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EDITOR:  
H.M. BASNER.

Vol. 3, No. 1

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January, 1946

Mr. GALLAGHER and Mr. SHEEHAN

Parliament, 1946

African Adult Education

SOCIALISM vs COMMUNISM IN EUROPE

Soviet Plan for German  
Prisoners

Labour Disputes In  
South Africa

FOOD — AND LEARNING TO TAKE IT

Correspondence

Rosa Luxemburg

The World Trade Union Conference

*official organ of the socialist party of south africa  
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# socialist review

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## Mr. GALLAGHER and Mr. SHEEHAN

THESE two comedians put on an act which got them fame and fortune. It was a very simple act: they chose a subject and pattered round it, pretending to be in complete agreement until the last line, when it became clear to the audience that they hadn't been talking about the same thing at all and that the one had been leading the other up the garden path.

Senator Clarkson and Mr. Eric Louw, representing the United and Nationalist parties, are not exactly brilliant or amusing comedians. But they have an act. And both, being experienced and competent politicians, know the patter and know that it's the public which has to be led up the garden path. They have also, learning from their parliamentary leaders, introduced a variation to the Gallagher-Sheehan turn which makes it more effective than the original act: they pretend to be in violent disagreement until the last word, when it becomes clear to everybody that the boys have been in perfect agreement all along and that everybody else has been fooled.

Take, for instance, the act which these two put on about immigration. Mr. Louw, pretending to be a fascist, raves about aliens and will have no one in the Union except those whose blood can think like his; Senator Clarkson, disguised as a democrat, violently disagrees with him. They keep up the argument for years. The people of South Africa, if not exactly amused, are vitally interested. Now comes the denouement: the boys have been fooling, they have been in complete agreement all along. Senator Clarkson announces, through an interview with the *Natal Mercury*, "a major tightening-up of the control over aliens, who had successfully dodged the authorities, especially during the war" and "This scheme has been endorsed in Parliament by Mr. Eric Louw of the Opposition, who agreed with the stand taken that only suitable immigrants should be permitted to come to the Union." The public thought there was a difference between Clarkson the democrat and Louw the fascist. Ha! ha! ha!

The only snag now is that most of Mr. Louw's "suitable immigrants" are in the dock at Nuremberg, in Allied prison camps, or fugitives from international justice; but this shouldn't be an insurmountable difficulty—Senator Clarkson's government will make representations to UNO to declare an amnesty and to ship them all here where a hearty welcome awaits them. The herren-voik of South Africa will restore the health and the morale of their battered brothers so roughly and unjustly treated by the nasty English, American and Russian bullies.

# FOOD — AND LEARNING TO TAKE IT

THE Argus Press — by which we mean nearly all the English-medium dailies in the country — has been so pre-occupied with the question of mining taxation that it has had no time to notice the public's pre-occupation with bread and butter or, rather, the absence of bread and butter. But a few raids by angry women on abattoirs and butcher-shops, a threat of a general strike by the Trades and Labour Council, and some criticism by staunch United Party supporters, have brought the editors flying to the succour of their Prime Minister, their Government and their Party.

The papers have started a campaign. They point to the food position of the people of Great Britain, to the correct behaviour of the British people. The South African public, they say, has got to learn to take it. One South African, they say, eats as much in one day as sixteen Britons. They also say that the British people have never been as healthy as they are today. All these arguments are as false as the analogies and facts on which they are founded.

In England, today, there is a strict rationing plan and the people live on a carefully thought-out balanced diet. The monotony bothers the people, but not the injustice of seeing some with too much and others with nothing at all. In England the people live on good bacon (not too much), on good vegetables (as much as they need) and on hope. The people of England live mainly on hope — hope of a better, more rational, more just distribution of the necessities and comforts of life. Hope — unless it is too long deferred — is one of the most satisfactory diets known to man. In the Soviet Union the people have thrived on it (together with cabbage and black bread) for nearly four decades. The people of England and the Soviet Union would also get angry and raid their abattoirs if their Melroses and Houghtons flourished on the black market and if they were the victims not of genuine shortages but of planned attacks to establish monopolies in the people's food.

In South Africa the people have nothing to hope for except more chaos, more pro-

fitteering, more specious propaganda from a not disinterested press. We have no margarine because the Dairy Control Board does not want us to have any. We have no flour and no petrol because sterling and dollar bankers are fighting each other. We have no meat because farmers, speculators, the wholesale butchers and the cold storage interests are engaged in a struggle for higher profits. We have no fruit because the Government prefers to see it rot rather than sold cheaply. We have no vegetables because the officials of the Agricultural Department advise farmers not to grow too much and because canning firms buy up huge quantities for export. We have no food because of the inefficiency of the controllers, the incompetence of the Government and mainly because of a disordered social system which is concerned with creating scarcities to ensure larger profits. The drought, which will save the Government's face for the time being, has not created as much havoc as the Government's compliance with the wishes of vested interests.

The *Rand Daily Mail* is quite right in saying that the people of South Africa must learn to take it. But we mean it in a different and positive sense. The people of South Africa must learn to take possession of their food. They must learn to take it out of the hands of their exploiters and their paid and unpaid agents. They must learn that capitalism means much for the few, little for the many. When South Africans learn this, they will see that only under socialism lies the road to plenty — and they will take it.

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## UNOFFICIAL VIEWPOINTS

The views expressed in signed articles appearing in the Review are the opinions of the respective writers, and not necessarily those of the Socialist Party.

As differences of opinion on many problems do exist on the Left, the Editor is prepared, whenever circumstances warrant, to provide space for the expression of views with which the majority of opinion in the Socialist Party is not in full accord.



## PARLIAMENT, 1946

IN an analysis of the activities of the 1945 session of the Union Parliament we pointed out the meagreness of its achievements and predicted that each coming session would show up the bankruptcy of the Government and the lack of constructive criticism by all the other existing political parties. We based our predictions not on the shortcomings of individuals but on the social system and the structure of racial oppression which have finally brought South Africa to the pass where every day can only bring fresh disasters and every plan of policy can only end in frustration.

In the first two sessions of the life of the present parliament the war was advanced as an excuse for the absence of social security legislation, for effective action on housing and for the lack of plans to raise the national economy of the country. This third session, the first since the end of the war, is going to be, according to the Government and its supporters, a long and fruitful one. We are not prepared to deny that it will be long; but we are prepared, and as socialists we stake our political reputation on it, to deny that it will be fruitful except in political polemics and windy promises.

There is no way to raise our national economy except to abandon the colour-bar and the cheap labour policy of the country. We are too poor, as a nation, for any adequate schemes of social security, housing or health measures. The only way to increase our wealth, to enable us to pay our way for a decent way of life, is to give the four-fifths, the non-European section of the population, proper education and liberty to partake fully in the economic life of the country. This no party is prepared to do. This, no party committed to the system of cheap labour for the gold mines and agricultural industry, can possibly do. Therefore there will be plenty of talk, lots of political manoeuvring, many bills and many blue-prints. But there will be no action—except repressive action. There will be no fruit, except the little bitter apples of frustration and disappointment. The Nationalists will blame General Smuts and General Smuts will blame world conditions. The Dominion Party will blame the Indians.

The Labour Party will blame the abstract Capitalist System—with a capital C and a capital S. But no one will face the reality of the South African situation—that you cannot oppress four-fifths of the population, and act as gaolers to four-fifths of the population, and have prosperity at the same time.

We wish the parliamentarians luck—they will need it!

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# AFRICAN ADULT EDUCATION

THE question of adult education is one which is attracting the attention of both Government circles and the general public, in England, and to a lesser extent in South Africa. In the United Kingdom, a new Education Bill, embodying considerable reforms has recently been passed, and an expansion of adult education is planned for the post-war period. Even in South Africa, the Government has appointed a commission to enquire into the question of adult education. It has not, however, published its report yet.

From available data, it appears that practically all European children between the ages of seven and 16 enjoy full school facilities. There is an average of one teacher to every 22 pupils, and the state expenditure is about £20 per pupil per annum. As far as the non-Europeans are concerned, only three out of 11 Bantu children receive any schooling at all. Of these, about 75% are in Standard II or below, while about 3% are in Standard VI, so that about one native child in 600 receives education beyond the primary school and a very small percentage ever becomes literate. The teachers are of low academic standard and poorly paid, and the schools are badly equipped. The Transvaal Director of Education said that the premises in the majority of cases were "dilapidated, shabby, unhygienic and badly situated." In one room, for example, he found 373 pupils with five teachers trying to conduct separate classes simultaneously. The average teacher has a class of 44 pupils which is too large a number for one person to manage. The State expenditure is £3 per year for every non-European pupil at school.

From these facts we can see that the Bantu population as a whole is almost totally illiterate. Even in the unlikely eventuality of the introduction by the Government of free compulsory education for all non-European children, there would still remain millions of ignorant adults. These illiterates are a burden on the society to which they belong. They are enslaved by their primitive conceptions of witchcraft, and their tribal traditions, and are furthermore unable to play a constructive part in industrial development. Increased productivity, South Africa's greatest single

need, cannot be achieved with an illiterate and backward African population.

Judging by the general attitude towards non-Europeans in the country today, it is unlikely that any large scale Government scheme for non-European adult education will be introduced for some time to come. It is therefore self-evident that the task of educating Africans must devolve upon voluntary organisations. That there is an acute need for such education can be seen from the spontaneous formation and growth of night-schools, run by various voluntary organisations, in the larger urban areas.

The history of these night schools starts in 1925 when the Communist Party opened a school in Ferreirstown. This was run on very primitive lines, without blackboards, desks, or suitable textbooks. The Africans were taught from advanced theoretical textbooks. This school continued for some time, but eventually petered out. During this period Edward Roux published his *Mayibuye* reader in basic English, which was used subsequently. This was the first attempt to produce a suitable textbook for adults, but had a number of drawbacks. Since then Roux has written a complete series of readers, which have been published by the African Bookman. Pupils who are totally illiterate can be started on these and brought to the point where they can read fluently articles of general interest.

In 1936, Roux started another school in Cape Town which continued for some years. This school took the pupils up to the Junior Certificate.

In 1939, a group of progressive young people, mainly university students, started the African College in Johannesburg, which still exists today. For a few weeks the school was run in a dancing studio and then had to be transferred to an African club, where it functioned under extreme difficulties. Eighty to ninety pupils were taught in a single room, divided into six different classes. There was insufficient seating, many pupils having to work on the floor; there were insufficient blackboards, and periodic interruptions by night club visitors.

Only at the end of 1941 were suitable premises obtained at the City and Suburban school, Polly Street. In December 1945, unfortunately, the premises burnt down and all books and medical equipment to the value of over £200 were destroyed. New premises have not yet been found and the organisation is in great need of funds for replacements.

During the war also the Transvaal Teachers' Association started a night school in Market Street, Johannesburg, which has suffered largely from lack of teachers, but had a considerable number of pupils.

Under the stimulus provided by these two organisations, about 20 night schools of varying sizes sprang into existence and are still functioning in Johannesburg. Noteworthy among these is the school run by the pupils at King Edward VII High School. There are about 150 African adult pupils who are taught at night by the senior scholars of the day school.

In addition, one of the original teachers of the African College, himself a serviceman, started night classes for African soldiers. Six such schools were started in various camps, catering for a total of about 600 pupils. Two visitors from Cape Town, impressed with the work they observed in Johannesburg, have founded a similar school in Retreat.

The schools all operate in the face of considerable difficulties. The teachers are usually untrained, and even if qualified, cannot always adapt themselves to the special problems involved in adult education. As they are not paid, they do not all attend regularly, and the pupils are subject to frequent changes of teachers and teaching methods. Even when teachers do come regularly, they teach one night a week only, so that the same class is taught the same subject by as many as four different teachers during the week. This difficulty has been partly overcome by planning the course so that each teacher deals with a specific portion of it. (Thus, one will always take reading, while another will always take dictation and grammar, etc.).

In spite of the many difficulties, however, the pupils are pathetically anxious to learn, and teachers do not have any disciplinary problems nor do they have to complain of inattention. The sacrifice of leisure time on the part of the teachers is occasionally rewarded by a flash of unconscious humour, such as the pupil, who when asked to write an essay on the newspaper, began thus: "The newspaper is a very useful thing: to

read, to wrap up parcels, and to light the fire."

Attendance fluctuates quite considerably, and for this there are many reasons. Some pupils return to their homes for long periods, and then come back to school on their return to Johannesburg. Night shift-work often prevents regular attendance, while bad weather results in a large drop in the number of pupils, as many are inadequately clothed and have to walk several miles to school.

With all these handicaps, the progress of the pupils is phenomenal as compared with that of children in day schools. Although there are only 6-8 school hours a week, most pupils pass through the elementary standards in half the time usually taken at day schools. Tribal beliefs and prejudices are rapidly lost and pupils assimilate basic scientific facts very readily.

An attempt is now being made to co-ordinate and expand the existing facilities. In 1944, a Federal Council for non-European Adult Education was formed, with representatives from all the larger organisations. The Council intends to standardise syllabuses, to evolve new teaching methods, and to write suitable textbooks. It is essential that all existing schools should co-operate in this venture. There are many common difficulties, the main one being experienced in teaching English. Another difficulty is the provision of simple texts for the teaching of History, Geography and Hygiene. Altogether there is a great deal of educational research to be done.

Funds are urgently required by most of the schools, which at present rely totally on donations. It is, however, hoped that the Johannesburg municipality will make a substantial grant, but this is not likely to be available for some time.

The education of the adult African in addition to being an ideal worth striving for from the humanitarian point of view, is a step both practical and necessary from the socio-economic point of view. This will become even more evident in future years when the country will have to turn its attention more and more from gold mining to the industries, and the African population will have to fit into a changing economic environment. Even at the present time, however, there is a great need for educational facilities for adult Africans. What is wanted, and

(Continued at foot of next column)



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## CORRESPONDENCE

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### EARLY DAYS OF THE S.A. SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

YOUR contributor L. Storman seems to be fairly well versed in the socialist vocabulary, but has perhaps a smaller knowledge of its more ancient history in South Africa, and which my more advanced years will allow me to explain. He says, "In South Africa very little socialist propaganda has been disseminated"—admittedly, as he says, "in the last decade"—but in the beginning of the present century we initiated the Social Democratic Federation in Cape Town and affiliated ourselves with that same body in England. About the same time the Clarion Fellowship and the Socialist Party of Durban were founded. In 1912 we held a Conference in Johannesburg representing the three bodies, including the Pretoria Socialist Society, which came into existence about the same time. Each of these bodies carried on a virulent propaganda on purely Marxian lines, typical of the First International interpretation of it.

