shire. The King, through the intermediary of his shire-officer, endeavoured to restrict the powers of the courts, whether of each lordship or of each group of lordships. *He did this not in the interests of law and order, of progress and civilisation, but with the aim of acquiring for himself the financial proceeds of the administration of the customary law!* All English constitutional historians are emphatic on this point; the great authority, Bishop Stubbs, declares:—

"So intimate is the conception of judicature with finance under the Norman Kings, that we scarcely need the comments of the historians to guide us to the conclusion that it was mainly for the sake of the

profits that justice was administered at all."—(*Constitutional History of England. Vol. 1, p. 418.*)

These Kings of the twelfth century strengthened the powers of the shire-officers, making them the channel through which rents and taxes were remitted to a new court of law, set up especially to receive and to regulate the receipt of royal revenue, called the Court of Exchequer.

Here, twice a year, the shire-officers presented their accounts, and, in order to make certain that they were not defrauding him or proving lax in their duties, the King sent down two of his lords from the Court of Exchequer to each shire-court to make careful enquiry into the customary law and to discover ways and means whereby his revenues might be increased. The shire-officer called to the shire-court persons, generally, but not always, freeholders of land, from every manor or lordship within the shire to give an account of all the monies, whether in the form of rent, or taxes, due to the King's Exchequer. If the King wanted more money and ordered that such should be provided, it was the duty of these persons to arrange for its payment in due proportion and in accordance with relative capacity to pay.

These shire-courts, presided over by the King's administrative officer and by the King's collectors of taxes, became, the historians tell us, "the link between the old and new organisations of the country by which that concentration of local machinery was produced, out of which the representative system (of parliament) arose."

It was, likewise, the activity of the King's officers, especially those sent down from the centre of the State, and their endeavours to invent new taxes or to extend the scope of old ones, which caused the great lords, the more powerful of the King's tenants, to come together *en masse*, and in arms; they were aided by the higher clergy who, also, were landlords, and as such, objected to being taxed heavily—even when the King was handing over the proceeds to their own superiors in Rome. These powerful propertied interests compelled King John to concede to them, in 1215, what is generally called "the Charter of English Liberties"—Magna Charta.

#### THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

It was, certainly, a charter of "liberties," but it concerned the interests only of those who were great landlords. It was, says one bourgeois historian, "manifestly conceived in the interests of a class" and, says another, "designed to secure the local independence of barons (i.e., lords of the land) rather than the national responsibility of Kings." "The liberties," says the Professor of Modern History at the University of London, "which the barons hoped to secure were largely composed of the services of their villeins. A liberty was in no sense a common right or a popular conception." It was this charter which gave to the great lords the "liberties" which constituted the fundamental privileges of the Upper House of Parliament, i.e., of the House of Lords. It was the treaty with the King to which the great territorial magnates were in future to refer and from which they were to insist that there must be no deviation. Magna Charta gave to the lords the right to veto any measure that in their opinion interfered with their rights as a class.

For the next two centuries, the great lords were busy with the

endeavour to make themselves each independent in his own lordship as far as possible, and, as a class, to compel the King to take their advice and accept their control.

Within a century they had decided amongst themselves which of their number were to be summoned by the King to every parliament there to sit by right as "lords of parliament" or, as they are called to-day, as "peers of the realm." The same historian, already quoted, Dr. Pollard, says: —

"Peerage law is not a fiction of the Crown, but the invention of the House of Lords."

The Upper House, therefore, in this most venerable Constitution of the Realm of England, owes its *status* and its privileges to an act or, rather, to a series of acts of revolutionary violence on the part of the great lords of the soil. The members of the House of Lords owe their traditional position and their privileges to two things. First, they held from the King vast estates of land, and, secondly, they were able by the exercise of that economic power which confers political power, acting as a class, to seize and to maintain a privileged position to which they had no other conceivable right.

Whilst the House of Lords was thus coming into existence, three other great departments of the estate were taking shape.

#### RISE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

First, the King, thanks to the enormous revenues which he derived from his estates, both in France and in the British Isles, to the huge sums which he borrowed from merchants and bankers in Italy, and to the technical assistance which he obtained from the clerics of the Catholic Church, was able to develop a strong system of Courts to administer the law and to establish his authority throughout the Kingdom. In this way, he was progressively isolating from the ranks of the feudal lords of the soil certain of their number, and, also, adding to their number men of his own selection, who were loyal to him rather than to the landlord class to which they belonged. Secondly, the King was selecting from the ranks of those lords whom he had to call to his "great council," a limited number who constituted a smaller or inner and confidential council of advisers. This small body, chosen by the King, and called at his own complete discretion, became known in time as "the Privy Council." It was the members of the Privy Council and the clerks of that body, and the assistants of its members, who, actually, ruled and administered the government on behalf of the King. The Privy Council was a committee appointed by, and presided over by, the King himself, or by someone whom he deputed to take his place. It is the Privy Council through which the King, at the present moment, in constitutional and legal theory, governs the country. Every member of the Cabinet must be made a Privy Councillor, and it is as "a member of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council," that a Cabinet Minister exercises his legal authority. The King holds a Privy Council at frequent intervals to sign documents, to give his assent to bills that have passed both Houses of Parliament, and to consult with his Ministers. No member of the Privy Council has any right to attend. Members attend only when summoned to do so by the King or his deputy, the Lord President of the Council.

In law, the King has an absolute right to summon to the Council whomsoever he may wish. In constitutional practice, he summons



only those whom his Ministers advise him to call. The Privy Council was, in its origin, the result of a successful endeavour on the part of the King to keep, if not "the great Council of the Realm," at any rate a part of that Council under his absolute control. The Privy Council to-day is a legal survival whose actual powers have been usurped by an arbitrary committee of its members called the "Cabinet," which has no legal existence and no legal standing whatsoever. How it came into being and what is the basis of its power we shall tell at a later stage.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Meanwhile we must turn to the third development of the state which showed itself in the 13th Century. I refer to the House of Commons. I have shown how the King, in order to collect his revenues more effectively sent his representatives to the shire-courts there to meet representatives of his tenants from each manor or lordship within the shire. So long as it was only a matter of interpreting and effecting the observance of the accepted and customary rights of the King to certain immemorial rents on land, fines for offences, dues payable by the feudatory to his superior, and taxes on an unchanging volume and description of commerce, there was little or no occasion for argument or debate as between King's man and tenant's man.

When, however, on the one hand, economic development, notably the increasing revenue of many estates from the sale of wool, and a growing volume of trade made available new sources of income which the royal officers could tax, and when the requirements, real or imaginary, of the King and his ally, the Catholic Church, caused him to demand the payment of new taxes, or payments in kind which no one ever expected him to return, the tenants, large and small, claimed a right to decide how the new customs should be operated and, as demands became greater and more frequent, to bargain with the King through his officers for concessions of privileges in exchange for money. By the time of the 13th century, a considerable amount of coined money was in circulation, and an extensive commerce in raw wool and finished fabrics had grown up between England and the Cities of France and Italy.

