



# INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS JOURNAL

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## Affiliated Unions :

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ARGENTINA  
AUSTRALIA  
BELGIUM  
CANADA  
CHILE  
CHINA  
DENMARK  
DUTCH EAST INDIES  
DUTCH GUIANA  
FINLAND  
FRANCE  
GREAT BRITAIN  
GREECE  
HOLLAND  
HUNGARY  
ICELAND  
INDIA  
INDO-CHINA  
IRELAND  
ITALY  
KENYA  
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CZECHOSLOVAKIA  
GERMANY  
JAPAN  
PORTUGAL  
SPAIN  
and other countries

## MANIFESTO

### To the Transport Workers of the World.

**A**FTER a forced interval of nearly five years, during which one free country after another succumbed under the onslaught of Axis aggression, the Executive of the Transport Workers' International meets again.

The war has entered its final phase and the military doom of Germany is sealed. To make that phase as short as possible, and to smash the German war machine for all time, the efforts of the United Nations must be sustained until the goal of victory has been reached. In this effort the newly liberated countries must take their full share.

The struggle against Fascism will not finish with the war ; it will have to be carried on with all the forces that Progress can muster until the evil is eradicated in all its forms and manifestations. This makes it imperative that the workers of all countries should be united in powerful national trade unions co-operating closely on the international plane and inspired by the principle of International Solidarity : All for One and One for All.

It is in this spirit that the war-ravaged regions must be restored and economic activity resumed by co-operation between the peace-loving peoples of the world. With the enormous powers of production which exist in the world, this restoration can be accomplished in a short period of time, on the basis of honourable international co-operation between the peoples, provided that the common welfare is placed in the foreground and the common effort is not hampered by sectional interests. By participation in the common effort the idea of international solidarity will be strengthened also between the peoples at war.

The I.T.F. has carried on during the war, though on a restricted scale, but now that the tide has turned and those who unleashed World War No. 2 are hurled back on all fronts, the time approaches when the international activity of the transport workers, as a vital section of the working class, may be resumed with greater vigour.

When Poland was added to the list of victims of Nazi aggression in September, 1939, the I.T.F. without hesitation ranged itself at the side of the Allies. Thus it continued its long uncompromising struggle against National Socialism, the arch-enemy of the freedom of the peoples and of trade unionism in particular, and added its efforts to those of the valorous Armies, Navies and Air Forces of the United Nations and of the undaunted fighters of the underground movement.

The I.T.F. is eager to play its part also during the period that lies ahead, by giving every possible aid in the redevelopment of free internationally minded trade unions of transport workers. Backed in its turn by the transport workers unions, it will be able to extend its range to the maximum. Already the first steps have been taken in this direction, successively, in liberated North Africa, Italy and France, where transport workers unions exist again and have taken their place in the international.

Transport workers share the aspirations which to-day live in all sections of the peoples : democratic forms of government, freedom of association, self-determination for the nations, co-operation between the peoples for the

advancement of prosperity everywhere, lasting peace on the basis of collective security, full employment and social security for all, higher standards of living, and the greatest possible standardization of conditions of employment.

The existence of a powerful, world-wide Transport Workers' International, duly represented on the International machinery to be created for settling the problems of the post-war world, is the best guarantee that this section of the working class will do its part in the shaping of things to come and ensuring for the peoples a full measure of Freedom and Welfare and a Lasting Peace.

The Executive Committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation :

Ch. Lindley (Sweden), President.  
 J. Marchbank (Great Britain), Vice-President.  
 R. Bratschi (Switzerland).  
 Ch. Garcias (France).  
 T. Gómez (Spain).  
 J. H. Oldenbroek, Acting General Secretary.

London, 26 November, 1944.

## —FULL SPEED AHEAD!

By J. H. OLDENBROEK

*Acting General Secretary of the I.T.F.*

War is a stern judge, who without pity pronounces judgment on the life of international organizations. An international organism is for the most part still a tender plant, in need of constant cherishing by those who brought it into being and wish to keep it alive. War means the interruption of normal relations between the countries, and as the interruption is prolonged, the scope for international work contracts, the soil in which the tender plant grows dries up more and more. Practical work, which must be the solid foundation of international co-operation, comes to a standstill.

For most international bodies, in consequence, the war period is like a winter sleep, the awakening from which must coincide with the advent of peace in a new world.

Deep must be the feelings of international fellowship and great the belief and confidence in its principles, activities and future, if an International is to survive the test of war without too serious shocks. This belief and confidence must in the first place live in those who were affiliated before the war or become affiliated while it rages, but also it is desirable that the International should be able to win the confidence of those whose future co-operation is needed, indeed indispensable, for the successful accomplishment of the tasks to be undertaken. For war creates new power relationships, and an International which failed to recognize the fact would soon come to grief. At the same time, international co-operation, like any other form of co-operation, must be based on common interests and directed at the attainment of common ends.

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When we have made the above reflections, may we of the I.T.F. conclude that our International is destined to continue its work after the war? To answer in the affirmative we start from the statement that before and during the war the I.T.F. filled an existing need, that it has done its duty, and that there will be a task for it to perform in the future.

The Secretariat of the I.T.F. may consider itself released from the duty of substantiating the statement. For that has been done by the Executive Committee of the I.T.F., which met in London from the 24th to 26th November, 1944, in a fully attended session, with the accessible regular and deputy members of the General Council also present. This meeting of the Executive Committee, the most representative gathering that could be held in the circumstances—and incidentally the first really authoritative international trade union meeting since 1940—testified to a unanimous will to hold high the banner of the I.T.F.; to enable it to extend its activities to their former amplitude; and to convene an International Transport Workers' Congress at the earliest possible date permitted by circumstances.

It has been without doubt due to the renown which it built up before the war under the leadership of Edo Fimmen, and to its manifold activities during the war both in support of the war effort and on behalf of its affiliates, that the I.T.F. has forfeited none of its authority. Moreover, the unions affiliated with the I.T.F. showed themselves loyal to the International, by enabling it to continue its work on a considerable scale in the midst of war and refraining from anything calculated to damage its prestige.

The fact that some eleven unions have joined the I.T.F. during the war, from nine different countries, may be quoted as an achievement unrivalled in the international movement and as proof that the I.T.F. has lost none of its appeal.