We ran our own press and printed our own paper, the *Cape Socialist*, in Cape Town; Johannesburg, and the *Voice of Labour*, Durban, a Clarion leaflet. Following the first world war most of these bodies, like those in Europe who were not sufficiently militant to oppose it, faded out. The Social Democratic Federation of Cape Town alone survived that conflict in South Africa, and carried on a forceful propaganda right through it. This body existed till 1921 when it allowed itself to be converted into the Communist Party of South Africa at a Conference in Cape Town; Johannesburg being represented by the dissenting elements of the Labour Party on the war, and bringing Andrews and Bunting as their chief spokesmen. What followed that combination is more recent history which I won't trouble your space here. Suffice it to say nearly all the leading elements have since

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what night schools are attempting to give, is basic educational training. It is not expected that this will produce great scholars, but the pupils will acquire knowledge of immediate practical use and will find it easier to adjust themselves to their strange urban environment.

B.L.

been expelled or have resigned from that party.

Another matter over-emphasized in your column is the Native or Coloured problem—which is not a Coloured problem but an economic problem; any attempts to eradicate the economic reasons for their subjection is impossible under the present system—the only remedy is Socialism. Again Socialism has nothing to do with the pigment in a man's skin. To specialise on them as a body means to increase the prejudices against them by the European community. Social segregation is almost complete now, even amongst those Europeans who claim to preach objection to it, on the ground that they cannot practice what they preach during the process. Further, those who will make possible the social revolution will be those who understand the science of industry and its administration on Socialist lines—a question for the intellectuals rather than for an illiterate mass of proletarians who will and can only be emancipated by its results.

This does not exclude the Native from the ranks of a socialist party, but it does mean that his association with it will be to disseminate the socialist creed as the inevitable alternative to the present system, rather than aiding that system by trying to eradicate the many evils he may suffer in it. On those grounds you test his intelligence rather than his hostility to the employing class, without any knowledge of a real remedy.

Reformist tactics have always been the curse of the revolutionary movement. As a result of such tactics the Social Democrats were almost totally absorbed by the national aspect of the 1914 war, since when they have lost their identity as a propaganda force and faded out. The Communist Party succeeded them with a supposed revolutionary slogan "Back to the masses" which, on the contrary, involved them in the petty grievances of the masses and they lost their revolutionary outlook as a consequence. The same slogan in South Africa meant back to the Native community, the masses of this country—with many additional grievances for their attention. The same tactics will produce the same results and hence one wonders what policy the new Socialist Party will adopt to avoid inevitable failure as a Revolutionary Socialist Party.

However, you have invited discussion on it. This will test your correspondent's abilities to show us what it means.

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## SOVIET PLAN FOR GERMAN PRISONERS

GERMAN prisoners in Russian hands are estimated to number from four to five million. What plan of treatment is in the Soviet Government's mind? Its watchwords are "justice" and "normality." There is no intention of passing life sentences in Siberia on these Germans, as suggested for years by Goebbels' propaganda.

When the columns of prisoners headed east from Berlin, they were marched towards huge depots near Leningrad, Moscow, Minsk, Stalingrad, Kiev, Kharkov, and Sebastopol. All fit men had to march some twenty-two miles a day. Those physically handicapped went in handcarts or carts pulled by spare beasts. There were about one million exceptions to this rule. They comprised elderly "Volksstuermer," combatant women, and the wounded. These were segregated in Eastern Germany, in Upper Silesia, round Breslau, and in Poland.

At the bases the men were divided into categories A, B and C. In category A are war criminals, men who have directed crimes against Russia or the Allies, who have been responsible for shooting, for ill-treatment of conquered people or slave labour. They are held as individual war criminals. Those responsible for atrocities are removed to the scene of the crime. They will be tried there as soon as the legal process is agreed upon by the Allies.

In category B come the servants and instruments of the greater criminals, who destroyed Russian factories, villages, communal institutions, etc. They will be made to rebuild the Russian towns and villages which they destroyed. They will not return home until the work is completed, though as a general rule they will be set tasks that can be carried out within two to three years.

Category C contains the vast bulk of prisoners. Against them no individual or joint crimes are listed. They will join in the work of reconstruction on farms or in towns. There prisoners will have the privilege of writing home, learning a craft, and in many cases rejoining their families as soon as there are homes available for them in Germany and

their labour is unnecessary in Russia. Some, it is believed, will be repatriated within a very short time. At the most a two-year sentence is estimated.

Category A criminals are dealt with on a strictly legal basis and their guilt established. There is, however, an important exception to this rule: the very young. Many who delighted in shocking cruelties are only 14-16 years old, since nearly all the boys between 14 and 16 were recruited for the Waffen S.S. Under Russian law no young person can be faced with a capital charge. Therefore the Soviet authorities have asked many of their famous pedagogues to make proposals as to what is to be done with these politically and morally neglected youngsters.

One estimate places the total number of criminals—including the village terrorists—at a little over 10,000. In spite of this, all cases may be dealt with before the end of 1945. It is intended that during the proceedings full evidence shall be given, with Allied diplomats and correspondents present. Russia has all the evidence concerning local crimes since it has been her practice to collect it from the moment a town or village was occupied.

In category B, the method of making guilty units work out their sentence on the scene of their guilt is interesting. The prisoners are given a set task. They are under the command of a Russian technical overseer. Under him comes a group of German "control officers" from the Freies Deutschland (Free Germany) Committee and the affiliated Bund Deutsch Offiziere (League of German Officers)—now dissolved—whose duty it is to get the reconstruction work done efficiently and rapidly. This "control" is made up of technicians among the prisoners and "moral teachers" selected from among the soldiers who have surrendered since Stalingrad. All "moral teachers" have been trained for over a year for their task of persuading the prisoners to a normal outlook on life.

(Condensed from the *Central European Observer*, London, quoted in *Europe Tomorrow*).



AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

## SOCIALISM vs COMMUNISM IN EUROPE

IN Europe, two power blocs are in conflict. Both are left-of-centre, but they operate in entirely different ways. One bloc will win — this is the considered view of William G. Carleton, Professor of political science at the University of Florida, according to his article, entitled "How Will Socialism vs. Communism in Europe Affect Us?" published in *Magazine Digest*, December, 1945. Whilst the views expressed are not those of the Socialist Party, they are reproduced here because of its interesting outlook on a matter which is of vital importance to all who desire peaceful progress in a war-torn world.

Shortly after the British Labour Party came into power in the United Kingdom, a high British official began a significant tour of western Europe. He was Professor Harold J. Laski, chairman of the party, and he visited government heads in France, the Low Countries, and Scandinavia.

Laski's tour was the first move in the formation of a new balance of power in Europe. Wherever he went, he found that the ruling governments were similar in their political colour to that of the labour government in Britain. Laski wasted little time. First indirectly, then openly, he suggested the formation of a western bloc of nations.

His proposals met with warm approval, and the initial grouping of the western nations began to get under way.

This new balance of power is based not only upon a possible conflict of national interests, but also upon differences in ideological outlook.

On the one hand, the bloc of western countries that is emerging under the leadership of Britain and France is composed of nations moderately socialist or social-democratic.

On the other hand, a bloc of eastern European nations, taking shape under the leadership of Russia, is being increasingly influenced by the extreme socialism or communism of the Soviet Union.

The Russian grouping, already fairly well established, includes Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. Military necessity first drew the armies of Russia into these countries, but long-time political considerations have since caused the formation of pro-Russian governments in all of them.

Vividly remembering the anti-Soviet governments which existed in all of these countries in the thirties, the Soviet Government, pursuing a policy of national military security, has been determined to supplant hostile governments with distinctly friendly ones linked to Russia by strong military alliances.

A counter-grouping of nations, guided by social-democratic parties and leaders, appears to be in the making among western European countries. The urges behind such a counter-balancing movement seem to be threefold.

First, there is the age-long impulse to balance one powerful bloc of nations against another powerful bloc of nations.

Second, there is the conviction that much closer economic collaboration must take place between the various nations of Western Europe if this area is to raise its standard of living and compete with such giants as United States and Russia.

Third, there is the feeling that communist revolutions break too sharply with the cultural pattern of the West but that moderate socialist revolutions can effect the necessary changes in the economic life of this region and at the same time can be made to harmonise with the basic spiritual traditions of western civilisation.

These two power blocs are being brought about in entirely different ways, and each will produce far-reaching economic changes. And although these changes are both left-of-centre, they are completely dissimilar in their consequences.

The dominant position of Russia in eastern Europe means more than pro-Russian governments linked to the Soviet Union by military alliances. Large-scale social and economic reforms of a revolutionary nature are taking

place in the countries included in the Russian sphere. Large estates are being broken up and distributed to land-hungry peasants. Cheap credit facilities are being extended to the peasants by government agencies and co-operatives. Some 6,000 peasant co-operatives are already operating in Czechoslovakia, according to a bulletin published by the Czechoslovak Council of America.

The Renner cabinet in Austria, backed by Russia, has approved a draft law which will nationalise power, mining and petroleum production, iron and steel fabrication, and the manufacture of electrical and railway rolling stock.

Scarcely a day passes that does not bring out of Yugoslavia news of additional industries nationalised, including the expropriation of various foreign mining and other properties.

Representative Frances Bolton of Ohio, recently returned from Poland, reports that she was amazed at the extent of the socialisation of industry already accomplished in that country. A recent dispatch to the *New York Times* from Czechoslovakia indicated that well over 4,000 business establishments have been nationalised there since the liberation. Bohumil Lausman, Czechoslovak minister of industry, states that 73 per cent of the Czechoslovak iron industry has been nationalised.

It is estimated that before this winter is over two-thirds of all Czechoslovak industry will be operated by the state.

Contrast this picture with the situation developing in the West.

Leaders of social-democratic parties agree that some sort of a socialist revolution is necessary in western Europe. They point out the virtual disappearance of the middle classes due to the cartelization of industry and the devastating sweep of events during the past 30 years: two world wars, catastrophic inflation, confiscatory taxation, and a world depression of unprecedented proportions.

They also point to the tremendous problems produced by modern technology—mass unemployment and violent fluctuations in

the business cycle—and declare that only the socialisation of basic industries can solve these problems.

They further emphasise the well-nigh overwhelming task of economic reconstruction confronting Europe and insist that this task is far too big for capitalism to perform.

Finally, they refer to the bankruptcy of all the old political parties except those of the Left. The parties of the Right have been discredited either because they went fascist or collaborated with the fascists. The middle-class parties have declined along with the decline of the middle classes.

Only the parties of the Left remain as vigorous political organisations. In fact, their strength has enormously increased. They were the consistent opponents of fascism. They were the spearheads of the resistance and liberation movements. Today they feel that the future belongs to them.

But here is the main difference in the economic outlook of the western group with the bloc in the East:

The social-democrats maintain strenuously that only moderate or revisionist socialists like themselves can make a socialist revolution palatable to western Europe. They rule out the extreme socialists or communists on a number of grounds.

They say that extreme socialism or communism necessarily means a totalitarian or an authoritarian state which they insist runs contrary to the traditions of western Europe. They contend that communists cannot be trusted with national administration because they look to Moscow for guidance and might betray the national interest of their respective countries. They argue that you can't do business with communists because communism forces its adherents to act upon two planes of morality—one between communists themselves and one between communists and non-communists.

Recently social-democratic leaders have boldly projected the formation of a bloc of western European nations. About two years ago Prime Minister Jan Christian Smuts, the most distinguished elder statesman of



the British Commonwealth, called for such a grouping of western European powers around Britain.

But it remained for the impressive electoral victory of the British Labour Party this past summer to give real impetus to the movement.

At Copenhagen, Professor Laski urged socialist states to stand side by side. At Stockholm, Laski called upon the socialist foreign ministers of Britain, Denmark, Norway and Sweden to draw up a common programme.

Even so cautious a social-democrat as Premier Per Albin Hansson of Sweden has come out in favour of a common Scandinavian labour market and is advocating closer economic collaboration of western European countries. Recently Belgium's foreign minister expressed his country's desire for close understanding between France and Britain and for the entry of Belgium into a western European grouping.

While this movement for a combination of western European states has been largely initiated by the social-democrats, it is by no means confined to them. General Charles de Gaulle's recent affirmation of the common interests of the western European nations, especially in the exploitation of an internationalised Ruhr, is being interpreted as the French President's bid for a western orientation and the formation of a western bloc.

Extreme enthusiasts for a western coalition envisage such a combination as eventually including not only Britain, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, but also Italy, Spain, and Greece.

In spite of the enthusiasm of its advocates a strong bloc of western social-democratic states will be difficult to achieve. What are the difficulties?

First, no nation in western Europe—not even Britain and France—will come to the front and display the strength and grim determination displayed by Russia in building the eastern grouping.

Second, serious points of conflict exist among the various countries envisaged as future partners in this planned western grouping, and none of them is capable of acting as a strong umpire in the sense that Russia will act in composing territorial and national differences in her orbit.

Only recently Italy and Greece engaged in a bitter war, and there exist between them

old differences over the Dodecanese Islands and Albania. France still remembers the Italian "stab in the back," and between France and Italy exist old border disputes and differences over Tunisia. Between Britain and France are differences involving Syria and the Middle East, Indo-China, and possibly the ultimate disposition of the Rhineland, the Ruhr, and western Germany generally.

Third, even if all the prospective countries of the western coalition should in fact join such a combination, the total power potential would in no way equal that of the Soviet Union and the eastern group.

Failing to win Germany as a whole, the western powers, especially France, would seek the dismemberment of Germany. Indeed, France is already on record as favouring the permanent occupation of the Rhineland and the "internationalizing" of the Ruhr. It is not yet clear whether Britain will favour this.

Fourth, it is by no means certain that the social-democrats will win out in Italy, in France, in Spain. On the continent, the communist party has grown more rapidly than any other political party, and has made by far the greatest numerical percentage of gain. D. W. Brogan reports that the communist party is now the best disciplined, and the most active party in France. Unless the communist and socialist parties unite in France there can be no clear-cut Leftist majority capable of carrying out a real revolutionary programme.

The same situation obtains in Italy. In spite of this, Harold Laski has publicly reprimanded the Italian socialist leader, Pietro Nenni, because the latter had previously announced his support of a policy of communist-socialist co-operation.

