

JAMES CONNOLLY :
His Life and Work.
By Arthur McManus

THE
COMMUNIST
REVIEW

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Monthly Organ of the Communist Party of Great Britain

MAY 1924

Number 1

IMPORTANT FEATURES of THIS ISSUE

**Trade Unions & the Workers'
Struggle.**

By J. R. CAMPBELL.

MAY - DAY.

By THOS. A. JACKSON.

Unemployed Workers' Charter.

(A REPLY By WAL HANNINGTON).

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P R I C E S I X P E N C E



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[The several letters sent in for the "Forum" have been unavoidably held over. Next month we print another splendid article by D. I. Jones, on Lenin's First Newspaper. We hope, also, to review "The Morlocks," by J. Welsh, M.P., the miner-poet.—Editor.]

Notice to Contributors, &c. M.S.S. and letters relating thereto should be addressed to Editor, COMMUNIST REVIEW, 16, King Street, W. C. 2.

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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

Editor: THOS. BELL

THE EDITORIAL VIEW

WITH this issue the *Communist Review* enters upon the fourth year of its publication. Our success has indeed exceeded our most sanguine expectations. We have reached the proud position when we can truly say we are self-supporting and depending, neither upon extensive advertisements, nor heavy subsidies from political patrons, for our existence. To reach this unique position within the space of three years is, we think, a splendid achievement. Our one aim has been to make the *Communist Review* a revolutionary workers' journal, in which the problems and tactics confronting the working class could be clearly examined and discussed by means of contributions written by workers, and intended to be read by workers.

Here, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party, we have to acknowledge our indebtedness to all those numerous comrades, contributors, translators and others at the centre, and in the remotest Local Party Committee, who, by their voluntary efforts and sacrifice of time and leisure, have helped to make and build up our splendid circulation.

* * * * *

We have always understood the First of May to be the workers' own day, when all work would stop and the organised masses of the wealth producers could come together, and renew their pledges of international solidarity in the struggle for emancipation from capitalism. That, certainly, was the intention thirty-five years ago, when the founders of the Second International to which Premier MacDonald belongs declared for a general cessation of work on the first day of May to demand an 8-hours working day, and to demonstrate the international solidarity of the workers of all lands whether red, black, white or yellow.

This year, May Day has a special significance for us in this country. For the first time in our history, we have a Labour Government in office. No doubt at our usual Sunday afternoon "May Day" Demonstrations, much will be made of this event by our Labour politicians, but surely at these demonstrations we are entitled to ask, why the Labour Party has failed to live up to the one international Socialist obligation upon which there is no difference of opinion between parties, and not instructed MacDonald to declare a cessation of work upon the first day of May as the Workers' Own Day?

Compare May Day, a General Holiday in the Workers' Republic of Russia under the guidance of the Communist Party, *i.e.*, under Leninism, and May Day in Capitalist Britain under the guidance of the Labour Party, *i.e.*, MacDonaldism. It will not do to say our Labour Government "is only in office but not in power." The fact is MacDonald and his colleagues have neither the will nor the courage to offend their bourgeois masters.

* * * * *

Yet another illustration comes to hand this month of the decided contrast in our Liberal-Labour Government, with that of a real government of workers and peasants, in the meeting at Downing Street on the 14th April, of the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, headed by Rakovsky, and that of the representatives of His Britannic Majesty's Government, headed by Ramsay MacDonald. It is the irony of fate that two such old delegates to the same international Socialist conferences as Rakovsky and MacDonald, should be brought face to face, the one, Rakovsky, defending the claims of the struggling masses of workers and peasants in the first Workers' Republic, the other, Ramsay MacDonald defending the property of the capitalist imperialists. If any of our readers desire the finest study extant in the contrast of reformist and revolutionary politics, let them read carefully, these speeches of MacDonald and Rakovsky.

We are tempted to illustrate this contrast by putting, side by side, the following extracts, which we have culled from the official texts of the speeches:—

MACDONALD.

"Our first duty will be the liquidation of the past. . . . The British Delegation will wish, as you have already been informed to include consideration of inter-governmental obligations, the claims of British holders of Russian bonds and of British subjects who have had their property taken away from them."

RAKOVSKY.

"The Peoples constituting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are determined to hold fast to the conquest, which constitutes the *raison-d'etre* of the existence of the Soviet Government, and for which the toiling masses of the entire Union have fought against the coalition between the internal enemy and foreign governments."

When MacDonald urged that " he had too intimate a knowledge of international movements to be deceived by false distinctions " he spoke with more truth than loyalty to the Labour Movement. He was advertising to the bourgeoisie his willingness to place at their service all the knowledge which his association with international Socialist conferences had given him. Such is the way of all renegades!

* * * * *

The problem of Reparations comes to the front once more in the latest report of the Experts Commission. This time there has been a remarkable anxiety on the part of the henchmen of the imperialists to reach a common plan of action. And why? The answer, we believe, is to be found in the policy of Poincaré in the Ruhr and its repercussions upon Europe. Poincaré's failure to seize Reparations was on the verge of leading France to disintegration. The Franc was rapidly going the way of the Mark. Nothing seemed capable of arresting its decline. When at the critical stage—critical for Europe as well as France—Wall Street comes to the rescue, and, as we now know, money tells! Not only has the Franc been stabilised for a period at least, but the spectre of another wave of civil war in Europe has led to a speeding up of the work of the Experts, and brought about the equally speedy and agreed consent of the Reparations Commission, as well as the prompt pronouncements of the governments.

With this Expert Committee's Report, a new phase has been opened up in European politics. The millions of dollars advanced by Wall Street have brought America on to the stage in a definite and concrete way. It means that American capitalists and British capitalists are now openly joining hands for the first time in the foul work of exploiting Germany, and dividing the spoils between them. A £40,000,000 Loan is to be raised (presumably New York and London will attend to that) with German Railways, certain industrial enterprises and customs as securities. *This means in effect, if it means anything at all, the complete colonisation of Germany.* Is this, we ask, " the sanction of justice " which Mr. MacDonald claimed in the House of Commons on April 15th, as an " unbiassed and carefully thought-out endeavour " to reach a settlement? Well may Mr. Baldwin assure him, that, he (MacDonald) will have the united support of the British people (capitalists).

The marriage between the reformist I.L.P'er, Ramsay MacDonald and British Imperialism could not be better consecrated to the glory of this old Empire!

And now that we are in a position to estimate at its true value the policy of our MacDonalld Government we can see through the anomaly of pacifists being tied to the armament commitments of the imperialist elements of the nation; why a would-be pacifist government is compelled to increase the air forces, carry out the aircraft domination of Mesopotamia initiated by Churchill, and make the army "more attractive." The old Tory argument of "help for the unemployed" as a defence of the policy of replacement of cruisers deceives nobody. Why not another war? The facts are the pacifist MacDonalld has completely surrendered to the naval demands of the imperialists. Witness, for example, the decision on Singapore, and its aftermath.

Within a week of the Singapore declaration, the Australian Government decides to build two cruisers and three submarines, and to develop Port Darwin on the North Coast of Australia as a naval base—all the previous financial objections notwithstanding!

Is Mr. MacDonalld *naive* enough to try and suggest the Admiralty was so badly informed, that he knew nothing of this project?

* * * * *

And what of the programme of social reforms the workers were asked to expect when Labour became the Government? The 1923-4 Budget yielded a surplus of £48,000,000, and like the "best Chancellor of the Exchequer Great Britain ever had," Mr. Snowden automatically assigns that to the reduction of the *National Debt*—a plum to investors for re-investment, and a saving(?) to the Exchequer of £500,000 per annum! True, the Snowden Budget as a whole is not yet before us, but the foregoing example, coupled with the present scale of taxation and departmental estimates already promised, including over £300,000,000 interest on the *National Debt*, does not augur well for the promises made at the last election.

Already excuses are forthcoming. Mr. Pethick Lawrence, speaking on the reforms promised, says, "These were contingent on the acceptance of the Capital Levy." The *Socialist Review* for April, criticising the "citizens" for refusing to give the Government a majority, says the "wage-earners . . . now expect it (the Government) to use, on their behalf, the power they have not given it." And so, presumably we must wait!

Nor is the position likely to be improved by the specious schemes of the I.L.P. for inflating the currency, nationalisation of the banks, etc. Inflation can only send the pound chasing after the Mark and Franc; while nationalisation of the banks is no solution without the substitution of social ownership and control

for private ownership in the means of production. *'As long as MacDonald and his colleagues refuse to touch the property question, i.e., as long as they run away from the class issue, no matter what promises they make to the workers, there never can be, nor will be social peace in these islands.*

* * * * *

Happily the workers everywhere are awakening from their lethargy. All over the world the alignment of forces is becoming sharpened into two definite camps—reaction on the Right, and militancy on the Left.

