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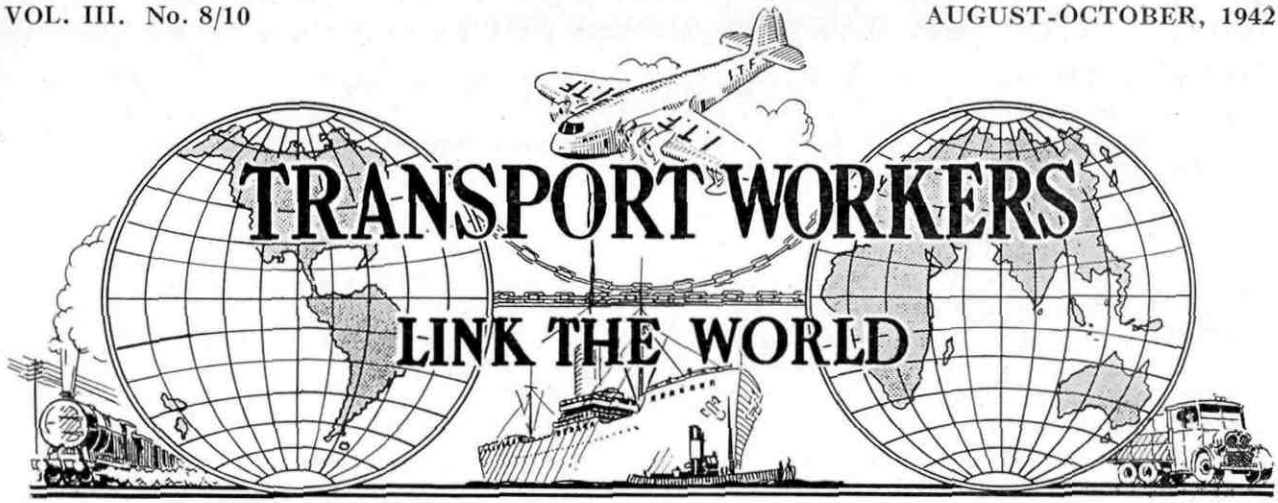

ISSUED BY THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

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ALGERIA
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CHINA
DENMARK
DUTCH EAST INDIES
DUTCH GUIANA
ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GREAT BRITAIN
HOLLAND
HUNGARY
ICELAND
INDIA
INDO-CHINA
IRELAND
KENYA
LUXEMBURG
MADAGASCAR
MOROCCO
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
PALESTINE
RHODESIA
RUMANIA
SOUTH AFRICA
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TRINIDAD
TUNISIA
UNITED STATES
YUGOSLAVIA

Relations with unions in:
CHILE
CUBA
ECUADOR
EGYPT
MEXICO

Other relations in :
AUSTRIA
BRAZIL
BULGARIA
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
GERMANY
GREECE
ITALY
JAPAN
LATVIA
POLAND
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
and other countries

REVOLUTION IN TRANSPORT

RECENT technical developments in sea and air transport—both international industries par excellence—are very impressive. Sea-going ships are now built, by entirely new methods, in a mere fraction of what has hitherto been regarded as a " normal " time. Aeroplanes are being designed which, in so far as dimensions, carrying capacity and speed are concerned, make our wildest dreams come true. And these giant planes are not only being planned —orders for their construction, on a more than experimental scale, have already been given. And it is already obvious that they are destined to rob shipping of a considerable share of its traffic across the seas.

It is no wonder, therefore, that one hears in transport circles voices that speak alternately of anxiety and the highest expectations. Anxiety seizes those who fear that the revolutionary character of the impending changes will adversely affect their interests. Hopes and expectations are cherished by those who see great social prospects in the changed world that must necessarily result from the fundamentally new transport conditions.

It is illuminating to listen to what the interests vested in shipping and civil aviation have to say about the revolution in transport : hearing their statements one cannot avoid the impression that this revolution carries with it far-reaching implications both for the economic and political organization of the world. The stubbornness with which these upholders of their own group interests refuse to believe that as a result of the present world war—incalculable though its results may at present be—the old pre-1939 world is due to disappear, is perhaps the best proof of this. Sunk in their unrealistic dreams, they proclaim opinions and make demands just as if the resurrection of this already dead world were inevitable ; though they no doubt regard themselves as the only true realists.

It will suffice to quote a couple of examples drawn from two completely different circles. The chief actor in the first is a former Minister of Economic Affairs of Holland—a small country, but important from the imperialistic and maritime points of view—a man who has now been entrusted with the special mission of defending the shipping interests of his country. He demands that after the war an equal volume of shipping tonnage shall sail under the Dutch flag as before the war.

The second example of an advocate for the rebirth of a worn-out system is the President of the National Aeronautic Association of the United States. Again trying to put new wine into old bottles, he claims that " air commerce properly belongs in the category of private enterprise since it can, if properly fostered by government, sustain itself on the profit motive and provide social security for the quota of society therein engaged."

Perhaps we need not let our imagination carry us quite so far, in estimating the results, for the near future at any rate, of the present revolution in the

technical side of transport, as a certain American Air Engineer, who foresees " ocean-going vessels completely replaced, for 40,000 planes like the experimental Douglas B-19's can do the work of the entire United Nations' shipping pool. Not only on water, but over land, a new day is dawning, for 45,000 planes of a type now being flown every day can take the place of 1,900,000 freight cars. Great harbours, such as New York, will lose their importance." The great expectations of our Air Engineer, however, seem to us a good deal less unlikely than those of the dreamer we mentioned first, who imagines that the social consequences of the transport developments so feverishly hastened under the needs of war will crystallize into a distribution of world tonnage, among the maritime countries, in precisely the same proportions as before the war. Or is it really believed that this world war is being fought solely to conserve the past, as our Aeronautic Association President demands, by providing for air transport supported by the different states, with secured private profits and wages ? Such an idea must seem unlikely even to the most hardened sceptic with regard to the coming of a new world ; particularly now that the end of the war seems ever farther off.

Experience shows that problems of such enormous importance for the future of society as the one we have under consideration are nearly always looked at from the material point of view. As soon as the technical possibility of a desirable new development is satisfactorily demonstrated, its economic possibility is promptly called into question. It is suggested, for instance, that the new methods of transport will cost more than the old. We do not believe, however, that such considerations should be regarded as decisive, for if, as at present, the technical bases of social development are revolutionised under the impact of war, this process can hardly be expected to leave its economic bases intact—certainly not such secondary economic factors as the cost complex.

Such objections spring from a point of view which has purely material factors as its basis. What are commonly left out of consideration when examining problems of such enormous importance for the future of society are the equally valid factors of a personal nature. The American Air Engineer we have quoted above is a notable exception. He draws attention to the fact that " for another reason than speed the change will be necessary. The country will have to have places for 300,000 trained pilots and millions of mechanics, released after the war."

This is a very important side to the problem of the future, which the trade union movement will have to keep in mind, for it has a good deal, if not everything, to do with the satisfaction of the demands put forward, and the fulfilment of the promises given, under the influence of the war, with regard to social security in the post-war world. For this it is first of all necessary that employment shall be provided, and employment of a socially useful character. This applies, in so far as transport is concerned, not only to the air pilots and mechanics referred to by our Air Engineer, but still more to that important branch commonly known as road transport. Under war conditions there has been an enormous increase in the number of motor drivers and mechanics, who would in peace time qualify for employment in this industry, with the consequence that if it is not organized after the war on a quite different basis to what it was before, the trade union movement will find that the whole basis for the social security of the professional driver and mechanic has been undermined. For the transport workers' trade unions to visualize road transport after the war operating on the chaotic basis of competition with other means of transport, that has hitherto been the rule, would be tantamount to planning suicide.

Before the war nationalization was regarded, at any rate in our own movement, as the panacea for all ills resulting from the private ownership of the means of transport. This war has made it in many respects an out-of-date and therefore unsatisfactory remedy. In the light of the feverish technical development which has loosened the economic shackles of arbitrarily drawn national frontiers, the call for nationalization misses in many cases its aim. It is of little avail in face of the pooling of the international means of transport of all states united in the same camp, whether they still exist, like the larger ones, or do so no longer, like most of the smaller ones. Under the urgent pressure of war-time needs these international means of transport, though still flying the same flags as before, have been amalgamated into an undertaking organized as rationally as possible upon a functional basis. A principle of industrial organization has been established which it is to be hoped will turn out to be more than a war-time interlude. The common organization set up for common purposes during the war should not be regarded as something to be inevitably dissolved as soon as the war is over. Just as it will be undesirable to eliminate the principle of Lend and Lease from international relations once these relations begin to take an expansive flight, so will it be undesirable to allow the transport that is so intimately bound up with these relations to develop on lines that will cause it to stand in the way of such expansion.