This rebuke by Laski is significant because up to the present time Laski has been the one conspicuous socialist who has never denounced the Soviet Union and who has always gone out of his way to stress the value of the Russian Revolution and to emphasize those elements which unite socialists and communists rather than those which divide them.

Fifth, western Europe will need American aid, resources, material, and credits during the next few years. It is not at all certain that the United States will not use western Europe's dependence on America to slowup and even to stifle economic changes.

Opposition to giving the Attlee Govern-

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# LABOUR DISPUTES IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE writer of this article is Mr. E. S. Sachs, General Secretary of the Garment Workers' Union, and one of the most prominent trade unionists in the country. He writes with authority on a subject which merits serious attention if industrial unrest is to be avoided in the difficult years ahead.

In most civilised countries labour disputes are considered inevitable under the capitalist system, and more or less satisfactory labour laws have therefore been introduced to prevent and settle such disputes. In some countries minimum wage legislation has been introduced and properly functioning industrial courts have been created by law to try and prevent labour disputes and to settle them when they do arise. In the United States of America, workers are guaranteed freedom of organisation by law and facilities are provided for trade unions to bargain collectively with employers. In South Africa the level of our national political life is still that of the backveld and the approach of many of our "statesmen" to economic problems has consequently not passed beyond that level.

## EARLIER LABOUR DISPUTES

In Australia and New Zealand arbitration acts and minimum wage laws were introduced some 50 years ago. In South Africa, however, consequent upon the industrial troubles of 1913 and 1914, an entirely different policy was pursued. In 1913 the government in power used the gun to crush the miners' strike, and over a score of people, all of them quite innocent, were killed. In 1914 a serious labour dispute on the Railways was settled by martial law and the illegal deportation of some nine labour leaders, an act which shook the entire civilised world. To prevent and settle labour disputes in future, no minimum Wage Act, no Conciliation or Arbitration Act was introduced, but an act known under the "conciliatory" title of "The Riotous Assemblies and Criminal Law Amendment Act." The government then in power clearly looked upon trade unions as organisations of anarchists and "bomb throwers," trade union leaders as terrible agitators and disturbers of

the peace, and workers struggling for a better life, as a bunch of criminals.

The Riotous Assemblies Act, apart from its provisions dealing with the amendment of the criminal law may be justifiably termed the "Scab, Strike Breaker and Black-leg Protection Act." It is a monstrous piece of legislation and in effect turns all workers striking for better conditions, into criminals, and all scabs into superior citizens entitled to privileges denied to ordinary citizens. It interferes grossly with freedom of speech and assembly. In 1930 Oswald Pirow, then Minister of Justice, introduced an amendment to the act, upon which even Hitler himself could not have improved.

## THE HANDS OF ESAU

Such was the government's reply to the protests against injustices, oppression, and starvation wages of the workers. "You protest against the despotism of the mining magnates, we shoot you down." "You protest against injustices, our reply is a police baton." "You protest against victimisation, we put your leaders in gaol unlawfully and deport them."

One would have thought that the terrible tragedies of 1913, 1914 and 1922 would have taught our government that police batons, gaols and repression generally cannot be a reply to workers' demands for a living wage, but our governments have learned nothing, forgotten nothing and know nothing. Latterly we have been treated to a spate of oratory in Bloemfontein and Cape Town, in Scotland and San Francisco, by our venerable Prime Minister, on Liberty, Democracy, the Rights of the Underdog, etc., etc., which would lead one to expect a more enlightened policy towards Labour, but the "voice is the voice of Jacob, the hands are the hands of Esau."

## THE STRUGGLE OF LOW PAID WORKERS

At least 80% of the workers of South Africa have always been compelled to work for starvation wages. In 1924 an Industrial Conciliation Act was introduced, and in



1925 a Wage Act was passed. The first, in effect, serves only as a vicious piece of anti-strike legislation. The second, which was ostensibly designed to improve the wages and conditions of employment of unorganised low paid workers, has proved in actual practice to be not worth the paper it is written on. Invariably, whenever a group of low paid workers start a struggle for improvement in their wage standards, the reply is police batons, the application of the Riotous Assemblies Act, and imprisonment.

In the last three or four years thousands of workers who have been scandalously let down by the Wage Board and the Minister of Labour, have been gaoled for endeavouring to obtain improved working conditions. Over three thousand workers in the timber, milling, baking, and other industries have been arrested in recent years. Scores have been sent to gaol, and fifteen were killed in Pretoria.

### THE WAR AND THE LOW PAID WORKERS

Bad as the conditions of the low paid workers were before the war, they have become intolerable in recent times as a result of the tremendous increase in the price of commodities, more especially those used by the lower paid workers. The staple foods of the low income groups, such as mealie meal, meat and sugar, are virtually unobtainable, nor have wages kept pace with the increase in the cost of living even for the higher paid workers. There are tens of thousands of workers who have to pay two weeks' wages for one second rate pair of trousers and ten weeks' wages for a third rate suit of clothes. The profits of the manufacturers and merchants are soaring; industry and commerce and mining are passing through a period of unprecedented prosperity, yet hundreds of thousands of workers find it increasingly impossible to come out on their earnings. Is it any wonder that South Africa is faced with the crime wave?

### BRUTAL REPRESSION WILL NOT INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

Many of our economists and employers continually lament over the extremely low level of efficiency and productivity of South African workers. They rightly proclaim that

our low national income must be raised, and to achieve that the productivity and efficiency of the masses of workers must be improved. The future of the South African people depends upon the industrial development of the country, but industrial development is possible only if the workers become efficient and highly productive. What our government, employers, and many of our economists completely fail to realise is that efficiency cannot be brought about by starvation wages nor by sending groups of workers to gaol, but only by giving workers a living wage, decent conditions of employment, and the possibility of developing culturally and technically.

### THE LAUNDRY WORKERS' STRIKE

The laundry workers' strike is typical of developments taking place today. Every decent person will wholeheartedly support the one thousand laundry workers in Durban who have come out on strike against starvation wages. These workers have been compelled to work for about 27s. per week or less. The dividends of the laundry companies have increased enormously in recent years, but not the wages of the workers. Instead of scrapping our retrogressive labour legislation and setting up machinery to facilitate collective bargaining, instead of introducing a positive wage policy which will ensure a living wage for all workers, we have only chaos in wage standards and a complete absence of a wage policy on the part of the government. The policy of the government towards the low paid workers, struggling for a living wage, is the application of the Riotous Assemblies Act, the arrest and imprisonment of strike leaders, the use of the police to terrorise and intimidate the strikers. Is it any wonder that not only labour opinion, but enlightened opinion generally, feels outraged at the government's policy towards the laundry workers, the timber workers in Johannesburg, and the other sections of workers whose treatment at the hands of the government has been most shameful?

The bitterness of the workers has not yet reached the 1913-1922 level, but we are rapidly approaching that stage. Not only the lower paid workers, but even the higher paid workers are beginning to find life intolerable because of the scandalous policy of the government in regard to the distri-

bution of food and the continuous rise in the cost of living.

### INCOMPETENT MINISTERS

Since the creation of a labour ministry in 1924, there have been appointed in office a whole series of Labour Ministers not one of whom has had an intelligent understanding of our labour, economic, and industrial problems. Our Prime Minister, Field Marshal Smuts, may know quite a lot about Holism, Philosophy, and Botany, and may be an authority on world affairs, but economic problems are completely outside his province. The incompetence and ignorance of our Labour Ministers and of our Prime Ministers on economic matters has resulted in labour matters being left in the hands of civil servant bureaucrats.

For the past ten years or so the various Ministers of Labour have been mere figure-heads; the real power behind the throne being Mr. Ivan Walker, Secretary of Labour until his recent retirement from the Service, and now appointed by Smuts as his personal adviser on labour matters. Mr. Ivan Walker has consistently shown himself to be a champion of low wages and repressive measures against discontented workers. It is all very well for General Smuts to boast of peace in industry, but there is no foundation in fact for such a boast. There have been numerous strikes, most of which could easily have been avoided if we had proper legislation, and the administration of the labour laws had been in the hands of people who have some regard for employers and employees and are not so fond of dictatorship and arbitrariness.

### A WARNING

As has been pointed out above, in recent years thousands of workers have been arrested, many killed, and substantial prison sentences meted out. By the Government following such repressive labour measures, it is hardly surprising that some 80% of the workers in South Africa live under inhuman conditions, that the vast majority of our workers remain inefficient, and that our national income rates with the lowest in the world. An entirely new approach to our labour problems is essential if this country is to make substantial economic and social advancement. **Failure**

on the part of the Government to take cognizance of this simple fact (and of which it should by now be well aware) can only lead to a deterioration in the labour sphere with consequences which will have serious social and economic repercussions throughout the country.

E. S. SACHS.

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ment favourable credit terms in the United States is increasing on the score that American money must not be used to socialize Britain.

A similar stand may be taken toward the social democratic governments in other western European countries—further hamstringing the efforts of the western countries to match the power of the pro-Soviet group.

There is no doubt that an outright alliance of social-democratic countries in western Europe would do much in the way of regional economic co-operation to raise the standard of living of the peoples of that area. On the other hand, such an alliance *vis-a-vis* eastern Europe might do much to produce diplomatic irritations between the two blocs.

What are the alternatives to a system of eastern and western groupings? Let us briefly examine these.

One would be a communist Europe. This would alienate Britain and the United States and exacerbate international tensions. This is not likely to happen in the near future.

Another would be the co-operation of socialists and communists in western Europe and the making of socialist revolutions in that area which would please both of these groups and which would act as a bridge between communist Russia and social-democratic Britain. There are, however, enormous difficulties in the way of such a fortunate solution.

Still another would be the failure of Leftist parties to co-operate at all and the consequent repetition of the political impasse which in the twenties and thirties produced fascism. If this were accompanied by a depression in the fifties we might witness the United States competing with Russian communism for the support of western Europe. This could only lead to grave international complications and finally to a third world war. There is a very real danger that this may happen.



# THE WORLD TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

The writer of this article is Miss Johanna Cornelius, Chairman of the Socialist Party of South Africa, who together with Mr. De Vries comprised the delegation from the South African Trades & Labour Council at the Conference to inaugurate the World Trade Union Conference. Miss Cornelius is an outstanding trade union personality and a fighter in the interest of the low paid workers of this country.

The Conference commenced on the 25th September, 1945, but unfortunately due to bad weather, I was unable to cross the Channel from England to France in time and arrived one day late.

It was held in the modern and attractive Palais de Chaillot, specially built in 1937 for the World Exhibition. The Conference was presided over by seven chairmen in rotation, Sir Walter Citrine (Great Britain), Sidney Hillman (C.I.O., United States), Leon Jouhaux (France), V. Kuznetsov (Soviet Union), Lombardo Toledano (Latin America), Chu Hsueh Fan (China) and Lindberg (Sweden). Louis Sallant was elected Secretary to the Conference.

There were one hundred and eighty-seven delegates and sixty-five substitutes, representing 66,760,000 trade union members of fifty-six different countries.

I found it most interesting to listen to speeches of delegates from the liberated areas. They told of the miseries they had to suffer during the Nazi occupation, whilst most trade union centres continued working underground. The progress which the trade union movement has made during the few months since liberation is astounding, and it is remarkable to find that many countries have already achieved a larger membership than they ever had before the war.

It is clear that the trade union movement is playing a very important role in rebuilding their countries. A feeling of progress was expressed by all delegates and it seems as if the trade union movement is not only taking part in questions of production but also of rehabilitation and future policies of their countries.

Many liberated countries have already made a big improvement in working conditions such as annual leave on full pay, short working hours, insurances against unemployment, old age, wage increases, etc.

One could note the difference between the larger countries and the smaller countries. The colonial and semi-colonial delegates spoke about the inevitable unemployment and their undeveloped industries, whereas the delegates of the bigger countries had big plans of reconstruction and industrial development to face the crisis.

It was very interesting to hear the delegates from the Soviet Union on their next five-year plan, by which they aim to replace all the damage done to their country during the war. In the Soviet Union there is no fear of unemployment and the trade unions are active and trying to restore pre-war working hours, vacations, and provisions for workers' rest homes and health resorts.

The main subjects discussed at the Conference were the formation of a World Federation of Trade Unions, the adoption of the Draft Constitution, election of officers, General Council and Executive Committee. Reports on the work of the Administrative Committee and the representation of World Labour and International Agencies and the implementation of the decisions of the London Conference in regard to the activities of International Trade Unions, were also under discussion.

## Formation of the World Federation

Sir Walter Citrine, on behalf of the British T.U.C. delegation, advocated that the World Federation be formed provisionally at the Conference, and that temporary officers for the transitional period should be appointed until a further Conference could be called. The main reasons given by the British T.U.C. for the postponement of the formation of the Federation were, to give the International Federation of Trade Unions an opportunity to decide its future and the absorption of its staff, the undesirability of having the headquarters of the Federation in Paris due to

the devaluation of money in France, and to give the Executive Committee time to investigate the bona fides of the trade unions applying for membership.

This attitude of the British T.U.C. caused a lot of discussion and was supported by Mr. Lindberg of Sweden, and by Mr. Oldenbroek and Mr. Achtenberg. The rest of the Conference expressed views similar to Mr. Sidney Hillman of the C.I.O., Mr. Kuznetsov of the Soviet Union, and Leon Jouhaux of France, for the immediate formation of the Federation. The majority of the delegates from the colonial and dependent countries, including South Africa, stressed the formation of the World Federation at this Conference.

During the discussions, Sir Walter Citrine and various delegates advocated that the Federation should be non-political, and should deal with trade union and economic issues, whilst others were of the opinion that the struggle of the trade unions cannot be divorced from political actions. The actual formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions finally took place on the 3rd October, 1945, when it was unanimously constituted.

## REPRESENTATION:

### Executive Committee

To the disappointment of representatives of the smaller countries, it was decided that groups of small countries should be represented collectively on the Executive Committee. The full Executive is to consist of twenty-six members with substitutes.

Most delegates who spoke on behalf of the smaller countries appealed to the Conference for closer co-operation between the bigger and the smaller Trade Union Centres, and asked for special reduced affiliation fees for undeveloped or small National Trade Union Centres. Again on this issue it was evident that all delegates were anxious to make the World Federation an effective body representing all centres, big or small, as reduced affiliation rates from fifty to seventy-five per cent were allowed for low-wage countries.

