

14 SEP 1932

PROLETARIAT

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Greenmount, West Australia,
9th August, 1932.

DEAR COMRADES,

May I say how delighted I was with "PROLETARIAT," and to know of the organisation of students responsible for it?

For so long, the indifference of the young people of our universities to the economic fermentations of the age we live in, and the causes underlying those fermentations, has been a reproach to us. In the universities of Europe organisations of students have always associated themselves with the revolutionary movements of the working people. Marx himself graduated from such an organisation. And in the darkest days before the dawn in Russia, student organisations did much to stir and maintain the spirit of the peasants and city workers against the injustices and oppression of their time.

In his "Letters," Tchekov says: "Only those young people can be accepted as healthy who refuse to be reconciled with the old order and foolishly, or wisely, struggle against it—such is the will of nature, and it is the foundation of progress. . . ."

He was referring to student disturbances in connection with a demand for: "Free right of entrance to the university without distinction of religious denomination, nationality, sex and social position; freedom of meeting and students' associations; the establishment of a university and students' tribunal; freedom of teaching; the abolition of police duties in respect of the universities."

This at a time when, Tchekov continues, "they flog in our police stations; a rate has been fixed; from peasants they take ten kopecks for a beating, from a workman twenty—that's for the rods and trouble. Peasant women are flogged, too. Not long ago, in their enthusiasm for beating, in a police station, they thrashed a couple of budding lawyers."

As a sign of the times, Tchekov mentions that, "the cabmen approve of the students' disturbances."

When a number of students were being taken to prison, at night, the populace fell on the gendarmes to rescue the students from them, shouting: "You have set-up flogging for us, but they stand-up for us!"

In Germany, France, Spain, Scandinavia, England and America, revolutionary organisations in the universities are standing behind mass movements of the working and workless people, realising that unemployment, wage cuts and legal injunctions are taking the place of the Tzarist knout to flog desperate people into acceptance of all the injustices perpetrated against them by a decadent and tyrannous system of exploitation.

Lenin said: "Less intellectual talk . . . and closer contact with life."

"Fewer pompous phrases and more every-day work . . . less political clatter and more attention to the simple, but tangible facts of Communist construction."

"Upon the youth organisation falls the gigantic task of struggling for revolutionary internationalism, for true socialism and against the dominant opportunism that has gone over to the side of the bourgeoisie."

Our universities have been lethal chambers for the painless extraction of youthful vigour, enterprise and independent ability. They have been standardising factories, stuffing students with lore of the ages, accepted formulæ, ideas, designs, platitudes—afraid for youth to make its own voyages of discovery: have any contact with the stirring tides of every-day life in their own time. Whereas knowledge, to be of value, must be related to life with Promethean valour and integrity.

"PROLETARIAT" breaks through that stultifying atmosphere with its gay and gallant waving of the torch. I could cheer the splendid, defiant spirit of youth, till the hills echo, on this bright, sunny morning after rain.

How can the dry-as-dusts and their moles of victims prevail against it? By duckings, kidnappings, excommunications? Not in the least!

In "Candide," Voltaire relates: "After the earthquake which destroyed three-quarters of Lisbon, the wise men of the country could discover no more efficacious way of preventing a total ruin than by giving the people a splendid auto-da-fé. It was decided by the University of Coimbra that the sight of several persons slowly burned in great ceremony is an infallible secret for preventing earthquakes."

As ceremonial burnings to earthquakes, so duckings and police prosecutions to the débâcle of Capitalism and Communist reconstruction.

KATHARINE SUSANNAH PRICHARD.



PROLETARIAT

THE ORGAN OF THE MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY LABOUR CLUB
(A Minority Group Within the University)

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EDITORIAL

IN the Editorial prefixed to our first number we ventured a sad prophecy. We predicted that the advent of "Proletariat" would not "disturb by so much as a ripple the immemorial tranquility of the University mind."

We were in error, though we erred on the side of wisdom. When the student body ran down to the lake-side like so many Gadarine swine, a psychic as well as a physical ripple was set in motion, upon which a total calm has not yet supervened. There was much talk about the rights and wrongs of total immersion, and from that it was a short step to the rights and wrongs of communism. "Proletariat" played a very subsidiary part in bringing to pass this surface ripple. But still, a ripple it was, and that is more than we had predicted.

The issue then, is raised, but we cannot feel satisfied with the grounds on which it has been fought. Whenever there is talk of Communism in the University, the question seems to be whether it is a Good Thing or a Bad. If it is a Good Thing, let us embrace it. If a Bad Thing, we shall have none of it. Away with it! To the lake with its advocates! It is as though the student body were to debate in all solemnity whether it ought to rain on Saturday. Such moral predicates are no doubt valid, but in the world of action they have never yet made much impression on that old champion, Necessity.

The assumptions of this specious moral politics are the assumptions of Idealism. Idealism from Plato downwards has been a University product, and in whatsoever ways the Universities have enriched the world, they have certainly left it blighted with this curse. University-trained statesmen to-day are complacently trying to create a machine for the prevention of war, and setting it up in Geneva for all to see, a fabric of admirable ideas and aspirations. Even the architects of the Tower of Babel were not more grimly funny. It is absurd to imagine

that any fabric of ideas or treaties or Zolvereins can deflect for a moment the economic destinies of nations. There are University-trained statesmen who, like our own undergraduates, spend a very great deal of time deliberating on whether Japan's entry into Manchuria is a Good or a Bad Thing, as though they or anyone else had some real choice in the matter. In reality, so great is Japan's economic necessity, that the gentlemen of Geneva can no more control the situation than Canute could command the sea.

The enemies of communism exemplify this very well. Communism is a Bad Thing, they say, because it involves the doctrine of class war. There shouldn't be a class war, they say. And the fiat goes forth from the strongholds of Liberalism: "Let there not be a class war!" But the class war remains a stubborn actuality. Some say Communism is a Bad Thing because it involves violence and bloodshed. These must be blind to the facts: the status quo involves bloodshed and worse; the present crisis involves a clash, not of statesmen who might be persuaded to shake hands, but between the economic destinies of nations, and this clash can be resolved only by bloodshed, so long as economics rests on "competition," i.e., conflict.

In brief, we are distressed, though not surprised, to find that local undergraduates are so badly corroded by the old blight of Idealism, choosing between ready-made policies as between apples on a dish, embracing this policy or that because it is ethically sound, or "progressive," or because it conforms to some kind of individual standard. It is because the Student Christian Movement has adopted this point of view that it is in general so amiable and so futile.

The moral is this: You can perhaps reason with Old Man Necessity, perhaps he can be bent a little this way or that; but to wrestle with him is a supreme folly. The only effective way of dealing with him is to collaborate with the old gentleman. S.C.M., please note!

The Roman Church and Communism



IN 1891, Leo XIII. issued the Encyclical (*Rerum Novarum*) on the Condition of Labour. The translation is published by the Australian Catholic Society, July 31, 1931. On page 9 we read: "There is nothing more useful than to look at this world as it really is and look elsewhere for a remedy." On p. 2 the troubles are stated: "The misery and wretchedness which press so heavily at this moment on the large majority of the very poor." The remedies suggested are just wages (p. 10), charity (p. 12), State regulations (the chief thing to be secured is the safeguarding of private property) (p. 20), a sufficient wage (p. 23), workman's associations founded on religion (p. 29). "Communism is robbery" (p. 5). The reason given being "that the results of labour should belong to him who has laboured."

In 1931, Pius XI. issued the encyclical (*Quadragesimo Anno*) on Labour and Capital. Claims are first made for the practical benefits created by Leo's effort. (1) Christian Social Science (sic) (p. 8). (2) Adoptions of his ideas by leaders of nations after Great War. (3) Increase of charity and health laws. (4) Growth of Catholic workers' associations. Still, after all these vast benefits (sic), "the few hold excessive wealth and the many who live in destitution constitute a grave evil in modern society" (p. 23).

Profit sharing suggested (p. 25), work must be supplied (p. 27). Harmonious relation between agrarian and industrial prices must be maintained (p. 28), syndicates advocated (unions of employers and employees), strikes and lock-outs to be forbidden (p. 33).

Now pp. 36, 37: "Free competition is dead, economic dictatorship has taken its place." There is "international imperialism in financial affairs." Communism is condemned: "Communists shrink from nothing and fear nothing when they have attained to power; it is unbelievable, indeed it seems portentous, how cruel and inhuman they show themselves to be" (p. 38). Socialism receives a milder condemnation (pp. 41, 42). "Modern factories and the present economic regime prove obstacles to the family tie and family life—dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed where men are corrupted and degraded" (p. 47). Remedy: (a) Economic life must be improved by Christian principles (p. 47). (b) The law of charity must operate (p. 49). In sum, all must become good Catholics.

In 1932, another encyclical, "Cristi caritate compulsi," published in *Tablet*, May 28 and June 4. Pope Pius XI. observes that "Distress is increasing and the host of men in affliction by enforced idleness grows greater."

The origin is the "unhappy heritage of sin." Communists are "waging war against religion and God—labouring diligently by all means—cinema, gramophone, books, radio—they mix the struggle for daily bread with their war against God."

"Now we must unite for or against God. Use, above all, prayer." "If therefore those who, through the excessive production of manufactured goods, have fallen into unemployment made up their minds to give the proper time to prayer, there is no doubt that work and production would soon be brought within reasonable limits." To prayer we must also add penance and frequent communion. "Let the poor and all those who at this time are facing the hard trial of unemployment and the scarcity of food, let them in a like spirit suffer with greater resignation the privations imposed upon them by these hard times and the state of society which divine Providence in its inscrutable but ever-loving plan has assigned them—let them with a humble and trustful heart accept from the hands of God the effects of poverty."

The considerations of these encyclicals may be made under four headings (if their perusal is not of itself sufficient).

(1) Attacks on Communism and Communists. Leo XIII. shows a total misconception. The precise aim of Communism is to give the results of their labour to the labourers and to abolish parasitism.

The attack on the character of Communists is not in good taste from the head of a Church whose history includes the inquisition. It must be admitted that Communists, Christians, Mohammedans, etc., when at war, are not readily distinguishable. Still, white terror has generally exceeded red terror.

(2) Suggestions for patching up Capitalism, such as profit sharing, syndicates, wage fixing, prohibition of strikes and lock-outs and price regulation. Under the Pope's nose in Italy all these things have been done, and Italy's unemployment is three times greater than in 1929 and misery prevails. Marx is again confirmed, as usual, by fact.

(3) So our good Pope Pius recommends that we all become good Catholics, and if we all followed the law of Christ, Mammon would not prove so hard a master. Surely after nineteen centuries this may be termed fantastic and impossible. Even now the wealthy Catholics who support the Church do not carry their religion into their business. The most they do is to get their wage slaves to do the dirty work. In business, where success means getting a great deal for nothing, Christian morality must be suspended. Listen to St. John Chrysostom (Tim. 1, Hom. 12): "Dives aut iniquus aut here"

iniqui"—"A rich man is either unjust or the heir of an unjust man." And still business proceeds not unbled by the Church.

(4) The final remedies: prayer, penance, communion, and the pious acceptance of God's will.

This in the year 1932 in a human problem which is undeniably material, and is already half solved. The problem is to supply man with sufficient material means of existence. Science has already given man the power to produce them in abundance. Distribution is the problem now to be solved by five-sixths of the world. In Russia the problem has already been solved by the workers seizing the means of production, distribution and exchange. This seizure was enforced upon them by sheer necessity, and to all appearances the same necessity will compel the workers of the rest of the world to follow their example and apply the same sharp remedy. There is no other.

As in Diphtheria to-day we inject antitoxin, and by a sharp, painful process destroy and dislodge the parasites; no longer saying it is God's

will and resorting to prayer. No, we use the knowledge gained on this earth and find it our only help.

Casting aside multiplied words and phrases, cliches of piety, what is the root idea of the Encyclicals? The security of private property. See page 26 (*Rerum Novarum*).

This must be secure, though man be corrupted, degraded and starved in the midst of plenty. If Rome is full of prostitutes and Moscow empty, it is God's will. The same applies to our youth driven to insanity, disease and death.

This attitude makes the Roman Church materially the enemy of the workers. In return the workers should deprive the Church of their material support.

Let the workers look well (with the aid of Marx and Lenin) at this world as it really is, seek the remedy where it lies; in action, not in prayer; in a scientific, planned economy—not in supine Christian resignation—in this world, not in the next.

G. P. O'DAY.

Notes on Australian Unemployment

Cessation of Loan Expenditure.

ONE employee in every five in Australia was in 1929 dependent upon oversea borrowing. A total of at least 200,000 persons received £47 million in wages. "However the world recovers, there can be no purchasing power for these men except from work." Before they can obtain employment they "must wait for new production." "Land now unpayable must somehow be made payable. 'Potentialities' must become realities, both primary and secondary. Prices must be within the reach of the multitude. Australian-made goods must be made, and sold. All this means that costs must fall, and all costs: not merely labor costs." These facts and quotations are taken from "Economic News," issued in June by the Queensland Bureau of Economics and Statistics. (See pp. 112, 97, 36, 87-8.) What do these facts indicate in relation to the ending of the "depression"?