The King and the Church were, by this time, accustomed to think in terms of money whilst the taxpayers in the lordships and parishes continued to think in terms of customary labour services and customary and infinitely varied payments in kind. With the settlement of the country and the increasing devotion of the lesser landlords, not to speak of their tenants, many of whom were becoming free tenants, to the cultivation of their lands, great numbers of the King's tenants omitted to attend the great council of the realm either to shout "aye" or "no" or silently to acquiesce in what others said, or even to appear in the sub-committee of the council—viz., the Court of King's Bench, the Court of Chancery, or the Court of Exchequer. They, also, absented themselves from the shire courts as often as possible. They did not wish to incur expense. Their more powerful neighbours, the great territorial magnates, did not desire their concurrence. They themselves had no desire to come merely to be taxed. They remained at home. The King had no easy means of compelling them to attend or to send in their contributions. Not only "the great Council" of all the King's tenants, but also the local council or

shire-court was becoming inadequate to the requirements of a new age

It was to overcome this practical difficulty that, in the later 13th century, first the rebel lord, Simon de Montfort, after having taken the King prisoner and put the pen into his captive master's hand, and second, that King's son, Edward I., sent down to every shire officer instructions to send up to Westminster two representative freeholders from each shire and two representatives from each of the King's towns to consider with him and with the great territorial magnates concerning the grant of money and the government of the Kingdom. The shires, from that time until the early 19th century, sent up from the shire-court to Parliament, two representative free holders, each of whom must have at least 500 acres of land. The King's towns—i.e., towns whose burgesses collectively paid to their lord the King every year a fixed rent, and in return had certain privileges of free administration of their own affairs, were expected to send, also, two of their number to the Parliament. Sometimes the towns sent their representatives, but more frequently they omitted to do so. So long as the towns remained poor the King made no great effort to compel them to send representatives to Parliament. The King, in those days, was a more ardent believer in Parliaments that were his subjects. They did not regard representative institutions as a privilege, but as a penalty. The King summoned them as and when he desired, and he summoned them only for the sake of asking for money.

The House of Commons was thus established as a means to ensure the more regular, the more uniform and the more continuous and abundant payment of taxes. To begin with, the representatives sent up from the shires and the towns met jointly with the magnates and with the King. After a time, they met by themselves. They were interested solely in the granting of money to the King and in receiving from him, in exchange, a promise of the grant of certain petitions for redress of grievances which, being granted, became new laws. The lords formed a Court for administering law; a council of great magnates who served the King in war in return for the occupation and enjoyment of their estates; a body of men who came together by right to safeguard their own property and to assist the Sovereign in the government of the Kingdom. They constituted themselves a House, and, from the 14th century, the representative freeholders and burgesses who came together only to grant money and to receive in return answers to their petitions, constituted themselves likewise a House, the Lower House, the House of Commons.

Three points of explanation are necessary concerning this House of Commons. First, the members were not, necessarily, elected. Very often, there is reason to believe, they were selected by the shire-officer with the mere approval or consent of the freeholders and others present in the shire-court. Otherwise, as is the case to-day, in theory, those present in the shire-court chose their representative, presented him to the shire-officer, and the shire-officer "selected" and sent him to Parliament. Second, "it was the *land* rather than *men* that Parliament represented." Says Dr. Pollard, in his "Evolution of Parliament":

"Parliament in its origin had less to do with the theory that all power emanated from the people than with the fact that all people held

their land directly or indirectly from the Crown, and were bound by a corresponding obligation to obey its writs of summons and carry out its behests." "Representation was not the offspring of democratic theory, but an incident of the feudal tenure." "The duty (of attendance in the shire-court) was even attached to particular pieces of land and not to their holders."

Third, the term "Commons" had no reference to anything pertaining to the common people as the Labour Party vulgarly imagines, but to "communes" or "communitates" or associations of persons having definite obligations. The "communes" or "commons" were the shires. The House of Commons was an "Assembly of Shires."

These shires, as we have seen, were represented in the shire-court by representatives from each locality of the tenants, supposedly free tenants, but frequently including amongst them tenants who were serfs or of servile origin. This became particularly the case in the years following the Peasant Revolt of 1381—not immediately, but after a time—when serfdom was dying out, being commuted not possess a freehold tenure yielding at least forty shillings a influential to attend the shire-court.

To check this tendency and to keep the House of Commons membership not only select, but selected by the gentry or "men of good family," a law was passed in 1430, forbidding anyone to vote for a member of parliament for any shire election who did not possess a freehold tenure yielding at least forty shillings a year. This placed a definitely class character upon the parliamentary privilege except in a few towns which had, for some exceptional reason, a democratic municipal constitution. The qualification of the elector enacted in 1430 continued until 1832.

The House of Commons was to be, definitely, an assembly of those who held land, and in return rendered no labour service for it. I have now outlined the historic origins and development of the basis elements of the English parliamentary constitution, viz., the King, the House of Lords, the Courts of Law, the Privy Council, and the House of Commons.

#### STRUGGLE BETWEEN CHURCH AND CROWN.

The place of Parliament and more particularly of the House of Commons was not considerable in England in the earlier centuries of its existence, owing to these two prime factors, viz., that the great territorial lords were concerned rather to conserve their own liberties and privileges intact upon their estates and to keep out the intervention of the King than to become powerful figures about the royal court, and also that the commercial and, in fact, the agricultural resources of England were so little developed that the traders and the cultivating owners of the soil had not sufficient economic power to exercise a great political power. When a monarch had a heavy expenditure on a war, or a lavish outlay upon his court and courtiers, he tended to become dependent upon his tenants for financial assistance, but very often he could obtain from Italian and Flemish merchants sufficient money to make him in large measure independent of parliamentary grants.

The House of Commons was, to the King, an institution for increasing the revenue, and to those whom it represented a place to be avoided for that very reason. The Parliament never ceased to exist or to function; but from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries it had very little importance in the national life.

The struggle for power was proceeding outside of it between two factions of territorial magnates for the possession of the throne or, in the earlier stages of the conflict, of one faction to limit the authority of the other faction around the King.

The firm establishment not only at the centre of the State, i.e., at Westminster, but also in the shire-courts everywhere throughout the land, of the authority of the King's Courts of Law, which were in fact only a magnification of the courts which in every feudal lordship interpreted the customary law of the landed class, together with the knitting together of the court of the Sovereign Lord with the shire-courts for the landed magnates by the High Court of Parliament, in which great lords specially summoned because they held great estates and lesser lords called thither to represent their fellows in town and country, and in which they advised the King as to how best to amend the laws that affected the property rights incidental to land tenure had the effect of making England the one country in Western and Central Europe where the Roman Law, the law of the dead Roman Empire perpetuated by the Living Roman Church, did not dominate all legal theory and practice.