### The General Council

The General Council will consist of delegates of each Trade Union Centre affiliated to the Federation, representation to be based on the affiliated membership. As elections had to be held at the Conference, Mr. de Vries was elected delegate and myself as his alternate for South Africa.

### General Secretary and Assistant Secretaries

Although the British T.U.C. intended to nominate Mr. Schevenels for the position of General Secretary, Sir Walter Citrine stated that they would not press their nominee and decided to withdraw him after Louis Saillant who was nominated by the French delegation for this position, was elected unanimously by the Conference.

The Executive Committee appointed J. Brophy (C.I.O.), M. Faline (U.S.S.R.) and W. Schevenels (Belgium) as Assistant Secretaries.

### Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

Sir Walter Citrine was unanimously elected as Chairman and the following seven leaders were elected as Vice-Chairmen: Sidney Hillman, Vassili Kuznetsov, Leon Jouhaux, Lombardo Toledano, Chu Hsueh Fan, G. di Vittorio, and E. Kupers, who will form the Executive Bureau, together with the General Secretary, Louis Saillant.

## WORLD LABOUR REPRESENTATION

On the report of Hillman on the work of the Administrative Committee, important resolutions of the Conference were passed on the representation of World Labour Organisations on international bodies, and it was claimed that the W.F.T.U. should be represented on all World Organisations dealing with matters of reconstruction, peace and world economy.

It was also felt that the W.F.T.U. should have a say in the demilitarisation and de-Nazification of Germany.

A resolution was passed that a delegation should be sent to Germany and Japan to investigate and to further the establishment of free trade unions.

### DELEGATES DELAYED

A report was made by the Credentials Committee that delegates from the Transvaal, Iran and Greece, were not allowed to leave their countries. Joseph Curran (C.I.O.) moved a resolution that the Administrative Committee should investigate the reasons for the delay of the Delegates and, if found that they were deliberately prevented from attending the Conference, protests should be made to the Governments concerned.

## COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES

Delegates urged that a commission should be sent to the colonial and semi-colonial



countries to investigate the economic and political conditions of such countries and to make recommendations to the Governments concerned.

### FASCISM

Strong feelings were also expressed against anti-Semitism and the growth of Fascism, which is noticeable all over the world.

### TRANSVAAL NON-EUROPEAN TRADE UNION COUNCIL

The day before the Conference closed, the non-European Trade Union Council sent an African delegate, Desmond Buckle, from London to represent them at the Conference. He was given the opportunity to address the Conference, and although he had never been to South Africa, he gave a correct explanation of the position of the African workers in this country.

The Credentials Committee reported that the non-European Trade Union Council had applied for membership and was accepted on a strength of 80,000 members.

### WOMEN

The women delegates at the Conference held various meetings at which women gave reports on the part women played in the trade union movement in various countries.

I attended a reception given on behalf of the French Women's Organisation to the women delegates, where approximately 300 French women were present.

I was also invited to attend an International Women's Conference on the 26th November, but could not accept owing to difficulties of postponing my return journey.

### CONCLUSION

I feel that the trade union movement of South Africa is neglecting to advertise its activities in the international sphere. People overseas do not know anything about this country and the attitude taken up towards our delegates can therefore be understood. It seems that most people believe that the European trade union movement in South Africa is completely opposed to the non-European movement. Many delegates were surprised to learn that there are progressive European trade unions who are working closely together with the African unions, and that some of them include Africans in their agreements with employers.

JOHANNA CORNELIUS.

## ROSA LUXEMBURG

Every January of the inter-war years, in big halls or in illegal conspiratorial meeting-places, communists and left-wing socialists have paid tribute to the memory of the three L's — Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg. All three died in January, though not of the same year. Lenin died in 1924, Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered in 1919. Though we do not know whether this tribute was continued in Europe during the war, we hope that commemoration meetings will be organised this year. The suggestion is not made for sentimental reasons, though even today, we of the younger generation of socialists, who did not know them, and did not see them in action, realise with a deep personal sorrow, how much their loss has meant to the working-class movement, and how different socialist development might have been if they were alive. The suggestion is made, because these three epitomised the highest development of socialist revolutionary leadership; and because they contributed tremendously to the theory and strategy of socialism. In the era of social revolution which we are now entering, we can learn a great deal from the lessons taught by Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg; and also from those mistakes which even they committed. The political world picture today has many features in common with their world.

This article is devoted to Rosa Luxemburg, because she is the least known of the three. Few workers in South Africa, and even in the Socialist Party have heard her name; very few indeed know anything about her life and her writings. Apart from an occasional pamphlet, none of her works are available in English. She is not very popular with the two main movements of the working class. The reformists of the Second International, hated her not so much because of her writing, but because she was a socialist revolutionary. The communists, on the other hand, pay tribute to her revolutionary activities, her anti-imperialist stand in the last war, and her leadership of Spartacus, but ignore her theoretical contributions, because of her many disagreements with Bolshevik principles and ideas.

Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) was born in Russian Poland. She entered the Polish revolutionary movement at an early age, and was a member of the famous "Proletariat." Though she had to leave Poland at the age of eighteen, she retained throughout her life an intimate connection with the Social Democratic party of Poland, and was one of its leading theoreticians. Some of her closest collaborators, like Leo Jogiches (leader of Spartacus, and one of the most interesting personalities in the Socialist movement), Karski, and Warski, came also from the Polish movement.

In Zurich, where she went after her escape, she immediately came into contact with many of the outstanding emigrants of the Polish and Russian movement, and also with the leaders of international socialism. A great deal of her time was spent in studying the political sciences, with much attention to the national question, particularly as it affected Poland. Among the Polish Socialist emigres, the achievement of Polish independence had become the main political task, and she soon earned their bitter hatred for her exposure of their anti-socialist activities. Under the influence of Luxemburg and Jogiches, the Polish Social Democrats split from the social patriots, and formed a separate party, which included the greater part of the underground organisation in Poland, and which adopted as the prime aim of the Polish Socialist movement, the achievement of power by the working-class.

At the same time Rosa began taking a great interest in other sections of the European working-class, particularly in the most important one of that period — German Social Democracy. A formal marriage enabled her to move to Germany and work without fear of police interference. Very soon she became a leading member in the German party, and the acknowledged leader and theoretician of its revolutionary left wing. German, and to a less obvious extent international, Social Democracy, was in the throes of a deep internal crisis. Under the effect of an apparent stabilisation of capitalism, and some electoral and trade union successes, the reformists in the party (best-known representative, Eduard Bernstein), began at first cautiously, and then quite blatantly, to renounce fundamental principles of Marxism. Bernstein denied the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism, and suggested that on the contrary it showed strong powers of adaptation, since at the time, the recurrent economic crises prophesied by Marx had become reduced. In the political field they rejected all forms of violence or extra-parliamentary activity as being necessary on the road to power. The reformists claimed that trade union activity and social reforms reduced the position of capitalists to that of mere administrators, and that gradual development would lead to the complete loss of their economic power. These beliefs led them to discard class-struggle in favour of class-collaboration, and to reject the ultimate socialist aim for the sake of "practical politics."

The reformist theories produced a definite and vigorous opposition, not only from the socialist rank and file, but even from the party leadership. The latter, though reformist in action was not prepared to give up socialism and revolution in their verbal aspects. Rosa Luxemburg was in the forefront of the fight. In a series of brilliant articles (the greater number are in her book "Social Reform or Revolu-

tion") she exposed the basic fallacies of reformism.

By placing the theory of the adaptability of capitalism in its historical perspective, she showed that it was based on a temporary and transitional phenomenon. The crises which Marx had predicted were the accompaniment of the decline of capitalism, the crises of over-production. Up till 1873, however, capitalism had been growing, and crises had been due to a developing market and sudden extensions of production. The transition stage between these two periods (1873-1900) showed a temporary stabilisation, which merely indicated the approach of the decline, "the beginning of the end." Those of us who experienced the terrible crises of the early thirties can judge of the correctness of her analysis. She exposed the limitations of trade-unionism, referring to it as "the labours of Sisyphus." At that time Millerand's entry into the French cabinet and the failure of his attempt at class-collaboration confirmed the correctness of Luxemburg's ideas.

At the Dresden party congress in 1903 the reformists were defeated, but not expelled as Luxemburg demanded. Subsequent history has shown that their defeat was a superficial one.

Her faithfulness to socialist principles, and her uncompromising fight against vacillators, reformists, etc., made Rosa extremely unpopular with the party leadership, who constantly obstructed her activities, making use, incidentally, of the fact that she was a woman. They were able to assist by the German state judiciary and police, so that Rosa was frequently in prison. This, however, did not deter her, and she continued to participate fully in the work, not only of the German party, but also of other movements.

When the 1905 revolution broke out in Russia, she was the first in Western Europe to appreciate its deep significance, and she analysed the events as they developed with remarkable insight, attempting to teach the European proletariat the lessons of the Russian revolution. In December 1905 she smuggled herself across the border into Poland where she participated in a leading capacity in the day-to-day struggles of the Polish Social Democratic Party until March, when she and Jogiches were arrested. Having been released on medical grounds at the end of June, she stayed for a while in Petersburg and in Finland, where she took part in the violent arguments between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

It is impossible in a short memorial note to discuss even briefly, Luxemburg's writings of that period. They are of the greatest significance to the working-class movement in their analysis of the strategy and tactics of revolution, and revolutionaries. Of particular importance is her pamphlet "The Mass Strike, the Party, and the Trade-Unions," which later occasioned the discussion in which some Bolsheviks accused her of inventing the theory of spontaneity.



On her return to Germany she taught in the party school for a while. Out of these lectures developed the "Introduction to Political Economy," and later the "Accumulation of Capital." In the latter, Marx's theories on the subject are expanded and implemented.

At this time began her intensive fight against imperialism and militarism. World War I loomed very near, yet the leaders of International Social Democracy either refused to see the danger, or else believed it could be prevented by pious resolutions, and especially by support for the liberal bourgeoisie. Rosa opposed to these policies a vigorous fight for the strengthening of international working-class solidarity, stressing the fact that only socialism, the conquest of power by the working-class could defeat imperialism and stop wars: other action can only mislead the working-class.

From this period dates her friendship and collaboration with Karl Liebknecht, leader of the young revolutionary Social Democrats; (a collaboration which was to continue until their martyred death).

Early in 1914 Rosa was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for calling on the German workers not to murder their French and other foreign brothers. Her arrest was delayed because of ill-health and she was free until February 1915. During the interim period she was active in exposing to the workers the treachery of the Social Democratic leadership. Karl Liebknecht had been the only Reichstag deputy to vote against the war credits, and to organise the Socialist rank and file in an anti-war stand. Rosa gave him her support and explained the significance of his actions.

Rosa went to prison with a heavy heart, but even here she continued with her work, managing to write the famous "Junius Brochure" which proclaimed the revolutionary socialist attitude to war, and indicated the line of action which militants must follow. She also helped to organise the conference out of which on New Year's Day 1916, the Spartacus League was born. Freed from prison for a few months, she drafted the "guiding principles" for the new league, wrote agitational articles, and helped in the organisational work, so that when she and Liebknecht were again arrested, Spartacus did not break up, but continued illegally under the brilliant leadership of Jogiches and others until the end of the war.

The outbreak of both Russian revolutions found her in jail. She greeted with joy the taking of power by the Bolsheviks, and defended them vigorously against the reformists and centrists in the Labour movement. Nevertheless as a genuine socialist, she believed that she must point out those features in the Bolshevik revolution which she found wrong. Her criticisms

were on the question of agrarian programme, policy of self-determination, and democracy and terrorism.

At a later date she modified her views to a great extent, and it is believed that she intended to write a new book. Her pamphlet "The Russian Revolution" remains, however, an extremely valuable contribution (particularly on the question of democracy) and demands a re-discussion by Socialists in the light of later developments in the Soviet Union. Her disagreements notwithstanding, she stood for complete aid and support to the Bolsheviks, and envisaged this as one of the tasks of the coming German revolution.

Rosa Luxemburg was freed from prison in November 1918 by the spontaneous action of the Breslau workers. She immediately joined the editorial board of "The Red Flag," organ of Spartacus and participated in the formation of the German Communist party, of which she and Liebknecht became the acknowledged leaders. It was the tragedy of the German working class that there was not in Germany a party organised and schooled like Lenin's Bolshevik party. The young Communist party was full of inexperienced, romantic members some of whom were imbued with putschist tendencies, and they frequently rejected the more sober wisdom and long experience of Luxemburg, Jogiches and others. Rosa, the great revolutionary, who truly longed for the revolution, urged caution on her followers, because she realised that the state of forces was not yet favourable for the successful overthrow of capitalism, with its social democratic hirelings.

The government realised the importance of Luxemburg, Liebknecht, and the Communist party, and decided to exterminate the revolutionary vanguard of the working-class. Making use of workers' demonstrations and some confused fighting in Berlin in January 1919, the Social Democrats, under the leadership of Ebert and Noske, succeeded in smashing the militants in Germany, and with the help of monarchist officers, murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. The road for Hitler and Nazism was open.

Today, twenty-seven years later, it is difficult to appraise correctly the role of Rosa Luxemburg in the international working-class movement. This can only be done fully by a future socialist historian. To us she has been and is the epitome of the truest type of working-class leader: theoretician, teacher and organiser. Though partly forgotten today we can say with the utmost certainty that no socialist movement will succeed which has not learned and assimilated the teachings of Luxemburg, as also those of the other two L's, Lenin and Liebknecht.

L. STORMAN.

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN



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H.M. BASNER

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The S.A. Labour Party

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## THE INCENDIARY OF FOULTON

IN October 1917, when the Soviet Union was born, there was also born in the hearts of the leaders of the world's ruling classes a fierce determination to pull down to the ground this first large-scale experiment in socialism. All international politics, since that day, are affected by this desire to destroy the Russian state, and who-ever reads the history of the last thirty years differently, reads in a language which he does not understand.

The first and loudest call for intervention came from Winston Churchill, then only the Marlborough of Gallipoli and of Sydney Street. But the closing stages of the struggle between the Kaiser's bid for empire and the established empires of England, France and the United States, afforded no opportunity for intervention ; and when it came, it came too late. Lenin's infant republic beat back the subsidised armies of Denikin, Yudenitch and Kolchak, as well as the Allied divisions and naval squadrons. A mutiny in the French navy and the workers' Councils of Action in Great Britain put a stop to further adventures. Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Hoover had to content themselves with the futile *cordons sanitaires*.

