

KNOWLEDGE MUST PRECEDE ALL INTELLIGENT ACTION

THE WORKER

EDUCATE

THE ORGAN OF WORKERS' COMMITTEES SCOTLAND

THE REVOLUTIONARY JOURNAL WITH THE LARGEST CIRCULATION IN BRITAIN.
REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.

Edited by JOHN S. CLARKE.

No. 93.

4th SEPTEMBER, 1920.

Price 2d.

THE MAN WHO WARMS THE WORLD.

A Plea for Nationalisation.

In a little mining village dwells a family of eight,
Where squalor and unloveliness run riot at the gate.

It boots not what the ideals are which in the household lurk,
Soon as the law allows of it, each lad is put to work.

I picture one as standing for the first time on the cage.

Above the pit whose horrors are his only heritage.

The signal has been given and he disappears from sight.

Down, down to utter darkness and to everlasting night.

Arriving at the bottom an imaginative lad
Might easily be pardoned did he fancy that he had
Been dropped into that awful place away all
mines beneath,

Where sinners groan in agony and wail and gnash
their teeth.

The tramp of feet, the jar of wheels, the shouts,
the noise of wagons

Impress his boyish mind with fear of foul, infernal dragons.

The men who pass before him seem the denizens of hell;

Poor, tattered, gaunt, and grimy ghosts, in darkness doomed to dwell.

He cries in fear and trembling: "Oh, is this my future home!

This kingdom of eternal night! This region of the gnome!

Whilst strength is in my sinews, with all my heart and soul,

In earth's black foetid bowels must I burrow like a mole?

Was it for this and this alone that I was born and bred—

To earn enough to keep alive among the living dead?

At school they taught me to believe that healthy, happy life

Was the birthright of a Briton, as of Adam and his wife.

How can I e'er attain to it in such a place as this.

Where I must toil, and drudge, and sweat, till death my eyelids kiss?

I read my wretched future in the men who stand around

As young man, husband, father—all the types of it abound.

Why it was only yesterday I reached my fifteenth year—

When I have lived for thirty more, what like will I appear?

Will some fair limb be crippled? Or will hope be dead or thwarted,

And all my finer faculties impaired, untuned, distorted?

Or, weary of the cruel strife, will I have fallen low,
Like some poor wretch whose language stops my heart's blood in its flow?

If seen beneath the microscope, will portions of my lung

Then look the colour of the coal which from the mine is flung?

Will squalor and unloveliness run riot as of yore?
Or will the light of comfort shine around my cottage door?

Oh ye, whose hearts contain a spark of pity or compassion,

Think of the men who live and die in this unhallowed fashion!

IF—



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR TO MINER:

"IT WILL BE A 'BLACK' LOOKOUT FOR CAPITALISM IF YOU FELLOWS STRIKE SOLID."

STAND ALONGSIDE THE MINERS!

In spite of the denunciations of Labour unrest, which are a constant feature of the press nowadays, that unrest continues to increase in volume, and in constantly growing more menacing. At the present time the Government, in refusing to make any concessions to the miners, are deliberately inviting the gravest industrial conflict in our history. A miners' strike is no new thing of course. We experienced such a strike in 1912, when the whole industrial fabric rocked from top to bottom. But a miners' strike to-day would have even greater revolutionary possibilities than one in 1912. The number of organised workers in Britain has trebled in the interval, and while the British working class are not yet revolutionary, they have been acquiring a growing sense of independence and solidarity, and there is much more inflammable material about in 1920 than there was in 1912. The press of the country has realised the danger of an industrial upheaval, and they are already endeavouring to blacken the miners' case with a view to detaching the rest of the workers from the miners' side, so that the Government can move forward to beating the miners alone.

THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE.