In Germany, while the forces of reaction, including the Social Democrats of the Labour and Socialist International are drawing closer together, the Communist Party, despite the ban of illegality is becoming stronger everywhere, as the election results show. In Bulgaria, after the blood-bath given to the workers, a remarkable recovery has been made by the Labour Party which has incited the Democrats in power to once more try its hand at suppression. In Italy, despite the lawless terrorism of Mussolini and Fascism, the forces of reaction have been badly shaken.

A Labour Government is proclaimed in Denmark. Three of the Governments in Australia are now in the hands of the Labour Party. In South Africa, the career of bloody-Smuts is about ended. In this country, the enormous poll for Labour at the last election is being followed up by spirited strikes for higher wages and better working conditions. Everywhere, we see a clearer alignment of forces in the class struggle.

But so long as the Labour Party in this country adheres to the I.L.P. doctrine that "a government seeking to represent the general will cannot take sides in disputes," it can never be a real leader of the workers in the class struggle. It can only be the plaything of capitalists. Only an attitude of "neutrality" can lead to the threatening of military scabbing on strikers and the Emergency Powers Act.

We are, therefore, glad to see that a stand is being taken against the wanton bourgeois parliamentarianism of MacDonald, and that a number of Labour M.P.'s have the courage to refuse to follow him blindly into the camp of the capitalists. We, ourselves, have always declared, that we would support the Labour Party *only so long as it was fighting for the aims of the workers, but, that we reserved the right to oppose it when it was running away from the working class issues.* On this basis there is common ground for joint action between the Communist Party, and all who have become disillusioned with MacDonaldism.

The First of May

“**M**AY DAY” will be celebrated all over the earth—as usual. This does not mean that here in Britain, yonder in France, in Germany, and beyond, in Russia, China, Japan, the South Seas and the U.S.A., the workers, moved by a common impulse, will, in set form, make manifest and visible their community of objective and aspiration. It means that in Russia the workers will celebrate their triumph and their fervent hope the day is near when the workers of other lands can join them in rejoicing.

That in France, Germany and most European countries, the workers will (in ways that vary, as vary the ferocity of their class enemies) demonstrate their will to accomplish *their* share at any rate of the “emancipation of the human race.” And in Britain? Ah! that is another story!

The originators of the Workers’ Annual Festival on the First of May were perfectly clear as to their objective. They knew—and had they been likely to forget their rulers would soon have reminded them—that “the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the workers themselves.” Therefore, they proposed to their fellow town-workers that the time-honoured peasants’ holiday on the First of May should be observed by them as a holiday likewise.

They had only newly been dragged from the land into the vortex of the mill and the mine. They had been uprooted, and scattered. In the first bewilderment of the transition they had been overwhelmed by the vastness of the powers which had taken possession of them, and made them into machines for its ends. Then, little by little, as use and wont made terrors into common-places, and multiplying exactions made misery too fierce to be borne, they looked for a way of escape. If not back to the air and the fields, at any rate forward, to a state of things in which a worker need not be either an ass stumbling, flogged, beneath burdens, or a machine worn out in heat, clatter and grime, and so flung aside in contempt.

They saw their way in a flash—in the “solidarity” of the wage-slave lay the magic which could alone bring them relief from all they suffered, and satisfaction for all that they craved. They proposed, these pioneers of the First of May, quite soberly and prosaically—yet with an intensity of insight that may well

command admiration—that the workers should take a holiday on the First of May in order to fraternise with each other and with their comrades the workers in the fields, and the countryside.

And then? Well, it should be remembered that they lived too long ago to know that the "tactics" of the working class struggle would become a theme upon which metaphysicians, politicians, and students of history would elaborate libraries. These simple ones would have expressed it quite simply—if the workers in mass take a holiday in defiance of the boss, that will be good training for acting as a mass in other ways—it may be for moving as a mass to dethrone the exploiters!

ON THE CONTINENT—IN BRITAIN.

On the Continent the May Day celebration has never entirely lost its primitive innocence. It still is a one-day demonstration strike designed and carried through to the greater glory of solidarity and the justification of the working class militant here upon earth. In Russia, of course, it loses its defiant character since it is a public festival honoured by the Workers' State. But its origin as a militant workers' festival is preserved by the practice of forming the processions at the factories and marching thence to the points of assembly. In France, and possibly in Germany, too, the exhibition of red flags and revolutionary emblems may be forbidden—as usual. As usual some will be exhibited, and the usual scuffle with the police will give zest to the enjoyment. In Italy, and the Balkans, processions and meetings will be forbidden—the factories will stand idle notwithstanding and the meetings will be held.

In Britain we shall be free to meet—if we wish—and free to march. We have a Labour Government. Socialists (of a sort) are in control of the police (more or less!) and Revolutionary Social Democrats are plentiful in the House of Commons. Theoretically, we are a revolutionary nation. At the name of Britain and its Prime Minister the Labour and Socialist International swells near to bursting with pride. In every Parliament in Western Europe the faithful can be found who quiver with enthusiasm at the thought of the splendid advance of the sturdy British toilers led by the stalwart MacDonald and the fiery I.L.P. Most of them will march on May Day; but the idols of their idolatry will stick fast—*until the Sunday after.*

There are times, of course, when by the grace of the Calendar the First of May falls upon a Sunday. When that happens the solidarity of British Labour with the rest of the

workers of the world is almost complete—(provided the weather is fine!). When it doesn't the First of May is celebrated in Britain by the Building Trades Unions, the "extremists," the Jewish Workers (man, woman and child), the National League of the Blind, and the Special Department from Scotland Yard.

That a good many British workers derive not a little spiritual consolation from the pageantry and speech-making even of the First Sunday in May cannot be denied. Neither can it be denied that a day's pay is a day's pay and a serious consideration. But when that is said and done with, what excuse remains for the British custom? There never was any point in May Day beyond its defiant affirmation of solidarity in the face of risk, or even actual loss. Take from May Day its *general strike* character; take from it the note of *international* unanimity, and it becomes the tamest and the most meaningless of rituals. And held on a Sunday—a British Sunday—with speakers and audience all in their best "go to meeting" clothes, and it becomes indistinguishable from any of the many middle-class manifestations and pageantries which follow each other monotonously all through the summer. It becomes a boredom and a foolish pretence—as disgusting as the old Chartist ending his days as a star speaker at a Band of Hope.

WHERE ARE THE REBELS ?

Those learned in these matters tell us that the movement which merged into history as the Christian Church, thereafter to be incorporated into the coercive apparatus of every State in "Christendom" took its rise in a whole series of slave conspiracies to overthrow the Roman Empire. When Constantine made Christianity an official religion of the Empire (they tell us) he "nobbled" it. The old words were repeated; the old ceremonies gone through. But everything that the words had indicated by concealing, and the ceremonies had revealed by indirection was carefully purged out and made away with. The old prophecies of a "good time coming" for the poor and the needy, of a rest for the weary and healing for those beaten with many stripes were "re-interpreted" into promises of the permanence of suffering here upon earth compensated by never-ending splendours in another world altogether. Thus a mighty engine of revolt was turned into a still mightier engine for stabilisation. That which had set out to "put down the mighty from their seat and exalt them of low degree" remained to reinforce privilege with power, and coercive authority with supernatural terrors.

Within the time of most of us now living the occupants of the Governmental Benches were, almost to a man, heralds and leaders of revolt. The soap-box was their portion; and in the shades of the Red Flag they developed the faculties which draw them laudations from the public press. Hardly a man of them has not in his day addressed three shop-shutters, two comrades, a "drunk" and a dog as "Fellow Workers and Citizens." Hardly one of them who has not lamented in his day the dead and damnable ignorance and apathy of the working class. Now that the ignorance has been so far dissipated that they are where they are, and the apathy has given place to angry activity all along the line, where are these one-time "rebels" and "agitators"? How many of them will testify their allegiance to the faith that they fed and which has given them place and distinction by turning out with their "Comrades and Fellow Workers" on the First of May?

True they will be "on deck" on the First Sunday in May—every man and every woman of them. They will have hopeful words to say of the spring time—natural and political. They will produce themselves as the buds and blossoms evidencing the political spring-time, and the burden of their song will be—"Wait! wait! wait! until the crop is ripe for the harvest."

RESPECTABLE LABOURISTS.

Take a look (in imagination) over the world. Picture the millions of toilers in all lands whom the preaching and teaching of Socialism for half a century has led to hope for deliverance. See them each in their degree calculating their chances of escape. And see them all without exception looking to the British working class, and its spokesman (now the Government of Britain) yearning for the signal that the hour has struck. See in particular the Socialist and Labour International (galled and fretted under persecution from the Right and Communist criticism from the Left) looking to their fortunate brethren in the High Places of Britain and longing for even a gesture of allegiance to the old International faith.

They will look in vain. Downing Street is a busy place, and it is hard to see the international proletariat through a screen of Press photographers. The Continental adherents of the Second International can wait until the First Sunday in May—and even then they must restrain their expectations within the bounds of British constitutional expediency. The cares and responsibilities of office weigh heavily on the shoulders of the I.L.P. and the

British Empire must not be allowed to come to harm. As for the international proletariat, they must as reasonable people wait their turn, and the only thing certain about that is that it is—not yet!