It is frequently said that the Australian Governments will be unable in future to borrow on the former scale. Unless conditions grow very much worse than they are at present, this may be accepted as true. At all events, the maturing in 1933 of foreign loans will not permit new loans to be raised until after that year. On the basis of the figures quoted, the 200,000 mentioned cannot be re-employed from money obtained from loans until 1934 at the earliest. And eighteen months is quite far enough ahead for us to look.

If the total unemployment for Australia is put at 500,000, and if the 300,000 dependent upon internal revenue for their employment, were to become re-employed, what would be the position of the 200,000 formerly dependent upon oversea loan income? Let us consider the Queensland Bureau's proposals.

New production is required to provide new jobs. But the difficulty is: new production of what? There is already far greater capacity to produce than can be used. And although Australia is technically backward, there is a definite improvement in organisation and production. Important, too, is the fact that under the whip of the depression, the output per worker has increased. Again, whence would be derived the capital for new—and unnecessary—enterprises, when dividend prospects would be more than doubtful? With goods produced at a lower cost, and wages chasing (if not preceding) them, who would buy the increased quantity of goods?

The first conclusion to which these considerations inescapably lead, is that there can be no additional, new production for the purpose of employing a greater proportion of the workers until existing plants have been more fully utilised. It is, of course, assumed that the Queensland Bureau contemplates only economically sound production capable of maintaining itself on profitable business lines. The significance of this conclusion is that, even if 300,000 now unemployed obtained work, there would still be 200,000 unemployed. It is, however, expecting

too much to imagine that the whole 300,000 should regain employment, so that the position is still worse, and, under the present control and organization of industry, 200,000 is too small a figure for future Australian permanent unemployment.

Demoralising the Unemployed.

AT first sight it appears that the trade unions and the Labor Party, as the bodies to which the mass of the industrial workers have given support, are the proper organizations to assist the unemployed. Yet the fact is that neither the unions nor the Labor Party has satisfactorily met the unemployed "problem."

To unions unemployment is a state of affairs of an incidental character. It is met by the payment of benefits of a small amount over a limited period. The union machine as a whole has been designed to arrange the terms of employment. For this the workers have been brought together in unions, and for this alone they are equipped. When unemployment became, not an incident, but the condition of a considerable proportion of the members—a majority, in some cases—the unions were utterly unable to meet the new situation. The common needs of the unemployed led to various organizations of unemployed. The position of a union secretary or organizer was an unenviable one. His policy may be summed up in the slogan, "Wherever you trade buy Australian made," which meant helping Australian capitalism to obtain some profit, more profit, or even monopoly profit.

The unions, acting in conjunction with the Trades Hall Councils of the large cities, and the Labor Party, strove to keep within reasonable bounds the clamor and agitation of the unemployed.

The result of the Labor Party's policy has tended to lead sections of the unemployed to acquiesce in their condition and to wait for to-morrow. Hosts of good working-class fighters have been slowly and almost imperceptibly demoralized. And, one may ask, for what? To make Mr. Hogan's path easier! But when it is realised that there are many in the unions who are quite as "bad" as Mr. Hogan, it will be plain that to draw any sharp distinction between the Labor Party and the unions is impossible. In both the policy is the same. A show must be made to keep the unemployed quiet, they must be brought into action on high-days and holidays, bedewed by an occasional tear, given sufficient to separate the soul and spirit of the man from his body, and kept under sufficient control to prevent them from developing into a support for a militant policy. But the irony of the situation for the Labor Party is that in demoralizing the unemployed, it undermined a considerable portion of its own foundations.

"If Winter Comes . . ."

ABOUT ten years ago the "best-seller" was a book of this name. It is a question which is now put daily: can this terrible unemployment continue very much longer? Surely, something must happen! Can we not by some scheme get round the corner into prosperity?

By common consent, Australia's problem is but part of a world-wide condition. But because it is a world-wide condition, it is quite wrong to say, as does the "Economic News," that "The world problem is not for us to solve" (p. 9). Similarly it is quite wrong for the unemployed man to say that he is helpless. True, an Australian wheat-grower cannot make anyone buy his wheat, nor an Australian carpenter his labor-power. But there are other ways of regarding the matter, other views as to what constitutes the "problem," other solutions.

The view of the economists may be regarded as being that of the intelligent capitalist who seeks to establish a balance between the variable elements and economic life with a view to the preservation of existing privileges.

Some evil tendencies must be curbed, the long view taken, and all will be well. The alternative view is that the world's problem is not merely a depression, due to "disequilibrium" of economic forces, but the last stage of capitalist society.

In the last stage of capitalism, the capitalist, who has most to lose, calls for equal sacrifice. This the worker and the unemployed must both refuse. The reply of the working-class must be "inequality of sacrifice." For if the man on the lowest rung of the ladder goes any lower, his head will be below water, and unequal conditions can be met by the greatest sacrifice by those who have most. Around this claim of inequality of sacrifice, those in and out of work must be organized. The objective must be to contribute in Australia to the ending of the social system which implies unemployment. Now is the time when the ending of the system is necessary. Notwithstanding the statement of a former Labor M.H.R. that this is not the time to "envisage" (wonderful word!) socialism, this is in fact the time not only to envisage it, but to strive for it. In relation to the unemployed, that does not mean to help the capitalist State to reduce the unemployed to a condition of dove-like resignation, but to encourage in them the utmost resentment, the utmost understanding, the utmost organization towards the ending of capitalism.

Finally, there are many who attach to the fact of unemployment more weight than is proper. The real point is: To what extent does unemployment lead the workers to abandon existing standards? To what extent do the

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SOVIET SONGS



THE first shock-brigadier of the universal republic of Labor," as Romain Rolland describes Gorky, had very little doubt in his mind, when he contributed a preface in 1914 to the first collection of proletarian verse published in Russia, that the workers and peasants of the world would eventually create their own culture. In the past, cultural activity has been restricted with very few exceptions to the leisured class and the patrons of æsthetic teas, to use Carlyle's admirable phrase. So that, when for the first time in history a proletarian literature and art and, above all, a proletarian criticism began to raise its shaggy head, it was not at all surprising that our literary pundits refused to treat it seriously and were as much impressed as a successful portrait painter would be by the competition or criticism of a pavement artist. But Maxim Gorky has always been the friend and adviser of the workers and peasants of Russia; and so it is that in this preface, after pointing out that they were handicapped in their efforts by their unfamiliarity with literary technique, he added: "I am absolutely convinced that the proletariat is able to write its own artistic literature just as it has produced with great effort and enormous sacrifice its daily press."

To-day, fifteen years after the revolution, we are beginning to see the first real fruits of their creative work. In fact, the bolder writers are gaining such confidence that Gerasimov, a poet and a man of action, whose revolutionary activity has made him familiar with the goals of more than one country, can write with fervour:

To proud daring there is no limit,
 We are Wagner, Leonardo, Titian,
 On the new museum we shall build
 A cupola like that of Mont Blanc.

Some will be inclined to dismiss this assertion as the ranting of an over-enthusiastic propagandist; others who remember how the scepticism and scorn which greeted the announcement of the famous five-year plan changed to admiration and concern within the space of two years, will be more cautious. For Russia, the land of rye steppes and turbulent factories, the land of "chintz and rusticity of iron and concrete," is engaged in the mighty task of building a new civilization. So far there has been little time to spare for the imaginative and artistic expression of the revolution—the major problems have been of a constructional and scientific type; and the task of taking over the means of culture—the schools, theatres and factories, combined with the gigantic attempt to liquidate illiteracy (a phrase that has now become famous)—would seem sufficient for one generation to accomplish.

Many of the men from whom imaginative work might have been expected are at present far too interested in other matters. The artist in Russia does not boast that he is merely an observer of life. Tretiakov, the author of the powerful play, *Roar China*, is engaged in industrial problems on the collective farms in the south. Lunarcharsky is Commissar of Education, though a writer of plays as well. Mayakovsky was a designer and propagandist, though more famous as a poet. And Demyan Bedny, the "bolshevik whose weapon is poetry," like many another among the proletarian writers, occupies a responsible position in the attempt to bring knowledge to the mass of the workers and peasants.

But a society based on collectivism, a society which hopes to make individuals think socially, must create its own culture if we agree that culture, broadly speaking, organizes the aims and ideals of the community and gives these artistic expression. And the proletarian poets are writing in letters of fire across the whole of bourgeois culture—Philanthropy, Romance, Reform, Individualism, are not enough. The art that is based upon the expression of individual experiences alone, however full of genius and splendour and humanity, must give place to an art which is social and recognises the relation of the individual to the community as a whole.

It is clearly true that the proletarian writers have an historical material to work upon which is completely new in the world, and they themselves are thoroughly aware of the fact. They know that life without creative activity, both artistic and scientific, can have little meaning; and the interest of the workers and peasants of Russia in artistic problems and artistic technique is proved by the activity of the numerous literary groups throughout the country. Proletkult, an organization for cultural activities in the industrial centres, was established in 1918; many of its leading members broke away and formed the *kuznitsa*, which soon became the most audible champion of the theories and practice of proletarian art. Since then numerous cults and groups have been brought into existence, expressing all kinds of tendencies.

In Russia art is feverish, as is to be expected, and perhaps a quieter time must come before the true masterpieces will be written. But the age-old misery has departed. The unrelieved gloom of pre-revolutionary literature, which might well have taken the name of Gorky—bitter, miserable—for its symbol, is replaced by an ecstatic and joyful tone strangely in contrast with the spirit of cynicism and detachment to be found in the literature of the rest of the world to-day. The hostile reader

will consider that the peasant poet, Essenin, has no good reason for his joy when he chants:

"The sky is like a church bell,
The moon like a tongue,
O mother country mine,
I am a Bolshevik."

But there is no feeling of anti-climax in his mind. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven," cried Wordsworth, and Kirillov, more than a century later, gives expression to the same triumphant feeling:

Everyone was a head taller,
Everyone was brave and strong,
I believe even the constellations hear
These days' passionate song.

Life, it seems, is no longer a sad experience to them, for they feel the doors of the world have been opened, though every step they take through them "may be painful and full of torture." I know nothing more remarkable in contemporary verse than this sustained note of joy which bubbles with excitement because the writers are so conscious that they are forging a new life. Here is indeed the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, though at times it may be couched in a false rhetoric.

The blue-bloused workmen of Russia are singing at their jobs. The shavings fly and the hammers beat. The atmosphere of clean and healthy work, not at all of the artist's studio, is in everything they write. Filipchenko's verses on the blacksmith rising to the boisterous assertion that "He who is not a blacksmith is not a man," or Sadofiev's curious poem, "At the Lathe," are not the works of intellectuals, but of men who have discovered the answer to a riddle which has puzzled critics all over the world. We have grown familiar with the criticism that poets have not been able to keep pace with the modern world of science, and with the answer that it is impossible to connect poetry with machines and factories in an industrial age. There is a false theory prevalent, especially among contributors to popular magazines, that beauty is only to be found in a world of medieval romance or among moons and nightingales. The result has been that people have come to believe that poetry cannot deal with the ordinary everyday things of life. It is true that a number of our more serious poets have endeavoured to keep in touch with the world in which they live, but for the most part they have only expressed the terror, the oppression, the monotony of the machine and the factory. They have had no opportunity to show the beauty of the creative work of man. Now for the first time the proletarian writers of Russia have discovered this new world. No word is said of "sordid farms and joyless factories," but Kazin can describe "The heavenly factory"; Gerasimov can say:

There is tenderness in iron,
The frolic of snowflakes,
And love glitters, when it is polished . . .
There is Autumn in iron,

The cold blueness
Amidst the rusty pine twigs,
There is the scorching summer heat
Clad in a mirage
Of the fervent, flowering spring. . . .

In the past the poet has only tolerated the city, because there he has been enabled to watch the moving spectacle of life. He has always been an outsider, a man with his heart in the hills; but Loginov can speak with the rapture of a lover of "the noisy and vigorous city where the new source of life begins"; just as Sadofiev can exclaim: "I loved then the factory—the fount of all striving." The Russian poet, whatever else he may be, is no machine wrecker. See how Kirillov describes The Iron Messiah:

Wherever he walks he leaves a trail
Of ringing iron rail,
He brings joy and light to us,
A desert he strews with blossoms.

Some critics have felt that, in order that they might give fitting expression to the new world of machines, the poets required only a new technique. But the terror which the forces of nature inspired in the old English poets only gave place to a realisation of beauty and joy when man had conquered the sea and subdued the night. This new attitude which can find romance in the workshop and on the bench is only explicable when one remembers that for the first time man has become master of the machine, and in Russia is using it for his own benefit. This is the reason why the factory stands "triumphant and bright like the sun" before the eager eyes of these poet workmen.

The verses of the peasants, of course, breathe a different spirit. They know "the murmur of the ringing corn that ripens in its sleep," and Oreshin loves

. . . the aftermath of green,
The row of sickles and the blades sheen,
The rustling whirl of the vagabond wind
Amidst the silvery birch trees.