Then the search for thugs began. The first volunteers, Marshalls Pilsudski and Mannerheim had not the stature for the job in hand. It was soon apparent that thuggery on a giant scale was required and the Prussian junkers and the Ruhr industrialists, with nothing but their bankruptcy to lose, volunteered for the task. From the secret offices of the international cartels, from the dark vaults of international finance, from behind the drawn blinds of the Carlton Club and Herren Klub, an evil conception was communicated to the confused hearts and darkened minds of the political leaders of the day—Neville Chamberlain, Baldwin, Hoare, Halifax and Simon in England ; Bonnet, Laval and Daladier in France ; Herbert Hoover and his associates in both major parties in the United States. It was no less than to make a demented Austrian house-painter the lord of Germany and to make Germany the strongest military power in the world.

They gambled cunningly, the gamblers of the international bourses. Mussolini had convinced them that fascism was only capitalism in a different and more convenient form. They gambled on Hitler's crazy energy and his insane



hatred for Bolshevism; they gambled on German docility and on the German capitalists' contempt for civilisation. They were prepared to trust the future of their sick and threatened social system to the lunatics and criminals of the Third Reich. These would save Europe from communism and destroy the Communist State.

But at this stage Winston Churchill parted from his fellow conspirators against human progress and world peace. He agreed with their aims but could not approve of their means. The chief architect of all anti-Soviet intrigues was not prepared to gamble with the safety of the British Empire. The class instinct of the descendant of dukes was too strong to trust a crazy corporal and the brilliant journalist was too imaginative not to foresee the possibilities of a double-cross.

When the double-cross came Laval and Chamberlain were ruined, and Churchill, with a magnificent "I told you so" became one of the leaders of the democratic forces of the world. By an irony unparalleled in history and too stupendous for immediate appreciation, Churchill and Stalin became comrades-in-arms and the British Empire and the Soviet Union saved each other from the Frankenstein created by the one to destroy the other. But the logic which forced Churchill, in order to preserve the British Empire, to join in arms with Stalin against Hitler, is the same logic which forces him to speak at Fulton.

The speech at Fulton is an open call for war against the Soviet Union. Roosevelt's death has removed the one authority who could keep the warmongers of Wall Street in order. The invention of the atomic bomb has fired the imagination of the reactionaries of both the United States and England. Churchill is their philosopher, their spokesman and their warrior. It would be under-rating Churchill to think of him as an irresponsible politician driven frantic by the loss of power. It is wrong to think of him as a common war-monger, a common incendiary.

This is no common incendiary. Centuries of breeding have given him courage and culture and he has natural gifts of eloquence and a colourful personality. He can speak evil with an eloquent tongue and do evil deeds with a heroic mien. He can speak for those who hate and fear human freedom in the name of freedom, and for those who hate and fear human progress in the name of

progress. He is the most accomplished representative of a class grown used to power and knowledgeable in wielding power. He knows how to lead and how to mislead men.

The class which Churchill represents is desperate because it is confronted with insurmountable difficulties. The feudal structure of central Europe and the Balkans has completely broken down; the masses of the western democracies of England and France have turned to socialism and have repudiated conservatism for ever; the revolutionary temper and tempo of the Indian, Chinese and other Eastern peoples grows stronger every day. There is no health and no stability in capitalism left anywhere except, to a limited extent, in the United States. Churchill turns for succour to the capitalists of America for if these do not help him then the system of imperialism which formed and fashioned him is doomed.

It is doomed anyhow. The struggle which started when the first man learned to exploit his brother is coming to a head. After centuries of human evolution the stage is finally set for a show-down between those who wish to live by the labour of others and those who wish to live in human brotherhood. Churchill would like this final show-down to take place amidst a welter of violence and blood. He wants war, another war quickly, because now he has nothing to gain and everything to lose by peace. The last war was, for him, a waste of time—a necessary effort to correct Chamberlain's colossal blunder. The new war—against the Soviet Union, against the new democracies in the Balkans, against the peoples who are raising their heads in Asia—that would be, for Winston Churchill, a just and profitable war.

Winston Churchill is more dangerous and more evil than Hitler because he has greater gifts and a greater prestige, clearer aims and more powerful allies; he suffers only one disadvantage and that will bring him down: fortunately for humanity, Hitler came to power before Churchill, and Hitler has taught the common people, all the common people, in all countries including England and America, a lesson which they cannot and will not forget. This incendiary and those who follow him will be smothered on the first signs of flame. Let the lords of capitalism listen to Churchill and start another war; the people will make it their last and shortest war.

# The South African Labour Party

IF the Labour Party would stop claiming to be a socialist party and would frankly admit that it represents what it considers to be the interests of the European working class and middle class sections of the South African population, half the criticism directed against it would cease immediately.

At present the Labour Party is considered, in all circles except its own, to be politically ineffectual and morally despicable. The charge of ineffectuality can be levelled against all political parties, especially those on the left. The social complexity and economic backwardness of the Union are such that the confusion of the Labour Party does not necessarily brand it with inferiority. About its moral bankruptcy, however, there is no doubt and there can be no argument. A party which claims to seek to establish international brotherhood whilst preaching and practising racial oppression, a party which claims to seek to establish socialism whilst advocating and defending the colour-bar, a party which claims to represent all the people whilst fighting for the privileges of one section, must be charged with double-dealing and cannot complain against such charges. Millions of words and reams of paper have been wasted on the subject of the Labour Party's attitude to the Non-European section of the population. Allegations of racial intolerance have been hotly pressed against the Labour Party and just as hotly denied. Let us take, therefore, three important recent incidents in our national life and consider how the Labour Party reacted to them and whether these reactions were characteristic of the party.

Some six months ago a crime wave swept the large cities of the Union leading to demands for protection by the law-abiding citizens. It has always been the contention of socialists, the world over, that crime is the result of bad social and economic conditions and can only be combated by remedying these conditions. But in Johannesburg, at a public meeting in the Southern Suburbs, addressed by a number of Labour councillors the whole emphasis was on the racial composition of the criminal, and one of the speakers, a trade union leader and a Labour Party candidate for municipal

office, openly and specifically advocated "one or two lynchings" to teach African criminals respect for law and order. This public utterance led to some criticism and repudiation in the Labour Party press, but not either to a public censure or to an official repudiation of the speaker.

Some two months ago the Africans of Orlando Township, the biggest of Johannesburg's Native locations, organised a shantytown as a protest against the intolerable over-crowding in their homes and the tardiness of the Council's building programme. It is recognised by socialists the world over that popular demonstrations and mass protests are legitimate expressions by the working class against social abuses and intolerable conditions. But in Johannesburg, with the Labour Party in control, two Labour councillors, Messrs. Light and Legum, were deputed to fly to Cape Town to press the Government to use emergency regulations to tear down the shanties erected by the squatters and to enforce sanctions against the Africans. The handling of the Orlando situation disgusted all socialist, progressive, and liberal opinion, but Messrs. Light and Legum could claim that all the Labour councillors, with one honourable exception, fully supported them in their action and in their attitude.

Let us now consider the Labour Party at its highest level—its parliamentary representatives and its parliamentary leader. A few weeks ago, the Prime Minister, General Smuts, moved his "Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill"; a Bill to "impose restrictions with regard to the acquisition and occupation of property in the Province of Natal . . . to make special provision for the representation in Parliament of Indians in the Province of Natal and Transvaal."

Is there any need to discuss the duty of any socialist towards a proposal imposing restrictions on any section of a community purely on the grounds of its race? The South African Labour Party with two abstentions, Messrs. Wanless and Burnside, were in favour of these restrictions, and the majority of its M.P.'s were against the



granting of even the limited, unsatisfactory communal franchise. Mr. Madeley's speech on the second reading was an immoderate emotional outburst of racial intolerance and insults, culminating in allegations that the Indian representatives would corrupt the whole of Parliament and that Indian traders gave unlimited credit to white women for immoral considerations.

It is unfair to draw conclusions from these three instances that the South African Labour Party is as incurably racialistic as the Nationalist and United Parties, and that no honest socialist can find a home there. We do not deny that there are many honest socialists in the Labour Party, but we do emphatically deny that they have a right to stay there.

If people like Sidney Smith, Alec Wanless, Jessie Macpherson, Richard Feldman, John Duthie feel aggrieved by our remarks, we can only reply that we are more aggrieved by their associating with and shielding with their names and reputations people like Walter Madeley.

The need for unity in the Labour movement is urgent and imperative, but it cannot come and will not be accomplished until some semblance of decency is re-established and until the tenets of socialism are re-proclaimed in the Labour Party. In the working class constituency of Castle the Labour Party candidate forfeited his deposit. That is because the Labour Party has in the last six months forfeited its political honour and its political sense.

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## REPORT OF MEETING ON “EUROPE TO-DAY”

TWO members of the Socialist Party executive were the speakers at an extremely well-attended meeting held recently under the joint auspices of the Europe To-morrow Group and the Socialist Party. Senator Basner presided. The speakers were Johanna Cornelius and Arnold Klopper who have recently returned from international conferences in Europe—the first from a Trades Union Conference in Paris and the second from a Student Congress in Prague.

Comrade Klopper opened his address by dealing with his experiences whilst travelling through Germany on his way to Czechoslovakia. The picture was not a pretty one, disease and undernourishment rampant and the people bewildered. Politically the people are in a state of flux, the doctrines of Nazism not by any means having been eradicated.

Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, presented an entirely different picture. Here, in contrast to Germany, the people were enthused with a mass political consciousness, with a very distinct Left bias; this new temper of the people being reflected even in their bourgeois leaders, such as Masaryk with whom Klopper had some discussion, and who had apparently expressed gratification at the spread of Socialism in Europe. Comrade Klopper considered Czechoslovakia to be nearest to Socialism of the European states. In making this assumption, however, I feel he has fallen into a mistake common to many Socialists, viz., that nationalisation in itself is Socialism, otherwise his reconciliation of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans and the statement that Czechoslovakia is nearest to Socialism is not understandable.

Apart from the above controversial question, Comrade Klopper's description of life in Czechoslovakia was most informative. Here, as in many other European countries, students had been the backbone of the Underground, an Underground which was among the best-organised in Europe. This fact resulted in most pleasurable consequences for the delegates to the Student Conference. Fêtes everywhere, the delegates, besides being given extra food rations, were afforded every

opportunity of investigating existing social and economic conditions. One factor among all others impressed the speaker—the spirit of the people—their rejection of the old, and their striving for a new and better world based on socialist principles.

The Trade Union Congress attended by Johanna Cornelius was a momentous one, in that for the first time the Conference presented a truly international aspect—all Trade Unions were represented, the notable exception being the A.F. of L.

For the most part the conference was a successful one. Influenced largely by the progressive European Trade Unions, many motions of far-reaching importance were adopted. Political action is to become an integral factor in trade union activity.

Strangely enough the Dutch Catholic Trade Unions represented were amongst the most progressive of the delegates present and it was left to the pious mouthings of Sir Walter Citrine to put the case of reaction.

Apart from the report on the Trade Union Conference Comrade Cornelius gave a brief resumé of life in Paris as she experienced it. Food was scarce, Britain by comparison being overfed. Luxuries such as milk and sugar were unheard of. Her stay in Paris coincided with the pre-election period, and even at that time it was apparent that there would be a landslide to the Left. The people as a whole were becoming conscious that they had an important part to play.

A lively discussion ensued in which many of the audience participated.

I.S.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editor invites original contributions for publication in the Review. Articles should, preferably, not exceed 2,000 words and may be on any subject of interest to a progressive Left movement, but subjects dealing with South African affairs are preferred.

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# SOLIDARITY BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS

THE Council on African Affairs, which has its headquarters in New York, recently held a mass-meeting attended by an "over-flow audience" of 4,500 people in New York City.

News of this meeting should be heartening to Africans of the Union of South Africa, particularly as the dominant theme of the meeting was as follows: "We want our brothers and sisters in South Africa to know that they have friends here in America who realise that the fight against discrimination in the United States of America can be won only as part of the war against human exploitation and oppression in South Africa and everywhere else. We are your allies and together we shall achieve the final people's victory."

This was the text of a message sent to Dr. R. T. Bokwe, who is directing the distribution of relief supplies to the famine areas of the Union.

In this message the spirit of socialist internationalism transcends the borders of space and circumstances. Principal speaker at the meeting was Paul Robeson, who is chairman of the Council on African Affairs, and other speakers included were Marian Anderson and Dr. Wulf Sachs of Johannesburg.

The object of this mass-meeting was an appeal for famine relief to South Africa and this has been responded to generously. To quote from the monthly bulletin issued by the Council on African Affairs: "The several thousand cans of food and the collection of one thousand seven hundred dollars were a practical demonstration of the unity between the people of this country and the Africans. So also were the resolutions of protest voiced by the audience against the rank injustice and fascist discrimination practiced by the government against all who are not white.

"The Africans need more than food," said Rev. Ben Richardson. "They need to know how to overthrow the system that brings suffering year after year. The enemy is the system of capitalism, whereby some grow strong and fat and greasy at the expense of the rest of us."

Many prominent Americans expressed their support for the Council's campaign, among them Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt, and the president of the American Federation of Labour; and school-children, trades-unions, churches, and ordinary workers, have collected jointly or sent individual donations.

In addition to their charitable appeals, the audience also addressed resolutions to the United Nations Organisation, and to General Smuts. These resolutions were unanimously adopted and declared as follows: ". . . that the South African Union, with its 'fixed policy to maintain white supremacy,' as stated by General Smuts, must justify its right of membership in the U.N.O., which has as one of its chief objectives the promotion of 'respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race'."

In the resolution addressed to General Smuts, among other more general points which must receive the support of all Socialists, the following are of particular and practical interest: "We protest against the refusal of the South African Government to co-operate with our relief efforts by granting free entrance to shipments of relief food-stuffs, a refusal which appears to confirm the government's desire to keep its internal affairs veiled from the outside world."

We call upon the South African Government to do more than provide belated temporary and inadequate relief in the present famine emergency; for the avoidance of recurrent food shortage crises with more suffering and death among the Africans, it is imperative that the government remove the land restrictions and the various economic and civil barriers, such as the colour bar, pass laws, denial of trade union rights, and complete political disfranchisement, which are the fundamental causes of the Africans' present and ever recurring distress."

This expression of socialist internationalism is particularly welcome at a time when nationalistic sentiments have permeated the Socialist movement.

R.S.