The immediate question at issue between the miners and the Government is concerned with the allocation of the surplus profits realised on the sale of export coal. Under present circumstances 20 per cent. of this surplus is going to the mine-owners for studying the gentle art of doing absolutely nothing. The press, which is shrieking against the rapacious miners—who at least risk their skin in digging coal—has not a word to say against the rapacious coalowners, risking nothing and screening themselves behind their subsidised Government. The rest of the surplus is in present circumstances taken by the Government, and utilised to defray the national expenditure which otherwise would have fallen on the shoulders of the boss class. The miners on the other hand desire that the surplus profits realised abroad shall go to increase wages to the people who dig the coal, and to reduce prices to the people who use the coal. The Government proposal benefits the main small parasitic class; the miners' proposal benefits the useful producer, and the great masses of the people.

THE REAL ISSUE.

The real issue, however, goes deeper than that. The employers and the Government have now decided to refuse all further concessions to any body of the workers. They anticipate the coming of a period of trade depression, and they are prepared to use every means in their power to refuse all further allowances, and if possible to reduce the present wage level of the working class. No matter how reasonable the claims of the miners, or of any other body of workers might be, the Government and the employers are prepared to resist them. They fondly imagine that if they can beat the miners, the strongest Trade Union in Britain, they will be able to create such a feeling of hopelessness amongst the rest of the working class that there will be little or no resistance to their rule in industry for a long time to come. The miners' strike cannot therefore be isolated from the general working class struggle, and if the issue is joined, the rest of the workers have got to stand with the miners, fight with the miners, win with the miners, or go down with the miners.

THE RELATIVE VALUE OF MINER AND SHAREHOLDER.

The mere threat of the strike has, however, furnished us with an object lesson of considerable value in those days when various projects for bringing about a fundamental social change are being discussed by all sections of workers. The boss press is continually emphasising the priceless value of the Capitalist shareholder, telling us how the whole industrial system revolves around those unique personalities, and how, if they were dispensed with, chaos and dis-organisation would spread like a plague throughout industry. Those statements can be pretty thoroughly

checked at the present juncture. There are, if our memory serves us correctly, some 47,000 shareholders in the mining industry, guaranteed a fixed profit in the neighbourhood of twenty six million pounds. Most of them are quite small people, though the bulk of the shares are held by a few big men. All of them, however, have been taking a permanent holiday from the industry. They contribute nothing to its processes, perform no useful labour, are never in fact missed, yet they draw the enormous sum above mentioned. The miners on the other hand are the bottom dogs in industry. They risk their skin to get the coal. One of them is killed on an average every six hours, one of them is injured on an average every three minutes. The death-rate amongst them continually tends to rise, rising from 4.77 deaths per million tons dug in 1895 to 6.09 deaths per million tons in 1919. As mines get old and ramshackle the mining industry becomes continually more dangerous. The boss press has been emphasising the fact that the wage costs in mining the coal have tended to rise. They have, however, forgotten the other most relevant fact that the life costs in getting the coal are continuing to rise also. Here then we have the two main classes interested in the coal industry. On the one hand the boss class with their guaranteed profit, with their share of any surplus profits, with their permanent holiday from industry. On the other hand we have the miners, risking their lives in an increasing ratio to get the coal. Yet if an industrial dispute takes place over the division of the product of the industry all the venom of the press and the politicians will be directed against the miners. The shareholder will get off scot free; the parasites are respected, while the miners are execrated. The class who are top dogs in the industry are on permanent holiday and nothing happens. The class who are the bottom dogs in the industry threaten to take a temporary holiday, and the shrieks and contortions of the leader writer in the "Daily Record" would make a raving lunatic look calm and placid by comparison. Thus when an industrial crisis occurs the press by its actions denies the philosophy that it teaches in other times, exposes the uselessness of the functionless shareholder, and admits amidst painful wails the indispensability of the working class.

THE POOR OLD COMMUNITY.

If the strike does take place, we shall hear quite a lot about the duty of the workers to the community. Heaven knows what our politicians would do without this conception of the community. It is indispensable to them in creating prejudice against the workers in an industrial dispute. In the last year about four-fifths of the workers in Britain have been putting forward demands for increases in wages. Each section of them were admonished that they were injuring this mysterious thing, the community, yet the people so admonished with their dependents form the great majority of the population of the country.