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The Executive Committee of the I.T.F. did not confine itself to taking decisions concerning administrative measures. It gave attention also to the future development of the I.T.F. It assumed that the trade union movement will everywhere enter a phase of great expansion, that under the impact of the war there will be, in non-working class circles, too, a deepening of social

consciousness and an eagerness for economic reforms. The Executive Committee considered that it was the duty of the trade unions to provide the leadership in the struggle against social insecurity and misery, and that it was necessary to seek contact with such groups as the self-employed, smallholders and tenant farmers, as well as with those of technicians, scientific workers and others who, although in paid employment, have remained aloof from the trade unions. Demands for full employment, social security, increased production, raising of the national income and its redistribution by means of equitable taxation, will evoke a powerful popular movement.

The Executive Committee also gave careful consideration to the nature and the foundations of international collaboration, and the conclusions it arrived at may be summarized as follows:

(1) The task of the I.T.F. and of the international trade union movement as a whole is to build up a powerful force capable of playing its role in shaping the future as far as international implications are concerned. The I.T.F. will support the forces—governments or political groupings—which defend the interests of the workers and stand for sincere international co-operation, liberation of all oppressed peoples, the establishment of a lasting peace, and the destruction of militarism. Such objectives can best be promoted by the existence of independent international movements, each making its own appeal to public opinion, using its own resources, and acting on its own account to bring about the ends in view.

(2) An international trade union organization is an aggregation of national trade union organizations whose significance is determined by a variety of factors. It would be contrary to the spirit of international trade union work if not all the affiliated countries had the opportunity of taking a direct share in the making of decisions.

(3) The I.T.F. emphasizes that in its ranks there is room, on a footing of equality, for all countries eligible for affiliation, regardless whether they belonged to the United Nations, the Neutrals or the Axis.

(4) Eligible for affiliation are only free trade unions; that is, trade unions free from outside control, whether that control be exerted by government, political party or any other agency.

(5) The I.T.F. must make every effort to become more than has ever been the case before a worldwide organization, with regional sub-divisions and regional secretariats.

(6) The I.T.F. insists on respect for divergent opinions and abstention from any attempt to impose a point of view on a country or an organization because that point of view has been adopted or put into effect in another country. It is only through co-operation within the I.T.F. that it will be possible—after a due lapse of time—to arrive at a common point of view.

(7) The organizations affiliated with the I.T.F. should be prepared to act together for the realization of a

common programme, without renouncing their autonomy and their right to play, in their respective spheres, the role corresponding to their conceptions and to the trade union development and political temper of their countries.

(8) An international programme has to be drawn up in broad lines. It must be more than the highest common factor, that is to say, it must not be content with the position reached in the least advanced country, but on the other hand it may not be so ambitious that conditions which even the most advanced have failed to achieve after years of struggle set the standard for the programme. The trade union must, indeed, keep its regard on the future, but also it must act in the present and make its contribution towards the solving of problems as they present themselves.

(9) Apart from a common world programme, it will no doubt be possible, by means of trade union groupings in certain zones and parts of the world, to elaborate regional programmes which, while in harmony with the general programme as formulated from time to time, take into account the special economic and political conditions of the regions concerned.

(10) International policy is not merely an attempt to find a common denominator for the national policies, or rather the foreign policies of different countries. International policy must spring, not merely from a fear of violence, but from a willingness to sacrifice at the shrine of international fellowship and international co-operation. International policy must be a prelude to world policy.

Thus the Executive Committee, in virtue of its powers, has formulated the task and policy of the I.T.F. in the present phase. May it give occasion to affiliated unions to strengthen their relations with the Secretariat and to unaffiliated unions to seek membership of the International, so that the I.T.F. may be made able and ready to resume its important mission on the broadest possible basis.

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*The life of the entire world has been profoundly affected. Every part of the great family of mankind has felt the burden and terror of this unprecedented contest of arms. No nation in the civilized world can be said in truth to stand outside its influence or to be safe against its disturbing effects. And yet the concrete objects for which it is being waged have never been definitely stated.*

*. . . Never yet have the authoritative spokesmen . . . avowed the precise objects which would, if attained, satisfy them and their people that the war had been fought out. The world has been left to conjecture what definite results, what actual exchange of guarantees, what political or territorial changes or readjustments, what stage of military success even, would bring the war to an end.*

*President Woodrow Wilson on December 18th, 1916.*



## PROSPECTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

By T. GÓMEZ

*Member of the Executive Committee of the I.T.F.*

Whatever the position that may be taken up, when the war ends, by the mentors and rulers of the capitalist régime, there is not the slightest doubt that the working class, through its political and trade union organizations, will have much more say in political affairs in the several countries, which means that they will also have much more say in international politics. What is still unknown at the present moment is the degree, the measure in which the working class, and consequently its parties and trade union organizations, will win a voice in affairs, or be obliged to accept it, as the case may be. This will depend on factors which are still hidden, but which will no doubt reveal themselves once an end has been made to the present struggle. Only then, when there is no longer the danger of propaganda hampering the common effort to win the war; when the totalitarian régimes, who are alone to blame for the fact that the war was ever declared; only then shall we be able to speak and write freely, which is the same thing as to speak and write clearly, about the several responsibilities of each and every one in the generation of the bloodiest and most devastating conflict that history records. Nevertheless, without fear of falling into the sin of exaggeration one can assume that the working class is destined to make its influence felt on a grand scale.

Now any intervention of the working class in the politics of their respective countries also involves intervention in international politics, and this in turn involves at least the intention to bring about as wide-spread and deeply-rooted a transformation of former policy, that is to say the policy directed and carried out by the capitalist class, as the economic conditions of society and the constructive capacity of the agencies the working class possesses may permit. Any participation by the working class in the politics of their countries, either on a national or international scale, that does not aim to cause a fatal wound to the privileges which can only exist at the cost of the interests of society in general, and those of the workers of all trades in particular, is inevitably doomed to failure, and to have regrettable repercussions upon the parties and other organizations of the proletariat. Such participation is quite useless, and is not even worth trying. To put things still more clearly, any intervention by the working class that is to produce results must imply a definite intention to transform the present system of production and distribution, in the sense of increasing production in a rational manner and to the extent necessary to cover all requirements, and of distributing equitably the wealth created. Without falling into too many illusions, we organized workers should aim to get our trade unions to play in the economic life of the peoples the same rôle that our parties play in the political field, and if we are to achieve this aim we must prepare for it. Let us not forget that while in politics things are

nearly always what they ought not to be, in the field of economics that which ought not to be is not, in the long run at any rate, even though we may endeavour to bring it about.