The Roman Church in other countries, where the King and his lords did not come together to interpret and modify the law, was stronger than all the other institutions which had law courts, and, consequently, exercised an immense influence over the theory and practice of government which has been absent from England, and which makes English law so difficult to understand. "The growth of national legislation in parliament," says Professor Pollard, "accompanied by the inroads of positive man-made law upon the old cosmopolitan laws of reason and nature, produced English law out of the international legal systems of mediæval Europe; and the more English our secular law became in the hands of English parliaments, the more certain and incessant would be its conflict with the canon law of the Church, which, if it changed at all, grew ever stranger to England."

Here was the beginning of the movement which resulted in the breach between the King of England, supported by the dominant class as represented in parliament, and the Church of Rome. At the very opening of the fourteenth century the territorial lords in parliament were claiming that the King, of course, subject to their approval, should have a right to veto the appointment by the Pope of a bishop to an English diocese, and that, only by his and their consent, might the messengers of the Catholic Church come into the country. A century later the territorial lords in parliament were clamouring for the confiscation of the lands of the Church and their apportionment to endow a great number of new peers in England. A few years later on, during the war with France, the King and parliament abolished the monasteries, and appropriated the estates of all religious orders having their headquarters in France.

When, finally, in the sixteenth century, the King attacked the supremacy of the Pope over his own Church in England, proceeded to execute a bishop for high treason in denying his new-made supremacy, went on to confiscate the estates of all the religious orders and his successors to forbid the entry into the country of Roman propagandists on pain of death and to forbid the practice of the Catholic religion, the parliament was the King's willing and,

often, enthusiastic collaborator. For some time after the Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century the allocation by the King to the territorial magnates and to the rich merchants who desired to become landlords, of the confiscated estates and properties of the Church, checked the tendency of the landed class to assert through parliament the new economic power which they had acquired by the rearing of sheep and the sale of wool on the European markets. The King and the landed magnates shared between them the supremacy over the Church and the income from the appropriated lands. In local administration, whilst the lords had individually as territorial magnates lost all power in their private courts, they exercised as a class the authority of the King, and governed the country in his interests and their own.

Together in parliament they pursued what was a common interest of tyrannising over the peasantry who, no longer serfs, had lost all popular rights, and had no longer any monastery or religious charity to which they could go for relief or for help.

#### CONFLICT BETWEEN COMMONS AND CROWN.

Gradually, however, a quarrel developed between the King and the House of Commons. It was a quarrel over two things. First, it was a dispute over a matter of religion. Second, it was a dispute concerning his right to demand and their right to refuse money from taxation. The first matter in dispute was, at bottom, grounded on a material interest. Many of the landlords and more of the merchants believed that the King intended to restore the Church of Rome to supremacy, and that with that act of restoration would come not only a denial of their own freedom of religious belief, but, also, a restoration to the Church of the confiscated estates, and of the blessing of the King's claim to do what he wished with "the liberties," i.e., the property of his subjects. Yet more of each of these classes resented the claim of the King to a Divine Right to rule over them, untrammelled by any secular or parliamentary restraint.

A few of the landlords and most of the merchants desired the establishment of a Church which should be subordinate to themselves, as was the Church in Scotland to the landed class, and that a Church so regulated should be supreme in the State, i.e., should be supreme over the King himself. Such a Church had the added advantage that it could be conducted with very little expense, and its beliefs were favourable to unregulated enjoyment of private property and private enterprise in trade.

A very few landlords, some merchants, and a considerable number of craftsmen, tenant cultivators and others desired a republic, a Church governed on republican lines—in fact, a *petit bourgeoisie* commonwealth. The incidents of the struggle leading up to the civil war in the seventeenth century, the course of that conflict, the overthrow and restoration of the monarchy, and the subsequent oligarchic revolution of 1688, were all conditioned by the inter-necine quarrels of these factions one with another. Over these issues they wrangled. Over these issues they fought each other. The question as to whether or not the King had a right to tax his subjects, landlords or others, without the consent of the parliament, was one which rallied against the King practically all sections of the property class. There was a very large measure of unanimity on the slogan, "No taxation without representation."

When, however, the quarrel between King and parliament touched upon the supremacy of one set of religious ideas, one set of notions of the basis of secular authority, one set of interests in the land against another set, the issues became confused. The economic interest of the bourgeoisie was not strongly enough developed, and their class solidarity sufficiently intensive and extensive for the republic to be a permanency. There were four parties in the Civil War. First, there was the King and those landed magnates who believed either in the restoration of the Roman Church or the continuance of the supremacy of the King over a Church with bishops, a Church endowed with land by the King and Parliament. Second, there were the merchants of London and many landed magnates who believed in a Church, controlled by themselves and supreme in the State, deprived of much of its land and conducted on oligarchic principles. Third, there were the *petit bourgeois* republicans, and, fourth, there were peasant, proletarian and idealistic *petit bourgeois* communists, "levellers," etc., who desired to transform a political struggle into a class struggle and to take over the land for the cultivators.

The republic became a despotism directed as much or more against the extremists of the "left." The forces of law and order rallied together, and, as soon as Cromwell died, in order to obviate a rising of the rank and file of the army of the revolution, called back the King. The next twenty-five years were years of compromise between the King, his party, and the merchants. Then came the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688, consequent upon an attempt of the King to interfere with the supremacy of the Church, and to threaten a restoration of the Roman Church, which would, of course, it was believed, demand the restoration, also, of the estates of which it had been deprived, of a cancellation of the privileges of the mercantile oligarchy who governed the great towns and a repudiation by the King of a loan made to him by the bankers and merchants.

There was, in reality, much more involved in the dispute than even this. The history books always avoid it because it is derogatory to the conception of England as a great sovereign State, but the true position of affairs is obvious to the unprejudiced observer.

There were in Europe, in Western Europe, at that time, two great powers. The one was a great military and political power—France. The other was a great economic power—Holland. Holland had been defeated on the sea by England. Sea power and, as a result, colonial and commercial power, were, therefore, at the mercy of England or of France.

To Amsterdam, Leyden, Haarlem, Utrecht, and other Dutch cities had congregated together from Portugal and other lands of the Catholic reaction great numbers of immensely wealthy Jewish traders and bankers. These, already becoming the creditors of Hanover, Brunswick, Brandenburg and other German States, had immense properties and interests in the West Indies, Brazil, India and the Levant. They desired to see established in London a king or a government friendly to Holland rather than, as was the Stuart dynasty, friendly to France.