Here is to be found a softer, but less original note, which is more likely to appeal to the reader who cherishes the idea that all poetry is nature poetry. The peasant still loves the ancient customs of his forefathers and keeps alive the legendary tales of old Russia. He is a son of the soil and in "his songs there sing the earth and the rye," though the brooding melancholy which was so marked a characteristic of pre-revolutionary peasant verse is departing.

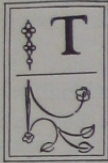
The silver-haired yesterday
Will be reaped and mown.

for a new light is shining upon the monotonous landscape which the peasants have known so long. We in Australia may feel more sympathetic towards this poetry dedicated to a countryside so like our own, when we remember that as Louis Esson has observed, more than one writer has suggested a resemblance between Russia and Australia—Havelock Ellis and Maurice Baring, to mention but two. And Vance

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Social Democracy and Fascism

SIXTY YEARS OF REVOLUTION—1789-1848



THE development of Capitalism to its last stage, Imperialism, involved a change from "free" competition to control of the world economy by several financial oligarchies. These partitioned out the world among themselves for exploitation, continually clashing along their lines of contact. This change in the economic form of capitalism had a correspondingly profound influence upon the class-struggle—an influence which disrupted the united ranks of the proletariat and complicated the whole structure of society.

Before the decade 1870-80, the struggle was developing along relatively simple lines. It is important to realise that, in the main, the contest was **revolutionary** in character. The sixty years following 1789 had seen the triumph of the bourgeoisie—but a triumph darkened by the forebodings of future successes of the rising proletariat. The year 1848 saw a powerful proletarian revolution in Paris and a successful bourgeois uprising in Germany and Austro-Hungary. In these latter countries the situation was extremely complex because of their mixed economic conditions—in parts highly industrialised, in others completely feudal; but one thing was common to all sections—the necessity for a change. A revolution took place, the bourgeoisie combining with the town workers to overthrow the ruling feudal class. In this they were successful for a short time, but the advancement of the industrialised section of the workers led the proletariat further than the bourgeois aim, and the latter found that they were compelled to unite with their former feudal foes against this new and dangerous force. Thus it was that after the successful rising of March 18th "the alliance between the bourgeoisie and the supporters of the overturned system was concluded on the very barricades of Berlin"* The same thing occurred in a more confused fashion in Vienna. It was this alliance which prevented the overthrow of the monarchy and maintained the old State apparatus almost entire.

In England, far more advanced capitalistically, the working class was naturally more developed and better organised. There was a powerful Chartist movement and the bourgeoisie was compelled by the mass pressure of the workers to pass the Ten Hours' Bill. This advanced state of the English working-class corresponded

with a similar advancement of the bourgeoisie who had gained their final victory in the struggle for power by the Reform Bill of 1832.

Thus we can say that the years 1789-1848 were characterised by fierce and confused struggles between all three main class groups—land-owners, bourgeoisie and proletarians—which took very different forms in different countries, depending on the stage of economic development of each. In England and France the result was victory for the bourgeoisie—in the latter despite the seizure of power by Louis Bonaparte and his band of financial adventurers. In Germany and the Central European States reaction set in temporarily, but the rapid development of capitalism there brought about a more peaceful bourgeois triumph during the next twenty years. At the same time the proletariat began to get better-formed ideas of its class position, and had made several attempts at independent revolt.

How, then, are we to account for the "softening" of class antagonisms which, in general, took place in Europe, and later in America, during the second half of the 19th Century?

The Expansion of Capitalism and the Growth of Opportunism.

In England the parallelism between these two tendencies appeared earliest and in its most outspoken form. This was due to the fact that England during the forty years preceding the year 1860 had practically a monopoly of the European market. The profits resulting from this monopoly enabled the British manufacturers to grant greater privileges to the working class as regards working hours and conditions, wages, etc., and even made it advantageous for them to do so. The two sections which benefited especially were the factory hands and the great Trade Unions. Engels, writing of the new era which opened about 1850, said that the best proof of the improved conditions of the workers was that "out of ten strikes they make, nine are provoked by the manufacturers in their own interests as the only means of securing a reduced production." This marked the origin of the "aristocracy among the working class" who "have succeeded in enforcing for themselves a relatively comfortable position, and they accept it as final."* That is, the British monopoly of the European market led to the formation of a "bourgeois proletariat side by side with the bourgeoisie."

*Marx: "Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany," pp. 46-7.

*Engels: "Condition of the Working Class in England in 1884." Introduction. (Written in 1892.)

However, Britain's aspirations towards being the permanent workshop of the world were shattered by the rapid development of France, Germany and America, and the expansion of the economic life from a national to a world scale—in other words, by the replacement of “free” and competitive capitalism by trustification and financial monopolies. And the working class of these countries enjoyed, in more or less degree, a share of the profits of imperialist expansion and its exploitation of native races. In apparent contradiction to this stands the fact of the Paris Commune of 1871, but it must be remembered that this followed the collapse of the power of the adventurer Louis Bonaparte and the crushing defeat of the French bourgeoisie in the Franco-Prussian war. Once suppressed the proletariat was not permitted to make any independent revolutionary movement of importance, and very soon overseas expansion enabled the bourgeoisie to follow the same lines as the English ruling class.

The attitude of the European proletariat towards Imperialist colonial policy was much the same as that of their masters. They regarded the exploitation of the Hindu, the Negro, and the Chinese with the same complacency as the shareholders in big concerns. The important thing to realise is that **this section of the working class, because of its superior education, greater leisure and closer contact with the bourgeoisie, became the leaders of the working class as a whole, and thus infected the whole Labour movement with its bourgeois spirit and bourgeois methods.** In Engel's words, “they are very nice people nowadays to deal with, for any sensible capitalist in particular and for the whole capitalist class in general.”* (1885.)

It was from this background that the Second International sprang. The First International, formed by Marx in 1864, was dissolved in 1873 because of the growth of power of the “bourgeois” proletariat and the internal dissension of an Anarchist faction led by Michael Bakunin. Nevertheless, it was an International revolutionary in character, as seen by its manifesto on the Paris Commune, which was criticised only on the grounds that it was not sufficiently revolutionary in its activity. The Second International, on the other hand, was infected with all sorts of Liberal Reformism, Radical Constitutionalism, etc., and its policy was mainly opportunist—that is, its whole activity was devoted to the attainment of small immediate advantages, completely obscuring the main issues of the class-struggle. It further turned its back on the old proletarian party by adopting constitutional methods in preference to forceful means and relying on the use of the bourgeois machine to grind the bourgeoisie out of existence—a

process requiring “gradual education of the workers” as “preparation for socialism.”

In brief, the effect of Imperialism during its “expanding phase” was the transformation of a section of the proletariat into the lowest stratum of the bourgeoisie: this section became the leaders of the working class and substituted opportunism and liberal reformism for the bitter antagonisms of the class-struggle.

The Collapse of the Second International.

In the twenty-five years between 1889 and 1914 the Second International spread its influence throughout Europe. In every country, under all sorts of different guises, opportunism was the characteristic of the working-class leaders. In Russia as Menshevism, in Germany as Revisionism, in France as Ministerialism, in England as Labourism and Fabianism, the reformist policy was leading the workers astray, blinding them to the increasing contradictions in capitalism and emasculating proletarian activity against the bourgeoisie. The chief theoretician of the Second International, Kautsky, even during the Imperialist war of 1914, a war forecast by socialists (including Kautsky) for many years, brought forward his ridiculous and traitorous theory of “Ultra-Imperialism,” which implied the formation of a gigantic world trust with “softening” of the attitude of the bourgeoisie to the proletariat and consequent gradual liquidation of the class-struggle! With much learned phraseology he attempted “to justify the opportunists, to present the situation in such a light as if they did not join the bourgeoisie, but simply ‘did not believe’ in introducing socialism immediately because they expected a ‘new era’ of disarmament and lasting peace”*. It is not surprising that such “socialists” became “socialist-imperialists” and voted for the German war credits, thus supporting the butchery of the workers of all countries!

So much for the opportunists who showed the feeble nature of their class-consciousness in the era of Imperialist crisis, who openly declared their interests to be identical with those of “their own” bourgeoisie, and who demonstrated their determination to “protect” themselves from imperialist invaders in the period when it was the duty of all honest socialists to declare that the Great War was an Imperialist war, the inevitable product of the contradictions of capitalism—a war actually forecast for years and placed foremost in the Basle Manifesto signed in 1912 by socialists of all countries. This subservience to the bourgeoisie can only be explained by reference to the preceding fifty years. Such reference reveals the petty-bourgeois nature of the Social Democratic leaders.

In short, the ideology of the Second International arose from non-proletarian sources.

*Letter of Engels to Marx, 1858.

*Lenin: “Collapse of the Second International,” p. 23.

When those ideas became, of necessity, rules for practical application in the period of capitalist crisis they revealed that a rift had occurred in the proletarian ranks, the larger group being led by outspoken "socialist-imperialists," the smaller by a resolute body of socialists who realised and clearly stated that socialism had been betrayed, that opportunism became naturally converted into patriotism, and that an era of imperialist wars and hence of proletarian revolutions was approaching.

Social Democracy and Fascism.

We have seen how Social Democracy inevitably betrayed the workers in 1914, we will now consider the greater crimes committed since then by the same party. For it is to their treacherous counter-revolutionary action in 1919 that we must attribute the growth of Fascism.

In the early part of November, 1918, the united masses of the German workers seized power in the principal ports and Berlin. Thence a successful revolutionary wave spread through the country. Then a split occurred in their ranks. The Spartacists wished to go ahead and complete the revolution; the Social Democrats desired to proceed cautiously and constitutionally, because they thought that the workers could not maintain power. This, although the German bourgeoisie was at its weakest following its defeat in the Great War, although the Allied bourgeoisie were almost equally weak and could not rely on their proletariat to fight again, as they also were beginning to revolt, and finally although the German workers were completely equipped and armed with all the instruments of war. It is obvious that all the necessary conditions were present for a successful proletarian revolution. But the stronger party, the Social Democrats, assumed power in a bourgeois parliament and despatched armies which murdered thousands of militant workers. By so doing they gave the bourgeoisie the respite they needed and paved the way for the direct introduction of Fascism.

Fascism was born among the petty bourgeoisie, who increased greatly in numbers in the first, or ascending period of imperialism, but inevitably began to disappear during the declining period, which dates roughly from the war. The vacillations in the views of this class were brilliantly exposed by Marx in 1852: "Its intermediate position between the class of the larger capitalists, traders and manufacturers, the bourgeoisie properly so-called, and the proletarian or industrial class, determines its character. Aspiring to the position of the first, the least adverse turn of fortune hurls the individuals of this class down into the ranks of the second. . . . Humble and crouchingly submissive under a powerful feudal or monarchical government, it turns to the side of Liberalism when the middle-class is in the ascendant; it becomes seized with

violent democratic fits as soon as the middle-class has secured its own supremacy, but falls back into the abject despondency of fear as soon as the class below itself, the proletarian, attempts an independent movement."*

These "democratic fits" occurred in Germany during Hitler's march on Munich in 1923. With the rapid growth of Communist power since then the Nazis have changed their attitude. Pressed by the proletarians from below, they have identified themselves more and more with the general aims of the bourgeoisie and now, with a huge following of 13 million, they seem likely to take power at any moment, in one last desperate attempt to save German capitalism. Using the Nazi forces as a flail and supplying them with all the necessary munitions, the bourgeoisie is engaged in a most ferocious onslaught on the workers. And all this is due to the Social Democrats! Fascism in Germany must be blamed on them, for it was they who betrayed the revolution in 1919, at which time there was little or no Fascism. There is no general rule that Fascism **must** appear before every successful revolution because the proper activity of the proletarian parties, especially after defeat in war, should result in a comparatively easy revolution. We can assert that Fascism and Social Democracy are but two aspects of a powerful machine used by the bourgeoisie against the workers.

Since 1919, Social Democracy has twice again played traitor on two major issues. In 1925 the Locarno Pact was signed, thus averting imminent revolution—the "socialists" in control of parliament worked hand in glove with the Finance capitalists in France, America, and Britain to restore decrepit German industry. Again in the past few weeks, when the course of events forced the bourgeoisie to declare a state of emergency and military dictatorship, the Social Democrats, instead of answering force with force, "appealed" and "protested" against the military power. They refused a general strike on the ground that the Nazis would enter and run the factories! By striking they may have precipitated a revolutionary crisis, but once more they showed their kinship with the bourgeoisie.

Internationally the Second International has played the same rôle in every country. In England they wrecked the general strike of 1926. In Russia, 1917, they actually aided the counter-revolutionary forces in the Ukraine with munitions. The character of the machinations of the Social Democrats was further revealed during the recent trial of the Menshevik saboteurs in the U.S.S.R. Everywhere to-day the steady upsurge of the revolutionary proletariat is forcing the Social Democrats to speak in a more "Left" fashion; but their actions still betray

*"Revolution and Counter-revolution," p. 7-8.

the workers. A high official from the Melbourne Trades Hall Council recently informed unemployed workers at Essendon that they should go on fighting against work for the dole, but that nevertheless the struggle was a hopeless one! Thus does subserviency to the bourgeoisie display itself on the international sphere.