Looked at in this way, it will be seen that the urge to world-wide co-operation goes out in the first place from the international means of transport—shipping and civil aviation. To secure this co-operation it will first of all be necessary to find an organizational basis free from national sovereignties. Nor will the trade union movement concerned be able to solve other than internationally the problems with which it will be faced at the end of the war. It should already be giving serious consideration to the human factors connected with the problems of transport organization that will arise as a result of the revolutionary technical developments which are at present taking place under the influence of the war. The movement should be brought to realize that it will be unable to do constructive justice to these human factors if it continues to be an institution that endeavours to uphold the

AN URGENT TASK

WORLD UNITY OF LABOUR

Two years ago we endeavoured, in this journal, to draw attention to the urgent need of immediate organizational unity of " such workers as are free to unite," and to prepare for the unification " of all the workers, including those who to-day are governed or subjugated by tyrants." For once—once does not make a habit—we wish to quote ourselves. We wrote then : " The number of trade unions still living in national isolation is very large, so large, in fact, that the trade union movement of the free countries would be at present incapable of action on a grand scale, even if all other conditions were favourable for international action."

Is the position any different to-day ? In some respects it is. The British Trades Union Congress and the Soviet Trade Union Central Council have set up an Anglo-Soviet trade union committee, and have come to an agreement for co-operation during and after the war. This is promising. It provides at least the beginnings of a chance that when the time comes to make peace again there will not be a renewal of the fraticidal struggle that emasculated the international trade union movement during the period between the two world wars. But as it falls a good deal short of resolving all the problems of that movement, the Trades Union Congress took, in the spring of 1942, the happy initiative of proposing that representatives of the organized labour movement of the United States should unite with the British and Soviet trade unions in a joint committee. It did not, however, meet with the success it deserved, or that the interests of the organized workers of the world demanded. Instead of it leading to the constitution of a single committee covering the trade union movements of Great Britain, the U.S.S.R. and the United States, it was only decided that an Anglo-American Committee should be set up, parallel to the Anglo-Russian Committee.

This arrangement satisfies the wishes neither of the Trades Union Congress nor the Central Council of Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R. It arose out of the repugnance of the American Federation of Labour to all co-operation with the trade union movement of Soviet Russia—a repugnance which, be it noted, is not shared by the other great central trade union body of the United States, the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The value of the agreement come to is seriously impaired by the fact that the formula providing for the representation of the American unions is rejected by both the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the " big four " railroad brotherhoods, which between them can lay claim to at any rate about one-half of the organized workers in the United States.

These difficulties will have to be overcome. Trade union action on a world-wide scale would be a very complicated affair, and doomed to failure, if it had to be directed by two international trade union bodies, one comprising the Russian trade union movement and the other excluding it. The two organizations would necessarily follow divergent policies, and this would lead to collisions, and eventually to open conflict. The organization which excluded the Russian trade union movement would probably find itself practically deprived of all influence throughout the vast territory of the continent of Asia, where the working class, as a result of the progress of industrialization under the impact of the war, is likely to become a factor of ever-increasing international importance during the next two or three decades.

And where would such divisions lead us ? We might find ourselves faced with a resurrection of the old imperialist order, and with it the inevitability of further wars. Neither the divisions in the trade union movement in the United States nor the anti-Soviet prejudices of the American Federation of Labour must be allowed to stand in the way of unity in the international trade union movement. The divisions in the American movement are of a purely national character, the result of conflicting ideas with regard to methods of organization, which have their origin in the historical development of the trade union movement in the United States. It is unthinkable that the cause of labour throughout the world should be allowed to suffer from these purely national divisions.

In connection with the developments of the last two years, it may be noted that the Confederation of Workers of Latin America (*Confederacion de Trabajadores de America Latina*) has also made its voice

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Revolution in Transport—*continued.*

interests of its members on a national basis. To try to do so would have such detrimental consequences for social development that the trade union movement would be turned from a progressive into a reactionary element in social life.

It is a historically established economic and cultural fact that a revolutionary development in transport cannot remain isolated from other technical and social factors. Major transport developments have always had far-reaching effects in social development. Throughout history they have always been the most characteristic symptom of a transformation in the foundations of society. And it is the same to-day : they will bring incalculable consequences for all institutions which are established on the foundations of pre-war society ; and therefore also for the trade union movement.

An international trade union movement fully comprehending this fact, and supported by national trade unions striving for a socialist order, can make history.

The task of the trade union movement is becoming more international than ever.

heard, calling for the bringing together of the trade unions of the United Nations ; while there is also in being a scheme for a Conference of British Empire labour organizations.

But if it is true that a beginning has been made with endeavours to unite the organized workers of the world, it is no less true to-day than it was two years ago that " the trade union movement of the free countries of the world would at present be incapable of action on a grand scale, even if all other conditions were favourable for international action." However important and urgent it may be to start co-operation between the trade unions of the very big countries, it is of at least equal importance and urgency to unite on a democratic basis the organized workers of *all* countries, and the workers in the great world industries.

To what extent do bipartite or tripartite agreements contribute to make the International Federation of Trade Unions a world federation of labour ? " To our knowledge no groundwork whatsoever has been prepared for the admission of the Soviet unions into the I.F.T.U. No direct or indirect approach had or has been made to that effect during the whole duration of the Soviet trade union representatives' visit to Great Britain." (Walter Schevenels, General Secretary of the I.F.T.U., in the *New Leader*, New York, 4th April, 1942).

But if the development of the I.F.T.U. plays no major part in the discussions between the general councils of the trade union movements of the big countries, the development, position, policy and opinions of the international industrial organizations probably get even less of their attention. Nevertheless, if international trade union action is not to be limited to conferences whose only result is windy talk and pious resolutions, the active participation, at all stages, of the organizations to which our jargon has given the name of " international trade secretariats " is of paramount importance. Action in the real sense of the word calls, according to circumstances, for the assistance of one or more of the international federations of transport workers, miners, iron and steel workers, ship-builders, engineers, textile workers, producers of raw materials, etc. The problem of the co-ordination of the activities of the I.F.T.U. and the international federations by trade or industry is as old as the international trade union movement itself. Its solution still hangs fire.

Time is passing, and time presses. Until the problem of the unification of the trade union movement of the world has been solved it will be impossible to reach agreement on the peace aims of the labour world. It is to the credit of the Emergency Council of the I.F.T.U. that in spite of all hesitations and tergiversations it has decided to appoint two committees to study, one the future structure of the international trade union movement, and the other the peace aims to be pursued by the organized workers. The credit would have been greater had the decision been come to earlier than September, 1942. Nevertheless, it is well to remember that the best of programmes for trade union action in pursuit of labour peace aims must fail in its object if the trade union movement is not united, and that unity is necessary if agreement is to be reached on a programme equal to the needs of all the workers of the world.

Every day brings us one step nearer to the solution of the crisis through which the world is passing. How much time have we still left ? Nobody knows ; but it would be foolhardy to wait for a miracle to bring us our unity, and to trust, in so far as action is concerned, to our talent for improvisation.

There are many trade union leaders who complain that the governments of the United Nations do not proclaim peace aims which, by arousing general enthusiasm, would serve to stimulate the war effort and revolt against the facist armies of occupation. But why expect so much of governments that belong, for the greater part, to a world that is past ? They cannot do our job for us.

P. T.

ON THE TASK OF TRADE UNIONISM

Many influences will be at work to determine the shape of things after the war, but I believe that the Labour movement holds out the best promise of a new order which will bring the utmost benefit to the workers as well as to the masses of the people. It must be a Labour movement, however, that is motivated by higher considerations than the material benefits obtained through wage-increases. This has been the chief incentive toward organization in the past, and the measure of success of a union has been the improvements in wages and working conditions which it has been able to get. This is an important aspect of the work of a Labour organization ; the establishment of proper wage levels, the adjustment of grievances, and the other day-to-day tasks must be carried on, but it is no more important than the other aspect, which is often overlooked, the establishment of a new order in which social justice will prevail.

For one thing, the limitation of the functions of a union to the negotiation of agreements, etc., ties it closely to the capitalist system ; it is an agency whereby the abuses and injustices of the system may be redressed to some extent, but not eliminated by the abolition of the system itself. The ultimate objective of organization should be the replacement of the present competitive system by one in which goods will be produced and services rendered upon a basis which will be equitable to all. A vast amount of human energy and natural resources is being directed now to the manufacture of war-material for the purposes of destruction ; imagine what a World it would be if the same energy and those resources were used to provide the necessities and the luxuries which it would be possible to obtain under a co-operative system.