Preparing ourselves for the test which awaits us means that every trade union organization must have a clear idea of what has to be done, in its own field of activity, to raise production to the level of requirements for consumption, so that a harmonic plan may be drawn up, jointly with other trade union organizations, under which the national interest may prevail in so far as it is limited to one country, and the common interests of all countries when the matter appertains to the international field. Preparation means setting up trade unions where there are none, or perfecting their structure and functions where they do exist, endowing them with the necessary means to tackle the new and complicated tasks which lie before us. It must be admitted that the immense majority of the trade union organizations of the working class in general, those of the transport workers included, lack the equipment needed for a task such as that I have outlined. It is true that generally speaking the organizations that constitute the basis of the International Transport Workers' Federation are well equipped to defend successfully the moral and economic rights of their members, and that on very many occasions they have given proof of their fighting power and even of their capacity for soundly reasoned criticism. But not all the unions which compose the I.T.F. can claim to be in such a desirable and hopeful position, and such as are will not suffice to enable us to overcome the obstacles that will pile up before us in the very near future. We have no alternative, therefore, but to accept the responsibility as a duty, and make it an obligation to increase our capacity.

Obsessed by these thoughts, I came recently to London to attend the meetings of the Executive Committee of the I.T.F. I expected to find our International on its feet, in spite of the ravages the war and its consequences must inevitably have caused in the ranks of its leaders and its affiliated organizations, but what I did not expect to find was that in addition to still existing, the pulse of our International was beating with greater vigour and vitality than ever. I expected to give my approval to the activities, and conduct, of men and organizations long known to me, during the period since 1940, when I was cut off from them, until to-day. But between this expectation and what I have now had occasion to learn there is a difference for which we must thank the capabilities and efforts of the men who have guided the destinies of our International, in whatever capacity, and which it is desirable to point out, not only in the interests of justice, but because it is of the highest importance for the purposes of our organization.

## LABOUR AND POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

By AL. ADAMCZYK

*President of the Polish Transport Workers' Union*

It is imperative that Labour participate in all international conferences dealing with post-war reconstruction. The workers of the world must take an active interest in the plans being made, since upon their ultimate outcome depends, not only a lasting peace, but social and economic security for all workers.

Unfortunately, the part played by representatives of Labour in these conferences, thus far, has been very small. Should this situation continue, Labour will be faced with highly unpleasant consequences. A "taste of things to come" was recently provided by the Dumbarton Oaks Conference of the "Big Four"—U.S.A., Great Britain, U.S.S.R. and China—which ended in October, 1944. Here, proposals were brought forth for the establishing of a general international organization, under the title "United Nations," which would ensure a lasting peace. The proposals are now being considered by the four Governments, with a view to completing several topics left for further consideration. The completed proposals will then be formally submitted to the various Governments to serve as a basis for discussion at a full United Nations Conference, where the Charter of the Organization will be drawn up. The Charter would be subject to ratification by the signatory states in accordance with their constitutional processes.

Any efforts tending to the stabilization of peace are, of course, warmly welcomed by Labour. The Dumbarton Oaks Conference is undoubtedly a big stride forward in

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The preparatory work done by the Secretariat, by the Management Committee and by the more responsible officials is a proof that the I.T.F. is fully qualified for activities of the kind I have described, and also that it not only knows what it wants, but knows how to get it. It is the more meritorious in that it points out what the I.T.F. ought to do, and does not fail to indicate what requirements must still be satisfied if it is to achieve its aims. It is a job that lends them authority while it loads them with responsibilities. You fellow-transportworkers, whatever your country, who under present war conditions are still able to carry on your trade union activities, you have had a share, in some cases a very large share, in bringing about this state of vitality and power which, as if by a miracle, has preserved our International. And many an effort will still be required of you before the mass of the organizations that formerly belonged to the I.T.F., and still have not lost their affection for it, are also able to contribute to its greater glory. Do not spare your efforts to carry through the programme which our International has set as its aim. To work for and serve an organization of its merits is not only a duty, it is a pleasure and a privilege.

that direction. Nevertheless, the agreement drafted at the Conference is far from being perfect and requires many elucidations and supplements. This article is restricted to one problem only, that, which is covered by Chapter IX of the proposed agreement.

According to the present draft, the organization would have as its purpose the creation of conditions of stability and well-being, which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations. It should facilitate solutions of international, economic, social and other humanitarian problems and promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It would also be given the task of recommending the co-ordination of the activities of international organizations and agencies which may be brought into relationship with the Organizations. These would include organizations such as the projected United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, the International Labour Organization, the proposed International Monetary Fund, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It would also most probably include other specialized agencies in the field of education, cultural co-operation, health, etc.

Under the authority of a General Assembly, an "Economic and Social Council" would be empowered to consider, not only an enumerated list of problems in the field of economic and social co-operation, as was the League of Nations, but to facilitate solution of problems in this field generally. In contrast to the League, which provided for placing only existing international bureaus under the direction of the League, the present proposals provide that each specialized economic, social and other organization or agency, existing or projected, should be brought into relationship with the new organization on "mutually agreeable terms." The plan anticipates the participation in deliberations of the "Council" of organizations or agencies, including the I.L.O., but without vote.

We must be fully aware of the issues involved, since regulation of social problems on an international scale lies within the competency of the I.L.O. The draft is such as to imply that the functions heretofore performed by the I.L.O. would, in future, be subordinated to the proposed "Economic and Social Council." As is generally known, the I.L.O. is comprised of representatives of Governments as well as employers and workers of all the countries having membership in this organization. The proposed agreement does not provide for the participation of employers or labour representatives in the new organization. There is no mention as to what will become of the I.L.O. One may assume from the text of the present draft, however, that the I.L.O. is to be deprived of its present character as an authoritative

joint representation of governments, employers and workers.