The class-struggle throughout the world and in every country is becoming more and more intense—on one side brutal Fascism, and on the other the revolutionary masses. The capitalist crisis is urging the whole world onwards to the second great imperialist war, which has already commenced in the East. With this war must

come a great revolutionary wave with a struggle infinitely more bitter and more intense than before. Once more the Social Democrats throughout the world are attempting to disguise the true situation, substituting opportunism for true revolutionary action. Now more than ever before it is necessary to have in mind Lenin's slogan:

"Long live a Proletarian International free from Opportunism!"

which we can now re-write:

"Long live a Proletarian International free from Social Fascism!"

—IAN MACDONALD.

"Fascism"—Germany



THE contradiction between oppressor and oppressed in the Hitler party is the Achilles' heel of National Socialism. But an Achilles' heel is not in itself a wounded heel—the mortal wound must first be inflicted."

The increase in the antagonisms and in the aggressiveness of imperialism in international relations is reflected in the internal relations of classes in the capitalist States, in the intensification of the class struggle and the oppression of the bourgeois dictatorship which is more and more assuming open fascist forms of suppressing the toilers. Political reaction, as a system of administration, has uninterruptedly increased in all capitalist countries in proportion to the development of imperialism and has become the other, or internal side of imperialist aggression. The fascist regime is not a new type of state: it is one of the forms of the bourgeois dictatorship in the epoch of imperialism. Fascism organically grows out of bourgeois democracy. The process of transition of bourgeois dictatorship to the open forms of suppressing the workers represents in substance the fascistation of bourgeois democracy. The modern capitalist states, taken as a whole, represent a motley conglomeration of fascist states (Italy, Poland) and bourgeois democracies streaked with the elements of fascism in various stages of fascistation as, for example, France or England.

Marx said that bourgeois democracy is a "form of revolution" and not a conservative form of existence of the bourgeoisie. With this form the bourgeoisie was able to purchase the active co-operation and participation of the proletariat in bourgeois-democratic revolutions. But on the day following the capture of power by the bourgeoisie this form began to evolve in the direction of political reaction.

The establishment of a fascist dictatorship

may proceed in various ways: gradually by the so-called dry road, where a powerful social democracy, having disarmed the proletariat by calling upon them to keep within the law and by surrendering one position after another to fascism, leads the working class to capitulation before fascism, as was the case in Austria. German social democracy has striven to usher in the fascist dictatorship by the "dry road." But precisely because there has been a strong Communist Party in Germany which from day to day mobilised the masses, for the struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship now in the process of fascistation, the Austrian method of ushering in the fascist dictatorship cannot be applied there.

Another type of the establishment of the fascist dictatorship (Italian, Polish) is linked up with a fascist *coup d'etat*. But both in the first and second cases the establishment of the fascist dictatorship is equally a preventive counter-revolution.

Fascism is not a belated historical miscarriage of the middle ages; it is a product of monopoly capitalism based on the concentration and centralisation of capital, the growth of trusts and cartels which leads to the tremendous centralisation of the whole of the apparatus for the oppression of the masses and the inclusion in it of the political parties, the apparatus of social democracy, of the reformist trade unions, of the co-operative societies, etc. The reason why its ideological forms bear this freakish character is that it is the political superstructure of decaying capitalism. But this retrograde ideology is interwoven with all the ideological attributes of bourgeois democracy of the epoch of monopoly capitalism, with the theory of "organized capitalism," of "industrial democracy," "peace in industry," the theory of "state capitalism as a new era in social relationships," the theory of the "non-class state," etc. Fascism, which did

not invent gunpowder, did not invent these ideas: it borrowed them ready made from social democracy and clothed them in medieval formulæ. And this community of ideas is the best evidence of kinship between fascism and social fascism. "Socialism differs from Fascism only in its methods. Both represent the interests of the workers," said Albert Thomas, secretary of the I.L.O. Their relation is proved also by the fact that Social Democracy is changing, and that it is more and more orientating itself on those strata which serve as the mass basis of Fascism. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in Germany to-day.

Social fascism (social democracy) and fascism fulfil by different methods the same social task—the task of shattering the class organizations of the workers by supporting and consolidating capitalism. But this does not in any way mean that there exist no differences between the social democrats and the national socialists, and that they are united in everything. The community of ideas and the common social basis are determined by the fundamental factor that both fascism and social fascism equally serve the interests of decaying capitalism in the epoch of its general crisis. Social democracy is not simply the apologist of capitalism in general, but a decaying capitalism; it takes full responsibility for its existence with all its contradictions and consequences.

In order to retain its following of extremely fluctuating and motley elements, and in order to recruit certain strata of the working class to its side, Fascism must resort to crude demagoguery, a combination of the wildest reactionary demands with quasi-socialist phraseology. The existence of the Soviet Union, which ushered in the new era of world proletarian revolution and the growth of revolutionary temper among the masses, compel fascism to adapt itself to the spirit of the times, to call the masses to revolution against "prostituted bourgeois democracy." Playing on the needs and misfortunes of the masses, drawing the passive strata of the population into politics, destroying the influence of Social Democracy—one of the pillars of capitalism—destroying by its policy of open violence the deep-rooted prejudices of bourgeois legality, fascism, itself a product of the crisis of capitalism, increases the instability of the capitalist system and paves the way for its own doom and the doom of the whole of capitalism.

The diverse roles played by social fascism on the one hand and fascism on the other, and their relations to one another, have been and are of the greatest importance for the fascist development in Germany. The alternative employment of these two forces by finance capital is shown on the one side in the Prussian Government of the Socialist Party of Germany, and on the other side in the Thuringian and Braunschweig government of the Nazis. Not only has the

policy of the social democrats prepared the way for the Nazis, but the role of social fascism has been formally that of auxiliary police of fascism. By its support, which was alleged to have prevented a Hitler Government from coming into power, the social democracy has formed the Parliamentary buttress of the Bruening Government. By its action Social Democracy, in reality, gave the Nazis a certain amount of manoeuvring room so that the latter were able, by means of a sham opposition, to acquire a broad mass basis. On the other hand, the Nazis in all questions of foreign policy, but partly also in home policy, represent the most important extra-parliamentary mass basis for the bourgeoisie in carrying out the fascist policy.

With the growing revolutionary situation there also increases the importance of the armed counter-revolution as a mass movement of the bourgeoisie; but only the Nazis and not the social fascists can adequately perform this role. Even during the Noske period the armed counter-revolution, although politically set up and led by the majority social democrats, was in fact carried out, not by the social democratic organizations, but by the volunteer corps, the germ cells of the present-day Nazi Party. Thus, with the aggravation of the class struggle, and on the other hand the constant decline of the mass influence of the Socialist Party of Germany, the role of the Nazis increases.

Without doubt the above facts regarding the fascistisation of Germany constitute a new, higher phase compared with that state of development which existed in the first period of the Bruening Government after the Socialist Party had been superseded.

The Bruening Government was overthrown on June 2nd. Says "Pravda" of June 3rd:

"In the 26 months during which it held office unemployment in Germany, according to official statistics, increased from 3,100,000 to 6,100,000; the number of unemployed in receipt of unemployment benefit has been reduced from 68 to 26 per cent.; rates of benefit have been reduced; the wages of employed workers have been reduced by 33 per cent.; the average weekly wage of an individual worker, taking into account the losses through unemployment and tax reduction, has declined from 42.20 marks to 22.45 marks. In the 26 months of this Government, milliards of marks squeezed out of the starving masses were played into the hands of the big bankers, the heavy industrialists and the Prussian Junkers, in order to salvage their bankrupt undertakings and big estates. This is the social countenance of the policy of the Bruening Government, this Government of emergency decrees and expropriation of the toilers in the interests of finance capital. The workers of Germany are faced with a Government of open reaction, whose programme contains an unexampled enslavement of the toiling masses."

Bruening has been replaced by his colleague of the Catholic Centre Party, the big landowner, Franz von Papen, the biggest shareholder of "Germania," who during the war was military attaché in Washington. The new Government is a Government of heavy industry and of the junkers with the closest co-operation of the Reichswehr generals, who have in their hands all the means of terror for suppressing the resistance of the workers. The German bourgeoisie has decided to substitute terror for deceit as the "chief means" of overcoming the resistance of the masses and maintaining its class rule. In foreign politics, however, the Government will have to take into account that national sentiment which has driven many millions of petty bourgeois in the towns, peasants and even individual workers into Hitler's camp. These millions voted at the Presidential and Prussian elections, not so much for Hitler as against France and Poland. German national sentiment is being daily outraged by attacks upon the right of self-determination of the German people on various sectors of the German frontiers. The recent actions of the Papen group have considerably modified the methods of deception in this quarter, and show another step towards open fascist rule.

The middle class of Germany form the bridge which national Socialism needs between the employers and the workers to set up the "community of the people." Proletarian in mode of living, bourgeois in ideas, striving to avoid falling into the ranks of the working class, and dreaming of rising to the level of the bourgeoisie—with whom they still feel themselves connected, in spite of their empty stomachs. Their traditions, their school drill, their lack of political training, lack of understanding of economic things, veneration for big leading personalities, contempt for the "lower orders"—all this renders them ripe for national socialism at a time of fearful crisis of the capitalist system. They stand helpless. Communist propaganda has so far only partly succeeded in reaching them. National socialism demands of them less mental exertion. Hitler promises salvation. He promises bread for all, abolition of the crisis, reduction of taxes. Hitler, his partisans shout, will drive out the Marxists, who handed over the country to the Jews and the French, who enslaved it to finance capital. The Nazis have achieved great successes among the clerks, the middle classes in the country, the peasants and the civil servants, including the upper and lower grades. The peasant was everybody's beast of burden. The social democracy paid as little heed to him as to the handworkers. Then came Hitler. This argument that the present governing powers are responsible for everything was crude, but illuminating—Marxists, Jews, French. The peasant was easily suscep-

tible to anti-semitism as a result of his experience with corn and cattle dealers.

The repeated wage cuts had simply driven the lower civil servants into the arms of the Nazis, while among the higher grades the incitements of the Nazis against those civil servants who had been given the easiest and most lucrative posts simply because they were members of the social democrats or Centre parties, fell on fruitful soil. After the revolution of 1918, the social democracy maintained intact the whole of the monarchist apparatus and appointed to positions in it only a number of their own followers. When National Socialism grew stronger and had prospects of coming into power, then in order to retain their posts a large number of civil servants and officials joined the ranks of the Nazis. By divers means were the unemployed attracted to the Nazis. Some were disappointed in the S.D. party, others in the Centre, some even in the German Nationalists, while others were formerly indifferent. Among the Nazi electors are many who think that Hitler's coming into power will more quickly bring about chaos and collapse. These see in national socialism a weapon against capital, as capital sees in national socialism a weapon against the proletariat.

Under all these circumstances, the successes of the Hitler movement are not surprising. National Socialism promises the workers higher wages, the employers lower ones; the consumers lower customs duties, the big agrarians higher ones; to the workers socialism, to the employers the inviolability of private property. The peasants are promised land, the agrarians the safety of their property; the peasants lower rents, the house owners higher rents; the nationalists the cessation of reparations payments, the Entente the fulfilment of all obligations, the disinherited, the fight against finance capital, the foreign capitalists the payment of interest, the Republicans the Republic, the monarchists the restoration of the Hohenzollerns, the workers in the factories the revolution, and the employers the counter-revolution. Thus the employers see in Hitler their rescuer from Bolshevism, the dictator over the rebellious masses; the petty bourgeoisie see in him the solver of the crisis, the emancipation from the foreign yoke, the leader to new national revival; the peasants see in him the protector of agriculture, the intellectuals the purger who will cleanse the Augean stable of corruption, whilst the misled proletarians see in him the revolutionary fighter against international finance capital and the emancipator of oppressed Germany.

With the seizure of supreme political power by von Papen it would appear that the power of Hitler and the National Socialists had gone, but it is clear that the Papen group of junkers, big agrarians, financiers, and industrialists, have the



support of the National Socialists. Correspondence dated June 6th, and sent out by the Herren Club, to which Von Gayls, Minister of the Interior, and other Ministers belong, carries the following:

"The new Cabinet is not only tolerated by the Nazis, but has also the express approval of the leader," etc.

That Hitler is responsible for the emergency orders and also for the agreements concluded by Papen at Lausanne is beyond doubt, and the results of the very recent election indicate a clearer demarcation of the division of Germany into two opposing class interests—the National Socialists and the Communists. The "accord a trois," with its threefold plan of (i) an economic alliance against the Five Year Plan; (ii) re-armament of Germany; (iii) the agreement between Germany, France and Poland, is obviously aimed at the growing power of the revolutionary movement in Germany and its sympathy with Soviet Russia. There is no longer

any need for the crude demagogy, the deceitful tactics—the time is ripe (with the aid of the outside imperialist groups) to crush ruthlessly the growing power of the masses.