A. R. MOSHER.

The national state, like all anachronisms, did not work. This is not theory, but in 1914 *it was already fact.* *Leonard Woolf.*

WAGE SYSTEM MUST BE ABOLISHED

By SENATOR DON CAMERON

Australian Minister for Aircraft Production

As a matter of pure economics the wage workers the world over have never received as wages, on the averages, any more than the lowest rates which they could be forced to accept by employers or wage-fixing tribunals, based on the cost of living.

Nor have they ever received any real increase in wages as compared with their productivity.

On the contrary, the wages of the workers, on the average, have always been more or less constant, and, when compared with their ever-increasing productivity, they have been also a rapidly diminishing quantity.

So much so that, in these days of frantic and intensified rationalisation of or efficiency in industry, the workers who are now employed in production are able to provide, not only for their own minimum of sustenance and for that of the vast army of workers not employed in production, and for the luxuries of the privileged rich and their hangers-on, but also for the sustenance and equipment of the greatest military forces that have ever been organised for war.

Now, as always in the past, the production of ever-increasing wealth in excess of that which is paid to the workers as wages, is being used to provide luxurious living conditions for the rich and their hangers-on, and for the maintenance and strengthening of military forces.

In the low-wage Fascist countries, like Germany, Italy and Japan, ever since immediately after the Great War in 1914–18, the expenditure on the maintenance of the military forces, as the world is now being made aware, has been increased to the limit, and, on the other hand, that on luxurious living conditions for the rich and their hangers-on has been reduced.

In addition, enormous capital which has flowed unceasingly from anti-Fascist countries, like England, France and America, into the Fascist countries, as a means of profitable investment, has also been used for military purposes. And it continued to flow and be so used almost to the very day that war was declared by England against Germany.

In the anti-Fascist countries, where slightly higher wages were paid to workers, the expenditure on luxurious living conditions for the rich and their hangers-on was increased, and that for the maintenance and strengthening of the military forces was reduced down to the irreducible minimum.

And that, apart from the strong feeling against war that existed at the time in anti-Fascist countries, was the principal reason why they were so unprepared when war became the order of the day.

But in the Fascist and anti-Fascist countries alike, the wages paid to the workers on the average have never been more than the lowest rates that they could be forced to accept by employers or wage-fixing tribunals. And, in the case of millions of the more unfortunate among them, the lowest rate was the dole, which amounted to the enforcement of slow starvation or death caused by poverty and preventible diseases of all kinds.

Now as the outcome or the effect of the wage system—the expenditure of the wealth produced in excess of wages paid on producing luxurious conditions of living for the rich and their hangers-on, and on the maintenance and strengthening of military forces—the most brutal and deadliest war ever known to mankind is being waged. If that excess wealth had not been made available, it would have been impossible for the war to have taken place.

Actually, this war, like those in the past, has its origin in the wage system, which has made it practicable for ever-increasing excess wealth to be used in the manner referred to. And that applies more so in the low-wage Fascist than in the higher-wage anti-Fascist countries.

The lower the average wage accepted by the workers in the Fascist countries, the easier it has been for the Fascist dictators to prepare for and to prosecute the war against the anti-Fascist countries.

The lower wage indicates the fact that the workers concerned in the Fascist countries have provided, either willingly or unwillingly, a cheaper service in production and on the field of battle than those in the anti-Fascist countries for the benefit financially and the glorification of their employers and the military chiefs.

And as the position in that regard is now in these days of war, so it has always been in a lesser or less spectacular degree in times of peace. The lowest-paid workers under the wage system have always made possible the forging of the weapon of war and destruction, so to speak, more so than the higher-paid workers, which has always been used so effectively by their employers and military chiefs in the effort to defeat or destroy all others who would resist them.

Finally it should be obvious that ever since the day when it was first made part and parcel of social process through which mankind is passing, the wage system, more than anything else, has been used by the employers and their rulers generally to divide the workers against themselves, both in the times of peace and war.

Therefore, if the workers, as a class, are to survive, and if they are to make it possible for them to live under safer and more congenial conditions socially in the future than they have been able to do in the past, the wage system must be abolished. And, in its place, must be established a system whereby they will have full control of all the wealth created by their labour, rather than to allow themselves to be limited by employers or wage-fixing tribunals to receive just the minimum considered necessary for their sustenance.

THE INDIAN PROBLEM AND THE WORKER

By G. KRISHNAMURTHY

The author of this article, Mr. G. Krishnamurthy, has been a Labour Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Madras since 1937 ; from 1932 to 1937 he was General Secretary of the Madras & Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union, and in 1938 Acting General Secretary of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. He is employed as a jig and tool draftsman in the M. & S.M. Railway workshops, having been reinstated last year, eight years after his dismissal for trade union activity in 1933.

The problem of India, like the problem of every other country in the world, is the problem of the working class. Indian labour, both agricultural and industrial, is so badly exploited by capitalists, both Indian and foreign, that one cannot be far wrong in stating that living and working conditions are something worse than those prevailing in Fascist or even Fascist-occupied countries.

The wages of agricultural workers in India—including those employed on the huge tea and coffee plantations owned by British capitalists, and even by the British Co-operative Wholesale Society—range from 6d. to 10d. per working day of ten to twelve hours. A permanent way man—ganger or platelayer—on the technically State-owned and State-managed railways gets from 8d. to 1s. for a day of eight or nine hours work. A skilled worker in the engineering or textile industries, or on the railways, earns from 1s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. a day, according to capacity and length of service, and a semi-skilled artisan from 1s. to 1s. 6d.

The standard of living of the average Indian of the working class can only be described as appalling, when compared with that of his fellow-worker in any European country. His housing conditions are beneath description : there is little or no sanitation, and were it not for the beneficial effects of the tropical sun epidemics would be rife. In most of the villages the securing of water for drinking purposes is itself a difficult and serious problem. There is no health insurance of any kind, and medical assistance is very poor. The annual mortality from malaria and cholera alone exceeds the total casualties in the biggest wars known to history.

In the absence of old age pensions, health insurance or any other provision for the aged and invalid, the existence of beggary, starvation and crime against property is not to be wondered at.

Unemployment is severe, and there are no labour exchanges or other means for placing men at work. There is no system of compulsory primary education, to say nothing of secondary education, with the result that 85 per cent. of the population is illiterate. There are also little or no facilities for technical training and education of either industrial or agricultural workers, a fact which places the Indian worker at a great disadvantage.

The population of the country is mainly occupied in agriculture, which is not regulated by any laws but those of nature and those providing for taxation. During at least six months of the year the small landowner-farmers, and the landless agricultural workers, are mostly unemployed, and run into debt for mere existence. There is no governmental regulation of prices of agricultural commodities that are exported, and therefore the landowner and the landless labourer are alike exploited by export traders and large-scale commercial interests.

Child labour is the rule, and not the exception, in agriculture and in the less well organized industries, which are allowed successfully to evade the provisions of the Indian Factories' Act.

There is little or no trade union organization among the vast body of landless agricultural wage-earners, though organizations of small peasants and owner-farmers are now springing up throughout the country ; and even the organization of workers engaged in large-scale industries, and employed on the railways, is limited in extent. From the figures given above it will be seen that the wages of the Indian worker generally are so meagre that they leave him little or no scope for financing a trade union organization, even though it be for his own betterment.

A further serious difficulty arises from the fact that the Indian worker, even the lower-grade manual worker, is often paid on a monthly basis, and owing to the length of time which elapses between pay-days is apt to get into the hands of usurious money-lenders. Neither money-lending nor pawn-broking are controlled by any legislation which is effective from the point of view of the industrial or agricultural wage-earner. In passing it may be mentioned that the different provincial governments formed by the Congress Party made the first real endeavours to tackle the problem of the indebtedness of the small landowning farmer, by passing what is known as the Agricultural Debt Relief Act. The principle underlying this Act is more important than the Act itself. A debt was deemed to be wiped out after payment of double the amount borrowed, either in the form of interest charges or part repayment of the principal. The harassing of workers at factory gates on paydays by money-lenders is a common sight in all parts of India. These money-lenders seldom charge anything less than 75 to 100 per cent. per annum as interest, and they rely mainly on their lathis (big sticks) to secure the regular monthly payment of their interest.

In the circumstances it will be readily understood that what little trade union work is being done has to be done by voluntary unpaid part-time executives ; and even this is made much more difficult by the hostility on the part of the employers—with a few exceptions here and there—to the trade union organization of their personnel, leading to severe victimiza-

tion of workers for trade union activity or even membership.