The I.L.O. has proved its usefulness and efficiency. Direct participation of representatives of governments, employers and workers, has given satisfactory results. The I.L.O. contributed in a large degree to the improvement of social legislation in the various countries. The governments participating in this organization—numbering forty-four—deemed it essential that the institution continue its activities even during the war. The first war-time conference took place in New York in 1941. The second was held in the middle of 1944 in Philadelphia. When the resolutions adopted at these conferences are carried out in full by the governments of the respective countries, much progress will have been made toward ensuring better living and social conditions for all Nations.

The workers of Poland have long recognized the value of the I.L.O. Their representatives took an active part

in the functioning of this institution and almost all the recommendations made by the I.L.O. were put into effect in Poland. A few were not enacted formally, but this was only because social legislation already existing in these instances was more advantageous for the workers. The workers of Poland, together with the workers of other democratic nations, stand ready and willing to defend the achievements they have accomplished.

Labour organizations of all countries would do well to watch the development of events resulting from the Dumbarton Oaks Conference. Labour cannot afford to have its representatives eliminated from direct participation in the establishment of principles of social legislation on an international scale. It is quite obvious that the I.L.O. must become a part of the new world organization, but the decisive influence of the representatives of the governments, employers and workers must be maintained.

## POLISH RAILWAY WORKERS IN CLANDESTINE STRUGGLE

**An Underground Meeting.** Dusk was slowly falling over a large city in Poland under the German occupation. In a courtyard, shaded by trees, it was even darker than elsewhere. The courtyard was surrounded by several wooden houses, occupied mostly by families of Polish railway workers. As dusk fell, a number of men quietly began to gather in one of the houses, entering at irregular intervals. They stepped into a room where a young man, whom they addressed as "chief," was sitting at a table.

Most of those who arrived were clad in worn railroad uniforms. As the guests sat down, the master of the house treated them to tobacco and inquired whether everything was ready.

"Yes," replied the man who was addressed first, a man who bore the typical expression acquired by railway workers during long trips on a locomotive.

The next guest, with a dark complexion, whose daily work was probably lubricating machines, raised his cap and answered—"Ready and waiting, citizen."

"Good. We meet at ten."

The guests filed out of the house. 10 p.m. was not far off.

**Night Shift.** In a nearby forest, several armed men were waiting under the trees, near a railroad track. Others came, whispering the password. The group commanders gathered to discuss the details of the task at hand, then issued their orders.

Those who had come first took charge of the machine guns; the later arrivals went to the tracks and, taking out the tools which had been concealed under their coats, began to loosen the rails. Suddenly the lights of several lanterns appeared a short distance away. A patrol of the *Bahnschutz* (the German Railroad Guards) was approaching.

The train, carrying tanks and soldiers, was scheduled to leave a neighbouring station about that time. There

was no time for deliberation. The underground warriors decided to interrupt the work for a moment and let the German patrol pass. Should the Germans notice the damage, the commanders would open fire to prevent them from signalling the train. Work was halted and the men hid in the bushes. The patrol approached, their lanterns lighting the rails. A moment of breathless tension. But the Germans noticed nothing and passed on. They had not gone far when the work of loosening the rails was resumed.

**German Train Derailed.** Soon the train whistle sounded, quite near now. A whispered question: "Everything ready? Right. Leave the tracks!"

The train was already in sight. It slowed up for a moment, then gathered speed. A sudden crash, and the locomotive jumped the rail, dragging several of the carriages behind it. Confusion broke out in the train. An alarm was sounded. Meanwhile, a thick hail of shots came from the forest. The Germans rallied and answered the fire. By that time many of them were wounded, and screams for help rose above the general turmoil and confusion.

After a lively exchange of fire, the Polish railway brigade, its task accomplished, withdrew into the woods.

### TO-MORROW'S AIR AGE IS HERE

Who will own it ?

Will we live in it ?

—Or die by it ?

Will we visit London in 3 hours ?

—Or bomb Moscow in 5 ?

From *The Viking Press's* Advertisement of "Winged Peace," by Air Marshal 'Billy' Bishop, in *The New York Times*—according to *The New Republic*.



## FRENCH TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION IN WARTIME

*The following accounts have been compiled and condensed from reports received in November, 1944, from the General Secretaries at present in charge of the French Transport Workers' organizations, viz.:*

*J. LE GALL, Dock and Riverside Workers' Federation.*

*G. OURADOU, Railwaymen's Federation.*

*E. JACCOUD, Road Transport Workers' Federation.*

*E. EHLERS, Seamen's Federation.*

### Dock and Riverside Workers' Federation

The Federation's headquarters were closed and sealed by the German occupation authorities from June, 1940 to 1st March, 1941. The officers and Executive Committee of the Federation endeavoured nevertheless—and with some success—to establish contact with local organizations in seaside and river ports which had almost all been more or less disrupted by the German invasion and the confusion that followed. On 7th December, 1940, the German authorities issued a declaration that Trade Unions would be allowed to function on condition that they abstained from political activities. The Federation gave the required undertaking, as the officers and Executive wished to retain some means of defending their members' interests. Moreover, the organization had always kept aloof from political parties.

Towards the end of 1940 Vichy, which, at least in theory, governed France, decreed that the old collective agreements determining working conditions should remain in force. The employers, however, took advantage of the defeat to reduce wages below the level at which they were frozen by a decree of September, 1939. In the ports of the lower Seine the cuts were over 50 per cent. Action to restore wages to their old level was difficult and success slow, in spite of the rapid and considerable rise of the cost of living. As the will to resistance grew throughout the population it became possible, by using subterfuges, to raise wages above the level fixed by decree. So the employers of the Paris region agreed to supplement them by a "basket premium" of 13 francs per day; shortly afterwards this premium was also introduced in Marseilles and Sète, and later it was increased to 30 francs a day in the Paris area.

When endeavours to secure the generalization of this premium, particularly in the Atlantic ports, were unsuccessful, the Federation instructed the workers concerned to desert the calling stands in the ports, where workers are engaged for single days or half-days. This deprived the Germans of the labour required for unloading ore in Bordeaux and Conflans. The result was that Vichy had to revise the wage scales for port labour and increase them by 20 to 23 per cent in all ports.

Endeavours by the Federation to exploit the necessity of "appeasing" the dockers and inland waterway workers were made with fairly good success in another field, to secure additional rations of food, clothing and footwear.