Consequently, from within and, unobtrusively, from without, came a movement to overthrow James II., and to put in his place

William, Prince of Holland; to limit once and for all the prerogative of the King; to assert the supremacy over the Army and Navy of the Parliament, and to vest the executive power of the State in a Committee of the King's Privy Council, from which he should himself be excluded, which should, nominally, be responsible to the parliament, but which should, in reality, be controlled by certain interests, the interests which had engineered and carried through, successfully, this "Glorious Revolution." These interests were a group of very influential territorial magnates, including the ancestors of the Duke of Devonshire, now Colonial Secretary, and of Mr. Winston Churchill. Associated with them were certain merchants in the City of London in competition with the East India Company and a whole conger of Dutch Jews, bankers, brokers and merchants from Amsterdam and the Hague.

These latter, of course, remained discreetly in the background. Later, in 1700, when the Princess Anne, heiress to the throne, had no children surviving, the parliament enacted a law, the Act of Settlement, passing over the lawful but deposed King and his heirs, and conferring the Crown upon the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her heirs. Eighth in the succession from the Electress Sophia and, by virtue of that Act of a revolutionary parliament, King of England, is George V. The King William from Holland and the subsequently imported German dynasty from Hanover were brought in, installed on the throne and taught to talk English, in order to rivet once and for all on the necks of the English people the rule of the Amsterdam money-lenders and their English aristocratic allies. The late Dr. Maitland, discussing the "Glorious Revolution" in a series of lectures at Cambridge University, recently edited by Mr. Fisher, well known for his advocacy, and his presidency for a time of the Council of the League of Nations, says:—

"Those who conducted the revolution sought, and we may well say were wise in seeking, to make the revolution look as small as possible, to make it as like a legal proceeding, as by any stretch of ingenuity it could be made. But to make it out to be a perfectly legal act seems impossible." "It seems to me that we must treat the revolution as a revolution, a very necessary and wisely conducted revolution, but still a revolution. We cannot work it into our constitutional law." (*Constitutional History of England*, pp. 284-5).

"We cannot work it into our constitutional law." No, but, somehow, George V. has been worked into our constitutional law, the Cabinet has been worked, if not into our constitutional law, into our constitutional procedure. As a matter of fact, the whole bag of tricks is the outcome of a revolution that succeeded just as the Soviet Constitution has in Russia and the Communist Constitution will, we hope, in England hereafter.

The "Glorious Revolution" in no way lessened the executive power of the Crown. It merely transferred, in practice, the exercise of that executive power to a coterie of persons, nominally acting for the King and nominally responsible to parliament, which could refuse to grant money to the King to carry on the government should it disagree with the actions of his Ministers. The right of granting money, legally vested in parliament from this time forward, was actually asserted with success by the House of Commons. The House of Commons, nominally elected by the votes of persons in boroughs (corporate towns) having the franchise on terms locally regulated, and of persons in the shires having lands held on free tenure and producing an income of forty shillings, was, in

reality, filled with the nominees of magnates who bought up either the votes of the electors by bribes or who bought up the pieces of land which conferred on the tenants the right to vote, and who thereby controlled a majority adequate to secure the election of those whom they wished to have in parliament.

The "Whig" oligarchy—the people who had carried through the revolution—generally succeeded, with the aid of their Dutch money-lenders, of securing control of the House of Commons. By their control of the King, who had the right to make any of his subjects lords, i.e., members of the House of Lords, they controlled the whole of Parliament. They ruled in the King's name, with the consent of their nominees "in parliament assembled," in the interest of themselves and their banking and mercantile paymasters. They borrowed a sum of £1,200,000 from themselves as private subscribers, their friends and their allies, with which to finance the State. This became the nucleus of the National Debt.

The corporation of persons who subscribed the money was made by an Act of parliament, "The Governor and Company of the Bank of England." The loan to the State constituted the initial capital of the Bank. They conferred upon it exclusive privileges of note issues. They transacted with and through it the issue of all State loans and all government money business. They borrowed money from themselves for the State, and regulated the loans in such a way that they became in their private capacity the perpetual creditors of themselves in their public capacity.

They conferred or extended exclusive privileges of trading in India, Canada and the South Seas upon other companies consisting of themselves and their friends. They secured complete control of the raising of an army and the maintenance of a fleet, and carefully saw to it that the officers were of their own party. They sold Crown lands to defray State expenses, and bought them themselves or took care that they were obtained by their friends at fictitious values. They conferred upon the lord of the manor or upon the free tenant the ownership of all minerals under his land, a property previously vested in the King. They began on a more extended scale the stealing of popular or common lands by persons whom they authorised by parliament enactment so to do. They set themselves up as an absolute autocracy veiled as a constitutional monarchy.

From 1690 to 1832 this gang of thieves used the political, military and naval power of the State to maintain and to extend the interests of their vast monopolies, and exercised sovereign rights over immense territories in Asia and America, exploiting the natives and extending their traffic by the most shameless repression and deliberate debauchery. Their politics were directed towards enforcing the exclusive rights of British and Colonial shippers among the several parts of the Dominions, protection and bounties for the native corn-growers, and measures calculated to make the West Indian Islands, the Colonies, India and Ireland buyers of home manufactures and sources of the supply of raw materials.

#### THE POWER OF THE KING.

Gradually, from the sixteenth century, the Privy Council had sunk into the background, and specific clerks or Secretaries of State, as they were called, had become the executive heads of departments



of administration of public affairs which derived their authority from the King through the Privy Council.

There has evolved a whole system of Ministries, each presided over by the Secretary of State, or functionary of similar nature, who is responsible to parliament for his department. Some of these are in the Cabinet, the number being regulated by the Prime Minister at his discretion, and all who are members of the Cabinet are, of course, members of the Privy Council, and, as such, have a legal status, and, whilst acting for the King, are responsible to parliament for his actions.

The theory is that His Most Gracious Majesty the King is not responsible for his actions. This does not mean that he is a lunatic, an idiot, or a minor. If he is deemed so to be, then a Regent must be appointed. But the theories are: (i.) the King can do no wrong; (ii.) the King is not responsible for his actions. Moreover, we may add, the King is as absolute in law to-day as he ever was. Constitutionally he is limited in the exercise of his prerogative. Legally, he is absolute. In the final event it is legality and not constitutional theory and practice which we shall encounter.

In law, the King can dispense with parliament for any time up to but not exceeding three years. He cannot, however, maintain an army without the consent of parliament, and this is given only for one year. The King can, legally, dissolve parliament whenever he pleases. He does not require to consult his Ministers, although, in constitutional practice, he always does so. But, then, hitherto, he has always had bourgeois Ministers, who could withhold from him not only moneys voted by parliament, but also, moneys available from any other quarter.