In addition the attempts of the industrial and agricultural workers to organize themselves in trade unions have been systematically put down, during the past fifteen years, by legislative and executive action on the part of the Government. Trade union workers have been prosecuted under one pretext or another, and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment. The workers' organizations have further been adversely affected by the trade depression which lasted from 1929 until 1938, or about the time when the rearmament period began. In the year 1937 organized industrial labour, and the vast body of unorganized agricultural workers, secured a certain amount of representation in the provincial legislatures, under the Government of India Act, 1935. The declaration of war, and the suppression of constitutional government in a number of provinces, once more resulted in the prosecution and imprisonment of many an active worker in the trade union movement.

It should be noted here that in spite of the fact that welfare of labour was a " concurrent " subject, and that the Indian National Congress Party was in power in seven major provinces out of a total of eleven for a period well over two and a half years, it passed no legislation protecting the interests of labour. The Provincial (Congress Party) Government of Bombay, however, pushed through in the latter half of 1938 the Bombay Trades Disputes Act, in spite of the vehement opposition of the Indian Trades Union Congress and all independent members, representing labour, in the Provincial Assembly. It is interesting to note how exactly the measures resorted to by the Congress Party Government then in power in Bombay Province, against the one-day protest strike and other demonstrations in opposition to this Act, resemble (except, of course, for the Whipping Act) those adopted by the Central Indian Government to suppress the civil disobedience movement and the recent disorders. In 1938 the police shot down workers in Bombay for protesting against the Trades Disputes Act ; while the same thing happened to workers on strike in the Province of Madras, also under a Congress Party regime, where the Minister of Labour was a former trade unionist who turned renegade.

This is the picture of the state of the Indian worker, be he Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Parsi or Sikh, and whether he belongs to the majority or minority communities by religion. His helpless condition can only be compared to that of the workers in European countries a generation or two back.

What, then, is really the Indian problem ? It is really the problem of the economic, social and political emancipation of the Indian worker, to whatever religion or community he may belong by accident of birth. The landless Muslim agricultural worker is as much exploited as his Hindu or Christian brother by the land-owning classes, also belonging to the Muslim, Hindu or Christian religions. Similarly the industrial workers, be they Muslim, Hindu or Christian, are alike the victims of heartless exploitation, for miserable wages, by capitalists professing the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Zoroastrian or even the Buddhist creeds. And above all is the British capitalist exploitation.

It will be seen, therefore, that India is at present governed entirely for the benefit of the vested interests, both indigenous and foreign—mainly British. It is no wonder that there is wide-spread opposition to such government ; the real wonder is that it should have been tolerated for so long. What is wanted, and at once, in India, is not the mere withdrawal of British government, but the withdrawal of both British and Indian capitalist influence in and control over the government of India, and the establishment of government in the interests of the working classes.

The war has rendered still more precarious the livelihood of the Indian working classes, industrial and agricultural. Prices of essential commodities have gone up considerably, and wages have not kept pace with the rise. Government control of prices has only been half-hearted, as the administration is run solely in the interests of the commercial and capitalist sections of the community.

The nationalist agitation for political power, carried on on an intensive scale, has had its repercussions on the working classes in India, and its tempo has increased since the war began. This has aroused a considerable degree of political and economic consciousness on the part of the Indian proletariat. The propaganda carried on by the Government, since the beginning of the war, against Nazism and its anti-labour and anti-trade-union measures—though it should be remembered that before the war the Government tried to discredit, in many subtle ways, the similar propaganda then carried on by the trade unions against Fascism and Hitlerism—has also had its share in the general awakening, and a large number of people have rightly begun to question why Fascist-like conditions of labour should still continue in India, at a time when the Government is supposed to be fighting against Fascism and for the establishment of freedom.

Under these conditions Indian labour needs the moral support and practical help of organized labour throughout the world in general, but more particularly in Great Britain, in its endeavours to rise to its own economically, socially and politically, so that it can be an effective check to the advance of the Fascist hordes in the East. The fall of Singapore, Malaya, Burma, the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies should open the eyes of organized labour in the West to the *real* problem in the East—that of the economic and political exploitation of coloured labour. Much of the future course of events in the East depends upon the attitude of organized labour in the West ; but it may be safely and most emphatically said that labour in the East will no longer allow itself to be exploited by the selfish capitalist interests in Europe or America who have been directly responsible for two world wars within our generation.

Continued on page 44

JOINT MARITIME COMMISSION OF THE I.L.O.

An Impression of the Session in London

By CHARLES JARMAN

Acting General Secretary of the National Union of Seamen of Great Britain

I was privileged to act, by unanimous election, as Chairman of the Workers' Group represented at this Commission, which was held in London on 26th–30th June. Those who have attended International Conferences, especially those under I.L.O. auspices, know that chairmanship of the Workers' Group is no sinecure. For one thing the Workers' representatives are an independent crowd. Each of them has his own ideas about the business on the Agenda. As a group they are not so easily managed as the Employers' Group, whose technique at these gatherings is a fairly simple one: they have, as a rule, little to propose, and usually only oppose; and they generally act together under discipline in trying to whittle down reforms proposed by the workers.

On the other hand, the task of the chairman of the Workers' Group is to try to reconcile and unify different points of view, and to see that the views of the Group thus unified, are expressed by speakers who are qualified by special knowledge on the subjects before the meeting. It is necessary in these gatherings to make sure that any differences of view on particular matters are threshed out in the Workers' Group meetings and not in the main conference; because the Employers' Group are quite quick to notice and take advantage of any conflict of opinion on our side.

As an instance, during the Conference an employers' representative suggested that white seamen had in 1936 agreed to discrimination against Indian seamen. This was, of course, a distortion of the facts: it confused a discrimination against British shipowners who employed Indian seamen by twisting this into discrimination against the Indian seamen themselves, which was not the case. It is obviously of prime importance that workers' representation at conferences should be competent and fully informed on every matter likely to arise in debate, and that the spokesman of the Workers' Group should be quick in the uptake.

My experience in the chair at this gathering convinced me that in the interests of the Union and of the seamen we have to give the best we have got to the job.

Resolutions before the Conference gave rise to interesting discussions in which it can fairly be said the debating skill displayed was predominantly on the workers' side. I am glad to say that, although the Employers' Group showed at times more zeal to delay reforms than to speed them up, the eleven resolutions ultimately adopted were unanimous. In fact, the main value of the Conference was that it concentrated pressure on the Governments who have not yet ratified all the I.L.O. Conventions dealing with seamen's welfare and conditions of service, to give effect to them as a small part of the payment the community owes to the seamen for the service they are rendering in the war effort. Conventions that present no special difficulty the Governments—our own particularly—were urged to ratify immediately. On others they were called upon to consult the Unions and the shipowners' organisations to see whether obstacles to ratification can be overcome.

With respect to safety measures embodied in the longest resolution the most encouraging fact was that the conference was unanimous in expressing the view that expense was to be ruled out altogether as a consideration—the paramount concern must be in all cases the safety of the seamen, and considerations of expense, as this resolution explicitly stated, should not be allowed to be a barrier to the adoption of the most effective measures of protection. That, anyway, is something that we are glad to have on record.

Next in long-term importance to the question of safety measures for seamen was the programme embodied in the resolution dealing with the organisation for seamen's welfare. This matter is well overdue. It is time something is done to give effect to the provisions of the recommendation dealing with seamen's welfare in ports that was framed and adopted by the I.L.O. as long ago as 1936. Especially under war conditions it is imperatively necessary that adequate welfare measures should be provided in the ports.

The proposals are clearly set forth, and the need for them requires no emphasis here. But there are two principles affirmed in this resolution which the Union heartily and emphatically endorses, and which I am sure seamen themselves fully approve: one is that the administration of welfare schemes must so be organised as to give effective control to representatives of industrial organisations directly concerned with ships and the sea; and the second is that such welfare schemes and arrangements should be financed on an adequate and permanent basis, and should not be exclusively dependent upon so-called charitable organisations.

We are not ungrateful in insisting upon this second point. When the community as a whole and the State itself have neglected the interests of the seamen, voluntary charitable efforts have done something in the past to mitigate the hardships of their lives, and to provide for some at least of their needs when they come ashore, but the Merchant Navy performs a national service and the care and welfare of the merchant seamen is a national responsibility. I am glad that that principle was so definitely affirmed by this Conference.

The Indian Problem and the Worker—*continued.*

It is quite possible that this war may result in the workers of India and China, and the East generally, giving a new lead to the world, just as the workers in backward Russia did during the last great war.