An increasing number of the German Social Democratic workers realise the treachery of the slogan, "A vote for Hindenburg is a blow at Fascism." Conferences and congresses of anti-Fascist action "are being attended by delegations from the local organizations of the Social Democratic Party, from the reformist and the Christian trade union branches. The pressure of the Social Democratic masses upon the leaders in favor of a united front of the whole working population is growing intense. To the German worker there are two alternatives: the organisation of the whole into a united "iron front" against the ever-increasing attack from without and within or the misery of starvation. Fascism and war—such is the prospect opened up by the capitalist way out.

—JOHN FINLAYSON.

Soviet Songs--*Concluded from page 8.*

Palmer has stated, according to Mr. Esson, "that the farms and cattle, the landscape, the common interests of workaday people, all recall the familiar life of the bush." The feelings of the peasantry the world over are much the same; and it would be well for those among us who feel that Russian thought is alien to us, or who feel that there is no freedom of religion in Russia to-day, to read the peasant poetry which is still filled with a mysticism that is close to the soil and religion that is simple and child-like.

But not only the glory of iron and steel and the beauty of the land of rye and oats are the themes of Russian poetry. Its most significant feature is to be found in the chants of collectivity. These are sung by the proletarian poet, who feels himself in actual fact a member of "the family of the working commune." The peasant is still inclined to see himself against a background of the sky. But it cannot be said that it is only in the hymns of Demyan Bedny, who has brought poetry to the masses in a way that no other man has ever done, or in the vigorous works of other proletarian poets who are striving to make us hear the voices of the millions of blue-bloused workmen, their comrades, that this spirit of what the first manifesto of Kuznitsa calls the industrial collectivism is felt. It is also to be found in verse of every description written by men who are aware of a new background in their lives, who are beginning to think first of the welfare of all, not of themselves, and by sinking their own individuality, are learning to assert it. They are fond of speaking of "we," and not of the first person singular. Because on so many vital mat-

ters they think in unison they continually refer to the masses, the collectivity:

We shall take all, we shall know all,
We shall pierce the depths to the bottom,
And drunk is the vernal soul,
Like May, golden with blossoms.

These songs of the masses are not the songs of blood-thirsty fomenters of strife, as some would have us believe, but of simple-minded, child-like human beings who are laying the foundations of a new life.

To these young poets the world has grown young again and is no longer bowed down beneath the weight of an intolerable burden. No doubt the unsympathetic critic, forgetting that we are dealing with the first fruits of the new proletarian writers, will find much crudity in their verses. They have much to learn, but not so much to unlearn as we in a land where is found, as Bernard O'Dowd says, "all old sin in full malignant flower."

For those who are not frightened of fierce attacks on all our sacred monuments to individualism and class privileges, or of new ideas in poetry, there is to be found in these songs of the Soviet a picture of mighty Russia announcing the freedom of the human spirit to create, and taking the first step towards a culture that shall be really human and give full play to the human personality in a human society. This is the best news I have heard of Russia; here is a form of internal evidence. When statistics fail to impress, when engineering feats do not convince, and when the contrast between Russia in construction and the rest of the world in depression falls on deaf ears, listen to what the workers and peasants have to say about their own life in their own songs.

H. WINSTON RHODES.

THE TIMES CHANGE

"The continued domination of finance—capital means either the complete annihilation of civilized society or an increase in exploitation, slavery, political reaction and armaments, leading to new devastating wars."—Lenin.

CAPITALISM.

IN THE UNITED States a special law was adopted in a great hurry last year (1930) against the import of goods 'produced by prison labour, or with the assistance of forced labour' but,

'These provisions shall not apply to commodities of any kind, even if they should be produced, manufactured, transported, carried, loaded or unloaded with the assistance of forced labour . . . providing such commodities are not produced in the United States in such measure as to satisfy the demand for such commodities in the United States.'—*Molotov*.

* * * *

FORCED LABOUR!

HE, who, being unemployed, shall refuse to work, shall receive no sustenance.

SOVIET DUMPING . . .

FOR 1930, Soviet export trade was 1.9 per cent. of the world's total export trade.

'Can one really seriously speak of the effect of 'Soviet dumping' on the steel industry, which is experiencing an unparalleled slump at the moment? The Soviet Union does not export metals. On the contrary, it imports metals.'—*Success of Five Year Plan, 1931. Molotov*.

AUSTRALIAN DUMPING.

SENATOR McLACHLAN said: . . . Queensland consumed only 6 per cent. of the sugar she produced. The other five States absorbed 46 per cent. (at £27 a ton); and the remaining 50 per cent. was shipped overseas (sold at £10 a ton).—*Age, 25/8/32*.

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CLASS WAR.

ARGYLE ADDRESSING city people at the Town Hall:

"I cannot tax you more—I am not prepared to borrow more money because that would be uneconomic . . . ; then, the community itself can come to our help and see what it can do."—*Argus, 24/6/32*.

In all quotations the author's comments are bracketed: (500).

THE GRAVAMEN of their grievance was that £1/14/- a week was too little for a woman for work that has a considerable degree of skill.

"It is very exacting work, they added, involving long and inconvenient hours. The day shift commences at 6 a.m. in bitter winter mornings, often before the trams are running. Some girls say they must rise at 4.30 a.m., rain or frost, and walk from home to work.

"The only break for food is half an hour from 11 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. So long as the machines are watched, one girl in a section is allowed to make morning tea for herself and others, and it can be taken while still on attending the machines.

"Under the proposed compromise they would get £1/17/- a week. That, they said, was too little for the work, particularly when the mills were having a revival of good times (due to tariffs). It was all "speed-up" to meet orders and save the employers from being penalized under the forfeiture clauses."—*Herald, 26/8/32*.

BASIC WAGE.

12/6 REDUCTION IN N.S.W.

Female Rate, £1/18/-.

—*Herald, 26/8/32*.

CCHEERS announced the information by the chairman of the reduction of the New South Wales basic wage."—Report of Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. meeting.—*Age, 27/8/32*.

"There is no strike pay, nor is there likely to be any, and the Government has announced that there can be no unemployed sustenance for any who refuse to work."—*Herald, 26/8/32*.

IN U.S.S.R.

HEADING UPSTREAM under a bridge, we came abreast of the biggest and best organized of Moscow's many bathing places. For anything like this, I must confess, the British Press had not prepared me. . . . It was the people bathing who caught my attention. Almost all were deeply bronzed with the sun, and the great majority were of very fine physique. Little sign of surplus fat [it is, perhaps, a good thing not to be able to eat as much as one would

like], but no sign of under-nourishment (compare with Riga news). . . . None of our willowy, boyish figures—solid, robust, healthy, they swam and sunbathed and enjoyed themselves.”—*A Scientist Among the Soviets—1931. Julian Huxley.*

And these people were WORKERS.

RUSSIAN FAILURE.

WORKERS STARVING.

Published in “The Times.”

RIGA, August 30.

“. . . The Five Year Plan . . . is an incident in a long series of plans; it is a symptom of a new spirit, the spirit of science introduced into politics and industry.”

“It heralds the birth of a new kind of society, a society which is coherently planned, and has not, like Topsy and the out-of-hand individualisms that constitute our Western nations, ‘jest growed.’”

“Science is an essential part of the Russian Plan.”—*Julian Huxley.*

THE CHURCH.

WE AS A CHURCH want to bring our people back from the consideration of all our problems in terms of material wealth—riches and poverty, employer and employed, profits and wages—to the moral question of the right to serve to full capacity. Then men will listen when we remind them that what comes first is not the wage, but the good work for which the wage is given. . . .

To-day we have gone too far in repressing the freedom of the strong man, whether employer or workman, in the interests of the weak.”—*Archbishop Head, Address to Synod.—Argus, 29/9/31.*

We would add:

“Never mind the housing problem,
Heaven is our home.”

There are some millions of unemployed.

The picture of US restraining the freedom of Rockefeller, in the interests of the weak, tests the imagination beyond its limits.

“The amount in the fund (the Supernumerary Fund of the Methodist Church of Australasia) was £713,665, the actuarial reserves for ministers, and ministers’ widows’ claims were £663,063—an excess of funds over reserves of £50,602. The sum had accumulated over many years. In 1931 the fund had earned an interest rate, after expenses had been deducted, of £5/10/10 per cent., and the surplus had been £1/10/-. The surplus earnings for three years

had been £13,005, and the bonus payments in that period had been £19,755. Much less interest might be earned in 1932.”—*Argus, 25/5/32.*

The conference, after discussing this small aspect of its financial affairs in such churchman-like spirit, passed this pious and useful resolution:

“The conference views with concern the grave problem of unemployment.

“The conference is aware that much unemployment results from the intrusion and interference in industrial fields of leaders whose avowed purpose is to disrupt society, and also from the attitude of mind and spirit of elements among both employers (sic!) and employees. . . .

“The conviction of this conference is that, rather than the giving of sustenance, productive work ought to be made available.”

It then proceeded to resolve regarding its loyalty to King George and all constituted authority.

In view of the Churches’ temporal interests it is possibly significant that Monk, because he would not agree beforehand “to work harmoniously” with capitalists, was excluded from the State Employment Council as workers’ representative. His place was filled by the philanthropist, Rev. J. H. Cain.

* * * *

2,000 GUESTS FOR CIVIC BALL.

NOVEL WRITING ON CARD.

—*Herald, 23/7/32.*

THE DOLE.

IF WE HAD NOT the dole there would have been a revolution in this country long ago. . . . You would not keep a dog on your premises unless you had a bone to give him.”—Lloyd George: *Manchester Guardian, 7/1/31.*

“The Minister in Charge of Sustenance (Mr. Kent Hughes) has determined that imposition shall cease, and he has designed the social index system, which is to be brought into use next week, with the object of making detection of impostors much easier and more certain than it has been in the past.”

“When the new sustenance rates came into operation on 7th July, 34,079 family units in the metropolis were receiving assistance at a weekly cost of £19,502. Now there are 30,579 family units receiving sustenance at a cost of £17,602. Thus £1,900 a week has been saved in sustenance payments. A simple process of checking proved sufficient for the removal of 1,100 names.”

“In addition to the 1,100, a further 2,400 names have been struck off the lists. A large percentage of these were men who either re-

fused to accept relief work when it was recently offered to them, or failed to report when called up for work.”

—Age, 27/8/32.

Australian capitalists are determined to starve the dog. He will turn on his myopic masters.

ANOTHER £13 FOR BLANKET FUND.

Successful Bridge Parties.

—Herald, 9/7/32.

* * * *

EVICITION PHILOSOPHY.

CAIRNS SHOWGROUNDS eviction of July, 1932. The Home Secretary thought “that proceedings for evictions should be through the courts. That might have taken months, and have prevented the holding of the Show. So a strong band of Cairns people (500) decided to take a short cut and hence the brawl. It was soon over, with a few broken heads, and the grounds were soon cleared. Thus we have a lesson that if a job of eviction is necessary it is better to apply primitive methods. . . . There's nothing like law and order.”—Age, 25/7/32.

OTTAWA.

NEW PAGE IN HISTORY.

KING'S MESSAGE:

“Empire Can Give Lead to the World.”

—Herald, 22/7/32.

RUSSIAN WHEAT dumping in Britain has aroused a strong Australian feeling.”—Herald, 23/7/32.

“The ‘Chicago Tribune’ . . . reports that Mr. Bennett demanded complete exclusion of Soviet wheat and lumber, but that the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Chamberlain) squelched this proposal by declaring that Britain's hands were tied by the millions of sterling credits advanced to Russia and by Trade Treaties. . . . President of the Board of Trade replied: ‘Oh, dear, no. . . . We have 42 treaties with “most favored nation” clauses, and these are the basis and backbone of our export trade.’

“No Canadian newspaper reports this alleged dialogue.”—Herald, 25/7/32.

The probable causes of decline of the sterling rate include—

“The technically improved condition of the dollar.”—Herald, 9/7/32.

“Economic and banking advisers at the Ottawa Imperial Conference have reached a momentous decision regarding the Imperial Cur-

rency question. If the Ministers accept their recommendations, the effect will be instantaneous and world-wide.”—Argus, 9/8/32.

“I have never seen such a scramble of interests,” declared Mr. John Bromley, chairman of the Trade Union Congress and an adviser to the British delegation, on his return from Ottawa. “The delegates to the conference exhibited more desire for what they could get from it than for the glory of the Empire, the revival of world trade, or any other consideration.”—Argus, 29/8/32.

* * * *

DISARMAMENT.

ADDRESSING JOURNALISTS at Geneva, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald drew a parallel between Creation and the Disarmament Conference.”

“Mr. MacDonald prophesied that the sixth day would come on which work would be accomplished worthy of being recorded in the most illustrious pages of history.”—Argus, 25/4/32.

“They used to call him the Loon of Lossiemouth, this erstwhile poor Scotch lad, who can look back over half a century and perhaps marvel at the strange destiny which has brought him to become the Peacemaker of Europe—perhaps of the world!”—Herald, 12/7/32.

We would add that this former leader in the Second International, may, very appropriately, wear the mitre before his respectable career closes.

“One of the lessons he had learned from his visit abroad, Latham said, was that the real work was now done in private conversations between the leaders of the delegations.