It may interest those people who are working this community stunt to death that the active elements in the Labour movement recognise not one community but two communities, living alongside each other in a state of more or less veiled hostility. We have the working community living away in mean streets of squalid tenements, tormented with a constant struggle to make ends meet, starved physically and mentally, the spectre of insecurity constantly troubling them. In antagonism to them we have the idling community living away from the smoke-polluted atmosphere of the great industrial towns, away from the noisy clanging of the hammers and the incessant whirring of machinery, spending an absolutely useless existence by sponging on the labour of the working community. And before anyone starts shedding crocodile tears over the woes of the poor community, let them tell us plainly community they mean—the working community or the idling community. The miners are fighting for the former, the Government is the tool of the latter.

PEACE WITH VICTORY.

It is probable that before a strike takes place some of the larger Labour bodies will intervene and endeavour to negotiate a peace between miners and the Government. There is more a little danger, however, of such negotiations leading to a veiled betrayal. The Parliamentary Committee, the Council of Action, or the T. A. Alliance, whatever Labour body enters into negotiations, have got to realise that they cannot act as impartial mediators. Their interests are bound up with those of the miners. Their voice in negotiations has got to be thrown on the side of the miners. The price that the Government has got to pay for industrial peace is unconditional surrender to the miners' demands. If the Government is not prepared to make peace on this basis, then the Labour movement must stand that it goes down to defeat in the industrial which ensues. This point has got to be stressed because there are several aimable fools in workers' ranks who are suggesting another mission of enquiry. Heaven help us, what is to enquire into? The whole structure of the industry was pulled to pieces and put together over a year ago. There is nothing further to cover. No economic facts are disputed by contending parties. The miners assert that wages can be increased and the price of coal reduced out of the surplus profits. The Government does not deny the probable existence of profits; they have merely told the miners there is nothing doing. There is nothing to enquire into except the extent and power of the Government's strike-breaking machinery, and that is not exactly a task for an impartial mission.

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

In the event of the strike taking place the Government will have to use all the force at its disposal to win speedily. Its strike-breaking machinery will be utilised to the full, and the rest of the workers will have to co-operate with the miners to avoid being defeated. No doubt the Government is hard pressed they will put into operation the scheme that they were preparing last spring for blockading the mining villages in the event of a strike. Of course David George denied that this scheme was discussed, but all the while the prevaricating powers of the Government makes Ananias look a timid and unimaginative liar alongside him. If the Government try to beat the miners by means of this impudent terrorist device, they the whole forces of the working class must be mobilised against them.

THE COUNCILS OF ACTION.

In the various localities the workers will face to face with serious problems. Transport will be disorganised; food supplies may be running low; and it is more than probable that the Government will endeavour to accentuate these things with a view to rousing public indignation against the miners. The workers must therefore come together to devise means for carrying out the transport and the food distribution themselves. The ex-service men amongst them must form a civil guard to protect whatever agencies the workers may set up, until the Government goes down or the Labour movement goes down.

These are the tasks that will require to be undertaken if the strike clouds darken. Local councils of action should immediately range for an intensive propaganda on behalf of the miners to be started while at the same time sitting from night to night making arrangements to meet any situation that arises. The press will shriek, of course, but that is to be expected. And intelligent workers will pay no attention to it. There is no more ungodly sight under the canopy of heaven than a wage-slave giving expression to the diseased thoughts implanted in his mind by the boss press. But that influence is beginning to weaken. An independent outlook is being developed and the workers are standing in this crisis, free to a great extent from capitalist prejudice, ready to take whatever action is best in order to win a great class victory.

WORKERS, ATTENTION!

A Meeting to discuss Constitution for Workers' Committees to be held in "Worker" Office, Thursday, 2nd September, at 8 p.m. All Workers invited.