THE DUTCH SHIP REQUISITIONING ORDER AND THE SEAFARERS

By J. H. OLDENBROEK

Assistant General Secretary of the I.T.F.

When Holland was treacherously attacked on 10th May, 1940, and overrun after some days of desperate resistance, immediate steps were taken to ensure that the Dutch merchant ships should continue to sail in the service of the Allied cause. With great difficulty and at great sacrifice nearly all ships lying in Dutch ports were taken to sea. To the honour of Dutch seafarers it may be said that no cases occurred of ships returning to Dutch ports or making for enemy ports.

Swift action was required. On 24th May, 1940, already there was published in the Dutch *Official Gazette* (now continued in London), an announcement that powers had been given to the Dutch Shipping and Trading Commission in London " to act as custodian of all Dutch ships belonging to owners in occupied Dutch territory and of all goods afloat or ashore in any port of the world belonging to or consigned to persons, firms or companies in occupied Dutch territory."

The Dutch Government thus charged the Shipping and Trading Commission to concern itself about the interests of those shipowners and exporters and importers who had not succeeded in transferring their seat of administration or in escaping . A large number of companies, including several shipping companies, had taken steps, however, for the transfer of their seat of administration. The Government, moreover, did not confine itself to taking charge of the ships which were without an owner ; it availed itself also of the powers vested in it to require of shipping personnel the performance of special services in the interests of the State. A Royal Decree of 6th June, 1940, followed by an Order of the Minister of Defence, made it compulsory for Dutch nationals serving in ships to continue in that occupation for the period that Holland was at war.

The carrying out of this Essential Works Order was entrusted to the Dutch Shipping and Trading Commission, whose task therefore extended not only over the ships it was administering but also over those of the so-called free companies. With respect to working conditions it was laid down that they should be fixed " according to principles of equity " by the Trading and Shipping Commission, in consultation with the Government. Consultation with the trade unions was apparently not considered necessary, at least it was not prescribed. In practice, however, things turned out somewhat otherwise and the trade unions are to an increasing extent both consulted and given an opportunity of presenting the demands of their members.

This, notwithstanding the arrangements come to, could not be considered satisfactory for any of the parties concerned. The State had indeed conscripted the seamen, the " live material," but the ships, " the dead material," had been left in the hands of the shipowners. And, as the Dutch Minister of Shipping put it in his broadcast address of 8th June, 1942, for the Dutch seamen's radio programme " De Brandaris," one of the most serious objections to the old state of affairs without a doubt was that " free shipping managements could freely dispose of money earned by ships manned by crews sailing under Government orders under pain of punishment at the daily risk of their lives."

By a Royal Decree of 5th March, 1942, followed by a Ministerial Order of 5th June, practically the whole of the fleet sailing under the Dutch flag—excepted were a few small ships in West Indian waters—were transferred to Government possession. To understand the meaning of this Requisitioning Order the distinction should be noted between requisitioning the services and the possession of the ships, and it should also be noted that it is possible to have possession of a thing without being the owner. Now if the Government takes possession of the fleet, it decides not only the use to be made of the ships, but disposes also of the earnings and other benefits accruing therefrom. In addition the Minister has declared that he proposes—and he will no doubt find the means of carrying out his intention—to investigate to what extent the revenue earned prior to the Requisitioning Order can be transferred to the State.

Dutch seamen have received the announcement of the new Order with satisfaction. Many of them thought : we work the ships, risk our lives, and the owners pocket the profits. Whether that was quite the case is a point for discussion, but there certainly were companies in a position to make profits.

Of great significance in connection with the Order is the declaration of the Government that requisitioning has been applied—to use once more the words of the Minister—in order " to possess the ways and means of maintaining, restoring and safeguarding the position of our merchant fleet in the very difficult post-war periods as effectively as possible, including, be it expressly noted, the social position of the seaman and his dependants." The balance of the revenue is to be applied in the first place to " the building or buying of ships, to ensuring the continued employment under reasonable conditions of the seafarers who at present must risk their lives ; to supporting and protecting the victims who, directly or indirectly, are rendered completely or partially in need of help as a result of the compulsion under the essential works' measure."

The Minister also declared categorically that the interests of the seafarers would not be placed after but treated on a par with those of the shipping industry, a declaration which will give satisfaction not only to those now continue to sail the ships, but particularly

to those remaining behind in Holland, who appreciate at their true value the services Dutch seafarers are rendering in the liberation of the country.

As a result of the Essential Works Order the seamen are now in the service of the Government. This for the present imparts an entirely new character to their legal status. In contrast with the previous state of affairs, the Minister now takes a direct part in the negotiations on working conditions, and if no agreement can be reached on certain points, the Minister of Shipping, or if a very important issue is involved the Government, must come to a decision. This has not made the task of the negotiators easier. On the contrary, the demands made upon them are heavier even than they were. The view that in these times the trade unions have no part to play was and is entirely erroneous and can only be voiced by those either are not of good faith or fail to understand the important function that the trade unions can and should fulfil precisely now in the life of the seafarers. Apart from continuing to defend the acquired rights of the members and to give support to individual members, the trade union has the task of securing human decent conditions in the many directions in which seamen are in a socially inferior position.

Naturally many are wondering what will happen to the merchant navy in the future, but that future lies ahead and is a question which we shall still have occasion to discuss. What the future has in store will of course depend upon the power relationships then existing. But it is evident already that for a considerable period after the war shipping will occupy such an important place that no government will abandon it to unchecked private enterprise.

Voices are of course being raised already against State enterprise. Warnings are uttered about the dangers of excessive bureaucracy and the stifling of private initiative. They enquire whether all officers and seamen are to become government servants and it is suggested that they will not relish being placed in such a " straight-jacket."

It would take us too far to dwell on the question in this article. But one remark we may make is that the Dutch shipping companies could certainly not be said to be free of all bureaucracy. And it may also be said that the conditions which obtained in the shipping industry after the last war were hardly of a nature to make the seamen and officers anxious for a repetition of the said private initiative.

If the seafarers do not wish that after the war their lot will be decided for them without their having any say in the matter, they should make their trade union as strong as possible, because it will be through the trade union that they will have to make their voice heard and exert their influence.

THE SOVIET RAILWAYS IN 1942

By J. H. POTTS

Mr. J. H. Potts visited Soviet Russia in the Spring of 1942 as a representative of the British National Union of Railwaymen. He is a member of the Executive of his Union, and was its President from 1939 to 1941.

The development of the Soviet railways have been of course, seriously hindred by the results of the 1914–1918 war, and the civil war and interventionist war which followed it ; but the early difficulties have been mainly overcome, and progress, particularly since 1935, has been considerable, so that at the time of my visit I found the railways to be in a state of very high efficiency, and standing up well to the strain the present war was placing on them.

While they can hardly be compared, technically, with our railways in Great Britain, there is a great deal that is quite modern and up to date, and much that is really admirable. I recall particularly the automatic marshalling yards I visited at Sverdlovsk. These, like other yards I saw, were operated by compressed air. There were three control towers. The first, situated on the peak of the hump, controlled all the points, and the outstanding feature of this control was that the person in charge—in this instance it was a woman—could issue instructions to engine drivers by wireless, the engines being equipped with the necessary sets. The other two towers were situated one midway on the slope and the other at the base, and these towers controlled the retarders. The capacity of this yard was 5,000 wagons every twenty-four hours.

A striking feature of Soviet Russian railway work—as, indeed, of work in general throughout the Union–is the number of women employed, and the diversity of the jobs they do. As Comrade Tarasov, the President of the Railwaymen's Union, impressed upon me, the Russian railways are employing women in every grade in the service, from porter to general manager. All that was asked was that they should be capable of doing the work and willing to undertake the duties.

This is literally true. While in Moscow I had the privilege of meeting Zinaida Troitskaya, who is at present General Manageress of the Moscow Circuit Railway. She started to work on the railroads in a minor post, but eventually found her way to the footplate, and was the first woman to be drive a locomotive in the U.S.S.R. She proved that women can do this job as well as men, and they are now employed as drivers in large numbers. When I had the opportunity of making a trip in the driver's cab on the Moscow Underground, I found that both the driver and her assistant were women, and I can testify personally to their skill and ability.

All positions on the railways are open to women, and their promotion depends entirely upon skill and ability. They are given the same opportunities as men,

and are paid the same rates of pay. Like the men, they all appear to be trained, further, in one or other of the various branches of defence, i.e. A.R.P., which includes first-aid units, fire-fighting, anti-gas, decontamination, etc.; bomb disposal, reconstruction squads and also anti-aircraft guns. Every railroad depot has a creche, where railwaywomen can leave their children while they carry on with their duties. A visit to several of these creches, and to schools which exist for railwaymen's children, convinced me that the Soviet authorities regard the question of child welfare as one of major importance, and they certainly make a very fine job of it.