When Vichy undertook to revise industrial and social legislation, the Federation decided to accept representation on the new committees to be set up for the purpose, and delegates of the Federation were appointed to the Joint Central Man-power Boards for the ports and inland waterways; the local boards functioned effectively only in Bordeaux, Sète and Marseilles. They served further on different committees that were to implement the Vichy Labour Charter, and did their best to delay its application. They succeeded in inducing all participants in a key committee, the "National Social Committee of the Vocational Family of Transport" (Vichy jargon), to go on strike for three months as a protest against Vichy's failure to put new wage scales into force, thus paralysing all newly created bodies for the transport industry.

During the war the trade unions belonging to the Federation were subject to attempts at disruption by outside and inside influences. When Vichy dissolved the General Confederation of Labour, the Federation protested. Soon after, Vichy created the Provisional Organization Committees for the Stevedoring Industry and Inland Water Transport and appointed as assistants to the Chairman of the latter committee two trade unionists, who immediately set about creating a rival organization of inland navigation workers. Local unions of coal loaders employed in transport and other undertakings ancillary to the mines were ordered by Vichy to leave the Dockers' Federation to which they had belonged for many decades, and to join the "Vocational Family of the Mining Industry." The staff in charge of the publicly owned installations and services in ports managed by Chambers of Commerce or autonomous public corporations were declared to belong to the Civil Service, and their trade unions, affiliated with the Dockers' Federation, were dissolved. They continued to exist in secrecy, however, and to pay their contributions to the Federation.

Everywhere great numbers of dockers and allied transport workers refused to work for the Occupying Power. They simply left their jobs and sought work in other industries and in agriculture. The exodus was particularly great in Le Havre. Those who could not resort to this device did their best to hamper the enemy by working slow and playing truant. In the Joint Man-Power Boards for the Stevedoring Industry the Federation's delegates endeavoured successfully to overstate labour requirements systematically, thus securing the dockers' work ticket for men who otherwise would have been

deported to Germany. Many men in the resistance organizations were holders of the dockers' ticket and had the benefit of additional food, clothing and footwear rations without doing any work worth mentioning in the stevedoring industry. The Federation was successful in its endeavours to obtain the institution of joint manpower boards for the inland water transport industry and thus secured additional means for disguising resisters as transport workers.

When the General Confederation of Labour launched its appeal for the general strike, to assist the Allied armed forces in their endeavour to liberate France, the dockers and inland waterway workers responded to a man. Since the liberation, all who can be employed are in the service of the Allies. They have agreed to work in three shifts round the clock, a system of work which the Federation had succeeded in abolishing between the two wars.

At the end of 1944, 18,000 transport workers were holders of the membership card of the Dockers' Federation. It may be expected that this figure will be doubled early in 1945.

### French Railwaymen's Federation

The campaign of May-June, 1940 put an enormous strain on the French railways, and particularly on the railwaymen, owing to the vast movement of population from North to South. It created for the trade union organization problems without number. When the Government left Paris for Bordeaux, the Railwaymen's Federation headquarters were moved from Paris to Brive. The Federation remained in constant touch with the Railway Corporation's General Management and tried to co-operate in the solution of the enormous and endless difficulties.

The armistice threw the whole population, not excepting the railwaymen, into deep despondency. All writhed under the blow, though hardly any seemed stirred to action. But when the majority of the Members of Parliament abdicated to the defeatist clique, vast numbers of workers realised that *The Republic* (French for Democracy) was being destroyed and that the defeat and the armistice had been carefully planned moves in the process. From that moment on revolt was brewing and the will to resistance grew, with the railwaymen in the vanguard.

The leadership of the Federation was in the hands of four officers, one of whom was the General Secretary and the other three members of the Board of Directors of the Railway Corporation. They had to decide which course to steer. A deputation interviewed the then Minister of Labour of the Vichy Government about the future of the trade union movement in general and that of the Railwaymen's Federation in particular. Two of the four officers remained full of misgivings, in spite of the assurances given, while the other two were prepared to make common cause with the Vichy régime. From that moment on the anti-Vichy group had secret conversations with numbers of leading railway trade-unionists among whom they encouraged hostility to Vichy, while keeping up the pretence of goodwill towards that régime.

And so they remained at the head of the Federation side by side with the two convinced Vichyites. In September, 1940, the General Secretary retired—one year behind schedule—and the General Secretaryship of the organization passed into the hands of a Vichyite. In spite of this the strength of the anti-Vichy group increased continually, but hostility towards Vichy and its followers within the Federation was never displayed openly.

When the German authorities declared that trade unions would be allowed to function on condition that they confined themselves to vocational matters, the Federation decided to give the required undertaking and to re-establish its headquarters in Paris. It further encouraged its component trade unions and branches to comply with the German condition. This decision was unanimous, but the motives inspiring it were not in all cases the same. One group voted in favour because they accepted the German victory as final and were prepared to adapt themselves to the new situation. The other group decided to comply with the German condition because they hoped thus to secure facilities to remain in contact with trade union stewards and members for purposes of clandestine activities, though they had no idea yet what such activities might be.

Within the limits set by the Germans and their lackeys in Vichy the Federation has done a great deal of work to secure improvements of the working conditions, which had deteriorated considerably since the outbreak of war and still more since the defeat. Many efforts were also made to assist railwaymen who were involved in acts of sabotage. Success attended these efforts fairly often, the outstanding example being the saving from execution of seven railwaymen of Oullins who had been sentenced to death. While the Federation made "lawful" and official representations to the German and Vichy authorities, thousands of railwaymen in the area protested against the death sentence by a strike which the Federation, of course, ostensibly condemned as wild and unofficial.

When Vichy started its new social legislation the anti-Vichy leaders of the Federation and its affiliated unions were confronted with a new problem. Were they to leave the field to the Vichyites alone? They decided, after long reflection, to enter all the new committees and to try to sabotage their work from inside by a sham display of co-operative spirit. Thus they delayed so successfully the application of the Vichy Labour Charter to the railway industry that on liberation day it was not yet in force.