Had the Labour Party lived up to its obligations as a member of the Second International it would have made this May Day a public holiday. It didn't. Respectable British Socialism, led by its "Labour" Premier with scripture quotations on his lips, and psalms chanted in his drawing room, has started upon the path which will lead the Second International into the place and function of the Christian Church under Constantine. Yet a little while and the "New Church," will evolve its Holy Inquisition, and the First Sunday in May be brightened by bonfires lit to burn Communists all round the British Imperial Globe.

T. A. JACKSON.

RECRUITING

Are you a regular reader?

Do you agree with our views?

Are you a member of the Communist Party?

IF NOT, WHY NOT?

We are anxious that every worker who agrees with us, should join up, and do his share in the spreading of our views, and the realisation of our common aim.

As a sympathiser, you are useful, but as a member of the Party you are immeasurably more so.

Our influence amongst the masses is increasing, as also is the circulation of our literature, but our membership is not increasing in proportion. This state of things can, and must be altered, and *you can alter it* if you are not a member by joining up, and if you are a member, by getting others whom you know to do so.

The Recruiting Committee will give all the information and guidance it can, and in return asks you for your suggestions and experiences in recruiting.

If you are not a member and do not know any Party members in your locality, write to us at Party Headquarters, 16, King Street, Covent Garden, and we will put you in touch.

JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

RECRUITING SERGEANT.

Trade Unionism and the Workers' Struggle

(WATCH YOUR SLOGANS).

[In view of the increasing industrial activity in the trade union movement, and the desire expressed by a number of prominent "Left wing" leaders for a big forward movement by the organised labour unions, this article by the Editor of the official organ of the R.I.L.U. in this country, "The Worker," on the necessity of not forgetting the basic aims of Trade Unionism, is a timely reminder to all those "Left wing" elements who, in their anxiety to recover the ground lost during the last two years, are apt to use in a flippant way the slogans of our revolutionary movement.—Editor.]

IT is exceedingly enlightening to watch how demands and policy, originally propagated by the advanced sections of the Labour movement can be utilised by Labour reactionaries in the interests of Conservatism. Mr. Bevin, pleading with the Southampton strikers to return to work in the name of unity and the General Council; Mr. J. A. Hobson, appealing for co-ordination in order to tie up strike movements, which are likely to be embarrassing to a Labour Government, are familiar examples of this tendency.

In no case, however, has a demand originally put forward by advanced workers been perverted to more base uses than that of "industrial unionism."

During the A.S.L.E. & F. strike, the social pacifists of the N.U.R. worked this slogan, which was once symbolic of revolutionary trade unionism, to death, and used it as an excuse for the most disgusting strike-breaking tactics imaginable.

In a similar way we find the slogan of "More Power to the General Council," which advanced trade unionists have been popularising, finding favour with the social-pacifist Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, which hopes to see the General Council using its powers, not in co-ordinating the workers' struggle, but in stifling forward movements.

These facts make it necessary that the active men of the industrial movement should cease taking their catchwords on trust, and should constantly be examining them in the light of new developments.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM.

The struggle for industrial unionism was on the part of its pioneers not only a struggle for a new form of organisation, it was also a struggle against the prevailing practice of the union move-

ment, and against the prevailing conception of the role of the unions in the workers' struggle for emancipation.

The industrial unionists struggled—

1. Against the prevailing craft union form of organisation and for union by industry.
2. Against peaceful and ineffective compromise with the employers, and for a more militant class struggle policy.
3. For the utilisation of the re-organised unions as weapons of struggle against capitalism, and their preparation for the role of controlling production after capitalism had been overthrown.

If we examine the unions approximating to the industrial form, the N.U.R., the T. & G.W.U. and the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, we find that while they are approaching an industrial structure, they are far from adopting the outlook which alone makes better organisation valuable, and without which, larger organisation only leads to bureaucracy, and stagnation. The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, for example, is a hopelessly social-pacifist body, having definite arrangements with the steel bosses for the regulation of wages in accordance with steel prices. Its leaders in the past have even betrayed an open protectionist policy in the interests of the boss class. The N.U.R. is also dominated through and through with social pacifism; to the leaders "scientific negotiation" is more important than struggle.

Both those organisations, controlling large forces, have a formidable appearance, but it may be doubted if their real strength is as great as it appears. Effective industrial unity cannot be manufactured by formally bringing together bodies of workers previously separated. Effective unity amongst diverse workers in an industry can only be created through a common struggle against the boss. Unless the workers are welded together in the actual struggle, the strength of the larger industrial organisations is mainly delusive.

Active men must, therefore, beware of propagating amalgamation in a mechanical fashion, without reference to the need for more vigorous struggle, and without reference to the need for trade unionists to organise to hew a way out of capitalism. No mechanical series of measures are any use without a more revolutionary spirit amongst the rank and file.

WHERE ARE THE MASSES ?

To get this will necessitate a very considerable change in our methods. It is astonishing how even the most intensive-

campaign undertaken by active men in an industry merely touches a tiny minority. Resolutions will, of course, be passed by various branches, conferences will be held; the workers in the trade union branches will have a few more talismanic words at their disposal, but the mass will remain untouched.

If we are going to create, not only a change of organisation, but a change of outlook amongst the rank and file, then we must get contacts with the rank and file in the workshops, and there carry on the real propaganda for industrial unity. This is by no means easy to do, especially in those industries where the employers have been annoyed by workshop movements in the past. The job must be tackled, however, and both the Party and the R.I.L.U. must prepare for it by getting not only more workshop letters in their press, but by developing a simple pamphlet literature written, not with one eye on Mr. Karl Radek, and another eye on "Mr. John Smith," but with both eyes on "Mr. Smith," for whom the pamphlet is designed. Only by this continual workshop contact and propaganda amongst the rank and file, only by gathering the rank and file around the active men in the Party, and the Minority Movement can we create that level of consciousness in the trade union membership that will prevent the larger organisations from becoming merely the plaything of bureaucracy, and a bulwark of reaction.

SECTIONALISM WITHIN THE GREATER UNIONISM.

Another feature of modern so-called Industrial Unionism must be noted in passing, particularly with reference to the Transport and General Workers' Union. The pioneers of the industrial unionist idea used to make merry with the plight that the workers in an industry were in with regard to separate agreements.

There might be a dozen different occupations in an industry, each occupation being catered for by a separate union, each union having a separate agreement, terminating at a different time. All the resources of irony at the disposal of the propagandist were called upon to characterise this situation, and it was shown how much better it would be if all the men concerned were in one union, governed by one agreement. To-day, the T. & G. W. U. has organised all transport workers under one union, but has split them up under separate agreements, and is almost as incapable of bringing about common action at the same time as were the older unions.

It is obvious that if this sort of thing is persisted in, the bosses will be able to split up different grades of workers within the same

union almost as effectively as if they were members of separate unions. The real struggle for industrial unionism is, therefore, really just beginning, for industrial unionism is much more than the instinctive huddling together of a number of small unions into one large union.

Our aim in the union movement must not be merely the conquest of the trade union apparatus, but the ideological conquest of the membership. Without this, the various proposals for a concentration of power in the trade union movement might conceivably mean not a concentration of leadership for class struggle purposes, but a Gompers' dictatorship in the Trade Union movement of this country. More power to the General Council means more power for good or evil, and it may well be evil instead of good if the active men do not succeed in establishing an ascendancy over the mass of the workers.

THE AIMS OF THE "MINORITY" MOVEMENT.

This brings us to the question of what should be the functions of the minority groups which are springing up within the unions in various parts of the country, and which will probably come together in a National Minority Movement in the near future. At the present moment the minority groups are concentrating on getting the unions to struggle for higher wages, at the same time bringing before the workers attention certain structural alterations in trade union organisation, calculated to produce a more effective mobilisation of the workers' forces. This is very necessary work. Unless the fighting spirit of the workers can be roused again, all revolutionary agitation is simply a beating of the air. It should be clear to members of minority groups, however, that their task consists of something more than demanding slightly higher wages than the officials are prepared to demand, or by popularising amalgamation proposals.

That "something more" is the popularisation of the conception of trade unionism, not merely as a reformist force under capitalism, but as a revolutionary instrument for participating in the struggle for power, and after the struggle for power, playing a part in the management of industry.

The minority movements must popularise this or leave the working class to draw the inevitable conclusion, that the only difference between the Left wing of the Trade Union movement and the Right is, that the former are concerned with demanding higher wage increases, and are somewhat impatient about the slow progress of amalgamation.

To popularise the conception of the trade union movement as a body which should be concerned with the transformation of the capitalist system, does not mean that we have to indulge in abstract propoganda about the "happy land, far, far away." It means that we should formulate immediate demands that definitely challenge capitalist autocracy in the workshop, such as shop control of piece work, control of hiring and firing, prior agreement before any changes in conditions of production become operative, and so on; that around such demands we endeavour to develop workshop organisation, which will continue to make more onerous demands upon the employing class, thus in a popular and concrete way spreading the demand for the workers' control of industry.