“If the actual figures brought to Geneva by some of the nations had been made public, Latham went on, everyone would have thought it was a re-armament and not a disarmament conference.”—Report on Lecture, “Disarmament,” at Auditorium, 5.8.32.

—Worker's Weekly.

U. S. A. ARMAMENT reduction proposals: . . . Air forces—all bombing planes should be abolished . . . Navy—number and tonnage of aircraft carriers and destroyers to be reduced by one-fourth. . . .”—Argus, 28/6/32.

“Although I am an enthusiastic supporter of the League of Nations, the position to-day gives us many grounds for doubt (sic!) whether the nationalism of each nation has not really crippled the hands of the League . . .

“Each nation also grandiloquently offers to give up what she fears most: for example, England surrenders submarines.

“In other words, we have evolved machinery for peace . . . but have we evolved the will for peace?”—Prof. Paton: Herald, 25/7/32.

CONTRASTS:"ANZAC COMMEMORATED

25,000 Men March.

SPLENDID SPECTACLE IN CITY.

In the Churches: Large Congregations.
Anzac Spirit is Christian."

—*Argus*, 26/4/32."COMMUNIST MARCH.

Anti-War Demonstration.

Six Men Fined."

—*Argus*, 10/8/32.

And in the Churches—"God protect us from the menace of the Reds. Bless, Oh Lord, our Army and our Navy."

* * * *

COMMUNISM IN CHINA.

"THE STAMPING OUT of Communism is the most formidable problem for China. In her central provinces there is a large Communist army. Suppressed in one place it bobs up in another. When this menace, and banditry, have been crushed—Dr. Stuckey (missionary) believes—China should be able to move ahead and take her place among the nations."—*Herald*, 25/7/32.

Communist control in China extends over one-fifth of the territory in which there are 80,000,000 people.

* * * *

CONCLUSION.

MOLOTOV, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, in *The Success of the Five Year Plan* (1931), writes:

"It must be admitted that the bourgeois economists are in a difficult position. They are incessantly obliged to find fresh explanations for the present 'economic crisis.' Incapable of grasping the Marxist—that is, the actual scientific recognition of the causes of the crisis—these economists are lost in a maze of endless contradictions.

'We have landed in an incredible chaos,' states the well-known English economist, Keynes—'For whilst having to do with an ex-

remely sensitive machine, whose laws are unknown to us, we have committed some bad blunder.'—*Wirtschaftsdienst* of 19th Dec., 1930.

. . . The distinguished German economist, Bonn, . . . declares:

'In the minds of thousands of people an extremely naive question has arisen: Does the capitalist system still possess any right to exist, if it is incapable, in the richest country in the world, comparatively thinly populated, with industries and capable people, of securing for this population the means of living in accordance with the demands developing in human beings by modern technique, without from time to time forcing millions of people to suffer deprivation, or to resort to charity and night shelters? The import and meaning of the American crisis lie in the fact that at the present juncture it is not merely a question of economic leadership or politics, but of the existence of the capitalist system as such.'—*Die Neue Rundschau*, Feb., 1931.

. . . The organ of the Austrian big bourgeoisie, the *Neue Freie Presse*, wrote in its New Year Survey (1931): 'Many are troubled by the question whether the capitalist economic system is not to blame for all this misery.'"

"Professor Gregory was convinced that the problem of falling prices, 'if it is going to be solved at all, must be solved by the agency of the central bankers; but I am bound to admit,' he added, 'that the process of solving this problem is much more heart-breaking than it appears at first sight.' The events of the last two years have lent a gloomy emphasis to my learned predecessor's admission."—*Australia's Share in International Recovery: Davidson*.

This misery is ended by "the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized, by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter on the mode of production which has arisen and flourished with and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with the capitalist husk. The husk is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."

—*Marx: Capital*.

"Workers of the World, Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains; you have a world to gain."

Capitalism Prepares for War

FINDINGS OF A MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY CLUB COMMITTEE

*The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.

IF declarations such as that above could be taken at their face value we could regard war as a thing of the past. Nor is the Kellog Pact the only anti-war gesture made by the imperialist powers since 1918. In the first place the formation of the League of Nations was embodied in the Treaty of Versailles. Then we have the Washington and London Treaties for the limitation of naval armaments, and finally the World Disarmament Conference, which met in February of this year.

A ready method is at hand for testing the sincerity and achievements of all these "peace" moves. If the war danger has become less acute in recent years, if the great powers feel more secure as a result of their pacts and conferences than formerly, then a reduction of armaments would be a natural and inevitable consequence. But, on the other hand, should we observe a contrary movement in armaments it will follow that the attempts to outlaw war are in fact a smoke-screen to conceal actual war preparations. It is to the task of analysing movements in armaments that we now turn; we will consider first land forces, then air, chemical, and bacteriological warfare, and finally naval armaments.

Land Forces.

With regard to land forces, it might be assumed that the number of men under arms would be an adequate index of the movements of armaments under this heading. But, in fact, the technique of mass slaughter has developed rapidly since 1918, so that now each soldier under arms is a much more effective dealer of death than at the end of the last war. This proviso must be remembered with regard to all the other types of armaments. Nevertheless, the number of peace-time effectives is of the greatest significance. Excluding Russia, the strength of the 18 principal European powers in 1913 was approximately three million men.† In 1930 the peace-time strength of the same countries was 2,865,000 men. But Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria are compulsorily disarmed, and their combined strength

in 1930 was 189,000 men as compared with 1,300,000 in 1913.* It follows that apart from the nations defeated in the war, there were far more men in Europe under arms in 1930 than in 1913. †Outside Europe the United States standing army has increased from 92,035 (1913) to 139,000 (1930); while that of Japan has increased from 250,000 to 259,000 during the same years. 1913 marked the culmination of a feverish race for increased armaments strength: the early outbreak of a world war was regarded as inevitable; and yet the victorious powers maintained fewer men under arms than in 1930. The only great power that has been able to reduce its peace-time effectives is the Soviet Union. The Czarist army in 1913 numbered 1,200,000 men‡; the strength of the Red Army has remained constant at 562,000 men since 1924.§

Air and Chemical Warfare.

Even on the basis of the 1913 types of warfare we find the nations arming. But, in addition to the army, new and more destructive methods of warfare have been developed during and since the world war. Nearly one-fifth of the armament budgets of the great powers is devoted to air "defence." Between 1925 and 1930 the four great air powers increased the number of their first-line military aeroplanes as follows¶:

Country	1925	April, 1930
Britain	630	780
France	1280	1310
America	750	950
Italy	600	1100

Between 1925 and 1930 the air expenditure of France rose no less than 113 per cent., that of Italy by 25 per cent., and that of the United States by 140 per cent.** At the same time vast and increasing sums are being expended on chemical and bacteriological warfare.

Naval Armaments.

With regard to naval strength, the most important post-war development has been the emergence of Japan and the United States as

*Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. VII., No. 20, page 363.

†Ibid Page 364.

‡Ibid Page 363.

§Ibid Page 363.

¶Chiozza Money: Can War be Averted? page 27.

**Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. VI., No. 17, page 307.

*Kellog Pact, 1928, signed by 58 nations, including the United States and Russia.

†Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. VII., No. 20, page 363.

great naval powers, and the relative weakness of Great Britain. Both these countries showed vast increases in their total tonnage in 1930 as compared with 1913, while the tonnage of the British navy was reduced. The relative decline in the strength of the British navy is due partly to her depressed financial position and partly to the fact that the Admiralty authorities regard the huge battleship as being out of date. Naval expenditure is now devoted to the smaller warships—the submarine, the destroyer and the cruiser. Thoroughly characteristic of disarmament agreements is the fact that at the Washington Naval Conference of 1921-2 the size of battleships only was limited.

Armaments Expenditure.

But the total tonnage of warships or the number of military aeroplanes or military effectives gives a very inadequate future of actual war preparations. For example, Germany's military strength has been rigorously limited in all these directions by the Versailles system. But, nevertheless, the effectiveness of the German military machine steadily increases, for although the armaments cannot increase in quantity, they can and do increase in quality. This new qualitative strength is reflected in the German military budget, which increases each year. Considered from this angle we get a clear proof that all the great imperialist powers are rapidly increasing their armaments. The following table compares military expenditure of the powers for 1913 and 1930:

BUDGET EXPENDITURE ON ARMAMENTS*
(in millions of dollars).

Country	1913	1930	Percentage of Increase	Index of wholesale prices 1913 = 100
Great Britain ..	375.1	535.0	+42	116
France ..	348.7	455.3	+30	105
Italy ..	179.1	258.9	+44	100
Japan ..	95.5	232.1	+142	131
Russia ..	447.7	579.4	+30	185
United States ..	244.6	727.7	+197	118
Total	1,690.7	2,788.4	+65	

It follows that by 1930 armaments expenditure of the above powers increased by 65 per cent., while price levels increased by no more than 26 per cent. This conclusion is in accord with the finding of Jacobsen in the London Economist. He states that "in order to bring the armaments of the European countries (excepting Germany) down to the level obtaining in 1908 there would have to be an average reduction of approximately 30 per cent. from the level of 1928."[†]

The only country which has succeeded in re-

ducing its military budget is the Soviet Union. Whereas the nominal expenditure of the Soviet Union increased during these years by 30 per cent., the price level increased 85 per cent.

But the national defence expenditures of the great powers are not only greater to-day than in 1913: they have increased sharply in the last five years. In 1930-1, Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Russia, Germany, and the United States spent £2,958,800,000 on armaments as compared with £2,276,000,000 in 1926-7.

The following table shows the growth in world armaments during the last six years:

WORLD ARMAMENTS EXPENDITURE.*

Year	Expenditure in millions of dollars	Year	Expenditure in millions of dollars
1925	3497	1928	3950
1926	3557	1929	4107
1927	3873	1930	4126

Defence expenditure in France was virtually doubled between 1926-7 and 1930-1, increasing from 6,478 million francs to 11,674 million francs.[†] The years 1925-31 were marked by a catastrophic fall in world prices, so that the real increase in armaments was much greater than the nominal figures indicate. As early as 1902, J. A. Hobson, in his work on "Imperialism," pointed out that since the rapid growth of imperialism after 1870, the great powers spend increasing proportions of their national budgets on armaments. Naturally, the tendency is accentuated to-day as a result of the 1914-18 war and the chronic world crisis which has enormously increased capitalist antagonisms. Approximately 69 per cent. of the French budget for 1930-31 was applied to paying for past wars and preparing for a new imperialist outbreak; 65.6 per cent. of the British budget and 58.8 per cent. of the United States budget was used for these purposes.[‡] Modern Poland is a post-war creation and, therefore, she is not burdened with the war debts of the old imperialist powers. Yet Poland devotes from 40 to 50 per cent. of her annual budget to preparations for war.[§]

The increase in armaments proceeds under a cloak of Disarmament Conferences and Security Pacts. Article 8 of the League Covenant proposes "the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement of international obligations." But up to 1925 the League took no effective steps in the direction of armaments reduction, despite a host of resolutions on the subject. Then in December, 1925, a Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Confer-

(Continued on page 24)

*Armaments Year Book, page 454.

[†]Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. VII., No. 20, page 369.

[‡]Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. VII., No. 20, page 380.

[§]L. Fischer, "The Soviets in World Affairs," page 717.

*Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. VII., No. 20, page 368.

[†]"Economist," October 19th, 1929.

Women In The Soviet Union

"**A** CHICKEN is not a bird and a baba (woman) is not a human being." So runs the old Russian proverb. So it was in Czarist Russia. Now woman's position is changed. No longer is she a possession—as her father's daughter, then her husband's wife; no longer is she given in marriage to the highest bidder, then commanded by the Church to fear the husband she cannot divorce; no longer is she forbidden to control her property; and no longer is she forced to work in the field and factory—abused and scarcely paid—carrying water, cooking, washing clothes, spinning, weaving, and bearing and losing her babies in filth, besides. War, revolution and civil war changed the position of Russian women. In the turmoil thousands flocked to the factories; they fought side by side with men; 2,000 were killed and wounded in the Red Army; 28 received the Order of the Red Banner. In all, 4 millions of the 14,300,000 victims of war, epidemic and famine were women. Virtually, Russian women won their own emancipation. It only remained for the Soviet Government (the Kerensky regime did nothing for women) to legalize their status. The first working women's conference, representative of more than 50,000 women, had met at Petrograd in March, 1917. From its discussions the Government filled in the detail of its own proposals.

Lenin said: "A victory for Socialism is impossible until a whole half of toiling mankind, the working woman, enjoys equal rights with man." All the legislation of the Soviet Government, concerning woman, has aimed at securing for her equality with man. Nothing that law can do to prevent the discrimination against woman has been left undone. To make possible equality, society itself has had to be radically reconstructed.

The most sweeping changes are in the laws concerning marriage, divorce and the family. The decrees of December, 1917, codified in July, 1918, were revised in 1926 as a result of the development of life and customs in the Soviet Union. At first only civil marriage was recognized, though the religious ceremony was not abolished. Polygamy was forbidden. If both desired it, divorce could be effected by the stroke of a pen in a Registry Office. The new law, which came into operation on January 1st, 1927, went much further. Its most important changes were the legalization of the defacto marriage and the provision that property accumulated during marriage should be jointly owned. Thus registration of marriage is unnecessary—except for statistical purposes. Co-habitation and marriage are synonymous. All children are legitimate. If husband or wife desires divorce he or

she is able, without further ado, to secure it. The Government asks no questions. It has placed man and woman on an equal footing in marriage. Its only concern is that there shall be adequate provision for the offspring of their union.