The immense majority of the railwaymen were intensely hostile to Vichy and the occupying forces. The leaders of the Federation and its affiliated unions who felt and thought likewise could not disclose themselves and, consequently were criticized as severely as the authentic Vichyites and collaborationists. Little by little, however, the number of active trade unionists who understood the game and took part in it was so large that they could easily have taken all the reins into their hands, even within the framework of Vichy legality. On the express advice of the clandestine Executive of the General Confederation of Labour they refrained from thus using



their strength. On 2nd and 3rd February, 1944, a General Delegate meeting, the first of the war, was held in Paris. When it came to the election of the Federation secretaries all Vichyite elements were ousted with one exception: the General Secretary. Delegates were secretly instructed to vote for him in sufficient numbers to ensure his election. He polled 40 votes out of 72. He was thus maintained in his office of General Secretary. Even if he had wished to refuse he could not, for it was now clear to him that he had become a hostage in the hands of the resisters and had to shield them.

Prior to this meeting the Vichy Minister of Transport had called Federation leaders to his office and told them that they were not to discuss the applicability or otherwise of the Labour Charter to the Railway industry; that it had been promulgated and would consequently be applied. At the fourth and last session of the Delegate Meeting, the Chairman announced that the Labour Charter was on the agenda. Three inspectors of the Security Police were in attendance, listened for two hours to speeches condemning the Charter, and witnessed a mass vote against its implementation in the railway industry. Nothing happened either at the meeting or later, and Vichy did not enforce its own decree.

The resisters among the railway trade-unionists took a great part in the anti-Vichy and anti-Nazi propaganda, helping in the production and distribution of the clandestine papers. From early in 1942 onwards there were regular contacts with the underground Executive of the General Confederation of Labour. Armed resistance groups of railwaymen were formed by trade-unionists. Trade-unionists joined the general resistance organizations as specialists in the sabotage of railways and other industrial establishments. Many of them paid with their lives for their devotion to the cause of liberation; many spent years in prisons and concentration camps; many have been deported to Germany.

In September, 1939, the Federation expelled from its ranks all Communist officers who refused to condemn the Germano-Soviet Pact of August, 1939. In 1943 the resisters in the leadership of the Federation sought contact with their former colleagues and invited them to resume their seats in the clandestine Executive Committee. After the liberation, the Federal administration was resurrected in the same form as in 1939, i.e. two joint general secretaries (one of the former, communist, Unitarian group and one of the original C.G.T.) and eight assistant secretaries (four of each tendency).

When the German retreat out of France began, the Federation instructed railwaymen to cease the sabotage of railway transport and to protect equipment against destruction by enemy troops. On 18th August, 1944, the railwaymen embarked upon a strike which was general and complete. On 19th August, with the Germans still in Paris, the clandestine Executive of the Federation took possession of the Federation's headquarters and drove out the last Vichyites to be found in the building. Within two months 200,000 membership cards were issued, and it is hoped that by early in 1945 some 80 per cent or more of the 400,000 railway servants will have joined their unions.

At the top there is reconciliation and unity between the communist and non-communist trade unionists. It seems to be less easy to achieve in the local branches, but the Federation leaders cherish the hope that when, with the improvement of postal and railway communications, they can take a hand in this, they will be successful in bringing about the unity without which railwaymen cannot hope to make the most of the immense opportunities which lie open to them. Already the Board of Directors of the Railway Corporation has been reformed. It is now composed of ten representatives of the State, five of the former railway companies and five of the railway personnel. The Federation hopes that this is not yet the last word and that they will succeed in time in eliminating the representatives of capitalist interests altogether. Meanwhile the railway administration has to be purged of those who have, in one way or another, been in the service of the enemy, and the Federation is determined to take a hand in that job as well.

### Road Transport Workers' Federation

In the disastrous campaign of May-June, 1940, heroic efforts were made by the road transport workers, bus drivers in particular, to help the fugitives from the invaded areas. Many of these workers risked and a number lost their lives.

When the armistice came all road transport undertakings were completely disorganized and the trade unions of the road transport workers disrupted. The personnel of the trade unions and of the Road Transport Workers' Federation was scattered and very few of them knew of the whereabouts of their fellow trade union or Federation officers. Not until October, 1940, was it possible to assemble the Executive Committee of the Federation in Paris. Every officer had, of course, made such contacts as he could, and at that meeting it seemed pretty clear that the bulk of the membership was hostile to Vichy, condemned the armistice and hated the German soldiery. But such was not the state of mind of all officers of the Federation, among whom there were men who already had good relations with the Vichy Minister of Labour and supported him. The General Secretary and a number of other officers resolved to remain at their posts in order to deprive Vichy of a means of action and influence, and to use the facilities thus afforded to foment hostility against Vichy. It proved to be a risky task, and several times the Federation was in danger of being dissolved or the anti-Vichyite officers of being removed by force. However, they managed every time to avoid drastic measures being taken against them and to hold their posts while the German occupation of France lasted.

When the German occupation authorities required that the organization should confine itself strictly to vocational affairs, the undertaking was given. Secretly, however, the General Secretary and his friends worked together with the clandestine Executive of the General Confederation of Labour and the resistance organizations. They fostered the will to resistance among road transport workers and though at first merely passive, it gradually became active. By numerous tricks and

devices transport breakdowns were brought about, causing stoppages of work in all kinds of establishments run by or for the enemy. Sabotage of vehicles became ever more artful and wide-spread, and in vehicle repair shops much good work was done. Of course, many a brave saboteur was caught and lost his life.

In 1939 communist office bearers were expelled from the Federation, but during the war, when the resistance became more determined, contact was re-established with them and agreement reached for immediate co-operation in the resistance and for the ultimate reinstatement of communists in all offices they held before the war. On liberation day the Vichyites and collaborationists were thrown out and all positions formerly held by communists were restored to them. The action taken, during the occupation and after liberation, for re-establishing unity has made a most favourable impression among the road transport workers, who are now flocking back to their trade unions.

### Seamen's Federation

On 10th June, 1940, the headquarters of the French Seamen's Federation were moved from Paris to St. Nazaire. A few days later, the German army occupied St. Nazaire. On 13th July, headquarters were moved back to Paris. On 24th July, a German commission ejected the officers and the staff and closed the Federation's headquarters for the next six months. When the offices were given back on 8th February, 1941, all the files and a part of the office equipment were gone.

The restoration of contact with the affiliated local organizations was a complicated job. All ports on the Atlantic coast were in German hands and closed to commercial maritime traffic. Paris was cut off from the French and North African ports on the Mediterranean by the demarcation line separating Vichy administered territory from the German occupied parts. Nevertheless contacts were established with the help of the fishermen when they were allowed to sail.