THE UNIONS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER.

Another prejudice that must be broken down by the active men in no uncertain fashion is that which draws an unnatural distinction between politics and industrialism to the detriment of the workers' struggle. It will be remembered, for instance, that prior to Black Friday the railway and transport workers representatives were very much perturbed by the miners' proposal for a National Pool, which was held to be a "political" demand, and the Trade Union Movement in capitalist democracy was held to be within its rights if it made industrial demands on the employers, but absolutely treasonable and subversive if it made any demands on the national government. This belief is still widely held, and if the Trade Union movement is going to play any useful part in the workers' struggle, it must be broken down. The Trade Union movement must be as prepared to enforce a demand for better unemployed maintenance from the Government, as it is to enforce a demand for better wages from the employers. It must be prepared to struggle for a Workers' Government by means of direct action, as well as by voting at elections. This requires to be made plain, because, at the moment, certain people are popularising amongst trade unionists the conception that their role in the struggle for workers' control of industry is purely a passive one. At certain I.L.P. conferences, and in a resolution submitted by the General Council at the recent Scottish Trade Union Congress, the conception is stated somewhat as follows: "The Labour Government is approaching power. It will soon be in a position to nationalise industry. The workers in the various industries must unite their forces, have only one union for each industry, and prepare for the task of participating in the management of their industry, once the

Government has nationalised it." This, to our minds, is avoiding the real question of what role the trade unions are going to play in the struggle to set up a real workers' government, that will be in a position to nationalise industry. Will they be prepared to use their power to smash capitalist opposition to the setting up of a workers' government? Evidently, the slogan of "workers' control of industry" is open to be charged with a social-pacifist content. The Minority Movements have got to make it clear to trade unionists that political and industrial questions are not separable and the trade union movement must be called upon to fight on all class issues that arise.

To sum up, slogans and watchwords being put forward by the active industrial workers are continually being taken up by the trade union reactionaries, and used for their own purposes, and the active workers must, therefore, be continually examining the content of their slogans.

Industrial unionism does not merely mean mechanical amalgamation, it means also the acceptance of a class struggle policy and outlook by the rank and file.

"More power to the General Council" to be really effective demands not merely the conquest of the trade union apparatus by a minority, but the enlarged class consciousness of the rank and file.

"Control of Industry" is to be popularised by the development of demands infringing on the capitalists' right of undivided control. In its complete form it cannot be the gift of a Labour Government to a passive trade union movement, but, on the contrary, a real workers' government is impossible without a direct struggle on the part of the whole Labour movement against the forces of capitalism.

These facts must be borne in mind while formulating our practical proposals and the working class must be approached by our propagandists not merely in the union branches, but in the workshops. This must be done by the Minority Movement organising workshop groups to carry on its propaganda and to set up factory committees wherever possible.

Only in this way can we make it clear that the active men in the union movement are struggling, not merely for higher wage demands, than the officials, but for a different conception of the role of the trade union movement in the workers' struggle.

J. R. CAMPBELL.

The Unemployed Workers' Charter

A Reply to E. STANLEY by WAL HANNINGTON.

LONG before this appears in print Comrade Stanley will have had in his possession the six explanatory leaflets to the "Charter," and will have realised that quite a good deal of his criticism in last month's "Communist Review" is invalidated.

There are certain points in his criticism that I agree with, but, if only Comrade Stanley had restrained himself from rushing into print until he had seen the explanatory leaflets, his revelation of the "Charter's" "vagueness and lack of definiteness" would not have appeared.

Comrade Stanley slipped badly in criticising the generalised points of the "Charter," without having the rest in his possession, namely, the leaflets to each point which indicate the definite proposals and intentions contained in the Point.

He complains of the "mildness" of the "Charter," but I would emphasise the fact that it is not intended to be taken as a complete or ultimate programme, but just a Charter that represents the "*minimum*" demands of British Labour on unemployment for "*immediate attainment*." This is clearly pointed out in the "Charter." Now "*immediate minimum demands*" are demands that arise out of the immediate or present suffering of the workers. They are the simple desires that are given birth to by the daily struggles of the workers for existence. If we fully comprehend this fact, then we shall not complain if those demands do not constitute a "whole-hogger" revolutionary programme.

I would here point out that many lessons have been learned by the world proletariat from the Russian revolution, and I am beginning to wonder whether the lessons have been missed by Comrade Stanley.

The November revolution clearly vindicated the policy of joining with the masses in their immediate and elementary demands, and preparing them for the ultimate struggle, with the ripening of class-consciousness, for the fundamental social change.

In July, 1917, when the Kerensky Government flung the starving Russian workers again into the imperialist war on be-

half of the Allies, the slogan with which the Bolsheviks led the masses on to the streets was "Bread and Peace."

When the workers realised how they were being betrayed by the Kerensky Provisional Government, they followed the demands of the Bolsheviks for "All Power to the Soviets."

These were the immediate desires of the masses arising out of their suffering, and they were demands with which the Bolsheviks could swing the masses behind them. This is a historical lesson well worth learning.

The struggle for a new social order comes as a natural sequence to the struggle for immediate demands when the workers have sufficiently realised that their demands will not be easily conceded, or guaranteed, by the present social order.

To understand this is to understand your position as a revolutionary in the daily struggles of the working class, whether the demands are "mild" compared with the clear-cut revolutionary programme, or not.

THE LEAFLETS EXPLAINED.

Now let us turn to Leaflet No. 1. In the Point itself we find the general term "effective maintenance," but in the explanation is contained a definite demand indicating what is considered "effective maintenance," namely, £3 per week, man and wife, plus 18/- for two children.

Comrade Stanley will see that this is an advance on the immediate demands of the N.U.W.C.M., and is backed up by statistics on what it costs to maintain a convict in prison or an inmate of the workhouse. Such simple and glaring comparisons make their impression upon the minds of those whom we desire to swing into activity.

With Point No. 2, Comrade Stanley must have suffered disillusion, on the receipt of the explanatory leaflets, for he kicks off his criticism with—"In this Point no definite Government schemes are stated," and goes on to point out that this "may mean the building of cruisers, aeroplanes, and other means of destruction."

A brief examination of Leaflet No. 2 will allay his fears, for we find the following schemes proposed :

- (a) Improving the roads and bridges of the country.
- (b) Improving the Rivers, Canals, Docks and Harbours.
- (c) Setting up of a national scheme of Electric Power Supply, publicly owned and democratically managed.
- (d) Afforestation, Land Drainage, and Land Reclamation.
- (e) Reconditioning, extension and electrification of railways.

In case Comrade Stanley should consider these demands too

“mild,” it is interesting to note that at the Conference of the Metal Workers’ Minority Movement—the Left wing of the metal workers—held in Glasgow, March 29th, a resolution on unemployment in the metal industry was agreed upon, and reads as follows :

The first demand of all workers in the metal industry must be for the inauguration of work schemes which will create a condition of full employment in that industry. We, therefore, demand that the metal unions will fight to enforce upon the Labour Government a policy for improving and expanding the capital equipment of the country. The work schemes should include :—

- (1) Electrification of Railways.
- (2) The erection of super Electric Power Stations.
- (3) The development of a system of inland waterways transport by the widening, deepening and extension of the existing canal system.
- (4) A lengthy clause on Trade with Russia.

You will note that these demands are practically identical with those contained in the “Charter,” and to have the employed and unemployed definitely engaged in a struggle with the employing class on the same immediate demands is undoubtedly of great importance, and one which Comrade Stanley, I am sure, will not underestimate.

Point No. 3. In this leaflet the failure of private enterprise is emphasised, and it hardly needs me to indicate that the type of commodity to be produced in the “State Workshops,” is in relation to the demands on Point. No. 2.

Now, with Point No. 4, dealing with the demand for a general reduction in the hours of labour, Comrade Stanley assures us that he is in entire agreement here, but that “he refuses to place the same importance upon it as do some workers,” but that “it is necessary at the moment to protect even the eight-hour day.”

But surely the best way to defend the eight-hour day is to rally your forces for a shorter working day.

In this leaflet is stated how the productive capacity of the worker through the introduction of labour-saving inventions has enormously increased during the last 150 years, without anything near to a comparative reduction in the hours of labour.

Point No. 5, deals with a problem that has been uppermost recently, namely, the provision of proper occupational training for unemployed boys and girls.

I must confess to certain agreement with Comrade Stanley in his criticism of the mention of provision for able-bodied ex-service men. But, perhaps, it will be as well to point out what was the underlying reason on the part of those who introduced it for doing so.

During the War, youths were dragged off to the army and consequently robbed of their opportunity for learning a trade, and after the State had used them they had been flung back on

to the industrial field seriously handicapped through no training, to drift into any sort of casual or badly-paid employment, when they could get it. This was in itself a gross injustice, but even so, I personally think that the time has come to drop the distinction of ex-service men in the ranks of the working class, but the leaflet on occupational training is principally intended to meet the problem of thousands of youngsters leaving school, swelling the ranks of the unemployed and having no chance to learn a trade, or of entering industry proper.