Should His Majesty have a proletarian Ministry, there is no reason why he should not dismiss them as well as dissolve a parliament as often as the electorate returns a proletarian majority. He would be easily able to conduct his government, in default of a vote of money by the House of Commons, by means of loans forthcoming, as they would be, from the Stock Exchange. Such loans would not, of course, be legally in accord with the Bill of Rights, but, then, that Bill was enacted by a revolutionary assembly, that of 1688, and there is no doubt that, once the counter-revolution was able to secure a parliamentary majority, it would legalise the illegal actions of its own puppet.

Legally and constitutionally, alike, as well as in accord with historic precedent and with all reasonable probability, the idea of the King tolerating the lawful transfer of land and the means of production to a proletarian ownership and control is only a fiction. It enables us meanwhile, however, to carry on our propaganda within parliament without coming into conflict with the terms of the pledge of allegiance. That is its main, though, perhaps, not its only value.

The House of Commons, let us remember, is only one-third of parliament. Parliament itself is not an executive instrument. The prerogative of the Crown, i.e., of the Executive, is legally absolute. The constitutional restraint on the prerogative is of a financial character, the power to withhold money, a power which no proletarian majority can exercise in parliament, but which can only be exercised outside by direct action, i.e., by action which the common law

declares, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it is sedition to recommend and advise. The House of Commons cannot, of itself, pass any legislation unless directly concerning money, and then only with the King's consent. The House of Commons—as part of parliament—can at any time be dismissed, and can be dispensed with for fully a year. The House cannot come together unless the King calls it.

The following quotations from Maitland's *Constitutional History* make the Labour Party apologists look exceedingly silly:—

The King without breaking the law can dissolve a parliament whenever he pleases. Any restraints that there are on this power are not legal restraints (p. 374).

Law has done little to take away powers from the King. When we have insured by indirect methods that such powers shall not be exercised without the approval of parliament, we have considered that enough has been done—we have not cared to pass a statute saying in so many words that such powers have ceased to exist (p. 342).

The law, then, as to the extent of the royal prerogative in many directions is very often very vague, and often we have to solace ourselves with the reflection that any attempt to exercise the prerogative in these directions is extremely improbable (p. 343).

We must not confuse the truth that the King's personal will has come to count for less and less with the falsehood (for falsehood it would be) that his legal powers have been diminishing. On the contrary, of late years they have enormously grown. Many governmental acts . . . are now performed by exercise of statutory powers conferred on the King. Acts which give these powers often require that they shall be exercised by order in council (p. 399).

Thus suppose a crisis. The King dissolves parliament. He selects new Ministers, or, in other words, he summonses whom he will to the Privy Council. He promulgates at that council a series of "Orders in Council" under the Emergency Powers Act. He enrols the White Guards as Special Constables. He mobilises the Army Reserve. He proclaims Martial Law. He suspends Habeas Corpus. He will be acting with perfect legality if he arrests Ramsay Macdonald, Tom Shaw, and the whole Executive of the Labour Party without warrant or cause shown. It will not matter in the least that they may all have been Ministers the day before and may still be Privy Councillors. That will only make it possible to proceed against them with greater rigour. It will be easy to find them disloyal to their oaths. Such a situation may quite possibly arise within the next ten years.

The King, who used the prerogative to save Carson from arrest in connection with the raising of an illegal army in Ulster to oppose Home Rule should it become law, is quite likely to accept the advice of the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Birkenhead, Winston Churchill and others to break a Socialist Government, proclaim every Labour organisation having Socialism for its objective an illegal society as contravening the common law or some suddenly trumped-up decision of the Courts, and wipe out the socialist, trade union and co-operative organisations as completely as Mussolini is endeavouring to do in the kingdom which His Most Gracious Majesty is about to visit in state and where he is to review, if report is correct, the pattern Fascisti, which his own Specials would readily emulate if he but gave them the word.

The history of the past, the signs of the present, the probabilities of the future not in Russia, not on the Continent, but here in this

realm of England could, surely, be advanced as the strongest and most commanding of all arguments in favour of the application to our own problems of the principles, policy and practice of the Communist International.

## The Labour Party Conference



By J. T. Murphy

**T**O all outward appearances the London Conference of the Labour Party took great strides to the "right." Every leading speech was keyed to the note sounded by Mr. Webb: "We are on the threshold of power." The Press boomed the rejection of the Communist Party affiliation, the pledge to constitutionalism, the loyalty to the Empire, the obeisance to the monarchy, the willingness to repeat 1914, and to vote war credits in "a defensive war." What more could the capitalist class desire than this?

The opening speech of Mr. Webb was at once parochial and Utopian, apparently a profound theoretical exposition of the evolution of capitalism to socialism; actually a complete surrender of the Labour movement to capitalism. At the very moment when political democracy throughout Europe lies completely stripped of its hypocritical trappings and the capitalist class is armed to the teeth and sweeping constitutions aside; at this moment to talk of "the inevitability of gradualness" reveals a condition of political myopia little short of amazing. To hold the Conference with dreams of perfect economic organisation free from the political barriers of jealous nations, and assert that these dreams could come true through Fabian gradualness smacks of a Wellsian novel and not of the realities of the economic and political life of Europe of to-day. To set Owen against Marx, the Utopian against the realist, is to emulate Canute in his efforts to sweep back the tide with a broom. But never a word came from any leader to check this flow of nonsense or to remind the Conference of the grim realities of the daily struggle of the workers against the most vicious forms of reaction yet manifest in the history of capitalism. Although Mr. Jowett, the retiring chairman, had told the Conference the previous year, "It is *no use* now expecting to remove this massed collection of evil imposition by gradual ameliorative reform. We can make little impression on it that way in the lifetime of a generation. It is like mowing ripe thistles. As you cut down this year's crop you scatter the seed of the next." — not a word came from a single I.L.P. leader in opposition to the Webbian philosophy of the comfortable.

Indeed, the Conference is as remarkable for its omissions as for its affirmations. Only a few weeks before the Labour Party and I.L.P. leaders had played a very important part in the formation of "the Labour and Socialist International." This is a wonderful organisation which Mr. MacDonald welcomed in glowing terms, but whose decisions appear to be of very little concern to the

Labour Party or the I.L.P. For example, the Hamburg Conference pledged the Labour Party and the I.L.P. to the class struggle. But there was not the slightest reference to this fact in the Conference by those who had committed the Labour Party to the constitution of this new organisation. Clause 1 of the new Labour and Socialist International reads: "The Labour and Socialist International is a union of such parties as accept the economic emancipation of the workers from capitalist domination and the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth as their object, *and the class struggle*, which finds its expression in the independent political and industrial action of the workers, as a means of realising that object." And the Labour Party and I.L.P. leaders were silent. And, like Brutus, they are "honourable men," "right honourable men."