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## L. STORMAN REPLIES

Comrade Harrison misunderstands me when he suggests that in my series of articles, "No Short Cut to Socialism," I attempted to discredit or belittle the efforts of the pioneers of Socialism in South Africa, at the beginning of the century. On the contrary, I feel that no Socialist movement can be built on solid foundations unless it takes cognisance of, studies its own history and learns from the experience and struggles of its predecessors. Comrade Harrison, who was himself one of the pioneers, could do S.A. Socialism a great deal of good by writing of the early days of the movement, particularly in Cape Town, because this aspect has been neglected in "Comrade Bill," "Bunting" and the articles of B. Weinbren in the "Forward." The point that I was making was that very little socialist propaganda is being disseminated among the people and that this, rather than electoral activities and committee meetings, is the fundamental task of socialists at the present time. A great deal of prejudice against, and misrepresentation of socialism persists, even among urban workers; and this must be combated before the socialist movement can become a force in this country.

With regard to the other points in his letter, it appears to me that Comrade Harrison has not made them very clearly. It is obvious (and this is precisely the point that I developed as against the exponents of "Progressive Capitalism") that the so-called Native problem cannot be solved outside of the Socialist system. It can be done only through nationalisation, the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, and the establishment of the proletarian state. To ignore, however, the many political, legal, social, and other disabilities which are often more immediately real in the eyes of the coloured people than their economic oppression, is proceeding precisely in the manner of the reformists and opportunists of the Labour Party, whom Comrade Harrison so strongly condemns. The reformists are prepared to offer the African every form of panacea, in the future . . . . under socialism, but in the meantime they fight for the African

in the "Orlando manner" which the majority of Johannesburg councillors are popularising so tragically at the moment. We are not afraid of getting involved in "petty grievances," because we believe that we will be able to bind these activities up with the ultimate struggle for power. It is only on the basis of action on everyday little problems that the people will learn to trust the revolutionary socialists, and to look to them for a lead towards ultimate victory.

Comrade Harrison joins in our condemnation of reformism, but he is afraid that a revolutionary socialist party will go the same way, and degenerate in the same fashion, as the Communist movement. This seems to me to be due to the fact that he has not appreciated fully the reasons for the failure of the Communists. He puts it down to what he terms the slogan "Back to the Masses," which, if I understand him correctly, implies the rejection of the spirit of bureaucratic leadership and a closer integration with the wishes and problems of the masses. Surely this is a valuable and commendable contribution of the early Communist movement. We see the failure of the Communists as being due to : (1) The unfavourable objective circumstances after the defeat of the European revolution in the early twenties, and (2) their dependence for a line, on what they considered to be advantageous to the foreign policy of Russia, irrespective of the true interests of their own working classes. Further, we consider their failure to be due to the complete lack of democracy within the Communist Parties, which stifle any independent criticism and thought of the rank and file. I attempted to analyse these problems in greater detail in my article. (see October 1945 issue *Socialist Review*).

Neither Reformism, nor the existing Communist Parties can provide the urgently needed revolutionary leadership in the struggle for Socialism. I believe that only an independent, democratic, socialist revolutionary party, as outlined in my articles, can do so.

L. STORMAN.



# SOCIALISM IN THE TRANSPORT HOUSE MANNER

NO event in recent years evoked as much enthusiasm and hope amongst the ordinary people in England and abroad as did the electoral victory of the British Labour Party. In the circumstances produced by the war, English Labour was in a position to tip the scale in favour of the Socialist forces throughout the world as against reaction, and become the leader in the fight for a Socialist Britain and the United Socialist States of Europe.

The leaders of the Labour Party had two ways open before them :

- (1) The great road towards a democratic socialist society, or
- (2) To remain what most of them had always been—defenders of the Capitalist system.

It is of the utmost importance to socialists to analyse which road the Attlees and Bevins have decided to take. Though it is only nine months since the general election, the policies both domestic and foreign, which they intend to follow, have become apparent even to a casual observer of politics. We shall attempt to analyse them briefly :

## 1. Domestic Scene.

It is to the activities in this sphere particularly that Labour men and supporters of the present British government, point with pride. After all, has not the government nationalised the Bank of England and isn't it going to nationalise the mines, transport and other heavy industry? Is that not Socialism or a very important step towards it?

Before these questions can be answered, a few preliminary remarks must be considered. British capitalism finished this war in a very much weaker position than when it entered it. This tendency which was noticeable during the interwar years and which was prophesied by Marxist theoreticians, has now been crystallised. In relation to American capital, Britain now occupies a subsidiary position. The two things which bolstered up the British capitalist structure, namely : pre-1914 foreign investments and the Imperial Preference System, have either disappeared or are in the process of disappearing. Britain's hegemony which was based on her ability to export industrial goods, is already non-existent, because the antiquated industrial

system cannot compete with the highly modern, integrated American industry, which has the additional benefit of a bigger internal market. Further, the mercantile marine, which was the biggest in the world in the pre-war period, and which was another factor in British imperialist supremacy, is at present incapable of competing with its huge American counterpart.

The problem that faces the British capitalists is therefore one of raising their competitive power. This could be done either by modernisation of British industries, or by lowering production costs (primarily through lower wages for workers), or by a combination of both. The former demands long-term investments, with a possibility of dividends, only after many years. Weakened British capital is at present incapable of dealing with this problem. The lowering of production costs through lower wages can be carried out only with the "co-operation" of a docile working class, which would avoid using its power against this attempt at greater exploitation.

At this stage it is necessary to make it clear that nationalisation of one industry or of some industries, does not make for socialism. South Africans will clearly understand this point when they consider that our railways are nationalised, but nobody has ever accused this country of being on the verge of socialism. On the contrary, the state usually takes over an industry in order to relieve a capitalist group when private enterprise is no longer able to handle the situation. Marxist theoreticians in the last century ridiculed politicians who treated nationalisation as a fetish, and I believe it was Engels who remarked that according to them the first bit of socialist property would be the regimental army tailor. Further they foresaw that during the epoch of capitalist development a period would arise, when even huge monopolies would not suffice in the exploitation of the workers in certain branches of industry, and would be taken over directly by the state in the interests of the capitalist. Until the present state machinery is broken down and converted into a proletarian state, it must, as always, remain the guardian of existing property-relations.

In the light of the above brief remarks the activities of the Labour Government can be put in their true historical perspective. The nationalisation policy of the Labour Government is not a policy of socialism, but a policy of bolstering up the capitalist class, of state capitalism. Let us consider the already accepted legislation on the Bank of England and the proposed bills on the mines. The "nigger in the wood pile" is of course the notorious "fair compensation." In the former case the government bought out the existing holdings in exchange for four times as many government bonds paying a 3 per cent. annual dividend, which would be equivalent to the 12 per cent. which they were receiving prior to nationalisation. After these proposals were announced, Bank of England shares rose to an unprecedented height on the stock-exchange, which is really the only comment one needs to make about this socialist legislation.

The British coal mines have, because of technical backwardness and chaos, been the least paying proposition of British capital. The production costs of coal are about four times higher than in America. Private enterprise has been absolutely incapable of dealing with the situation, and even the conservative "Spectator" admitted the necessity for re-organisation and nationalisation. How then does Shinwell propose to deal with the nationalisation? Fair compensation is again brought in. The Socialist minister's interpretation of this is "the sum which these properties might be expected to realise if sold as one unit in the open market . . . by a willing seller to a willing buyer." (Quoted from *Tribune*, December, 28th). No-one needs wonder that as soon as these "socialist" measures were announced, the shares of various collieries went up in price.

So far the Labour Government has accomplished only one thing—they have provided sections of the capitalist class with a secured income. In point of fact this amounts to the workers being the only losers, since they pay for it all. They will pay also for the modernisation of transport, and of basic industries, for which nationalisation is planned; thus providing cheaper power and

transport for capitalists in the manufacturing industries.

Labour ministers are speaking about the industrial peace, and the sacrifices which must be made for the sake of "building socialism" and increasing exports in the interests of the nation. Sir Stafford Cripps is particularly active in this sphere. He has recently appointed tri-partite commissions in the manufacturing industries (which will remain privately owned) for the purpose of increasing their competitive powers. Both the propaganda for these commissions, and the chairmen appointed to them (e.g. Sir Archibald Forbes), show, I am afraid, that Sir Stafford does not differ from the capitalist who identifies his private interests with that of the nation.

The last nine months, then, make one conclusion clear : under the socialist system of the British Labour Government, the capitalist remains a capitalist, the worker remains an exploited wage-earner, and the Labour Minister remains a stooge of the capitalist system.

## 2. Foreign Policy.

In this sphere the essentially capitalist nature of the Labour Government is very much more apparent. The most enthusiastic and ardent applause for Bevin's policy comes from the Tory ranks, which do not even bother to call for a division against the Government on matters of foreign policy. The Labour ministers themselves have called attention to the continuity between their policy and that of the Churchill Government. What the Churchillian policy implies has often been analysed by revolutionary socialists, but has now been clearly and openly explained by the great imperialist himself in his Fulton speech. Socialists in Europe and in the colonial countries looked to the Labourites to break completely with the imperialist policies of their predecessors, and to give a lead to the democratic socialist forces in the world. Instead of these, the following have been some of the achievements of the Labour Government in the last nine months:

(1) *Indonesia and Indo-China*.—The Labour Government has given full military and political support to French and Dutch imperialism to smash the nationalist move-



ments in their colonies. In Indo-China this has already been fully achieved. Though the situation in Indonesia is not yet clarified (at the time of writing) it is obvious that British armed might has prevented the nationalists from achieving and establishing independence. By enabling the Dutch to bring their armies, they have placed them in an excellent position during the forthcoming "negotiations" on "dominion status."

The British Socialists have betrayed the countless millions of oppressed colonial peoples. They find themselves much more at home in the company of Dutch, French and other imperialist robbers.

(2) *Greece*.—Here the Attlee government has continued the vicious Churchill policy of suppressing the Left Wing in favour of a discredited and hated king. Bevin forced the Greek people into elections, which with the present register and existing police-force, could give a victory only to reaction. Even Sophoulis, the Greek Prime Minister, and other members of the government, recognised the farcical nature of an election under such conditions and desired to postpone them. But Mr. Bevin insisted. No wonder, after all, the British Socialists recognised as democratic the Portuguese elections arranged by dictator Salazar. To them British capital investments are of very much greater importance than the mere wishes of ordinary Greek people.

(3) *Spain*.—The big talk that Mr. Bevin indulges in when it comes to countries like Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, etc., is in strange contrast with his pronouncements on the subject of Franco Fascism in Spain could be exploded by the rupture of diplomatic relations and the imposition of sanctions. There is no necessity for armed force as there was in putting down the Left Wing in the Greek resistance movement. But here Bevin and his colleagues become scrupulous. They would not dare interfere in the internal affairs of a nation. Support for Royalists in Greece, the Dutch in Indonesia, reactionaries in the Balkans and in Poland, is of course part of the policy of non-interference. Why do they do it? Obviously because their masters, the British capitalists, still see in that "Christian gentleman" a safeguard against socialism in Europe.

There are many more similar examples, but is it really necessary to adduce proof that British Labour has betrayed the wishes of

its own workers, and dashed the hopes of its European comrades? Is there any doubt when one hears Morrison's speeches on the Empire, that the voice is the voice of Herbert, but the words are the words of a few notorious City gentlemen?

The British Labour leaders, as we have said, could have taken the lead in rebuilding the world, in the abolition of the obsolete capitalist system, and the formation of a United Socialist Europe. They did not take this road; they chose "continuity" with Tory policy and they are landing Britain just where the City financiers and Wall street tycoons want her. Britain is rapidly becoming a junior partner of American imperialism.

The aim of this alliance is the isolation and weakening of Russia (with inevitable war at a later stage) and their joint exploitation of the world. This is not meant as support for the internal and foreign policy of Russia. On the contrary our differences with the Soviet Union are many and deep. Our disapproval of many of its actions is strong; but that would not under any possible circumstances justify a socialist in throwing in his lot with the American imperialists. With all its faults the Russian system is nearer to socialism than the American. The attempts of the imperialists in England and the United States to organise war against Russia will meet with the united, determined opposition of international socialists whatever their feelings about Stalin may be.

The conclusions we come to then, are that both in internal and foreign policy the Labour Government is playing the game of British capitalism, that the socialist pretensions are a mere sham. A grave responsibility rests on socialists within the Labour Party, and outside it, because the situation is fraught with immense danger, both for the British working-class and for world peace. What policy and what line of action must they adopt in view of the character of the present Labour Government? Because of limitations of space I shall postpone discussion of this question for a future article. At this stage we can only say that the question of the British Labour Party which was formulated in the August '45 editorial of the Socialist Review as being "Social Democracy's final test," has already, nine months later, been clearly answered. The final test has proved a failure.

L. STORMAN



# SOCIALISM AND THE COLONIAL PEOPLES

THE connection between the struggles of oppressed and colonial peoples and the socialist movement was analysed by the founders of scientific socialism. Marx, Engels and Lenin all made it clear that the self-determination of the colonial peoples is a vitally important part of socialist policy. Socialism does not recognise the right of any one people to rule any other by force.

After the Revolution the Soviet Union showed what this conception could mean in practice. Its solution of the problems of the oppressed nationalities of Czarist Russia stands as an important socialist achievement.

During the period between the two world wars the programmes of the Socialist parties of Europe all contained passages which expressed concern for the liberation of the colonial peoples. The Communist parties were more emphatic on the subject and took a more active interest in the struggles of the colonial peoples. As a result of this the Indian Congress Party, and most other national liberation movements in the colonial countries, were saved from a purely nationalist approach. These movements were influenced by European socialist thought and contained more or less organised socialist elements. Nehru, who is a professed socialist, became one of the leaders of Congress and the Indian Communist Party was one of the groups within it.

During the war there was a great swing to the left in Europe and there the prestige of both socialist and communist parties rose sharply. The record of these parties in the colonies, however, belies their European reputation. The British Labour Party was a partner in the coalition government which sponsored the futile Cripps mission to India but the coalition was dominated by the Tories and the urgent needs of war might have served as an excuse for the inadequacy of the offer made. Nehru was anxious to reach a compromise which would enable India to share in her own defence against Japanese feudal imperialism, but he agreed reluctantly to the decision of Congress to reject the Cripps offer and launch a passive resistance movement. This led to a violent upheaval which was

brutally suppressed. The Indian Communist Party, unfortunately, felt obliged to separate itself from the Indian people when Soviet Russia entered the war. It found itself in the false position of being a party favoured by the imperialist government while Congress was being persecuted and its leader imprisoned. Subhas Chandra Bose, one of the leaders of Congress, formed an Indian national army under the sponsorship of the Japanese. Himself a communist, he can have felt no liking for Japan's imperialism, or her sinister combination of feudalism and capitalism at home. He and his followers, however, so hated British imperialism that they felt willing to work with the devil himself if he were weakening British power in India.