Most important is woman's economic emancipation. The equality she has attained in every direction would carry no significance if she were not materially independent. Material independence makes possible mental independence. For the first time, women, both in industry and the professions, have been placed on a level with men. Under conditions of equal skill they must be paid equal wages. Many women in the Soviet Union receive much less pay than men, but only because the majority are less skilled. Only 16 per cent. of the women in industry are skilled; 37 per cent. are semi-skilled. Women are admitted to all industries with the exception of a few dangerous ones. Even here the doors are slowly being opened at their demand. During the first six months of 1931 the percentage of women in heavy industry increased from 17.9 per cent. to 21.9 per cent. Women are street-car conductors and motormen, plumbers, locksmiths, lathesmen, engineers, electricians, architects, Red Army officers, and even captains of ships. To a greater extent each month women are becoming workers. From 1/1/31-1/7/31 women in industry increased from 30.7 per cent. to 31.7 per cent.; in transport, from 9.1 per cent. to 10.1 per cent.; in public instruction, from 52.3 per cent. to 54.4 per cent.; and in trade institutions, from 25.7 per cent. to 28.3 per cent. All the labour legislation concerns them vitally—the seven-hour working day, prohibition of night work except in special cases, labour inspection and the provisions that none under 14 shall labour, and that four hours be the maximum of practical work from 14-16 years, and six from 16-18. Much investigation as to woman's suitability for certain work is being made. Already special appliances are lightening her labour. Especially concerned with women is the wide scheme of social insurance. This enables them to enjoy sanitarium treatment, an annual vacation on full pay, medical attention, and not less than a month's holiday on full pay before, and a month after, the birth of their children. It also provides an allowance for the children and places at the mothers' disposal factory crèches, where the children were cared for during their mothers' working hours. These benefits extend to workers' wives and to women who have been employed. Peasant women are not yet included in the social insurance, but for a small sum Mutual Insurance Organizations give them maternity aid.

The Soviet gives motherhood full recognition as a social service. In January, 1918, it organized all institutions for the protection of motherhood under the Institute for the Protection of Mother and Child, and placed Dr. Lebedeva in charge. The work of the Institute—which yearly extends despite the various setbacks it has received, falls into three sections—medical, legal and social. Maternity aid is unlimited. In Moscow, clinics are equipped to care for 6-10,000 women yearly. In 1917 there were only two maternity hospitals in all Russia. Moscow alone had 21 in 1928 and 30 in 1931. These cared for 68 per cent. of the city's new mothers; 35 Points of Medical Consultation examine 7,000 different children yearly. Hostels for Destitute and Homeless Mothers and Hostels for Mothers and Children educate as well as shelter women. A Prophylactorium of Prostitutes has been established, but its inmates decrease each year. There were 10 per cent. fewer in 1931 than in 1929. Prostitution will disappear entirely when women are capable of enjoying their rights and attaining economic independence. Free legal advice on all subjects is given women at the Judicial Consultation rooms attached to most of the Mother and Child Institutions. On the social side the Institute's chief work is educational. It gives profusely illustrated lectures on all social subjects—hygiene, birth control, etc.—and generally aims at enlightening women. Home visitors pay about 40,000 visits a year—to inspect homes, advise women and urge them to attend their lectures. The crèche combines all the best aspects of the Institute's work. Expert medical attention and educational training is given the children of mothers whose work occupies them all day.

In 1919, Lenin told a convention of working women that: "For the full emancipation of women, and to ensure her real equality with men, it is necessary that household functions be socialized . . . ; even with full equal rights women are still oppressed because on their shoulders falls the entire burden of the household." Since then, changes have occurred. The crèche relieves the working mother of her children during the day. In 1931, Moscow possessed 120 crèches, through which a minimum of 13,023 children pass each year. The fact that these are less than 10 per cent. of the city's children shows that the crèche is still in the experimental stage. Plans to cater for 75 per cent. of the workers' children in 1932 have been made. No other social institution attracts so much attention from the outside world. Perhaps crèches will tend to break up the family, as other things are tending to break it up. But they enable women to escape from the bondage of the home—if they so desire. Laundries and public dining-rooms, too, are becoming more popular. In the Soviet Union are more than 1,230 public dining-rooms organized by the Government and the co-operatives. These served

17 million courses in 1930 and 37 million in 1931. The solution of the housing problem will mean much to women. Of the 25,700,000 persons who in 1928 made up the urban population of the U.S.S.R., 15 per cent. lived in buildings rented at a nominal price from housing co-operatives. The socialization of household functions is not nearly universal; but each year brings the Government's objective nearer.

Illiteracy in pre-revolutionary Russia was three times as great among women as men. In 1917 there were only 25 literate women in all Turkmenistan. Under the Soviet all persons of 18, irrespective of sex, faith, or nationality, engaged in socially useful labour and not exploiting others for personal gain, have the right to elect or be elected to the Soviets. Few women could use these rights. Education was necessary first. The younger generation enjoys every opportunity. Education is compulsory and, for the most part, free. Of all the school children, 35 per cent. are girls. Industrial education is obtained in Techniciums, where 45 per cent. of the students are women; 31 per cent. of the college and higher technical school students are women. And women are in the majority in medical and pedagogical colleges. The older generation is the problem. Workers' Faculties prepare for higher institutions those who have had little or no education. In 1927 women comprised 20 per cent. of these. Of the 1,000,000 who go through the adult educational classes each year, more than a third are women. The Genotdel—the Women's Section of the Communist Party—whose chief work is educational, does much through its system of women's delegates. It also publishes journals, written in simple language and well illustrated. These even contain fashion pages—as a means of popularizing them.

With education, woman is finding her true position. She can now take part in public life; 8 per cent. of the members of the All-Russian Soviet, the chief governing body, are women. Since 1919, when the Genotdel was formed, its membership has grown from 6,499 to 400,000 in 1932. These women, as much as the men Communists, are advancing the revolution and promoting its work in every corner of Russia. One-fifth of the Comsomol (Young Communist League) and one-half of the Young Pioneers are girls. Boys and girls are not separated; unlike their elders, they are enjoying equal education. The Soviet expects most from its youth—girls and boys alike. Women comprise more than one-quarter of the membership of the trade unions, but only 6 per cent. of their higher administrative branches; 20 per cent. of the members of factory committees are women, however. Women are taking their place in the judiciary: 1,018 were elected to the People's Courts as judges in 1927. Scores of women have been elected to the chairmanship of town and city Soviets. For the first time in history

a woman has been ambassador in a foreign land. She is Alexandra Kollontai who after serving in Mexico is now in Sweden.

Progress towards the complete fulfilment of the Soviet's schemes is necessarily slow—especially in the villages. Moscow is foremost in women's institutions, but such institutions are springing up even in remote regions. Economic, social, cultural, legal, political and social equality

with man have been won by Soviet women. Only time is necessary before woman can take full advantage of her new position.

BEATRICE M. PITCHER.

Chief References: Jessica Smith, "Woman in the Soviet Union." Alice Withrow Field, "The Protection of Women and Children in Soviet Russia." International Press Correspondence, Vol. XII, No. IX.

Communism v. Civilization

THERE is no conflict between Communism and Civilization, as is frequently said. The fact is that what are called cultural activities and spiritual values are being undermined, restricted, destroyed or rendered decadent by being pent up in the outworn forms of capitalism. The intellect and feelings of mankind cry aloud for the opportunity for free growth, and are told to be content and await

the return of prosperity. There is much in existing culture that a new age will assuredly reject with scorn. But, in this connection, the aim of communism is to save all that is worthwhile from destruction, to make it the possession of all people, and to provide opportunities for the development by all men of their manifold aptitudes.

A.T.B.

Capitalism Prepares for War—cont. from p. 21.

ence was created. The Preparatory Commission held regular sessions for six years, and even then it could make no concrete proposals to guide the Disarmament Conference, which was finally summoned in February of this year. Instead of figures to indicate how far the powers should disarm the Commission left blanks in the Draft Convention which it presented to the Conference. But (if they did nothing else) deliberations of the Preparatory Commission and the Disarmament Conference illustrate the view that the capitalist States will not and cannot disarm. Litvinov attended the Preparatory Commission for the first time in 1927 as head of the Soviet Union Delegation.* He immediately brought forward a scheme for complete disarmament, which was rejected by the Commission in its next session in March, 1928.

On the same day that his original motion was negatived Litvinov brought forward a proposal for partial disarmament. Consideration of his plan was indefinitely postponed. At each session of the Commission, Litvinov's proposals for partial disarmament have been brought forward and rejected. Finally, the Disarmament Conference met in February of this year. After six months of more or less fruitless discussion it was finally adjourned—after rejecting all the proposals brought forward by the Soviet Union for disarmament. It was at the Disarmament Commission that Litvinov was charged with indulging in "propaganda for peace"—an end which was beyond the purview of the other dele-

gations at the Conference. At such a gathering it was only natural that the sincerity of any delegate making practical proposals for disarmament should be challenged.

The Imperialist Powers are Preparing for War.

We are now in the midst of the longest and most acute crisis in the history of capitalism, a crisis which is a phase, perhaps the final phase, in the general decline of the system. In every capitalist country we observe repeated attacks on the standard of living of the workers. Yet at the same time the size of military budgets becomes more colossal year by year. Money that is "saved" by reductions in unemployment insurance, wages, and social services is spent on preparations for another world blood bath. How are we to meet this position?

First, by recognising that capitalism involves, on the one hand, a struggle between national groups of capitalists for markets, raw materials, and fields for investment; and also the exploitation of colonial and semi-colonial peoples abroad and the working classes at home. Viewed from either of these angles, war is the inevitable product of capitalist antagonisms. The preparations for war in our own era are peculiarly intense, because to-day these antagonisms have taken peculiarly acute forms. This analysis leads to the conclusion that in order to abolish war we must first abolish capitalism, and if the mass action of the workers is unable to prevent the outbreak of a new imperialist war by the destruction of the system, then the slogan of every socialist must be:

"Turn the imperialist war into a civil war."

*Fischer, page 749.

Rembrandt and Revolution



MELBOURNE University Labour Club, at its vacational conference, has been devoting some attention to the subject of proletarian art. Accordingly, it may not be amiss to recall to readers of the Club's magazine the case of the great artist, the three hundred and twenty-sixth anniversary of whose birth has lately passed by. For in his case we have a world-historical example of the extent to which the permanent posthumous fame of an artist is determined by his position in regard to the class struggles of his day, and of the extent to which all æsthetic judgments that forsakes this firm ground falls into crazy contradictions.

Rembrandt was already so much forgotten during his life that it has been possible to establish the year of his death only with the greatest difficulty. Subsequently, however, he has been esteemed, in text-books on the history of art, as the "most typical artistic genius the Germanic world has produced." In this connection Franz Mehring, the well-known Socialist historian, tells us of a thick book, written by a raving Germanophile over forty years ago, dedicated to the "better of the cultured people of Germany," and entitled "Rembrandt as Educator." In this book Rembrandt-worship was recommended for the "cultivation of a specifically German sentiment," and Rembrandt's art was extolled as the bringer to the "spiritual life of the German people" of salvation "from a condition of slow, some opine even swift, degeneration." Since this bunk coupled worship of Rembrandt with worship of Bismarck (who had been dismissed from office in 1890), it actually enjoyed in a single year some thirty or more editions; to be sure, every trace of it has since vanished, nor is it likely to emerge from the waters of oblivion.

But, on the subject of the "most typical artistic genius of the Germanic world," let us now listen to that æsthetician, who is said, again in text-books on the history of art, to be the "most typical critical genius of the Germanic world." In a passage not devoid of a certain difficulty of translation, Lessing writes concerning Rembrandt: "The Rembrandtian manner is very well suited to lowly, odd and ugly subjects. Through the deep shadow, which is frequently enforced by the artifice of smudging (unreinen Wischens), we divine with pleasure a thousand things that to see plainly is no pleasure at all. The tatters of a worn-out coat, expressed by the fine and exact graving-tool of a Wille, would rather offend than please; if, however, in the free and easy style of Rembrandt they really please, this is because in the latter case we only imagine them to ourselves, while in the former we would

actually see them. On the other hand, I would not approve of treating lofty, noble subjects in Rembrandt's style, excepting those lofty, noble subjects in which the lowly and the noble are combined: for example, the birth of a God in a stall among oxen and asses, and the like, with which the darkness is bound up." Thus wrote, not, perchance, the young and still unripe Lessing, but the Hamburg dramaturgist, the author of *Laocoon*, who conceded to "ugly and lowly" subjects only a very limited place in art at all, and thought it by no means bad that the ancient Greeks had placed "painting of mullock" (to translate "*Kotmalerei*" by Australian slang) among police offences.