Were this the only glaring omission, things would not look so bad. But in the Executive Report, which includes their international obligations, there is a resolution on the Imperialist peace, which reads, after a long preamble: "This struggle of the International Working Class against imperialist policy will be most effective if Labour everywhere fights against the imperialism and capitalism of its own country, with all the Parliamentary and extra-Parliamentary means at its disposal for the class struggle, and if this struggle is ever more and more united internationally." The Labour leaders said never a word about this important declaration issued by the International which they dominate. And, like Brutus, they are "honourable men," "right honourable men." A few days after the Conference every Labour leader who was on the platform, including Mr. MacDonald, were making thundering declarations concerning the imminence of war. The columns of the *Daily Herald* blazed startling headlines, and the "honourable men" of the "gentlemanly party" followed Mr. MacDonald in orderly procession with articles written in a similar key. The Hamburg Conference, held before the London Labour Party Conference, had also considered the war business, and in its resolution on the matter said: "The Labour movement must organise the struggle for peace, must *oppose all wars* which may threaten to break out in the future with all the means at the disposal of the Labour movement and prevent the actual outbreak of such wars by proclaiming and carrying out a general international strike."

The Conference, ignoring this international obligation, voted under the leadership of Henderson and Brownlie in favour of war credits for "defensive wars" in the name of practical politics. What had become of the Hamburg committal, and where were the "honourable men" who everlastingly beat the moral drum, but appear to have such short memories. Or could it be that for once they remembered when Comrade Pollitt spoke and reminded them of Fimmen, who once promised that in the event of an Allied or French invasion of the Ruhr 25,000,000 workers would put into operation the Rome and Hamburg resolution for a general strike, and were ashamed or too "gentlemanly" to intervene?

Their silence is eloquent, especially when related to their deeds and pledges to the League of Nations. This is where their memory recovered, for the Hamburg Conference introduced the League of Nations, too. It may seem to be in contradiction to the class war

resolutions, but we will not dwell upon this point. Let Mr. MacDonald tell you of the League of Nations:—

Before the agenda is drawn up the topics which the Governing Body propose to put down for discussion are submitted, four months before the date of the conference, to the various State Members; and the Governments are entitled to object to the inclusion of any particular item they think it inexpedient to discuss. Such a provision makes it quite impossible for any topic to be introduced which any capitalist Government desires to exclude.

The composition of the Governing Body and the character of the annual conference furnish further safeguards against its becoming an appendage of the Labour and Socialist movement. The Governing Body, composed at present of 24 members, gives only six seats to representatives of organised Labour; 12 of the seats are given to representatives of the Governments, and the remaining six are held by representatives of employers' organisations. Similar distinctions are observed in the annual conference, from which the draft conventions and recommendations issue. Every Government is entitled to send two delegates, the employer organisation sends one, and the workers' organisation one, making a delegation of four from each country. Thus the workers' representative can only hope to carry his point of view if he can convert the two Government delegates or one of these delegates and the employers' representative. To make it still more improbable that the conference may be captured by the Socialists, the constitution provides that a two-thirds majority must be obtained for any proposal to be embodied, either in a draft convention or in a recommendation for submission to the national Parliaments. The draft conventions and recommendations have to be accepted by the Governments and endorsed by the Parliaments before they can become operative.

A most hopeful institution to which to send problems in the interests of the workers. Nevertheless, this kind of thing is characteristic of their leadership, as witness their lead on the Ruhr situation. Having been recruiting sergeants throughout the war, they have been parties to the continuation of war in the name of peace since the bugles sounded "cease fire." From the Amsterdam and Frankfurt Conferences of 1921 and 1922 to the latest speech of Mr. MacDonald, as leader of the opposition in Parliament, welcoming the statement of Mr. Baldwin, there has not been a single proposal put forward by him or his colleagues with reference to reparations or Ruhr invasion which has not had for its purpose the stabilising and reconstruction of capitalism. Their disagreement with the robber Treaty of Versailles has not been a disagreement of principle, but only of amount. "The principles upon which the Labour policy regarding reparations are founded are briefly as follows:—

(1) The amount and form of reparations required two sanctions—the first, that of justice; the second, of economics.

(2) The sanction of justice must be limited by the pre-armistice negotiations.

(3) The sanction of economics must be limited not only by what Germany can pay, but by what we can receive without damage to our own people, and by what forms indemnity can safely take."

Thus Mr. MacDonald, on behalf of the Labour Party, and thus the approval by the Conference of the resolutions which plead for diplomatic intervention, if possible with the co-operation of the U.S. Government and the reference of the whole problem of reparations to the League of Nations. On no occasion have the Labour Party leaders attempted to mobilise working-class action against

either the Ruhr invasion or the imperialist policy of the British Government. The nearer they get to power the worse they become. The reply to Comrade Pollitt's criticism of their Ruhr policy was a mockery of the working class, whilst there is not a single proposal in their programme of governmental diplomacy which is distinguishable from the proposals of Liberalism. The nearer to power they become the less do they express the interests of the working class. It is this fact which characterises the London Conference.

This is equally clear in its treatment of the current industrial problems in Britain. Although the railway men were about to hold their annual conference, and are faced with the beginning of a wholesale attack on their wages and conditions, their position was not mentioned. Although the miners were being faced with a critical conference immediately after the Parliamentary Labour Party had signally failed to remedy the miners' conditions by parliamentary action, the miners' conference was entirely disregarded. Although the boiler-makers had been locked out since April, they were entirely ignored, and the unemployed were dismissed with a collection and a resolution. As if to stamp upon the pages of history the unreal character of their approach to the workers' problems the Conference had only just closed its doors when a spontaneous revolt of the dockers throughout a number of principal ports broke through the indifference to the class struggle in forcible fashion. From tacitly ignoring the struggle, they became immediately partisans in the fight, but without a single moment's hesitation they line up against the workers who have dared to revolt. The full story of their actions in this struggle has yet to be written. Sufficient for the moment to observe that here was a glorious opportunity to line up for common action the dockers who had struck work; the boilermakers who were locked out; the railway men and railway shopmen faced with severe cuts in wages; and the miners whose claims both the Government and mine owners had rejected in no uncertain terms. The present leaders of the Labour movement have not only moved to the "right," if ever they were away from it, but have discouraged to the utmost anything in the form of industrial action, and are busy transforming the unions into subsidiaries of the Parliamentary Party. With every growth of the Parliamentary Party it has intervened in the industrial struggles of the workers, to a greater extent, not to strengthen the workers in action as a rallying force to their parliamentary agitation, but as a mediator to stifle and close down industrial action of any form. Now that the mantle of Mr. Lloyd George has fallen upon the shoulders of Mr. MacDonald, the weight of the Parliamentary Party has fallen upon the Labour Party and the industrial movement. At no time has this been more manifest than at the London Conference. The parliamentary leaders dominated the situation and have become the masters of the Labour Party. This process was very clearly outlined by Page Arnott in the June issue of the *Labour Monthly*. It is a process which makes doubly significant the debate on Communist Party affiliation, the question of the Labour Party Whip to Newbold, and the withdrawal of Clause (b) of the Edinburgh resolutions. The fight against the Communist Party is the continuation of the fight to subdue the workers within the ranks of the Labour Party. Mr. F. Hodges claimed that we must be rejected because we do not believe in the political democracy of capitalism,

and that we are prepared to fight with other than parliamentary means. That there are legitimate excuses for our scepticism of political democracy the workers can test for themselves by referring to what the Labour Party has subscribed in the new International, already cited in this article. Upon this phase we will not dwell. Suffice it for the moment to point out the open admission of the leaders that they are the defenders of capitalism, and that their action coincides with their deliberate efforts to smother every revolt of the workers.