The national movements of the Indonesians and Indochinese negotiated with the Japanese while their territory was occupied, but they did not commit themselves to support for the Japanese "new order in Asia." They did try to obtain concessions for their people, but only a few of their leaders fell into the trap of supporting Japanese imperialism because it was at war with their previous rulers.

What is the position to-day—nearly a year after the end of the war in Europe and six months after the defeat of Japan?—The swing to the left has found expression in a new government in nearly every country in Europe. In Britain the Labour Party is in power with a smashing majority in parliament. In France the Socialist and Communist parties together have an overwhelming majority. The record of these governments in the matter of colonial self-determination is shocking.

The British Labour Government has used its armed forces to suppress the Indonesian national movement. It is false to say that this movement is a Japanese creation. It has a long history and many of its best leaders have been trained in the school of European socialism. To-day British troops are handing them over, bound hand and foot, to the Dutch Government which does not even profess socialism.

The British Government has been staging treason trials of members of the Indian

National Army. Where these persons were previously members of the Indian Army there may be a technical case against them. The socialist view is that the error they made was one of method. The great mass of the Indian people feel very strongly that "treason" against the British is no crime. Widespread demonstrations against the trials have been met with the usual lathi charges and bullets of imperialist rule. The Indian who has been injured or imprisoned cannot but feel that the British Labour Government has made not one jot of difference to his fate. The ghastly famine which was allowed to develop in Bengal by the inefficiency and unconcern of the Indian Government threatens to repeat itself. No strong measures have been taken against hoarding and profiteering and only the feeblest attempts made to draw Congress into the efforts to avert it. Mr. Attlee's declaration that if India chooses independence outside the British Commonwealth then she must have it, and that Britain will help to make the transition as smooth as possible, might sound fair enough to a man from Mars. The Indians have listened to too many of these self-righteous declarations which have come to nothing. The British Government has not declared that it will not allow the minority represented by the Muslim League, nor the despot princes of the Indian States, to deny India her independence. The new mission to India to discuss her future is faced with a rising tide of hate and distrust and there is no single action of British rule in India since the Labour Government came into power to which one can point and say, "This is different, this is the act of a socialist government." As long as the only armed force in India is an army controlled by the British, and this army is used against the Indian people, they can have no faith in British "offers."

All this will have a more tragic and lasting result in destroying the Indian people's belief in the international character of socialism. The British Government, which professes socialism, has done nothing to make the people of India believe the statements of socialists with regard to colonial self-determination. They will turn away from socialism towards nationalism in its crudest form, and away from scientific European ideas to the superstitions of their old religions. The hatred which imperialism has bred is already making Indians reject modern medicine in favour of ancient Hindu "healing."

The cases of Indonesia and Indo-China are no better. Brute force has been used to suppress national movements and every attempt has been made to persuade the public of Europe that these serious and genuine movements are mere Japanese puppets. Since the Government of France is predominantly Socialist and Communist, the effect of its actions on the reputation of socialism among the peoples of Asia will be inescapable and devastating.

In China the Soviet Government has forced the Chinese Communists into a disadvantageous compromise with the Kuomintang. The pact which was signed by the Soviet and Chinese governments, with no conditions as to a settlement fair to the Chinese Communists, left the Yen'an Government high and dry; and the military intervention of the Americans "finished the job." The bitter disillusionment caused by this has already resulted in movements arising in China which are described as fascist.

Even in the Philippines the "liberating" American army imprisoned the young communist and nationalist leaders of the resistance movement for months after the defeat of the Japanese. These people were only set free when the pressure of vast popular movements was brought to bear. At least this means that American capitalist democracy has not much chance of inheriting the influence in Asia which European socialism has thrown on the dust heap.

In Africa there have not been such disastrous happenings, but Africans are quite capable of learning from events in Asia, and nothing has been done which might discourage them from drawing pessimistic conclusions about European socialism.

One of the greatest principles of socialism—support for the self-determination of colonial peoples—has been quietly abandoned while the masses of Europe were absorbed in building some sort of life on the ruins of their countries. The colonial peoples are already turning to the bitter and narrow nationalism which breeds fascism. The tide could still be turned if the people of Europe were to wake up to what is being done in their name and force their "Left" governments to act in a truly socialist way towards the oppressed peoples of the world's colonial areas.

MARY KLOPPER



# FREE HOSPITALISATION — IF YOU CAN GET IT!

The Draft Hospitals Ordinance, 1946, is the product of the Administrator of the Transvaal and the Provincial Secretary. For many years the subject of hospitalisation has been the pet hobby of the Administrator. A few years ago the Provincial Secretary produced the bigoted and bureaucratic Pentz Report which is comparable in many respects to the new Draft Ordinance. This Draft has now been published for the first time, for the information of the general public, and incidentally, the United Party Provincial caucus. The public has met its publication with growing hostility, and it is to be hoped that there are those among the United Party caucus who will support the public.

According to the sponsors, the scheme will solve the problem of hospitalisation, and its incumbent expenses for the people of the Transvaal. In fact, with the present limited facilities, the scheme merely means a redistribution in favour of middle and higher income groups, to the detriment of the lower-income groups. The possibilities of increasing existing services are very remote, if we are to rely on the Province; as an examination of their past record will show.

If the sponsors of the Draft Ordinance were really interested in the health of their constituents, they would not have refused last year to vote a penny per scholar for the feeding of Non-European school-children. If they are the experts on health matters, that they claim to be, they must have known that it was more economical to spend a penny preventing malnutrition in 1945, than to spend pounds treating the results of malnutrition in 1946. And if their scheme will really "provide the best hospital services for the people of the Transvaal" as the Administrator claims, why do they find it necessary to "sell" the scheme to the public, by means of front-page articles and leaders in the United Party newspapers; and by a broadcast speech by the Administrator on the virtues of the scheme, before it has even been discussed in the Provincial Council?

Possibly it is the past history of the Council's activities in the field of hospital services that has made it necessary for the Administrator to reassure the Transvaal public. A few statistics will illustrate just how badly the Provinces have served the public in the past.

They will also emphasize the necessity for removing hospital control from the provinces, instead of extending that control, as the Draft Ordinance proposes to do.

In the Transvaal in 1941-'42 the Provincial hospitals had 3,010 beds in the general, medical and surgical wards for Europeans; and 2,348 beds for Non-Europeans (the latest figures are a little higher, but do not alter the main contention). The ratio of beds per population was one bed for 314 Europeans, and one bed for 1,216 Non-Europeans. The Gluckman Commission quotes the Report of the Hospital Survey Committee, U.G. 1927, which says, "The goal aimed at in all civilised countries is one bed for every 200 persons." Because of conditions peculiar to South Africa, the Commission recommended one bed for every 500 Non-Europeans in the country.

On this basis the Transvaal would require for its European population of 1,050,000 and Non-European population of 2,500,000, five thousand two hundred and fifty, and five thousand beds, respectively. This means that there is a shortage of two thousand two hundred and forty hospital beds for Europeans, and two thousand, six hundred and fifty-two beds for Non-Europeans. In order to provide "the best hospital services for all the people of the Transvaal" the Provincial Council must increase the number of beds under its control from 5,358 to 10,250; i.e. an increase of 91 per cent. Knowing these facts, as these experts of the United Party surely do, it is no wonder that they consider it necessary to make such intensive propaganda to put across their scheme of "free hospitalisation."

Then there is the matter of maternity hospitals. In the Transvaal there are 463 beds for Europeans and 80 beds for Non-Europeans. The National Health Service Commission recommends one bed per thousand of population for Europeans, and one per five thousand Non-Europeans. On this basis there is at the moment in the Transvaal, with one maternity bed for 2,267 Europeans, and 31,250 Non-Europeans, an overall shortage of 1007 beds for all races. To provide proper maternity services, the Province must increase the number of beds by 185 per cent.

Ordinance No. 13 of 1938 empowered the Administrator to establish Maternity Homes. Only one, the Queen Victoria Maternity

Hospital in Johannesburg, has been established, in the whole Province. At this rate of progress the Provincial Authorities will not be in a position to offer proper facilities to the public for another century.

Added to this there is the grave shortage of nursing personnel which the Province has done very little to overcome, and without whom more hospitals will be valueless. At the last session of the Provincial Council, the Administrator, replying to a question, admitted that not all hospital beds were utilized owing to the shortage of staff.

At the present time, according to a press statement by the Provincial Secretary, 95 per cent. of Non-Europeans, and 75 per cent. of Europeans, enjoy free hospital services. Any extension of the present totally inadequate facilities to the remaining 25 per cent. of European middle and high income groups, can be done only at the expense of the lower income groups, whose economic status makes their demand for hospital services greater, and who are unable to carry on without these services. To deprive them of the facilities which they enjoy to-day, in favour of those sections of the population who are better able to pay for extra-institutional care, would be a grave injustice.

The statistics quoted above, prove that the claim that the Draft Hospitals Ordinance provides for free hospital services for all the peoples of the Transvaal, is completely without foundation. Since the very basis of the Provincial scheme is so impracticable, it is not necessary to discuss in detail many of its other features which need criticism. The National Council of Women and the Medical Council have already in press statements in the past few weeks, drawn attention to some of the more unfavourable aspects contained in the Ordinance.

There is one fact, however, which must be stressed. If the Draft Ordinance is passed, it will prevent the implementation of the findings of the National Health Services Commission for many years.

The Gluckman Commission envisages the establishment of a comprehensive curative and preventive medical service with the emphasis on the prevention of disease. As Col. Gluckman pointed out, it is much more intelligent and economical to build a fence at the top of a cliff than to have a well-equipped ambulance ready at the bottom. The Commission report contains much evidence of the very disturbing state of the nation's health, and condemns in no uncertain terms

the present chaotic state of affairs, which the Hospitals Ordinance will tend to keep in force.

The National Health Services Commission, in presenting its report to the Government in 1944, came to the following conclusion: "It appears to us that a National Health Service has become inevitable unless the whole trend of public and professional opinion in regard to health needs is reversed; accordingly we recommend that a National Health Service be established."

As there has been no reversal in either public or professional opinion since the Commission reported, it is obvious that the public will suffer if they accept an alternative scheme, which on the findings of the U.P.-sponsored commission, headed by the present Minister of Health, cannot solve the health needs of the people. In a nutshell, either we have a comprehensive national scheme, or we will be forced to carry on under the costly and chaotic state of affairs which exists to-day. No amount of patchwork and filling in of gaps, such as is inherent in the Draft Ordinance, can alter that fact.

A national service was promised by the Government, and is what we must demand from the Government. We must reject any alternative even if it goes by the attractive misnomer of "free hospitalisation."

"PIET PROLET"

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## WITHOUT COMMENT

Sentence of death was passed to-day by Mr. Justice Blackwell in the Circuit Court on a native, Izak Gajene, whom he found guilty on Thursday of raping a small native child and a European woman, and attempting to rape another European woman.

Sentence was postponed till to-day to observe Gajene's mental condition. Dr. K. Gillis, physician-superintendent of the Witrand institution for the feeble-minded, said he had found no form of mental abnormality.

A young married man, Jacobus Venter, was sentenced by Mr. Justice Blackwell to seven years' hard labour and six strokes for raping a native child of nine. The judge drew attention to the death sentence passed on the native, and told him he was a "disgrace to his European blood" and had "brought the whole white race in South Africa into disrepute."—Sapa.—*The Star*, April 23rd, 1946.



## Book Review

# LORCA THE POET AND HIS PEOPLE

By ARTURO BAREA. *Faber and Faber.*

ENGLISH translations of the poetry and plays of Federico Garcia Lorca have been rare. That glimpse of his work which we had, though in prose and in translation, brought to us a new poet, deeply emotional and vividly stirring, but left a sense of frustration. We could not help being aware that here was poetry which plunged deeply into the semi-conscious tides of feeling in which poetry lives, but nevertheless the contact remained indirect. There was the double barrier of the translation and of the comparative strangeness of the poet's background and literary tradition. One was left asking a vague multitude of questions. Arturo Barea's book is a brilliant answer to these questions. He interprets the poet primarily for his English audience, and suggests an explanation for the popularity of his work with that audience. In the section entitled "The Poet and Death" he says: ". . . here lies the hidden reason, or at least one of the main reasons, for the sudden strong repercussion of Lorca's poetry on the British intellectuals who came under the sway of the Spanish War.

"Certainly he was made a hero of anti-fascist propaganda, and this — or rather his death — opened the minds of many to his work. Certainly his (much misunderstood) imagery, the music of his verses, his symbolism with its realistic associations, his emotional lyricism, impressed those who read Spanish or saw the few translations published until now, because they seemed to find in them a creative level where old and new associations were welded into one. Certainly he represented in contrast to the poets of the brain of the 'thirties in England, the poetry of what we call *las entrañas del alma* — which means the heart and the entrails.

"But I think there is this other reason as well. During the years from the beginning of the Spanish War up till now, people in England felt the rising tide of war. War means death. But their whole civilisation had denied this violent kind of death. When we Spaniards had to fight our war, it was still possible for an English war correspondent to avoid gruesome stories about mangled bodies, 'because people don't want to read about such things at their breakfast-table.' But then the haze of blood drifted over the Continent, and those who could not help sensing it, the poets and the genuine intellectuals had to prepare for the inevitable test . . .

" . . . Lorca — the Spaniard who had summoned all the traditions, all the tragedy of his people, and all the suffering of his own life to face, fight and overcome death . . . may have carried, and may still carry his message to those English intellectuals who are now fighting with their gloves off."

There is, I think, a further reason which Barea does not mention, and which I will discuss later.

Lorca and his work are never overtly political.

Such tendencies as they show appear to be towards traditionalism and conservatism in the social sphere, though more than one interpretation is possible. There is the play *Mariana Pineda* for example. This play set in the early nineteenth century, tells the story of Mariana Pineda, who though deserted by her lover, a defeated Republican leader, goes to the scaffold rather than reveal the names of his associates. Mariana Pineda's place in Spanish history is that of an active republican, and heroine. Lorca, according to Barea, interprets her as a woman who sacrifices herself for love, and the conspirators as poltroons who do not even try to save her. Another critic, Edwin Honig (an Englishman, I think) maintains that Mariana's feeling for her lover becomes identified in the play with the love of Liberty.