Leaflet No. 6, deals with another very salient social grievance, namely, Housing. It demands that evictions shall be stopped, and is timely with the present ferment that is going on over that question.

To sum up: it is true to say that the "Charter" deals with the problems that most sorely affect the working class, especially the unemployed at the present time.

There may be an absence of revolutionary phraseology due to the fact that common agreement for the production of the "Charter" had to be arrived at between the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

From the standpoint of the advanced revolutionary, the "Charter" may be lacking in certain respects, but by no means to the extent made out by Comrade Stanley.

One of the chief values of the "Charter" is the way in which it knits up the employed and unemployed interests.

It embodies demands for a common struggle: a struggle in which employed and unemployed can engage without feeling that its accomplishment is only to the advantage of one section.

Keen interest is being taken in the "Charter" right throughout the country. We must turn that interest into real activity in order to lead on to greater struggles in the future.

[We reproduce here for the benefit of readers of the "Communist Review," the leaflets explanatory of the points under discussion in the Unemployed Workers' Charter. On account of limited space we eliminate the introductory matter, which is identical, from all the leaflets except number one.—Editor.]

Unemployed Workers' Charter Leaflet No. 1.

The UNITED NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

The unemployment Joint Advisory Council, representing the Trades Union Congress General Council and the Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, with the united approval of both bodies, submit to the judgment of British Citizens

The Unemployed Workers' Charter.

This represents the minimum demand of British Labour, employed and unemployed, and is made on behalf of over five million men, women and children, who suffer the tragic consequences of prolonged unemployment.

What is Maintenance?

WE DEMAND work or effective maintenance for all unemployed workers and increased Government assistance to be provided through Trade Unions. All unemployment relief to be completely dissociated from Poor Law administration.

GOVERNMENT MAINTENANCE FOR POOR LAW INSTITUTIONS.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain informed the House of Commons on August 1st, 1923, that the cost per head in Poor Law Institutions was £88 5s. 3½d. a year.

On Poor Law scale two adults would cost	£176 10 6½
Two children (equal to one adult) cost	88 5 3½

Total cost per annum.....	£264 15 9½
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Total cost per week	£5 1 10½
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Mr. Bridgeman, late Home Secretary, informed the House of Commons on August 2nd, 1923, that the cost of maintaining a convict in H.M. Prisons was £111 a year.

On the convict scale two adults would cost	£222 0 0
Two children (equal to one adult) cost	111 0 0

Total cost per annum	£333 0 0
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Total cost per week	£6 8 0½
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The Unemployed Workers have suggested the following scale for unemployed maintenance:—

Man and Wife	£3 0 0	per week
Two children	0 18 0	“ ”

Total cost per week.....	£3 18 0
Or an annual cost of	£202 16 0

The question arises: Are Unemployed Workers entitled to Maintenance equivalent to that provided for Poor Law inmates and convicts in H.M. Prisons? The answer of British citizenship should be clear and definite—

Support the Unemployed Workers' Charter.

Unemployed Workers' Charter Leaflet No. 2.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES TO PROVIDE WORK.

WE DEMAND the immediate development of Government schemes of employment to absorb the unemployed in their own trades at Trade Union rates of wages and conditions.

The Government should devise Schemes for:—

- Improving the Roads and Bridges of the Country;**
- Improving the Rivers, Canals, Docks and Harbours;**
- Setting up a National Scheme of Electric Power Supply, publicly owned and democratically managed;**
- Afforestation, Land Drainage and Land Reclamation;**
- Reconditioning, Extension and Electrification of Railways.**

A NATIONAL SPRING-CLEANING.

The Clearance, Cleaning and Planting of Open Spaces, the Pulling Down of Old and Obsolete Buildings to beautify and modernise Towns and Cities.

These schemes are necessary, would be remunerative, add to the resources and prosperity of the nation, and, above all, keep unemployed workers in a state of physical and mental efficiency.

The health and efficiency of the workers is a great National asset.

Work at Trades Union wages, and conditions, providing a reasonable standard of comfort, is essential for all citizens.

**WE STAND FOR USEFUL WORK WITH
EFFECTIVE MAINTENANCE.**

Support the Unemployed Workers' Charter.

Unemployed Workers' Charter Leaflet No. 3.

STATE WORKSHOPS.

WE DEMAND the establishment of State workshops for the purpose of supplying the necessary service or commodities to meet the requirements of Government Departments.

Private enterprise has failed to regulate industry in making provision for continuous employment for willing and capable workers.

The Government departments require commodities of all kinds. These should be produced in factories and workshops owned by the Nation, utilised for the Nation, and employed during periods of national emergency, such as exceptional trade depression, for producing Government requirements in advance as an alternative to providing unemployment benefits without a return.

Work is More Satisfactory than Maintenance. When Private Enterprise Fails the Community Must Act.

All Government Departments should be compelled to place orders for Government requirements with State-owned factories, especially in relation to non-perishable commodities. Where possible, these should be produced in advance to avoid the payment of overtime rates with extra cost during periods of normal demand.

During the Great War, national factories were established employing one and a-quarter million people, to increase the efficiency of the Nation for the purposes of war.

State factories and workshops are necessary for the regular employment of the workers, and the maintenance of their physical and mental efficiency to meet the dangers of a capitalist peace.

**Full Employment of Citizens is the Nation's Responsibility
Support the Unemployed Workers' Charter.**

Unemployed Workers' Charter Leaflet No. 4.

HOURS OF LABOUR.

WE DEMAND the reduction in the hours of labour necessary to absorb unemployed workers, the normal working day or week to be regulated by the requirements of the industry.

The development of our productive capacity, due to the application of steam, electricity, and a number of labour-saving inventions, has increased the productive power of the community to an enormous extent during the last 150 years.

The hours of labour have not been reduced in proportion to the increased capacity of the nation to produce wealth.

The normal working week of industry is not regulated by the needs of the community or the output power of the workers.

Every improvement in machinery has been utilised not to save labour but to scrap labourers.

Unemployment has become the natural economic consequence of increased productive efficiency.

The Hours of Labour should be regulated according to the time needed to produce the commodities the community requires.

As improved machinery, new methods of production and re-organisation of industrial activities are devised, a reduction in the normal working week should be the natural consequence.

The normal working week or day should, therefore, be reduced as a means of absorbing unemployed workers displaced by improvements in machinery.

Lord Leverhulme supports the unemployed workers' demand for a six-hour day.

This is the common-sense AND ONLY scientific method of regulating productive activities in accordance with social needs.

Support the Unemployed Workers' Charter.

Unemployed Workers' Charter Leaflet No. 5.

TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS.

WE DEMAND the establishment of occupational training centres for unemployed workers, providing proper training with effective maintenance particularly for unemployed boys and girls and able-bodied ex-service men.

The continued industrial depression has not only thrown thousands of able-bodied men and women out-of-work, but has prevented thousands of boys and girls from entering any kind of occupation.

The most disastrous consequence of our unemployed problem to-day is the serious physical, mental and moral degradation of boys and girls who have never been employed since leaving school.

The war-time period limited and in many industries destroyed the chance of apprenticeship. The long-continued period of industrial depression, reducing the normal requirements of industry has also limited the opportunities of occupational training.

THE STATE MUST ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING THE EFFICIENCY OF OUR INDUSTRIAL POPULATION BY UTILISING PERIODS OF UNEMPLOYMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF GIVING OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING WITH EFFECTIVE MAINTENANCE FOR UNEMPLOYED BOYS AND GIRLS.

Government action has been taken to provide inadequate and under-paid training for disabled ex-service men. In many cases for men so wholly disabled that they are unfit for remunerative occupation.

The Government has not provided proper schemes to give training with maintenance for able-bodied ex-service men. Such schemes are vitally needed and **MUST** be obtained by consultation and agreement with Trade Unions.

Prevent the ruin of boys and girls and the punishment of able-bodied men for their war service to the community BY INSISTING ON PROPER TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE FOR ALL.

Support the Unemployed Workers' Charter.

Unemployed Workers' Charter Leaflet No. 6.**HOUSING.**

WE DEMAND the provision of suitable housing accommodation at rents within the means of wage-earners, and the proper use of existing houses.

The nation needs at least ONE MILLION new houses.

BUILDING WORKERS ARE UNEMPLOYED.

Private enterprise has failed to provide houses at rents which wage earners can afford to pay.

Building rings and other profiteer agencies stand in the way.

Government factories could be employed in providing building materials on a large scale.

Profiteering interests would suffer but the community would gain.

CHEAP HOUSES ARE AS ESSENTIAL AS PUBLIC PARKS.

Healthy rooms are as necessary as well-lighted, broadly-constructed and clean public thoroughfares.

The workers' health can best be maintained by proper home conditions. All houses fit for habitation should be fully occupied, overcrowding abolished, and eviction of tenants suitably housed made illegal.

