

Useless Declarations.

By A. Lozovsky.

We all followed with the greatest eagerness the general strike in Great Britain, and are following from day to day with breathless attention the struggle of the British miners. The great strike and its little leaders will serve for a long time as an object of study for the workers of all countries, who will learn from this example how **not** to conduct a strike. Of the greatest value for those who are interested in the fate of the international labour movement are the statements of those who participated in this strike, and in particular the statements of the members of that General Council which so shamefully ended the magnificent strike. For this reason the declaration published in "Lansbury's Labour Weekly" of three Left members of the General Council, A. B. Swales, George Hicks and Ben Tillet, and which is addressed "To Comrades, National and International", arouses the greatest attention and the greatest interest.

Nevertheless the more one reads this declaration, the more the feeling of interest gives place to one of indignation. This is because one seeks in the document, but finds **something else**, that one seeks for a living word from eye witnesses, for the truth regarding the events, but one finds...

The first question which arises after a careful perusal of the declaration is: "What is the use of such a declaration?" What is the object of the three members of the General Council in issuing this document? We will obtain an answer if we proceed to analyse this declaration.

The document in question contains **correct things**; it also contains **obviously incorrect things**; but it does not contain the chief matter. It is true that "the strike was a demonstration of power", but it is not true that the "strike has served the purpose of urgent and necessary defence". It is true that "the government and their satellites met our gesture of comradeship with an armed force". It is true that the "strike showed the economic grip of the workers upon all industries", that "it closed a virulent and vehement capitalist press", but it is not correct to represent the calling off of the strike as a "courageous gesture of peace".

It is still more incorrect to accuse the government and the employers of having "with wiliness and chicanery endeavoured to misrepresent the logical (!) meaning of our act as being one of surrender". That is to say that the General Council has not capitulated? It has concluded an honourable peace? It is strange that no one has noticed this honourable peace. All three protest against the "cowardly travesty of the truth". In this question the "cowardly travesty of the truth" is not on the side of the government or of the employers but on the side of those who desire at all cost to represent the defeat as a victory.

It is also true that the strike "brought forth from the Russian Trade Union Movement a spontaneous gesture of goodwill". But it is wrong to refrain from saying a single word as to how this "gesture of goodwill" was rebuffed, thanks to the "courageous gesture of peace of the General Council". Is it not strange that even in this question the three did not have the courage to call a thing by its right name?

I do not think it necessary to give any further examples. Those given reveal the true character of the declaration, which every obvious truth is followed by a series of unimportant, obviously false and apologetic assertions.

But this declaration is not only of interest on account of what it contains, but mainly on account of what is omitted from it. As a matter of fact those responsible for the capitulation have, some days after the powerful strike when the results of the capitulation were already apparent, forgotten to explain to us how the "demonstration of power" was converted into a powerful demonstration of impotency. The authors have forgotten to say who betrayed the strike and why.

only that, they even endeavour to defend the monstrous capitulation by describing that which the British workers call treachery and cowardice as a "courageous (!) gesture of peace". Further, the miners are continuing the strike. Are the miners right or are they not? Ought they to have joined in "the courageous gesture of peace" of the General Council, or continued the struggle? One must either support the miners or not.

In this manner this declaration conceals the shameful role of the General Council in the strike; it diverts the attention of the workers along the wrong path, it conceals the treachery and the cowardice with empty phrases and justifies the crime committed against the working class of Great Britain.

It is of no great interest what the three members of the General Council intended to say, but that which they published must arouse the profound indignation of all honest workers. The "Sunday Worker" is wrong, a thousand times wrong, when it welcomes this action of Swales, Hicks and Ben Tillet. Such declarations merely discredit those who write them. The British and the international proletariat need the naked unadorned truth and not self-deception and beautiful declarations