*Above everything you love Liberty,  
But I am Liberty itself. I give my blood  
which is your blood and the blood of all  
living things.*

Though both shades of interpretation do appear in the play, popular audiences undoubtedly seized on the latter.

In 1935 the production of his play *Rosita la Soltera*—Rosita the Spinster, was made the occasion of a political demonstration in Barcelona. "Lorca was saddened, and observed to a friend, "I am no fool, they are making politics out of my Rosita, and I won't have it." Contrary to his intention, his songs became marching-songs for the Spanish masses, illiterate Loyalist soldiers learnt his poems by heart, and recited them in the trenches. He neither shows nor wishes to show a political path. Why, then, did he become the beloved poet-hero of revolutionary Spain, the victim of Fascist assassins, and a symbol of the Spanish Civil War, to those outside Spain who cared for her freedom? Lorca's place in his country's history is a striking refutation of a mechanical Marxist interpretation of literature. He took his place at the barricades not in the heads but in the hearts of those who fought.

What was the reason for this? Barea attributes much to the fact that Lorca's work is a deeply sympathetic mirror of the Spanish people's social and psychological inheritance and that therefore they misread into his plays a sympathy with their political strivings also. His work is full of the sights and sounds of their daily lives and throws on a bright screen their half-formed thoughts and emotions, as they work in the olive-groves, cower before the Civil Guard, love their women, or contemplate death.

Very important in discussing the poet's relation to his people is the hatred he expresses for the Civil Guard, who more than anything else had become th

symbol of the suffering and terror which the state meant. Here is an example from *The Romance of the Spanish Civil Guard* which will at the same time convey to those who do not know Lorca's work something of his poetic power:

The horses are black  
Black are the horseshoes  
On their capes glint  
Stains of ink and of wax.  
Their skulls are of lead,  
Therefore they have no tears.  
With souls of varnished leather  
They come down the road,  
Hunchbacked nocturnal,  
Where they go they command  
Silence of dark rubber  
And fear of fine sand.  
They pass if they wish to pass  
And they hide in their heads  
A vague astronomy  
Of shapeless pistols.

Though not a political poet, Lorca was a popular poet . . . he drew his material from folk-lore and wrote much in the form of ballads meant to be sung. Most of his work is permeated with a deep sympathy for the humble and simple, the un-public men, and a hatred for 'sombre organised violence.' When he came to New York, and could see a new environment from the outside, he responded with a deep pity for the Negro, an idealisation of him as a symbol of revolt.

*Oh Harlem — oh Harlem  
There is no anguish like your oppressed redness . . .  
This is the blood that comes, that will come,  
Over the roofs and terraces, everywhere . . .*

For the first time Lorca breaks out into social accusation:

*And the cobras will hiss in the top stories,  
And the Stock Exchange will be a moss grown pyramid,  
And the creepers will come after the rifles,  
And soon, very soon,  
Ah Wall Street,*

The Spanish Catholic Church, which owned one-third of the land and the "Bank of the Holy Ghost" was one of the strongest forces for reaction in Spain. Lorca does not deal with it in this aspect, but he lays bare much that was vicious in its spiritual role. There is a strange sado-masochistic sexual quality in Spanish Catholicism, which can be seen very clearly in the following religious verse written by Sister Marcela in the sixteenth century:

#### AMOR MYSTICUS

*Let them say to my lover,  
That here I lie!  
The thing of His pleasure —  
His slave am I.  
I kiss Thy hands  
When I feel their blows;  
In the place of caresses*

*Thou givest me woes.  
But in Thy chastising  
Is joy and peace  
O Master and love  
Let Thy blows not cease.  
Thy beauty, Beloved,  
With scorn is rife,  
But I know that Thou lovest me  
Better than life.*

Here are some verses by Lorca which show an awareness of the eroticism beneath the religious cloak, though Barea suggests that Lorca does not consciously wish to reveal it.

*Two horsemen gallop  
Before the nun's eyes.  
The last muffled sound  
Heaves her shirt.  
Oh what plain, steeply rising  
Under twenty suns,  
What rivers walking as men,  
Glimmer in her fancy!  
But she goes on with her flowers . . .*

Part of Lorca's appeal to a foreign English audience lies in the appeal which Spain herself has for us today. The Spanish Civil War has become a great and romantic symbol for the Left. After a long period of the doldrums of reformism Spain lit once again the torch of heroism, idealism and hope. For the first time in history there arose to support a nation in her fight for freedom, an International Brigade. Here was political activity without staleness and pettiness, magnificent and exciting. When defeat came, the defeat of the Spanish people was symbolic of the defeat of the Left in Europe. In Spain international fascism defeated the international Left, and was tacitly assisted by bourgeois democrats and bourgeois Leftists. Today when international fascism has suffered a military defeat, the bourgeois Labourite, Bevin of Britain continues the tacit assistance of the Fascist Franco.

Barea's interpretation of his subject combines the sensitive response of one artist to another with a conscientious and understanding evaluation in historical, social and psychological terms.

R.S.

#### READERS' VIEWS

The Editor invites readers to express their views on articles appearing in the *Review*, as well as on matters of interest to the Left generally. As space is limited, please make letters as brief as possible.

Address letters to The Editor, P.O. Box 3355, Johannesburg.



# THE TRUTH ABOUT SHANTYTOWN

Those city councillors and members of parliament who believe, or pretend to believe, that the municipal locations are full of vagrant and idle Africans, having no business there, are either ignorant of or prepared to mislead you about the operations of the urban Areas Act. Under that Act the location superintendents can and do keep a very strict supervision on all the residents of a location. They allow, with very few exceptions, only those Africans and their families to live there who can prove that they are employed in the urban area.

Whatever idle and vagrant Africans there are in Johannesburg find refuge in areas dotted in and around the city. The criminal elements haunt and inhabit the slums in the same way as they do in any large city in the world.

The Africans who live in the municipal locations are your domestic servants and the workers in your commercial and industrial undertakings. They are employed by you and you have, therefore, a direct material interest as well as a moral duty to serve in compelling the Government and the City Council to provide proper housing for the residents of the locations.

Your domestic servants, the people who prepare your food, make your beds, look after your children ; your industrial workers, from whom you expect energetic and efficient labour—they all live in locations which are over-crowded to the point of being dirty, verminous and disease-ridden. The Africans come and go from these centres to your homes and your factories. You are disgusted when they bring vermin into your houses ; you are angry when they do not do a proper day's work. But you do nothing to ensure clean and comfortable homes for them. You expect people who live in filthy homes to keep clean and you expect people who cannot get a proper night's rest to do a proper day's work.

**Your indifference is responsible for the indifference which the City Councillors and the Members of Parliament show towards African housing.**

Since 1923, the Africans have, by law, been prevented from leasing or buying land in the urban areas and from building their own homes. This task was allotted to the municipalities which eagerly accepted the responsibility because it gave them great advantages over the African Population, such as controlling their movements and their economic activities. The location system keeps wages down and prevents the Africans from starting their own enterprises. It ensures, above all, a supply of unskilled labour for the towns.

Since 1923, the City Council of Johannesburg has accepted the advantages but refused to fulfil the responsibilities of the Urban Areas Act. On the Council's own admission 28,000 African families entitled to live in the locations are without homes, and the Council has a waiting list of 16,000 applicants for houses, going back for at least seven years. The real number of homeless Africans working in Johannesburg is probably three times as great as the one admitted by the Council but its own admission is sufficient to show the magnitude of the Council's neglect and of the crisis in African housing. The plight of the African community in the municipal locations of Johannesburg beggars description. Nearly every house in every location is intolerably over-crowded.

The last ten years brought a tremendous increase in the industrial and commercial activities of Johannesburg and a tremendous increase in the European population. This brought with it a corresponding increase of African workers, clerks, messengers and domestic servants. While the city grew housing for Africans stood still. During the years of the war, the position became even worse. The Africans who came to Johannesburg because you needed workers and domestic servants were compelled to crowd into Alexandra and Sophiatown and to share the existing houses in the municipal locations. The result has been a disastrous and disgusting over-crowding in the locations. The Africans dislike it and resent having to live under filthy conditions and to share their

bed-rooms with strangers and their grown-up children as much as you do. Visit any Native stad in a rural area and you will see how clean the Africans keep their homes and how particular they are about their privacy.

The degeneration of health and moral standards in the life of the Africans in the towns, especially in Johannesburg, is your responsibility and due to your neglect of an elementary duty—to provide houses for those whom you prevent from building their own homes.

Two years ago the intolerable conditions of the African in Orlando Township compelled them to form a Shanty-town under the leadership of an elected member of the Advisory Board, James Mpanza. The Council, recognising the justness of the claims of the squatters, immediately set about and succeeded in building four thousand temporary shelters for the homeless Africans.

This year the Africans of Orlando, forced by the same and even worse conditions, formed another Shanty-town. But this year the City Council is controlled by the Labour Party whose first consideration is to maintain the colour-bar in industry, and especially in the building industry where it is most apparently threatened as being indefensible. So this year instead of moving to provide temporary shelters the Council moved to effect the deportation of Mpanza and the destruction of the Shanty-town by force under the emergency regulations. The spokesmen of the City Council, Councillors Legum and Light, managed to persuade the Government to use an undemocratic provision of the Native Administration Act against Mpanza and to employ police to force the squatters to remove their shelters. The Council is solving its housing problem by deportation orders and by terrorising Africans with a display of force. The Council seeks to justify its actions by blackening the character of Mpanza and the other leaders of the Shanty-town movement, and by claiming that the squatters are not inhabitants of Orlando, but Africans imported from Basutoland and elsewhere for the express purpose of embarrassing the Council. Press statements and interviews have been used to mislead the public of Johannesburg about the inhabitants of this new Shanty-town.

“Deportation is too good for Mpanza” said Councillor Legum at a Council meeting on the 27th February, 1946. The Council and the Government have neither the facts to charge Mpanza with any offence before the courts nor the moral courage to confront Mpanza at a public enquiry.

Councillor Light, who at this same meeting described the squatters as a defiant minority of foreign Africans, seeking to obtain an unfair advantage over the Council, is chairman of the Native Affairs Committee of the Council and has in his possession all the facts showing the desperate plight of the Africans in Orlando and other Johannesburg locations.

These two spokesmen of Labour have the enthusiastic support of the Ratepayers Party (whose years of neglect caused these conditions) and of the Nationalist councillors. On the issue of denying open justice to an African leader and temporary shelters to a homeless African community there is no crack in the unity of the major political parties.

The truth is that Mpanza has the loyalty and support of more Africans in Orlando than any other member of the Advisory Board and that his deportation has caused great resentment throughout the African community. The truth is that the squatters in Shanty-town are your servants and workers, who are homeless and are seeking to draw the attention of the public to their plight. The truth is that neither Councillor Light nor Legum would have dared to utter these words or to take this action if these had been Europeans armed with a vote instead of unenfranchised Africans.

The housing problem of the African community in Johannesburg must be faced and solved. The schemes put forward by the Council are so inadequate and so indefinite as to mean very little more than a method of allaying criticism and making a pretence rather than a serious attempt at tackling the problem.

The Government, the Council and the European public generally, are well aware that there is only one solution to the problem of African housing and that is to allow Africans to build their own homes and to train them to do so. No one can really believe that the



man-power of the White, trained building-workers can ever be sufficient to provide houses for the Non-European section. When Councillors deplore the lack of homes for Africans whilst resisting the claims of the Africans to be trained as builders they are expressing a sympathy which they do not feel and pursuing a policy in which they cannot believe. It is no accident that deportation orders and emergency regulations are used by Labour councillors ; it is a true expression of the role of the Labour Party in defending the colour-bar. Even guarantees of full employment for the next ten years, for all the white building workers, do not satisfy these alleged champions of the working class.

There are vast tracts of ground along-side Orlando which can be quickly laid out into African townships, both leasehold and freehold. There are thousands of Africans who can quickly be trained as builders. The erection of thousands of homes for Africans can be commenced within a year and completed within a few years. There are no real difficulties about this if the Government and the Council will be prepared to spend the money and to lift the ban on Africans. The C.O.T.T. scheme has proved how quickly artisans can be trained. The war has proved how quickly money can be found in the face of a national emergency.

The Shanty-town at Orlando has been demolished but the squatters are still homeless. The conditions in the locations will lead to

new and bigger shanty-towns. If the Council can hire a plane to take its Councillors and officials to Cape Town to persuade the Government to use emergency regulations against homeless people it can also do so to persuade the Government to use emergency regulations against homelessness.

The Africans realise that houses cannot be erected over night ; but they also know that most of the difficulties in the way, to making a start for the proper provision of their homes are artificial difficulties created by clever demagogues anxious to maintain the colour-bar, and by the unscrupulous exploiters of the African population anxious to maintain migratory labour.

Your Council was able to erect four thousand temporary shelters last year in Orlando. It is able, if it wishes to do so, to erect temporary shelters for all the Africans entitled to a home in the municipal locations until proper homes are built. The Africans are not asking for shelters for vagrants and criminals, but for workers who can prove that they are employed in Johannesburg.

You cannot do without the labour of the Africans and you must realise that the Africans cannot do without homes.—Signed (Senator) H. M. BASNER, Native Representative, Transvaal and Orange Free State. (Councillor) P. R. MOSAKA, Transvaal and Orange Free State (Urban areas).

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:: NOTICE ::

Our mail during the last month has contained a number of letters expressing very encouraging appreciation of the "Socialist Review," but also concern over the fact that the journal did not appear during March and April.

We take this opportunity of answering all these enquiries. We are very grateful for the expressions of support, and regret that owing to financial and administrative difficulties we have been forced to convert the publication from a monthly into a quarterly. We hope that this will be only a temporary measure.

We also take this opportunity of reminding many readers who have been receiving their copies of the *Socialist Review* regularly that we should be glad if they would forward their subscriptions.

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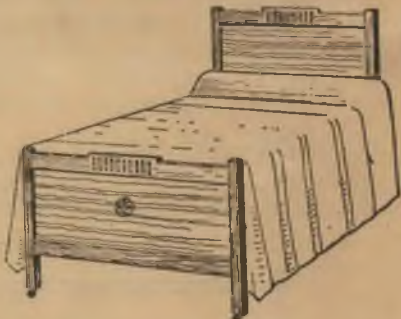
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