Equally clear was MacDonald's reply concerning the refusal of the Labour Party Whip to Newbold. To alter the Labour Party is apparently something which no constituent body is entitled to suggest. To have different principles and policy is not permissible, although the flagrant contrast between Mr. Jowett's declaration and Mr. Webb's "philosophy of the comfortable," is most glaring for all to see. The reason lies deeper in the hatred of the middle class leaders for anything that savours of stiff fighting on behalf of the workers.

But this is only one phase of the situation. The voting on these issues, in addition to the withdrawal of Clause (b), reveals the other. The card vote shows 2,880,000 against affiliation, 366,000 in favour. This outwardly reveals an increase of 100,000, as compared with last year, in favour of the Party. Two unions pledged to vote in favour, viz., the N.U.D.A.W. and the Garment Workers, were unavoidably absent, or at least another 100,000 votes would have been added. But it must be added that Mr. Hodges threw nearly a million votes against us, and we lost the miners' vote by 66 to 50. The N.U.R. cast over 300,000 votes, and we were defeated in the N.U.R. meeting owing to the absence of one delegate, as was shown in the voting on the question of the L.P. Whip for Newbold when the voting was 3 to 3, and thus railway men did not vote on this question. When these facts are considered and we further remember the large number of local Labour Parties and Trades Councils which voted in favour, plus the fact that there were 36 party members as delegates as against 6 at Edinburgh last year, the C.P. has little need to be alarmed with the block vote figures. Our influence with the rank and file of the organised Labour movement has grown enormously. It was this influence manifest in the Conference which compelled the withdrawal of the Edinburgh ban. The E.C. of the Labour Party in their anxiety to dictate a middle class liberalism to the organised workers in the union, blundered badly in their tactics against the C.P. at the Edinburgh Conference. In striking at the Communists they hit the unions and endeavoured to interfere with the operation of their constitutions. In effect they had declared, "Give us your money, and we'll decide your politics." Unions were in revolt against this, and it was known that at least two unions would have withdrawn their delegates from the conference if any of their members were interfered with because they were Communists. Coupled with the fact that some E.C. members who were not Communists were tripped up with this regulation, no wonder it was unanimously withdrawn. The Communist Party thus scored heavily in the Conference. Not only in the positive support secured, but in the modifying of resolutions. For example, the composite resolution based upon the E.C. report omitted the S.R. resolution which had

figured at Hamburg and Edinburgh, and Mr. MacDonald forgot his beloved Georgia both in speech and resolution. The significance of these developments makes clear the growth of a leftward movement among the working masses, coincident with the rightward movement of the middle class leaders as already outlined.

The importance of these movements cannot be over-emphasised. They justify the policy of Communist affiliation to the Labour Party, and provide the positive evidence of the theoretical predictions of the Communists. The approach to power by the leaders of Labour and the struggle of the Parliamentary Labour Party to dominate the Labour Party Conference stands in sharp contrast to the growth of class consciousness in the rank and file. A further growth of the leftward tendency amongst the masses cannot help but reflect itself in the Labour Party Conference by increasing the number of Communist delegates and sympathisers, such as Maxton, Wheatley, Buchanan. With this growth the Labour Party and the trade unions will stand in marked contrast to the Parliamentary Party, which will become the Labour Government. That the Parliamentary Party will be homogeneous is not likely, as witness the rift with the comrades already named, but it is already written that the day is not far distant when the Labour Party Conference will find itself in marked contrast to the Government it will have thrown up by its own labours. This is bound to happen. The Labour Party and the unions thrive on the struggles of the working class. The more acute the struggles, the more the class interests will rise and find expression, whilst its present leadership destined to become the Labour Government is more and more pledged to the interests of capitalism. The Labour Party Conference does not control the Parliamentary Party, but *vice versa*. That it will be possible to modify the Parliamentary Party from time to time, that the left wing will grow in Parliament as well as out of it, is certain. But the fundamental challenge between the working class organisations, the Parliamentary appendage is bound to come. The London Conference shows the alignment of the forces in their beginnings, and these destined to grow and sharpen until the workers are face to face with the task of creating a real workers' government with its own apparatus against a Labour Government with the apparatus of capitalism.

The struggle for affiliation to the L.P. and for winning the trade unions to the support and leadership of the Communist Party must be intensified. It is the guarantee that the working class interests shall find the fullest possible expression within the ranks of the mass organisations of the workers and for the transformation of the Labour Party into a Workers' Party capable of waging the class war. We must renew our application for affiliation, both nationally and locally. We must continue the policy of winning the confidence of the union branches and be elected to the local Trades Councils and Labour Parties. Every obstacle placed in the way by our opponents must be used to show that this opposition is really opposition to the interests of the workers and an embargo in favour of the capitalists. The London Conference of the Labour Party has shown quite clearly that the Communist Party alone is the real custodian of the interests of the working class and its entrance into the Labour Party is the one guarantee that the Labour Party will one day become a Workers' Party.



# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



## The Norwegian Labour Party

**T**HE Party Convention's report on the activity of the Norwegian Labour Party during the year 1922, shows that the Party, despite the internal crisis, is firmer than ever. The widespread unemployment has reduced the trade union membership, and this has reacted on the membership of the Party. The

membership statistics for the year 1922 are as follows: *First quarter*, 39,027 men and 7,608 women = 46,635; *second quarter*, 37,805 men and 7,884 women = 45,689; *third quarter*, 37,742 men and 7,400 women = 45,142; *fourth quarter*, 39,124 men and 8,391 women = 47,515.

The membership is largest in Christiania; here the Party has 19,132 members, the majority of whom are collectively affiliated to the Party through their trade unions.

In the country the Party is mainly built up on direct individual membership. The Party comprises 13 district organisations, 16 county, and 29 town organisations.

The Party convention has now resolved that within a year the Party is to be reorganized wholly on the basis of individual membership. It is clear that this measure will considerably reduce the membership of the Party.