Another feature of railway work in the U.S.S.R. is the enthusiasm the railwaymen put into their work, particularly under the stimulus of the war effort. Everybody has heard of the Stakhanovite movement, of the remarkable outputs it produces. I was given many instances. At a locomotive depot I visited in Eugeno a "social competition" was in full swing. The progress of the individual workers, or groups, as the case may be, was prominently displayed on a board in each workshop. My attention was drawn to cases of production being increased by as much as 400 per cent. At one workshop at this depot I was shown a complete armoured train that had been built by the workers in their free time, without payment, and they had also paid for the materials out of their earnings. I saw similar trains, built in the same way, at two other depots. At another locomotive depot, at Novosibirsk, the workers had been awarded the Red Banner, for increasing output nearly 1,000 per cent.

I was told of remarkable results achieved by locomotive drivers and firemen. In one case a driver and firemen had managed to obtain from their engine a total run, heavily laden, of 50,000 miles without replacement of any part. In this connection it should be noted that drivers and assistants remain with their engines throughout. When the engines go into the depots for washing or overhauling the drivers and assistants go with them and share the work.

In conversations with officials of the Railwaymen's Union they were very anxious to know my impressions of Russian railroad organization, and particularly to hear any criticisms I had to make. I answered quite frankly, making the following main points:

(1) Too much single line working. In this connection, however, it is only fair to say that this is being rapidly overcome, and nearly 4,000 kilometres of line already have a second track.

(2) The lack of modern lifting gear in many of the locomotive and carriage and wagon depots.

(3) The necessity for a co-ordinated system of traffic control, such as we have in Great Britain.

(4) The absence of good outside roads leading to and from depots, factories and sidings, etc.

Cultural activities loom largely in the life of the Soviet railwayman. All railway staff has access to reading rooms and libraries, lectures, evening classes, debating clubs, concert halls, etc., which are provided specially for them. In the bigger railway centres these amenities are directly connected with the railway establishments, and the educational and recreational activities are directly linked up with railway work. There are many railwaymen's club houses throughout the country. Not all of them are as spacious as the Railroadmen's House of Art and Culture, in Moscow, with its many reading and lecture rooms, its theatre and concert hall, its ballroom, gymnasium, etc., but all reflect the team spirit that animates a million railwaymen and railwaywomen, whose energy and drive are fully released and given ample elbow-room to make a success of the great job of helping the Red Army.

GERMAN STATE RAILWAYS IN WARTIME

By H. KRAMER

German Railwaymen's Leader

III.

Restricted Services

The exigencies of war have entailed a drastic restriction of passenger and goods services for the general public. A diversion of this traffic to the waterways and highways is not practicable owing to the shortage of fuel and other materials. Motor vehicle traffic has also been greatly curtailed. The motorways are allowed to fall into disrepair. Nevertheless, a certain volume of civilian traffic has to be kept going, in addition to the military traffic, if social chaos is not to supervene. The capacity of the freight service to-day amounts to something like 8,000,000 tons and that of the passenger service to 2,000,000 seats. With the extension of the German railways' radius of operation over the entire European Continent the provision of an adequate service for civilian purposes becomes increasingly impracticable. As once before, every mile farther away from the home base is a mile nearer to defeat.

Intensified Organization

To meet the situation an attempt is made to intensify the organization of the whole system: shortening of the time during which defective locomotives are out of commission, closer overhauling of the condition of rolling stock, braking equipment and axle bearings, provision of sufficient loading and unloading personnel, close supervision of train control at stations, constant vigilance at marshalling yards, full utilization of all gaps in timetables, timely reporting of delays, abolition of Sunday and night rests and of all pauses in the service, settlement of railway personnel in the immediate vicinity, so that they may be available for work at all times. But the question which imposes itself is how an aged personnel which has already endured so much is to bear the increased strain. The answer is that it is a last desperate attempt to cope with the tensions which also in the transport system are nearing the breaking point.

It becomes more and more evident that the transport system is the weakest link in the Nazi war

machine. A war on two fronts on the Continent would sooner or later bring matters to the breaking point. Whereas in Hitler's carefully laid plans the miscalculation was made of neglecting the railways, Russia made her railways the subject of increased attention. Since 1939 3,000 kilometres of double track have been built, and by 1940 some 8,000 new locomotives, 15,000 passenger carriages and 225,000 goods wagons had been ordered and put into service. That explains the magnificent feat of organization presented by the movement of the Russian armies.

From War to Revolution

The German State Railways are the undertaking ripest for conversion to public enterprise. The taking over of the undertaking by the staff at the close of the war would have to be effected simultaneously from below and above. By taking over the industry the staff would assume responsibility for its operation. The key positions in the industry would have to be occupied by completely trustworthy persons. The first act from above would be a service order to all points throughout the system that all posts shall be occupied by the accredited representatives of the staff. With these representatives contacts would be established forthwith. The first step from below would be the immediate appointment of staff representatives locally. These representatives would take over the duties of local supervision themselves or supervise the local official in charge. The local representatives would forthwith enter into contact with one another on a district basis, and through district representation contacts would be established between divisions and via the divisions with the central headquarters, along the lines of the existing division of the State Railways into Head Administration, Divisional Administrations, District and Local Administration.

Once the railway industry has been taken over by the staff, complete with equipment and properties, and its control and functioning assured, attention will be devoted to its relations with other sectors of the new order. Elections will be organized for the governing bodies. Maritime shipping, inland navigation, highway passenger and goods transport and air transport will be grouped with the railways in a main sector "Transport." Parallel with this development other key industries and services, such as banking, public administration, post office and telegraphs and telephones will be taken over and incorporated into the new economic system. All these measures presuppose the elimination of the influence of capitalist, landowning and officers circles. The elimination of these influences at the same time afford a guarantee for a durable peace and working-class progress.

The Future

To the Nazi plan for the enslavement of Europe we must oppose our plan for the peaceful development of the European Continent. The reorganization of transport must be ultimately conceived from the standpoint of welfare principles and of men living in peaceful communication with one another. The authority of the states in transport questions must be passed to a supra-national authority guaranteeing observance of the principles referred to and equipped with the requisite powers for the purpose. That presupposes that the greatest factor for peace, the organized working class, must be given a share in the building, operation, administration and management of the supra-national organization. Within the framework of the scheme there would also exist great opportunities for absorbing by gigantic reconstruction schemes the mass unemployment which would otherwise prevail upon the cessation of war activities.

LABOUR RELATIONS IN CANADA

By A. R. MOSHER

President of the Canadian Congress of Labour and of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees

II.

Principles that "should" Govern. If these principles were made mandatory, with suitable penalties for non-observance by employers, the morale of the organized workers of Canada would be tremendously improved, and the possibilities of securing harmony in employer-employee relationships would be greatly enhanced. Certainly some of the serious strikes which have occurred during the past year would not have taken place if this had been done. There has been widespread criticism of the action taken by the government in making a gesture of this sort, which, so far as practical effects are concerned, is utterly meaningless. It was assumed by the workers when the Order-in-Council was passed that it established a policy which the government would enforce, but employers generally paid no attention to it. Strong protests to the government, in which the futility of such a "declaration" was stressed, have been of no avail; the Order-in-Council is not legislation at all; in fact, it is the only Order-in-Council, out of many thousands passed since the outbreak of war, which uses the word "should" in place of the imperative "shall." In fact, the then Minister of Labour stated in the House of Commons that it was intended to be merely a "recommendation" to employers.

Any hope of effective assistance from the government in cases where employers were bitterly opposed to attempts to organize were doomed to disappointment, and there has been no improvement in their attitude. Any expansion of organization into new fields was met with the well-known devices of the employer to head off organization by the formation of

company unions, the dismissal or, in exceptional cases, the promotion of leaders, and the sudden arbitrary improvement of wages and working conditions to relieve discontent.

War-time Wage Policy. There is grave uncertainty as to the effects of the war-time wage-policy, as laid down in two Orders-in-Council, upon the Labour movement and upon the interests of the workers generally resulting in a consequent state of unrest and insecurity which retards the attainment of our most important industrial war-objective, maximum production.