In March, 1941, Vichy made its first big inroad into the field which had been so far the preserve of the Seamen's Federation. Copying Italian fascist legislation it set up a "Corporation" for the sea fishing industry, compelling the fishermen to join government controlled *ersatz* trade unions. This action cut the Federation officers off from the means of maintaining open contacts with an important group of affiliated unions and members.

In March, 1942, Vichy created the "Corporation" for the mercantile marine, dissolved the seamen's trade unions and compelled the seamen to join others under its own control. For the personnel of each shipping company four different sectional unions were set up. Thus in Marseilles, with its thirty shipping companies, 120 unions replaced the former two! The dissolution of the existing trade unions was accompanied by the confiscation of their assets. The Federation assets were confiscated too. Thus the Federation disappeared, in theory at least, and its officers were cut off from the whole of the membership.

But the Federation and its affiliated unions were not

caught napping. When Vichy commissioners came to value the assets not much was left. The trade unions had spent all, or nearly all, in benefits to the members. New benefits had been invented to hasten the spending. The families of seamen who had died, had been deported or were in captivity received benefits not provided for in the rules in force in pre-invasion days. So did the families who had suffered from bombing. When stock was taken of the assets of the Federation, the commissioners found net assets amounting to 55 centimes, less than a half-penny in British currency.

The remnants of the trade unions and of the Federation continued their existence underground. In the merchant fleet they carried on resistance propaganda and elsewhere also took their share in the resistance work.

The seamen were at no time favourably disposed towards Vichy or the Germans. When Vichy created its own unions and social committees, it attempted a sham display of democracy and issued ballot papers for the election of committees. The great majority of the ballot papers issued in Marseilles were returned in blank or with votes for de Gaulle, Churchill, Roosevelt and Charlie Chaplin. This single experience was enough and Vichy thenceforth appointed the Committees itself. When sailing on behalf of Vichy the seamen always hoped their ship would be captured by the Allies, and every time Allied control stations let them pass the disappointment on board was general. When the liberation offensive started the seamen helped the Allies, by divulging information about their movements, to capture or torpedo French ships sailing for the enemy.

The Seamen's Federation and its affiliated unions share only to a moderate extent the bright prospects liberation has opened up for most French trade unions. The French merchant navy is at present only a shadow of its former self. In its present size it can offer employment only to a fraction of the seafarers on its rolls before the war. Six great ports are still in the hands of the enemy. Most of the others have suffered considerable destruction, and their traffic will not amount to much for some time to come. Even in Marseilles harbour the amount of traffic is small. The seamen's trade union branches in these ports are mere nuclei. Their spirit is excellent, however, and there can be no doubt that strong trade unions would grow from them if maritime traffic regained anything approaching its former importance. There are strong and solid local unions in North Africa, and during the war a substantial French seamen's union grew up in Great Britain. This latter is by far the most important asset of the French Seamen's Federation in its efforts to rebuild the organization.

Both local organizations and the Federation are facing the future practically without material assets. What was not given away in time was either seized and wasted by Vichy or destroyed by bombs. All concerned regard these losses as an unavoidable contribution to the war effort, and nobody regrets them. The spirit is good and all French seafaring workers are organized. As the size of the fleet and the number of workers increases, the unions will grow. In those at present functioning, and in the Federation itself, unity prevails.

## DUTCH RAILWAY STRIKE UNBROKEN AFTER FOUR MONTHS

By HARRY DE VRIES

The grim strike in which the railway workers of Holland are engaged in the still occupied part of their country is overshadowed by the news of other developments in the swiftly changing world scene. In railwaymen's and transport workers' circles throughout the world, however, this heroic episode in the struggle against the enemies of human liberty and progress continues to be watched with tense interest and deep admiration.

The strike call was broadcast from London over the Orange radio station by the Dutch Prime Minister, Professor Gerbrandy, in the evening of the 17th September—at the very moment when Allied airborne forces were being landed in large numbers in the Arnhem area. It was issued in agreement with the Allied Supreme Command, which considered that the strike would promote its plans.

The call was received amidst general enthusiasm, and except for a few Dutch Nazis, all ranks and grades of the 40,000 strong Dutch railway personnel responded to it to a man.

Originally, seeing the speed with which France and Belgium were reoccupied, it was thought that the strike would not last longer than a fortnight at the most. But after the setback at Arnhem it was realized in Holland that the struggle would have to be waged much longer than first expected. The Dutch railwaymen continued to obey the call and with the splendid assistance of the rest of the population the strike has at the time of writing been in progress for close on four months and it shows no signs of weakening. On the 5th October, Professor Gerbrandy broadcast another appeal to the strikers to hold on, and in spite of the tremendous difficulties they still stand firm.

How have the Germans reacted to the strike? At first not at all, but when it became clear that the strike would not peter out, they began to resort to their accustomed methods of intimidation and coercion, aided diligently by the German-controlled radio. In particular they tried to discredit the strikers with the remainder of the population. In the press and on posters they represented the railway strike as responsible for the desperate food situation afflicting the country. Further, they contended that if the railway service was resumed, it would be possible to transport fuel and thus renew the supply of electricity and gas.

To these tactics the Dutch have responded in the way to be expected of a valiant people; they have continued unperturbably to render the utmost possible assistance to the strikers. It is this unity of all sections of the people which has made the railway strike the success it is.

It goes without saying that the strikers have to run grave risks and the same applies to those who aid them, though fortunately it has so far been possible to avoid major mishaps.

There were a few anxious moments at Amersfoort and Groningen, but they were soon overcome. At Amersfoort the Nazis wrecked the homes of four railway engineers, while in Haarlem the house of an assistant station master was plundered. Such acts of terrorism, however, made very little impression.

The majority of the strikers have gone into hiding, together with their families. At this stage we cannot enlarge on what is happening, but when the history of this heroic movement of the Dutch railwaymen is written, it will reveal how great has been the solidarity of the entire population in this crucial test and how valuable the services rendered by the workers of little Holland in the Allied cause.