HOUSES ARE A VITAL SOCIAL NECESSITY.

A National Housing Scheme on proper lines would reduce the death-rate and produce healthier men and women.

The efficiency, happiness, and general welfare of the community depends more on healthy houses than a powerful Army or Navy.

Support the Demand for Strengthening the Nation's First Line of Defence, namely—

HEALTHY HOUSES.

Support the Unemployed Workers' Charter.

Scottish Trade Unions in Congress

THE Scottish Trade Union Congress has just held its Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting at Ayr, the proceedings lasting the statutory three days, viz., from Wednesday, 16th April to Saturday, 19th.

The work of this Scottish Congress has always been somewhat handicapped and in many respects, obscured by the larger and more important British T.U. Congress. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to under-estimate its importance, for, while for many years it has played a minor role in the industrial organisation of the Scottish workers, a glance at its composition and the tasks it set before itself at Ayr this year, shows a steady advance in numerical strength and tendency towards militancy that augers well for the future of the industrial workers in Scotland. This year there were present 200 delegates representing over 70 bodies. These latter comprised 50 Trade Union branches, and 12 Trades and Labour Councils, representing close upon 350,000 workers.

The basis of representation at the Congress is one delegate for every 500 members or fraction thereof. The contributions being one penny per member towards the expenses of the General Council, and 10/- for each delegate attending. Trades Councils may send three delegates, provided they pay 10/- towards the General Council and 5/- for each delegate. On the basis of this computation, the income to the Conference this year will be approximately £1,139.

Like the British T.U.C., the governing body of the Scottish T.U.C. is a General Council of 12 representatives of the following :

Mining and Quarrying	...	...	...	...	...	2
Railways	...	...	...	...	...	1
Transport (other than Railways)	...	...	...	...	...	1
Shipbuilding, Engineering, Founding, Iron & Steel, Minor Metal Trades	...	...	...	...	...	1
Building, Vehicle Building, Furnishing, Woodworking	...	...	...	...	...	1
Printing and paper	...	...	...	...	...	1
Textile, Clothing, Leather, Boot and Shoe	...	...	...	...	...	1
Food and Distributive Trades, Tobacco, Brewing, Brush making, non-manual	...	...	...	...	...	1
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	1
Agriculture	...	...	...	...	...	1
Public Employees and General Workers, Trades Councils	...	...	...	...	...	1

This Council is elected at the Congress by ballot and con-

tinues in office until re-elected or their successors appointed. Its duties are defined as follows:—

“ To watch all legislative measures affecting the interests of Trade Unionists, and to initiate such action which in their opinion, is in the interests of the movement; to take effective steps with a view to the co-ordination of the Trade Unions affiliated to Congress; to advance the cause of Trade Unionism by means of propaganda, the issuing of literature, by meetings and demonstrations, and the conducting of educative campaigns along the lines of progressive Trade Unionism; to convene Conferences of Unions in the same industry with a view to common action and ultimate amalgamation; to provide a statistical and informative bureau; and in the event of any trade dispute, to offer its services to the Union or Unions concerned.”

It will be seen from this definition of duties that the General Council has a pretty wide field to work in, though, like its prototype of the British T.U.C., it lacks the real powers of a general staff. Its activities are principally propagandist. Nevertheless, the following brief summary of the Council's report for last year shows potentialities in this Council for developing the class struggle, given a strong Communist influence.

GENERAL COUNCIL REPORT.

In opening its report, which is a very comprehensive document, the General Council referred to the passing of the days of mere “ lobbying ” at Westminster over the “ Hardy Annuals ” that were passed at successive congresses. “ Organised Labour,” it declared, “ is no longer asking to be heard The Trade Union Movement, *emphasising the necessary permanency of its organisation irrespective of the political party in power, demands control of industry.*” To that end the Council urges this and future Congresses to discuss every structural problem to be faced, and put forward the following as a basis for discussion as the most urgent questions of the moment:—

- (1) Re-organisation of structure, and whether this should be on craft, industrial, employment or One Big Union lines.
- (2) Methods towards re-organisation with reference to federation, amalgamation, and regional structure within the Union.
- (3) The place of Trades Councils within any industrial re-organisation and the improvement of their existing industrial function.
- (4) The powers of Congress and its General Council with regard to co-ordination of Trade Union activities and general policy.
- (5) Increasing membership and co-ordination of competitive Unions.
- (6) Relationship of the Trade Union and Co-operative movements with reference to (1) Public Ownership; and (2) Private Ownership.
- (7) Adult Education Policy.
- (8) Democratic control in Industry.

For years, the time of these Congresses has often been frittered away in discussing minor matters that ought never to come before a Congress. Important as these items are in themselves, they ought to be passed over to the executive or administrative body for attention. This year, for example, there were no less than

fifty items on the Agenda, many of which were quite trivial in comparison with the limited time of the Congress. The General Council did well therefore, in advising the cutting out of motions dealing with personal or organisational grievances, and insisting upon sufficient time being guaranteed for the consideration of questions upon which the future of virile Trade Unionism depends. This is an important step forward and the Congress wisely accepted the Council's advice. Future Congresses should, therefore, prove more successful and serious-minded than has hitherto been the case.

To review at length the several important matters dealt with by the General Council, would take up more than our available space. We, therefore, confine ourselves to the more outstanding points dealt with. On the question of Night Work in Bakeries, we learn that there are 9,000 bakers affected in Scotland, and on representations being made to the Government, by the General Council, Arthur Henderson declared the question was on the Agenda of the International Labour Conference to be held at Genoa in June next! The question of introducing a bill would be considered by the Government after the Conference.

During the year the Council organised a six weeks' campaign on "Back to the Unions," 300,000 leaflets were distributed, 300 outdoor meetings held, and 11 indoor demonstrations in the important towns.

To the appeal of the I.F.T.U. for help to the German Trades Union, the Council advanced £25 and issued appeals to all its affiliated bodies. The total sum collected and sent to the I.F.T.U. being £307 9s. 7d.

On a reference from last year's Congress an enquiry was held into the scope of the "Industrial League and Council for Employers and Employees." It is important to note that in the circular communicated to the Trades Councils following the enquiry, the General Council declared it was of the opinion "that neither the Constitution, nor the activities of the Industrial League and Council warrant the support of the Scottish Trade Union Movement." The report is that the Industrial League has no standing in Scotland.

During the Curzon attack on Soviet Russia in May and June, 1923, the Council circulated a resolution to all the Scottish members of Parliament, emphasising "the necessity for no provocative action being taken by the British Government that would endanger the preservation of peace between the two countries." Further, it called upon the British Government "not to give support to any

demand for the cancellation or limitation of the Russian Trade Agreement."

At the Aberdeen Congress in 1922, a resolution was passed advising moral and financial support to the Scottish Labour College. The Council this year subscribed £5 and recommended the sum of £50 annually be subscribed to the College. This proposal was carried. Henceforth the T.U.C. will have a direct interest in the Scottish Labour College Movement.

OPENING PROCEEDINGS.

The Conference opened in the Town Hall, with T. Wilson (Shop Assistants Union) Glasgow, in the Chair. Two hundred delegates were present to receive the customary welcome from the Lord Provost and magistrates of the town. This feature of British Labour Congresses, so difficult to comprehend by our Continental comrades, expresses aptly the affinity of the shopkeeping mind of the petty bourgeois with the reformist character of the British Labour and Trade Union movement. On this occasion, however, the delegate from the Ayr Trades Council, Peter Robb, who was welcoming the delegates on behalf of the Council, lashed out at the Local Administration for their renewed attack upon free speech, to the discomfiture of the local dignitaries.

Mr. James Brown, the Miners' M.P. for South Ayrshire, was then introduced as "the Deputy-Lieutenant of the County of Ayr, and Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland."

After rambling on the amenities of Ayrshire, Brown tried to smooth the ruffled feelings of the Lord Provost by a mild attack upon Robb. This, however, only provoked the unemployed in the gallery to refer to Brown as "an old Lickspittle," etc.

A rather incongruous situation arose out of the invitation to tea to be given by the Town Council. At first the Congress accepted the invitation, but later it was reported by the Bakers' Union that the catering firm did not employ Union Labour. Next day, it was explained that the men were now in the union. Nevertheless, a great number of the delegates did not go to the tea, but gave their tickets to the unemployed.

The address of the President of the Congress was a typical moderate reformist speech. He reviewed the decline of Trade Unionism during the last three years, the loss in membership and depletion of funds. That retreat had ended and a more hopeful spirit was being shown in the recent strikes. He then went on to throw bouquets at the Labour Government for its pacific policy in home and foreign affairs, with an assurance to MacDonald that the

Scottish Trade Union movement was behind him in his Labour programme. The speech as a whole was insipid and tame, and lacked the real class ring of defiance and challenge which ought to characterise such an important event.

CONTROL OF CREDITS.