Contrariwise, a man whom convention has been wont to deny any understanding of the chaste and deep secrets of the Germanic character, namely Napoleon, was a great admirer of Rembrandt's. He found in Rembrandt precisely that impetuous greatness and strength, to representation of which, in Lessing's view, the Rembrandtian manner is unsuited. A favourite figure of Rembrandt's was Samson, the hero of the Old Testament. The painter accordingly depicted the scene from the Book of Judges, in which Samson thought to enter his wife's chamber, but found the house shut up. In response to his knocking, the father-in-law has opened a window-shutter on the first floor, leans out and puts off his son-in-law with these words: "I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion." In mien and bearing he betrays no less mock regret and sham sympathy than the furious Samson, with wrathful glance and powerfully clenched fists, manifests raging thirst for revenge and dreadful anger. This picture was a favourite of Napoleon's, though it is scarcely one of Rembrandt's masterpieces, and, moreover, a century and a quarter ago bore the senseless caption: The Duke of Guelderland threatens his father, whom he caused to be thrown into prison! Napoleon took it from the Berlin Gallery, and decorated his study at Saint Cloud with it. Here Blucher found it in 1815, and so it gave a start to the process of restoration of the art-treasures carried off by Napoleon to Paris.

These striking examples show sufficiently well how, in the case of Rembrandt, æsthetic judgment has swayed backwards and forwards, and how little such phrases as the "most typical artistic genius of the Germanic world" can tell us. The peculiar position of Rembrandt in the history of art is rather to be explained by the circumstances that he was the greatest painter of the Dutch Revolution, and likewise its most vital historian, insofar as in his works there

lives again for us the generation that the first modern revolution shaped. All that differentiates the art of Rembrandt in epoch-making wise from the art of his predecessors is of revolutionary origin. Out of the self-consciousness and pride of the bourgeois revolution arose the monumental art of the works portraying shotsmen and rulers; the victorious bourgeois did not demand battles or State ceremonies from his painters; the individual portrait and the group portrait formed the modest sphere of this historical painting; yet we must agree with Treitschke when he says: What fulness of historical life is in all these nameless "Jan and Maurits," who here check accounts in the guild hall, or, festively attired, make for the shooting-grounds, or solemnize the end of an octogenarian bourgeoisie with a sumptuous meal. And so, too, the living content of the Biblical material is transformed under the hands of Rembrandt and his pupils. They no longer painted religious pictures destined to decorate altars and awaken pious reverence; the bourgeois church disdained ecclesiastical art. Their religious pictures were destined to adorn the bourgeois home, and under the light veil of Biblical tradition they depicted the bourgeois life of their time in all its powerfully upsurging freshness and vigour.

Even the technique of Rembrandt's painting has been influenced by his art's revolutionary origin. It is already a considerable advance on Lessing's "smudging" when Treitschke traces

back the famous "chiaroscuro" (light-dark) of Rembrandt "to the land of the semi-overcast skies, of the glorious sunsets, of the eternally changing play of lights." But then the question arises: Why did these natural phenomena of Holland first impregnate art precisely in the century of the Dutch Revolution, and not earlier or later? The right answer was given by a bourgeois historian of art when he wrote: "While Reubens belongs half to the Italian world, Rembrandt stands as the antipodes of Michelangelo and Raffael. If the latter, as genuine sons of the Renaissance, had painted the godly in the beautiful human form, Rembrandt, the son of an epoch that saw God in the whole of nature, made the great cosmic forces of air and light his ideal. As the great Italians group form-masses, so he groups colour-masses, and knows how to give, through the harmony of his tones, unity and clarity to the composition." In point of fact, Rembrandt was a countryman and contemporary of Spinoza's.

Three hundred and twenty-six years after his birth, adherents of proletarian art, the revolutionary art of to-day, may still take off their hats to Rembrandt, not as the "most typical artistic genius of the Germanic world"—such phrases are made by wordmongers—but as the first Germanic artist to have created immortal life out of the first modern revolution.

—G. BARACCHI.

"If Winter Comes..." *Concluded from page 6.*

unemployed become ungovernable? For until these questions can be answered by "very largely," the importance of unemployment as a factor in ending the capitalist system is merely potential. The winter is long, the path tortuous, and spring is far behind. Yet if man cannot influence the seasons there is not the least doubt that he can play a great part in changing the organization of society to end unemployment.

Peaceful or Revolutionary Methods.

HOW to achieve communism, by revolutionary or peaceful methods, has been a much-argued question in the Labor Club. But this is a false opposition, and the problem does not so arise. Any change from capitalism to communism must be revolutionary. This is a basic proposition and is derived from a general examination of the relationships, associations and institutions of society. The character of the revolution may then be considered and, if desired, the question asked: is it likely to be violent or peaceful? Again, one must go to the facts for the answer. It is not for those who profess communist beliefs to say which it shall

be. Their desires are of small consequence, though it should be clearly understood that every communist desires a peaceful revolution. But in a class society the character of the action of one class is not determined by it alone, but by the interaction of the two classes, and by groups within the classes. In times of social decay, the utmost confusion in thought and action is to be expected. But broadly, the action of the capitalist class and its many and widespread middle-class supporters is directed against the working-class. And it is of importance to recognise that it is the capitalist class that begins to use coercion and creates an atmosphere of moral justification for the use of violence against the workers. But the question whether revolution is likely to be violent or peaceful obscures the real issue. This is communism or capitalism. To the communist, methods are of secondary importance, to end capitalism primary. Those who dispute about the methods of revolution while mentally rejecting capitalism are, in effect, in alliance with capitalism against the workers in their struggle for the emancipation of themselves and of society at large.

Red Vienna



IN Schilling v. Melbourne (1928 "Argus" Law Reports, p. 203), the Victorian Supreme Court decided that the Melbourne City Council could not provide parking space for cars. In Roberts v. Hopwood (1925 Appeal Cases, p. 578), the House of Lords decided that a socialist borough council could not pay what wages it pleased.¹ Legal difficulties, such as these, added to the property franchise of most Australian local bodies, have made municipal socialism a dead subject in this country. It is otherwise in Red Vienna.

Austria is a Federal State, and Vienna is not merely a city, but a Federal Province; the mayor and council are also the organs of a provincial government. Hence the Viennese municipality is in a peculiarly favourable position for socialist experiments, having (i) a uni-cameral legislature, (ii) wide legislative and fiscal powers, (iii) a varied and extensive region to control, including forests and farms, and (iv) a politically advanced proletariat with full representation in the City Council. On the debit side are: (i) The economic chaos produced by the splitting up of Austria-Hungary into separate States, with tariff barriers; (ii) the strong control of international finance—capital, operating through the League of Nations and the international Banks; (iii) the opposition of the Austrian Federal Government, where conservative parties usually hold the power.²

The Austro-Marxist Party—(left Social Democratic)—has held a strong majority in Vienna since 1919. It has carried out an extensive program of municipal socialism, including municipal housing, penetration into private business,³ penalisation of private enterprise, land ownership, and heavy taxation of economic rents. Most requirements are provided by municipally owned or controlled services, from antenatal care and motherhood endowment to a crematorium. Finance is ingenious and involved. House property in the slums was rendered almost valueless by moratorium acts; the slums were then bought up, and huge workmen's blocks built, with communal kitchens, gardens, libraries, crèches, medical services and meeting halls.⁴ Rents are very low⁵—(3% of wages as compared to 20% in most countries). Heavy taxes on house-rents, beer, hotels, advertisements, bachelors, motor-cars, servants, luxury-restaurants, etc., provide a large income for the many services not run for profit; the Austrian

capitalist, in strange contrast to our own pundits, complains that the Vienna Council operates too much on income, and does not borrow enough! Wage-fixing and price-fixing are used to prevent the burden of these taxes being placed on the workers. The achievements of Social Democracy may be summed up: Many free or cheap services, creation of highly communised workers' groups, and government completely free from graft.⁶ Moreover, these gains were at the expense of the capitalists. They cannot be explained as "concessions," of "expanding capitalism," since Austrian capitalism has been bankrupt almost continuously since the war, with the exception of a brief boom period in 1926.

Nevertheless, the Social Democrats have failed in three ways: (i) They have not secured workers' control of either industry or the State. Twice since the war the failure of large banks controlling industry has led to international loans on stringent conditions, duly passed on to the backs of the workers. Bitter attacks on living standards have been carried through, in accordance with the demand that Vienna become the cheap-shop of Europe. "A perfect craze for economy must prevail," said Breitner, socialist finance minister. Thus it is said that in Europe only Spain has lower-paid workers than Austria.⁷ (ii) They have not been able to fight the crisis better than capitalist governments. Unemployment is about 25 per cent., and rationalisation goes on apace.⁸ The government is completely bankrupt; interest on foreign loans is unpaid, and civil servants are receiving their salaries in instalments. (iii) They have played definitely social-fascist roles on at least two occasions: once, when they opposed the Hungarian soviet republic, and more recently, in allowing the Federal Government to carry out terrorism in Vienna. In 1927, the indignation of the workers at the rule of international finance led to mass demonstrations, in which the Palace of Justice was burnt. The Social Democrats stood by while the Federal Government sent in their Fascist police, gathered from the Catholic and reactionary provinces.

The workers of Vienna now know both the strength of socialism and the limitations imposed by working within the present State and international machinery. They will not be far behind Germany in the creation of a free Soviet State.

GEORGE SAWER.

¹ "It must be admitted that the management of the affairs of Vienna is model."—Basch.

(Sources: "Current History," Feb., 1931. "Spectator," Sept. 28th, Oct. 5th, 1929. "Inprecorr," Jan. 15th, March 12th, 19th, June 11th, 25th, Sep. 17th, Oct. 8th, 1931. "Austria and its Economic Existence," Basch and Dvoracek, Encyclopædia Britannica.)

⁶ Wage indices for world capitals are:—Vienna, 100; Berlin, 150; London, 231; Sydney, 315; Philadelphia, 426.

¹ This case is judicial confirmation of the Iron Law of Wages.

² Compare Lang's position in Australia.

³ Municipal officials being thus directors of many large companies.

⁴ 140,000 workers live in these buildings. See a lyrical description in "Spectator," Oct. 5th, 1929.

J'ACCUSE !

Henri Barbusse to the French Murderers



ACCUSE all French Governments which have been in power since the end of the war of having encouraged, aided, financed and armed, those associations of the White Guardists now entering into the foreground with increasing openness, this international organisation of criminals, whose aims are murder and war.

Hundreds of millions of francs were squeezed out of the French taxpayers and distributed—thanks to the favours bestowed by Clemenceau and Millerand—among these abominable white hordes of Koltchak and Wrangel who devastated Russia by fire and sword. The main masses of the white army—200,000 men, ready to commit any deed—are concentrated in France. General Miller acknowledges "this would not have been possible without the readiness to help shown by the French Government."

I accuse these Governments of being responsible for the repeated murderous deeds committed by these bandits, whose innumerable and financially powerful groups stretch out their tentacles over the whole world.

Under Tardieu's Government, the contact between the general staffs and the Czarist emigrés was strengthened by the activities of General Sekretev, who was closely connected with General Weygand—hence the orders by Japan to Panhard-Levassor, Hotchkiss and Schneider. There is a whole squadron of one-time Wrangel soldiers employed in the Schneider-Creuzot works. The White Guardists practise musketry on the rifle ranges of the French army. The Banque du Crédit Mutuel takes part in finding appointments for White Guardists and in financing their operations.

I accuse in particular the Tardieu Government of being responsible for the assassination of President Doumer by the White Guardist, Gorgulov, who was in touch with the Paris police.

Direct calls for murder appear every day in White Guard papers—"Kill the Communists! Do not permit even the children of this serpent to remain alive! The people's Terror—this is the sword of God!" "Everyone who supports the Soviet power is the enemy of the Russians, and such foreigners will be reduced to dust." "Let us change our target, and shoot the foreigners, the advantage is obvious: a revolver shot fired at a foreigner can get the Bolsheviki into serious trouble, and even cause political complications." "A holy terrorist action for the defence and the rights of the people." Gorgulov said: "I wanted to force France into a collision with Russia." Tardieu and his police knew this policy of the White Guardist, they knew Gorgulov, yet Gorgulov was able to approach President Doumer without any difficulty during a ceremony, and so wound him fatally by numerous revolver shots—10 to 15 seconds separated the shots—the attention of the police was drawn to Gorgulov's strange conduct before the shooting, but they did nothing.

I accuse Tardieu of having played a comedy rather more utterly base than ridiculous in this affair, in that he made use of the means of propaganda and corruption available to him in the press for spreading the rumour that Gorgulov was a Bolshevik, or an instrument of the Bolsheviki—a despicable lie, which was nevertheless exploited by all the foes of the working class.

Gorgulov was the son of a large landowner expropriated by the Revolution, then a White Guard officer, and founder of the landowners' Fascist party, the Green Peasants' Party. The first article of the program of the Greens is war against present Russia.

(Inprecorr, V.12., n. 32.)

The false statement that Gorgulov was a Red was repeated by the Melbourne "Sun"—Saturday, September 3rd, at p. 7.