## AMERICAN LABOUR HITS POWER POLITICS

By DANIEL BELL

Leaders of American labour, meeting in a full day discussion sponsored by the American Labour Conference on International Affairs on December 16th, in New York, were highly apprehensive over the turn in United Nations foreign relations, scoring recent clashes in Greece, Italy, Belgium and Poland, as due to "power politics arising out of the carving of Europe into spheres of influence." Representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation attended the sessions.

The American Labour Conference on International Affairs is a research and policy suggestion body for the American Labour movement. Its president is William Green of the A.F.L., its Vice-President David Dubinsky of the Ladies Garment Workers Union, but C.I.O. and Railway labour is represented on its executive committee.

The political committee of the Conference issued a statement on Dumbarton, which should be of interest to

the world labour movement. The Committee endorsed "the principles of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, which aim at the creation of a community of nations that shall outlaw war and aggression . . . but our endorsement does not absolve us from making criticism of its weaknesses and shortcomings."

The Conference proposed that:

(1) After a period of transition the new international organization should become a universal one, unlimited by the present formula that "membership should be open to all peace-loving states." Permanently to exclude any state is to prejudice the new order. In this new order all states must be peace-keeping.

(2) The assembly composed of all states, should be given more important functions. It should be given the right to initiate proposals for action by the security council, and the latter body should be made accountable



to the assembly for any actions it has decided to undertake.

(3) The Security Council in its projected form gives excessive dominance to four or at most five Great Powers. We emphatically reject, however, any proposals that would exempt four or five Great Powers, the permanent members of the Security Council, from the equal rule of law. It is neither just nor sound that any one of these Great Powers should be allowed to vote in a case where it is accused of aggression. It is still more unacceptable that its vote alone should suffice to annul any complaint against it. Yet this would automatically be the result of the provision requiring the unanimity of the "permanent members" of the Council if this should be adopted. We propose that the rule of unanimity be replaced by a two-thirds majority of all members, including a majority of the permanent members of the Security Council.

(4) Besides these specific defects of the present Dumbarton Oaks plan there is a lack of certain constructive proposals which are urgently needed if the world is to be subject, not to the rule of force, but to the rule of law

adopted through collective consideration and democratic decision. The Security Council should have as one of its functions the preparation of a continuous policy for the reduction of armaments. There is also lacking any provision for raising the living and cultural standards of dependent peoples, the colonies of the Axis countries, mandated territories, and semi-colonial or backward areas that cannot now be self-governing. A system of international trusteeship should be established for this purpose, and a special organ of the General International Organization with sufficient authority and means should be entrusted with the task of helping the above-mentioned countries and nations to accomplish in peace, and free of exploitation, the necessary evolution to modern cultural and political, social and economic maturity.

Labour everywhere must with all its force and energy pursue the policy of advocating and supporting the basic principles proclaimed by the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals in their full and true form, without any distortion or misinterpretation in the imperialistic interest of any Great Power.

## 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 it 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. Matter will be selected because it shows evidence of perceiving a problem, because it is calculated to provoke thought, and because it may contribute towards a clarification of thought.*

*Our first quotation is from an editorial comment entitled "Labour and the International Struggle" in "The New Dawn," the official organ of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers.*

The tragic events in Greece, and the pugnacious attitude of the British Government towards the best and most virile elements of the Greek people—an attitude which has lowered its international prestige more than any European crisis since Munich—underline the necessity for reaffirmation by the British Labour Movement of its international basis and ideals.

Labour has played a prominent and worthy part in the war effort of this country, because from the first it realised the menace of Fascism and the peril to the common peoples of the world. The men and women of Britain, with fortitude and endeavour, struggled through dark and grim days to the point where victory is in sight. During those weary years they were sustained by a new light of hope, a hope that victory would bring a fuller, freer democracy, and a nearer approach to social justice for all peoples. Men and women in the Forces in all quarters of the world, and men and women at home, sacrificed willingly that out of the struggle should emerge a newer conception of life than they had known hitherto.

Similarly, the men and women of the occupied countries of Europe, who through long years of German occupation struggled on in their underground groups, had their vision of hope not only for liberation from the yoke of Nazism but of the part the common people would play in the resurgence of those countries, many of which had suffered political "black-outs" before the lights went down in Europe. They also looked to Britain, which from 1940 stood as a symbol of hope for the forces of democracy. The "century of the common man" was being ushered in.

Now, victory is in sight and the tide of Fascism is ebbing from Europe. What, therefore, of the aspirations, the actively-encouraged hopes of the people? We have heard the "voice of the profits" already speaking at home in relation to the social and economic future. Are we now to witness the stultification of democratic resurgence by British repression of the very people in Europe who have been glorified for four years as fellow-fighters against the common Fascist enemy?

We in the Labour Movement are not content that property and financial interests should stand barring the road to social progress, nor are we content that the pre-war industrial oligarchy

structure shall be enforced on liberated Europe by British arms. If the peace is not to be lost, the common people struggling for liberation from a double yoke must be free to take their rightful place in the social structure and in shaping that peace. They are our fellow-strugglers for the grander conception of freedom for all lands and all peoples of the world.

*We take our next quotation from an article in "The Manchester Guardian," entitled "China, the War, and the Future." The author has spent many years in China.*

The Chinese student class is intensely interested in problems of the peace and the post-war world. Many of them want an international Government after the war in which all nations shall participate, though they recognise that for a time at least the major Powers will have to exercise a great deal of authority. But in general they feel the time has come to surrender national sovereignty. The future of Asia interests them intensely. What is to happen to the former colonies in this part of the world? If they merely return to their former owners, Indo-China to France, the East Indies to Holland, Malaya and Burma to Britain, China will feel great disappointment. China would agree that many of the colonial peoples in Asia are not yet ready for independence, but she would like to see international control of the colonies, or at least that the colonising Powers should move much more quickly than in the past towards self-government for the colonies.

The abolition of the unequal treaties and of extra-territoriality early in 1943 was made the occasion of great celebrations throughout China. A three days' holiday was declared; processions and public meetings were held in every town. But it is well to remember that the prevailing attitude was not one of gratitude to Western nations for a favour bestowed, which was the way some foreign comments seemed to interpret it, but one of satisfaction that China had at last achieved elementary justice and equality among the Great Powers. And one question still remains unsolved—the future of Hong-Kong. At the moment it is not politic for China to raise this question, but she will not feel satisfied till Hong-Kong returns to Chinese sovereignty.