Passing to the Agenda proper, the first question of importance was Control of Credits and Anglo-Russian relations. The resolution in the name of the General Council being as follows :—

“ That this Congress is of the opinion that the fact of control being exercised by the Joint Stock Banks over credit issues is prejudicial to democratic government, the interests of industry, and the economic welfare of the whole population. It demands that the Government appoint a Royal Commission to inquire fully into the Banking System, and take such steps as will ensure the greatest publicity for the evidence submitted and the recommendations made.”

Glasgow Trades and Labour Council wanted to add a clause to the motion asking

“ the British Trade Union Congress and the Labour Party to appoint a Committee to study and report as to Labour's attitude to the present Banking System and the present currency problem.”

For the latter amendment, Comrade Parks, on behalf of the Glasgow Council, argued the need for such an enquiry in view of the hopeless division in the Labour ranks on the question of inflation and deflation. On Bailie Walker, of the Iron & S.T.C. explaining that the Government had already appointed a committee on this question, the amendment was defeated by 88 to 36.

In moving the motion for the General Council, C. A. Gallie, of the Railway Clerks, expressed the desire for a closer understanding between the Workers' Republic of Soviet Russia and the Labour Government of Great Britain.

“ For many years,” he said, “ they had expressed themselves very definitely as being in complete sympathy with the aims of the Russian democracy. It might be that in the ranks of Labour in this country there were men who disagreed with the tactics of the Russian people. But that was not a question for the people of Great Britain, but a question for the Russians themselves, and they had to congratulate them on abolishing landlordism and capitalism and establishing a Government which was suitable to their own particular objects.” (Applause.)

Nevertheless, one could not fail to notice that the lines of approach in this speech was more a question of how to relieve the unemployed of Great Britain, than any fraternal spirit of class consciousness, or defiance to the imperialists.

The following emergency resolution was brought forward by the Glasgow delegates, but on the recommendation of the Standing

Orders Committee it was carried by acclamation without any discussion.

" This Congress of delegates representing the organised workers of Scotland records its emphatic protest against the bankers' recent attempt to interfere in the interests of British finance, and compel the Russian people to establish a government based on the needs of a foreign group, thus constituting a grave violation of the rights of a sovereign state to conduct its affairs according to the expressed wishes of its people."

FUNCTIONS OF THE CONGRESS.

The most important discussion of the Conference took place on the question of the " Functions of the Congress." As already mentioned, previous Congresses have been overloaded with " Hardy Annual " resolutions which take up much time. In addition to this aspect, there is a growing anxiety for closer unity and a desire for the General Council to be a real General Staff for the Trade Union movement. No less than ten resolutions appeared on the Agenda dealing with the problem of closer industrial unity. All of these were withdrawn with the exception of the one proposed by the General Council to allow for an all round discussion. This resolution was to the effect " *That the General Council be instructed to make a survey of the extent and structure of the Trade Union movement in Scotland and report.*"

The discussion was led off by Joe Duncan, of the Scottish Farm Servants Union. Duncan tilted at the " higger migger " organisational methods, especially of the type of union whose organisation was held practically in the pocket book of the General Secretary. His description of the state of sectionalism, rivalry, etc., in the industrial movement and the discussion that followed provoked an interjection from one delegate who said, " if the industrial workers of Scotland had heard the discussion that morning, they would sack the lot of them."

From what Duncan said, there is no idea yet of giving the General Council staff powers. The contention is held that if the demand for staff powers was forced, many of the unions would leave the Congress. It is, therefore, only proposed to make of the General Council, a clearing house of ideas, a bureau of information, or enabling body, but, certainly not a directing organ.

The discussion on this question took a whole day, thirty delegates taking part in it. This gives an idea of the eagerness of the delegates to face the problem of closer unity and a general staff.

Glasgow Trades and Labour Council wanted to amend the resolution and to add " proposals to affiliated organisations to give effective organisation," but this amendment was defeated by 53 to 33.

After this debate, most of the remaining resolutions were

voted upon without discussion. It is interesting to note, however, that a resolution from Dundee Calendar, Linoleum and Dye Workers Union, calling upon the General Council to try and get the co-operation of the British Congress to secure the principle of a six-hours day, with a maximum 30 hours working week through Parliamentary action was just defeated by four votes. The voting was, 55 for previous question, and 51 for the six-hours resolution.

The place of the next Congress was fixed for Dumfries.

THOS. BELL.

V E R S E S .

LENIN THE HAPPY.

Thou who didst lately leave us! When we link
 Thy name and Death's in bitter company—
 Would that we might have sundered them for ever!
 And on our lashes hang the glist'ning flags
 That speak our mourning, one word no man saith.
 We mourn the beacon quenched (though not indeed
 Before our torches multitudinous
 Had kindled been thereat); the teacher dumb;
 The watcher blinded and the comrade lost;
 The mighty brain untenanted—in brief,
 The cause which thou didst serve and symbolise
 Left Lenin-less—yet nowhere doth one cry:
*“ Unhappy thou! who having greatly wrought
 Art now denied the joys of victory ”*
 Thou art unpitied: therein are we wise.
 They knew thee not that pity. Thou wert one
 For whom the coming Commonwealth appeared,
 Beyond the blood and hunger of to-day,
 Perpetually present; at the plough
 Seeing the harvest that should crown his toil;
 Who, setting the foundations, looked upon
 The city builded, moved about its streets,
 And knew its smiling people.

While our host
 Yet groped among the shadows, doubting much
 Whether the night were near its end or no,
 Lo! him who climbed, and shouted from the height,
“ Brothers, take heart! Press on! I see the day.”
 Which knowing, all our thoughts go after thee
 With peals, not dirges, and with songs, not sighs.

MARY TALLAND.

JAMES CONNOLLY

HIS LIFE AND WORK.*

I SUPPOSE it will be a very long time indeed before Connolly has his true place in history accorded to him, due undoubtedly, as Desmond Ryan himself claims in his new book recently published on James Connolly, to the "partisan claims on his corpse." This, in a way, constitutes in itself a remarkable tribute to Connolly. The self-sacrificing character of the man's whole life and work, his optimism in moments of darkness and when things looked very black indeed, and his valour, fortitude and courage in action, these have impressed themselves deep down on the affection of the mass of the people of Ireland. It is, therefore, natural that sects and movements should hasten to claim him as their own. But how any historian can accord their claims even a moment's reflection, surpasses me.

Here is a man whose whole life was unquestionably devoted very definitely to work in, and on behalf of, the revolutionary working class movement; whose studies in this direction had been so profound as to place him as one of the outstanding international figures of our movement; whose activities had been so essentially working class, as to have him recognised in many lands as a great revolutionary leader of working class struggle. And yet, because he finds himself fighting side by side in an incident which lasted only a few weeks, with men of other professions and faith, his corpse has become the subject for "partisan claims." For cool effrontery, there is not much in history to equal this. Even the author himself, despite his protest, falls a victim to it, and commits the same error as those against whom he complains. He also would claim Connolly's corpse, and it is amazing to note that he claims it for the Irish Free State! Well, I shall be pardoned for endeavouring to re-claim Connolly from the body-snatchers, and back to the movement of Connolly's own choosing, the revolutionary working class movement.

It is true that he was associated with the rising of 1916. It is also true that this rising was of an essentially Nationalist character. It is true that during the fighting his recorded moments of joy or sadness, were of the character of a great Irishman doing battle for his country, and it is also noteworthy, that, when he was dying he is said to have observed to his daughter, "The

* Jas. Connolly, by Desmond Ryan. Lab. Pub. Co. Cloth, 5/-. Paper 2/6.

Socialists will never understand why I am here; they will all forget that I am an Irishman." Upon the basis of the above truths rests the whole misunderstanding, and misrepresentation of Connolly. Of much more significance, however, is how Connolly came to be there at all, and to anyone who understands the working class movement, and understands Connolly's place and life's activity in that movement—more particularly Connolly's leadership of the Irish workers in the eventful years beginning with 1914—there exists no problem at all.

His attitude, as I have previously contended, was, politically, thoroughly clear throughout. In all his writings and speeches, Connolly had endeavoured to make clear first, that the working class struggle was in itself an international struggle, and that, in this, the workers of every country had a common bond; he had also repeatedly made it clear that workers living in subjected nations had a national struggle as well as a class struggle. This, he himself clearly defined as follows (I quote from Ryan's book) :—

"§The war of a *subject nation* for independence, for its right to live its life in its own way, may and can be justified as holy and righteous; the war of a *subject class* to free itself from the debasing conditions of economic and political slavery, should at all times choose its own weapons and esteem all as sacred instruments of righteousness; but the war of nation against nation in the interest of royal freebooters and cosmopolitan thieves, is a thing accursed."

Consequently when he, in his dying moments, complains that the "Socialists will all forget that I am an Irishman," he was speaking at a moment when the Socialist movement had not reached an understanding of the significance of struggling subjected nations. He was speaking at a moment when the leading International Socialists of the various countries could see no difference between Connolly fighting for, and defending, Ireland against Britain, and they themselves entering their several Cabinets to defend and participate in the prosecution of what Connolly termed a "war of freebooters and thieves."