In 1922, the Party possessed 41 newspapers. Of these 16 were dailies, 14 were published thrice a week, 9 twice, and 2 once a week. Besides these, the Party has a periodical, a women's paper, and a humorous paper. A weekly youth paper is also published under the supervision of the Party, as well as a children's paper and a communist students' paper. The Party also has a press service, which provides the newspapers with telegrams, articles,

parliamentary speech reports and information from the main organisations.

The Party possesses a publishing establishment which issued, during the year 1922, 10 books with a total edition of 57,000, and 4 propaganda pamphlets with a total edition of 25,000 copies.

The Party is carrying on comprehensive educational work, and in 1922 conducted a day school with 33 students, course of instruction three and a-half months; a day school with 20 students in one district, which lasted two months, and about 50 local evening schools with about 1,000 students. In 1922 a correspondence school was founded, with 13 courses of instruction.

An idea of the comprehensive activity of the Party may be gained from the fact that in 1922 the Party executive arranged for 2,338 lectures and 290 agitation tours. For agitation purposes handbills amounting to a total circulation of 380,000 copies were issued.

The Young Communist League made good progress in 1922, and has now about 12,000 members in 250 groups. The children's movement comprised, at the end of 1922, 51 children's groups with more than 6,000 members. The Women's League connected with the Party (and which the convention decided to dissolve) had in 1922, 92 groups with about 3,000 members.

At the municipal and rural district elections in 1922, the Party obtained 1,786 seats in the rural district councils, and 558 in the town councils. At the same elections in the year 1919 (before the split in the Party) the figures were 2,033 and 631.

# THE FORUM

*Under this heading readers are invited to state their personal opinion upon any question of vital importance to the working class movement.*

## The "Workers' Life Page"

By D. IVON JONES

APROPOS OF COMRADE ROE- about 242 of these "worker corre-  
BUCK'S ARTICLE IN THE spondents." Here are the figures:--  
"COMMUNIST REVIEW."

On May 5th "Pravda" celebrates its "Press Day," it being the anniversary of the founding of the paper. On the "Workers' Life Page" a special greeting is devoted to Maria Ilinushna Ulianova (Lenin's sister), who reorganised this section of the paper in 1919 on the old pre-revolutionary lines. A note entitled "Our statistics," indicates the extent to which "Pravda" has organised its system of "worker correspondents" in all the factories and workshops of Russia.

"From the 5th May last year 8,000 letters were received in the 'Workers' Life' section. Who sent them?"

"2,200 persons from more than three hundred districts of Soviet Russia. Here are letters from Archangel, Odecea, Baku and Chita; in short, hardly an industrial centre is not represented. Workers wrote about their needs, about their efforts and ideas to build up a better life of labour. Many wrote particularly critical notes: about the increase of production and improvements in methods, about the defects of managers in tackling the problems of production, etc. During the last few months about 800 such letters were received from the Moscow district alone, which were so effective in this exposure of the defects of their respective managements, that they resulted in from 20 to 25 cases coming before the peoples' courts every month (purely as a result of the watch kept by workers' correspondents)."

"In addition to the correspondence from workers we received letters from peasants who also asked us to print what goes on in 'their world,' especially about linking up their village with some factory or workshop."

"Now, who were these 2,200 people who wrote during the year to the 'Workers' Life Page'? So far we have succeeded in analysing details

(1) <i>Social Position.</i>	
Workers at the Bench ...	219
Employees (office, etc.) ...	15
Peasants ... ..	8
(2) <i>Education.</i>	
Elementary ... ..	186
Home Education ... ..	18
Intermediate and Workers' Faculties ... ..	38
(3) <i>Party.</i>	
Communists ... ..	146
Young Communist League ...	12
Non-Party ... ..	84

"These figures show that the 'Workers' Life Page' is carried on by actual workers, irrespective of Party affiliation; and if the number of non-party correspondents is comparatively low, that is because the majority of those of whom details were received were Moscow correspondents."

### *How I became a Correspondent.*

A worker (V. Koukanov) says: "For a long while I had a notion for writing about things, especially verses of poetry. Although they were not of much account, I did not know this, so I wrote about everything that came into my head, but never wrote to the papers. Last year Comrade Lipkind, of the "Pravda" came to the factory where I work as harness maker and proposed I should write some notes about life in the workshop. From that time I wrote in the "Pravda." I wrote very badly at first, but now I have learnt a bit. I try to write about everything important that goes on in our factory. At first one had to write a lot about disorder in our factory, and my notes helped not a little. Now life is beginning to arrange itself, life is getting easier, and one pays more attention to the good things and about what is jolly in our factory life. Now I am kind of married to the "Pravda": hardly a day passes I don't ring up the office or send in a note. I have become a real "Pravda" man, and I am proud of it."

# BOOK REVIEW

*Japan in the Far East: the Bloody Epic of Japanese Intervention.* Communist Party of Great Britain, 6d.

**I**N this seventy-page booklet the workers of this country may learn for the first time the full story of the ruthless war waged by Japanese imperialism (backed by the full approval of British imperialism) on the Far Eastern outposts of the Russian Revolution. Japanese imperialism casts longing eyes on the vast unexploited natural resources of Siberia, and desires also, by getting a footing in the Maritime Province (Vladivostok, the Amur valley), to strengthen its strategic position for a stranglehold on China. These imperialist designs cannot succeed while the Soviet Power holds sway from the Urals to the Pacific: hence the savage struggle between Japan and the workers' and peasants' government of the Far Eastern Republic. When Koltchak was routed by the

Red Army, Japan supported the White Guard brigands Semenov and Ungern: and these precious scoundrels outdid even their imperialist masters in treacherous brutality. Eventually the determined fight of the Far East Siberian workers and peasants liquidated these White Guard adventures, but it was not till the end of last year that Japan evacuated Vladivostok (and rumours are now current of a new White attempt on the town) and the Russian half of the island of Sakhalin is still in Japanese hands. The story of Japanese intervention is an exposure of the ferocity and treachery, the unashamed aggression (by all means, foul preferably), that inevitably characterise the operations of imperialist policy. This booklet sets forth the story simply and effectively. We have only one complaint: that is, that it is a pity that the translation was not rather more carefully done. Perhaps, also, the printing might have been a little better.

G. A. H.

## THE NUCLEUS

is a most important part of Party organisation. The nucleus of a library is a necessity for every keen Party member.



Here are a few suggestions

<i>The ABC of Communism</i> —BUHARIN	paper 3s.
<i>Communism &amp; Society</i> —WM. PAUL	„ 2/6
<i>Left-wing Communism</i> —LENIN	„ 2s.
<i>Between Red &amp; White</i> —TROTSKY	9d.
<i>Communist Industrial Policy</i>	1d.
<i>Towards a Communist Programme</i>	3d.
<i>What is the United Front ?</i>	2d.

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