The advisability of action to prevent inflation through extreme increases in wages and prices is admitted by everyone, but the common assumption that wage-increases necessarily involve price increases to a proportionate or greater degree is unsound as a general proposition, and while the control of prices may properly be exercised by government, at the very least provision should have been made for the determination of wages by means of collective bargaining, up to an amount sufficient to maintain health and decency. At present, wage-levels, which in many instances were established in the depression years, and which are obviously inadequate to provide proper standards of living, have been "frozen" for the duration of the war, and thus an unequal and wholly injustifiable proportion of the burden imposed by the war rests upon these workers.

This drastic legislation was passed by the government within a few days prior to the assembling of Parliament, and there was no consultation of Labour.

The Representation of Labour. The organized workers of Canada believe that they have ample justification for a deep distrust of the government's policy or lack of policy with regard to Labour. The central Labour bodies, in June, 1940, asked the Prime Minister for adequate representation on boards, commissions, etc. As a result, the National Labour Supply Council was set up by an Order-in-Council which accompanied the famous order embodying the government's Labour policy. This Council, which has apparently ceased to function but has not been disbanded, was used as a consultative body whenever the government wished to have its Labour policies rubber-stamped beforehand; in many instances, however, it was not consulted at all, and little or no attention was paid to its recommendations. This Council has apparently been superseded by the National War Labour Board established later.

Labour is represented equally with industry on both the National and the Regional War Labour Boards, but there are various policy-making bodies, such as the Labour Co-ordination Committee and committees such as those in control of steel and automobile production, on which Labour is not represented at all. The general policy seems to be that the government policies affecting industry should be determined by government officials and industrial executives, while the workers who have invested their lives in the industry and whose labour must be presumed to be an important factor in production are utterly ignored.

Concluded.

ARGENTINE WORKERS *HATE* HITLERISM

By JOSE DOMENECH

Secretary, General Confederation of Labour of Argentina

The Argentine working class is the enemy of the wretched totalitarian adventurers who have plunged the world into this terrible maelstrom of destruction. Of this there should be no doubt.

At the conference of the International Labour Organization in New York last autumn I had the opportunity of making clear the position of Argentine labour with respect to the present war. I said:

"On one side we see the dictatorial system of Nazism and Fascism, and on the other side the liberal and democratic opinion of the world. Although we are removed from the scene of actual combat, the workers of Argentina have expressed with energy and clarity their solidarity with those who are defending democracy and liberty.

"This support is not by any means a merely sentimental expression of the workers of Argentina. On the contrary, it is based on all the traditions of our country and on the principles which have always animated the great men of Argentina."

Labour's worst enemies are the dictators. When dictatorship triumphs the workers lose their freedom of action, their right to assemble, their right to organize trade unions, their right to build libraries and cultural centres. Under totalitarian rule the workers are converted into cannon fodder, they are made to endure hunger and privation, they are forced to work to the point of utter collapse. The dictators are expert at the exploitation of labour.

Generally speaking, labour has always been strongly opposed to war. War brings misery. In a few days the fire and steel of war destroys the products of labour's sweat and skill. Labour has no fondness for war.

But this war is different from previous wars. In this war we find totalitarian leaders, having imposed slavery upon their own peoples, determined to achieve mastery of the whole world. Free men are not willing to permit the totalitarians to attain their goal, which would spell the humiliation of slavery for the conquered. Labour has made up its mind that those who pretend that it is their destiny to subjugate the earth shall be thwarted in their nefarious plans.

The trade unions of Argentina have repeatedly expressed their condemnation of the aggressions of the Nazis and the Fascists and have manifested their adherence to the cause of the free nations which are fighting the enemies of civilization and defending the lives and honour of all the decent people of the world.

WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR IN ASIA?

AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST'S QUESTIONS AND WARNING

Ramond Clapper, one of the best known American journalists, has returned to the U.S.A. after a tour of Asia. In the magazine „ Look " he wrote the following appeal for a new United Nations policy towards the exploited peoples of the East.

The colonial peoples of the Far East don't know why we are fighting in Asia—and they won't fight for us until they get an honest promise of freedom when this war is won.

Recently I returned from Asia deeply troubled by one thing. Wherever Japanese armies have gone, except in China, the Phillippines and some Indies islands, they have had either passive or active help from native populations.

It was so in Thailand, Indo-China, Malaya and Singapore. Even as I write this, with Japan's conquest of Burma at its climax, Burmese are helping the invaders. In India, worried officials anticipate that a portion of the population would welcome invasion.

It is not only our allies who are the victims of this sullen attitude. Even now, as the United States is trying to assist India in preparing for defence, we hear murmurs of apprehension. We hear Gandhi declaring he does not like a stream of soldiers from America pouring into India. He says he fears it will lead to American influence if not American rule in India.

Something is wrong. Something is gravely wrong when Japan, with the blood of decades on its hands—with the cruel conquests of Korea serving only as a prelude to its rape in China—is welcomed by its next victims and when, in the fact of this threat, even the intentions of the United States are viewed with suspicion.

We are not doing ourselves justice, and neither are the United Nations, by permitting this misunderstanding to continue. It is interfering with winning the war and it threatens to poison the peace. It interferes with

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Argentine Workers Hate Hitlerism—*continued.*

The unions of my country are satisfied that democracy is the only system of government that is favourable to union organization and development. We of Argentina appreciate that it is in a democracy that we can join together as we like, give free expression to our ideas and hopes, contend for improved living and working conditions and move toward larger and more fruitful vistas.

The General Confederation of Labour, the national workers' organization of Argentina, has raised its voice at various times in protest against and condemnation of the inhuman outrages of the Nazi-Fascists. The Confederation has made its views known in clear and hard-hitting resolutions. These have always been received favourably by the public.

The General Confederation of Labour has not only adopted resolutions blasting the aggressors but it has also organized great public demonstrations which have had important national repercussions. The last of these was held last August in our Luna Park Stadium. The seating capacity of the stadium is great, but that day the place was jammed to overflowing and huge throngs filled the adjacent streets. Crowds came to Buenos Aires in special trains for the event. In accordance with a recommendation of the General Confederation of Labour, work was suspended throughout the country while the meeting was in progress. The great crowd took a solemn oath to defend Argentina and to keep it free and " as we love it."

La Nacion, the famous newspaper, commented :

" This meeting is the most eloquent manifestation of unity in the face of the problems which trouble Argentina to-day since the war began. Initiated by the most powerful workers' organization, this gathering was converted into a national event. With a clear consciousness of the gravity of the hour, the multitude yesterday decided to follow the path of liberty blazed by the founding fathers of our nation."

A few months after this event the Americas seethed with indignation at the Japanese double-cross. Once again the Axis had shown its capacity for stupendous treachery and its absolute contempt for the standards of ordinary decency in relations among nations. This stab in the back served to open the eyes of those who still believed geography made America safe from aggression to the realities of the historic moment in which we live.

I believe it appropriate to reproduce the cable sent December 11th to the great President of the United States, the text of which is similar to the messages sent to the American Federation of Labour and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Our cable to Mr. Roosevelt said :

" The General Confederation of Labour of the Republic of Argentina, aware of the difficult hour through which the world has been made to pass by the repeated totalitarian aggressions, has the honour to send you the most cordial expressions of constant American solidarity. This solidarity will be maintained by the workers of Argentina. Civilization must triumph over barbarism.

" With this testimony of ours, accept most excellent President of this great sister Republic, our aroused salute to the Americans and to democracy."

We do not know who will be the next target with the further extension of the world conflict, but we do know that we can have confidence that America will fulfill her duty to the end.

The masses of American wage-earners understand that a great deal of work is necessary in order to win the war and, later, the peace.

Labour wishes to insure liberty, democracy and justice and to guarantee that mankind does not return to the dark ages. Labour is fighting with profound faith and determined spirit in defense of these principles, which alone make life worthwhile.

We of the United Nations have an Atlantic Charter —for Europe. What we need is a World Charter for

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winning the war by causing the native peoples to aid the enemy. It threatens to poison the peace because no good peace can rest on the shoulders of sullen and suspicious populations.

We—and everyone—must know what our war aims are in Asia. And we must know now.

Are we fighting Japanese imperialism merely to restore the old Western imperialism in East Asia ? If we're not, it's time to say so right now.

Just what are we fighting for ? As to Europe, the aims of the United Nations are clear. Free countries have been conquered by Hitler. Our victory will restore to them their soil, their right to govern themselves, their opportunity to play a part in a free, peaceful community of nations.

But in Asia, the defeat of Japan is not enough for us to promise. What the peoples of East Asia want to know is whether this is a war to destroy Japanese imperialism merely for the sake of restoring Western imperialism. They suspect it is.