Time will record Connolly as the first Irishman to give the Irish struggle its real and true historic significance. He is the first who say it all the time as a *revolutionary* struggle, but he is also the first to appreciate the *national* struggle as an *essential part* of this revolutionary struggle. Connolly, by his actions, did for Western revolutionary Socialism what Lenin and his confreres of the Russian Communist Party achieved completely for the international revolutionary movement. He represents outstandingly that type of revolutionary working class fighter living in a subjected nation, which the British revolutionary movement would do well to cultivate and encourage in the leadership of

the people, in such places as India, Africa, Egypt, and throughout the British colonies and Crown Dominions.

At best, speculations are idle and worthless, but the claim made by Desmond Ryan that Connolly would have accepted the Free State "even as an appreciable step" raises a very important point in Irish history which seems to have been completely overlooked or ignored. I refer to the attempts being made in 1922 to discover some real political programme for the working class of Ireland, and have in mind, particularly, the remarkable articles issued by Liam Mellows from prison. These articles had practically a world-wide publicity as lending a new significance to the Irish struggle. I remember that the individuals most closely concerned and connected with Mellows in the advancement of this programme were Joe McKelvie, Tom Barrie, and, to a lesser extent, Rory O'Connor. I also remember that as a reprisal for the shooting of Deputy Hales, the Free State Government decided to select for execution four of the Republican leaders, who were then in prison. Was it merely a coincidence, that the four selected happened to be the four who were pushing forward this political programme, and who had publicly associated themselves with it? Would Connolly have seen nothing significant in this? And would he have remained passive and unmoved when such a declaration of programme was made by Mellows or would he have turned that ever-watchful eye of his and ever-ready pen to extract what was good, and reject trenchantly what was bad, in such a programme? Can he be seen by any stretch of imagination to be leading the Irish Labour Party and completely ignoring such a significant programme? And what is more important, can he be seen leading the Irish Labour Party and having nothing to say when these four men were taken out and executed? As I have said, all speculation is idle, but a protest must be made against any attempt to represent Connolly doing anything of the sort.

This book of Desmond Ryan's is, on the whole, a very useful production indeed, and is remarkable in that it is the first book on Connolly which endeavours to do justice to his activities as a working class fighter. Much more, however, will have to be said, and with emphasis, before Connolly is revealed in his true character. Politically, there was nothing in the whole of his known activities and actions which was illogical, and his execution by the British Government, long, long after the atmosphere justifying reprisals or examples had passed away, and when he was already then a dying man, was much more the act of a conscious imperialist government disposing of a dangerous revolutionary than an incident in any national struggle between England and Ireland.

ARTHUR McMANUS.

International Review

GERMANY.

COMMUNIST CANDIDATES AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE CONTROL.

Declaration issued by the "Centrale" Committee of the Communist Party of Germany to be signed by all the Communist candidates at the elections on the 4th of May.

The Communist Party of Germany sees in Parliament an instrument of the "bourgeois dictatorship." *Parliament can bring absolutely nothing to the working class, nor to the exploited class as a whole. Parliament is not an expression of the "will of the people."* It is only a screen for the shameless "dictatorship of Capital."

The Communist Party, therefore, participates in the elections for the sole purpose of agitation. The Communist deputies use Parliament only to show that they are in principle the opponents of the bourgeois order, and to unmask "democracy," as the most refined form of the "bourgeois dictatorship."

The Communist deputies are certain that it is not Parliamentary action that "makes history," but that it is the class struggle of the proletariat which will decide the fate of the classes, and the fate of bourgeois society. *Consequently, the Communist deputies are obliged to find their field of action chiefly amongst the great masses of working people, and to serve only the interests of the proletarian masses.* The trustworthy men of the Communist Party are indissolubly bound to the great working masses. It is for this reason that the action of the Communists cannot unfold itself in Parliament, but in the active struggles of the working class.

This point of view in principle of the Communists does not allow the Communist deputies to remain silent, and to treat as secret the so-called "diplomatic secrets," a knowledge of which, they, as deputies and members of the Committees, have been able to secure. The Communist Deputy has the duty to unmask the dupery of the "diplomatic secrets," and the fetishism of the bourgeois Parliament. The Communist deputy undertakes, without personal consideration, and with all its consequences, to place entirely at the service of the struggling proletariat, his knowledge, his experience and his skill, in order that the class

struggle may profit by all he may learn, or acquire in the exercise of his mandate as deputy.

Hence, on the basis of these principles, the undersigned declares that as candidate and deputy in Parliament, *he is only, and can be only, a mandatory of the German Communist Party, and not a so-called "freely-elected representative of the people, responsible only to his conscience."* The undersigned declares that he will carry out all the decisions of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, and that in his actions and speech *he will submit himself to the decisions of the Central Committee.*

The undersigned, declares further, that he is prepared, at the instruction of the Central Committee of the Party to give up his mandate, or to withdraw his candidature, and to unmask as a traitor to the proletariat, the Communist deputy who will not submit himself to the decisions of the Central Committee of the Party. The undersigned declares that the "appeal to the electors for their judgment" is a myth, and a demagogic hypocrisy, and that a decision of this kind can only lead to automatic exclusion from the Communist Party.

REACTION IN POLAND.

(COMMUNISTS TRIED AFTER MONTHS IN JAIL.)

At Kattowitz (Upper Silesia), fifty-two workers, all miners, were brought up for trial on the 26th March, after being incarcerated in prison since last October, when they were arrested for taking part in the General Strike, which broke out in that month.

After the strike finished, all the prisoners were "released" the government decided, however, to punish our comrades "legally." The charge against the accused was that of belonging to the Communist Party in Upper Silesia; evidence being furnished by the famous political espionage organisation.

It is true the majority of the accused belong to the Communist Party, but the party has always been perfectly legal since its formation under the German regime; besides, the treaty ceding a part of Upper Silesia to Poland guaranteed the population of all the rights it enjoyed under the German regime.

The Government evidently were

alarmed after the strike in October at the strong influence of our Party. Its dissolution was, therefore, decided upon without regard to any Treaties or Guarantees of civil or political rights.

Amongst the prisoners were Comrades Pradzioch, for a long time Editor of the Communist journal, *Pravda*, of Kattowitz, and Comrade Wiercovek, chairman of the Central Committee. The charge was "having belonged to the Party with the object of overturning the present regime, and seeking to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The court has been obliged to acknowledge that the Party was legal, as per the old regime, but our comrades were convicted on other motives to periods of imprisonment in a fortress varying from 6 months to one year. The big strikes that have broken out in Upper Silesia have evidently had their effect upon the bourgeoisie, the decision in the trial is the best proof.

Another trial is taking place at Warsaw, of thirty-one young workers boys and girls, from 16 to 21 years of age. These young workers are charged with belonging to the Young Communist League, and being "dangerous criminals." The evidence being forthcoming from the political espionage organisation.

The most of the accused have been in prison for 19 months, and if their "crime" is proven, they may get eight years hard labour.

THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

The agenda of this Congress which opens on May 20th, includes :—

- (1) Political and organisational reports of the Central Committee.
- (2) Reports of the Control Commission and the representatives of the Party on the Communist International.
- (3) Reports—
 - (a) Commerce.
 - (b) Propaganda in the Country.
 - (c) Propaganda amongst the Youth.
 - (d) Administration in the Party.
- (4) Election of Central Organs of the Party.

THE FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN.

The agenda for the Fifth World Congress due to open on the 5th June, includes :—

- (1) Lenin and the Communist International.
- (2) Economic situation of the World.
- (3) Trade Unionism.
- (4) Nationalism (attitude of the Parties in regard to Nationalities; the revolutionary movement in the Orient, and in the colonies: the Negro question).
- (5) The Problem of Organisation.
- (6) Fascism.
- (7) The Position of the Intellectuals.
- (8) The Peasants' International.
- (9) The Youth Movement.
- (10) Reports from the Sections.
- (11) Co-operation.
- (12) Election of the Executive Committee.

THE THIRD WORLD CONGRESS OF THE R.I.L.U.

The agenda for the R.I.L.U. Congress to be held June 25th in Moscow, includes :—

- (1) Report of the R.I.L.U.
- (2) Next Tasks of the R.I.L.U.
- (3) International for the Eight-Hours Working Day.
- (4) Trade Unions and Factory Councils.
- (5) Attitude of the Revolutionary Trade Unions towards the Professional Internationals.
- (6) Strategy of Strikes.
- (7) Organisational Structure (Forms of Organisation of the Opposition, Mutual Relations between Independent Unions and Oppositional Minorities, One Big Union, etc.).
- (8) Tasks of the Adherents of the R.I.L.U. in England.
- (9) Tasks of the R.I.L.U. in the Colonial and semi-colonial countries (British India, Egypt, Algeria, Dutch Indies, China, Indo-China, Corea, etc.).
- (10) Peasants' International and Unions of Agricultural Labourers.
- (11) Trade Unionism and Co-operation.
- (12) Elections.

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