Many of them, therefore, are ready to use Japan as an instrument for throwing off the yoke of the West. That they would be saddled with something worse under Japan is a danger that still seems remote to them. In any event, they say : " If we must live under a foreign master, we don't much care which foreign master it is. All of them look bad to us."

Asia for all Asiatics—Not only the Japanese. Until the colonial peoples of Asia are convinced that defeat for Japan means freedom for themselves and not a restoration of the old imperialisms, they will have little heart for a war against Japanese aggression.

They have little heart for battle now. The fault is not theirs alone ; it lies with the United Nations. We must correct it.

And it cannot be corrected solely by a military victory. Take India, for example. For nearly 100 years, England has been militarily supreme there, but during all that period the movement for Indian independence grew. It is stronger now than ever. It will grow, regardless of how the war ends. All over Asia is the same urge. Japan uses it shrewdly by identifying with it her fake slogan of " Asia for the Asiatics."

Even in China there is firm determination to be rid of foreign controls. China, once victorious, will never go back to foreign courts, foreign control of Hong Kong, foreign control of customs revenues, foreign control of the huge " international settlements " which dominated so much of its economy and industrial life.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek expressed the new spirit when she said to me in Chungking : " China is through with that sort of thing forever."

Few Americans, if I know them, are interested in dying to restore nineteenth-century imperialism in Asia. Neither is any such aim consistent with the spirit of the Atlantic Charter. The United Nations stand for a free Europe, for the right of every nation to conduct its own internal affairs and for the right of all, collectively, to stand against any aggression.

It is not going to be easy to apply these aims to Asia. But it must be done. If we are to spike the guns of Japanese propaganda and win the support of Asia's peoples, we must tell them that our victory means their freedom.

And we must convince them of our sincerity. There must be no weasel words, no exceptions. What is holding back such a declaration of independence for Asia ? Selfishness ? Pride ? Face ? It is true that freedom for Asia means drastic readjustments for nations whose economies rest on colonial empires there. But the sacrifices they would have to make are more apparent than real. No matter what happens, drastic readjustments will be necessary. Japan has snatched a good deal of those empires away already.

And more than that. Japan snatched away the mighty force of white prestige. That probably can never be fully recovered.

Time doesn't move Backward. Subject populations who have seen their rulers driven out would less likely be willing subjects if those rulers tried to return. Any attempt to repair the structure of those shaky Oriental empires would have to rest on force to a far greater degree than before.

Such is the outlook for Malaya, Burma, India, Indo-China, the Netherlands Indies and Thailand, all of which were either open or disguised imperial domains. Whether the imperialists like it or not, a new world is being born in Asia. And that new world will be born, with or without benefit of clergy.

Argentine Workers Hate Hitlerism—*continued.*

Asia and Europe. Asia presents problems as difficult as any found in Europe—if not more difficult. Some areas in Asia are not ready for self-government. Some sort of outside guidance for the peoples of these areas will be needed.

But, in such cases, colonial policy should be determined and executed by the United Nations as a group, rather than by one imperialist nation. The aim here must be the same as in the areas which are capable of self-government. It must not be exploitation for outside profit. It must be development of each area in the way that will most benefit its own people. This means that whatever special resources—oil, rubber, tin or rice—each area may possess must be available to all the world on equal terms.

We must not be diverted from our goal of a free Asia by the certainty that some of its peoples will not adopt political democracy. For one thing, the populations are not educated or trained in democratic methods. Secondly their leaders may be unwilling to submit to the slow processes of democracy and prefer the short cuts of dictatorship to raise their standards of living.

No one will claim that Russia could have industrialised under democratic methods as under the high-pressure drive of Stalin. Asiatic countries desiring to make a quick transition are likely to be impressed by Russia's experience.

Certainly China is not a democracy in any sense that we recognise so far as mechanics of government

Read, Reflect and Write to Us

The purpose of this column is to provoke thought on world problems and those of our own movement, and will contain matter from all parts of the world. This matter will be presented as it was served up, whether you or we like it or not. We are not responsible for the views expressed and for the present pass no comment thereon. It will be selected because it gives evidence of perceiving a problem, because it is calculated to provoke thought. and because it may contribute towards a clarification of thought.

Readers are invited to write to us, briefly and clearly, their views on the matter we publish.

We reprint first a statement made by Theodor Dan, Russian Socialist leader in excile and formerly a member of the Executive Committee of the Second International.

The destiny of the future peace depends upon the social forces that shape the peace.

Peace will not last if, after the present war, human society is again ruled by social forces that place the preservation of property and profit over the interests of men, and the principle of competition among individuals, groups, classes, races, and nations over the principle of human solidarity. Under such conditions it would be impossible to find forms of organization that would enable diplomacy, the new League of Nations, and the police force at its disposal to act as agents of peace and freedom.

The present war has tied with unbreakable bonds the countries of the world, and it has revealed so clearly the connection between their form of government and the menace of war that talk about " non-intervention " cannot be taken in earnest. As a matter of fact, " non-intervention " has always been a delusive phrase. The only thing that has mattered is the question how and for what purpose to " intervene."

Brute force is not always needed for this ; the German and Austrian Socialist revolutions of 1918-19 were not strangled by military intervention but by economic pressure. With them the new-born democracy was strangled, too ; the way for Hitler was paved ; and war became inevitable.

Fascism in all its varieties cannot be uprooted from European soil without a European revolution, and to-day even more than in 1918-19 this revolution can be only a Socialist revolution. Will this European revolution be smothered by military force or economic pressure, or will the tremendous military and economic resources of the victors help it ? Not the academic question of the " right of intervention in internal affairs " but the how and the purpose of intervention, a question vital for freedom and peace, will become pressing as the military collapse of Hitler draws nearer. The way this problem is solved will decide whether we shall have only a short respite before the outbreak of World War III.

After the foregoing we should like to reproduce from ,, The Chicago Federation News '' of the American Federation of Labour an article entitled ,, The Real Leaders of Labour,'' dealing with an important problem of our movement.

The real leader of labour is a man who knows that he is no greater than those whom he represents, that he is a guide not a master, that his post is not for his own aggrandizement but for the betterment of those whom he serves.

There is a great need for able labour leaders to-day—for men who can be selfless enough to stand firm for the right, who can prove the strength of democratic processes. The standard for leaders must be high. Mediocre men at the helm might mean disaster in the hour of crisis.

There is room at the top for those men of action who can dream dreams and see visions and yet keep their feet on the ground.

The real labour leader knows that the ability that has lifted him up as a leader means simply that his responsibilities are greater, and he must wear the mantle of responsibility with that humility which is the true sign of strength.

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go. Yet in spirit, in purposes, in outlook on life China is high among the nations with which we feel a close spiritual kinship.

Here's a Gauge to Measure Asia. For the purposes of the United Nations, the test must be whether a nation is ready to confine itself to peaceful methods ; whether it is ready to take part in a world community of nations ; whether it will share the common burden of standing guard against threatened aggression.

It is a necessary test, easy to apply in Europe. It is equally necessary to apply it in Asia, however great the difficulties. For the United Nations to wait until the war is over to decide what we stand for in Asia is to invite the world disintegration of 1918 all over again. We've got to make up our minds now.

We've got to free the peoples capable of self-government and guide the others towards self-government. Unless we set up United Nations machinery now to do these things, the natural impulse of every nation when the war ends will be to try to win back its colonies.

Whatever the difficulties in the way of action now, however reluctant some may be to move now, such difficulties and reluctance will grow as victory comes into sight. Delay puts the millions of South-East Asia on the enemy's side. And he is using them to advantage every day.

The one person who can be most effective in initiating such Far Eastern statesmanship through the United Nations is President Roosevelt.

We have no colonies in Asia. We have already agreed to withdraw from the Philippines. The fighting assistance the Filipinos have given us is the fruit of our good faith.

We are investing heavily in Asia—men, machines, and money. All we want out of that investment is an orderly world, one that will settle down to developing a higher standard of living ; one in which vital raw materials will be open to all ; one in which the nations will join in common resistance to any future aggression.

We are not imperialistic. We know that. But Asia doesn't know it. Asia still sees us preserving a state of affairs that it resents.

If we stand for Freedom, Let's say so. The United States and the United Nations stand for freedom and the dignity of man. Vast numbers of people in England are eager to see their government change its policy towards India. There is deep sentiment among the Free French, also a conviction that times have changed and that the old yoke doesn't fit any more.

But most of us—and that includes our leaders of the United Nations—have been too busy fighting a desperate battle to have time to think what the battle is really for.

It is time now to think and to bring forth the promise of freedom as a new weapon and to set it up as a new beacon. It is time to make the real spirit which lies in the heart of the United Nations the new light of Asia.

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