Sabotaging Irish Nationality.

By an Irish Correspondent.

The British Government has officially acknowledged the collapse of all its authority in Ireland. This official acknowledgement is tacitly made by the issue on 21st August of a series of new "regulations" for the government of Ireland. These regulations are such that the moderate pro-British press in Ireland has already described them as "laws of appalling severity." The main purpose of these regulations is to legalise military terrorism in every part of Ireland. Henceforward the liberty of Irish citizens is to hang on the favour of any one of the numerous "competent military authorities" whom England has established as petty despots over every Irish County. Among other forms of coercion the new regulations set up these laws in Ireland: Regulation 3 (1-5) ordains that for any misdemeanour whatever whether committed before or after the issue of these regulations, Irish citizens may be tried by Court-Martial.

It should be understood that in Ireland there are stationed no Irish regiments. Every court-martial therefore will necessarily consist of English army officers, ignorant of Irish conditions and inimical to Ireland's claims of independence. In short, any Irishman tried by these courts-martial will in fact be tried by his enemies.

"Prisoners and judges will meet as enemies, representatives in the eyes of both of two races at war with each other."

Regulation 2-3 ordains that any Irish subject may be tried by court-martial for an act done at any time in the past, previous to these regulations becoming law.

Regulation 4 (5) ordains that any Irish subject can be sentenced to death for political offences by these courts-martial.

Under the pretence that the British Government holds even Irishmen's lives sacred, the personnel of the courts-martial which shall try Irishmen for an offence punishable by death is, the new regulations ordain, to be constituted differently from an ordinary court-martial. It "shall include as a member of the Court" a person nominated by the British Lord Chancellor of Ireland, or the Lord Chief Justice of England to be a person of "legal knowledge and experience." This is a worthless safeguard to Irish subjects, who are to be tried for their lives before these British courts-martial. The authority, who is empowered to nominate the person of "legal knowledge and experience," is also a British army officer—Field Marshal Lord French—and it is obvious that whatever this high-placed soldier nominates the lesser British employees will not hesitate to certify. But it is a valuable comment on the whole system of legalised military terrorism which these new regulations, create that this vague respect to the law is paid in one case only. Every Irish subject brought before a court-martial not empowered to inflict the death penalty is, on the admission of the regulations themselves, to be tried by a court which is without a person of "legal knowledge and experience."

Regulation 12 permits the courts-martial to try Irish subjects secretly. It says: "If in the course of proceedings before a court-martial application is made by the prosecution, in the public interest, that all or any portion of the public shall be excluded from any part of the hearing, the court may make an order to that effect."

Regulation 14 says: "Any person who does an act with a view to promoting or calculated to promote the objects of an unlawful association shall be guilty of an offence against these regulations." An "unlawful association" is the British term signifying a popular institution in Ireland. The Gaelic League, whose object is the revival of the ancient culture and language, is an "unlawful association." Any person, therefore, "who does an act with a view to" reviving this Gaelic culture or language can be tried and sentenced by court-martial. The other "unlawful associations" in Ireland are Dail Eireann, the Parliament and Government elected by the Irish people at the last General Election, and which now represents 83 per cent. of the Irish people and is obeyed by them; the Sinn Fein organisation; the Irish

Volunteers; the Cumann-na-Ban (Women's League).

These coercive regulations, humorously entitled "Regulations for Restoration of Order in Ireland," have drawn a significant comment from the London "Times" in its issue of August 21. In an editorial article it says: "That war is now going to become much more terrible because the Government are going to use the Coercion Act as a means for destroying the Sinn Fein Courts. That, we fear, is the meaning of the seizure of the Lord Mayor of Cork. The Government cannot keep order in Ireland themselves. They now propose to destroy if they can institutions which keep order with such success that Unionists gladly resort to them. If that is their settled policy the outlook is desperate."

It is instructive that the latest methods by which the British Government are endeavouring to govern Ireland is burglarious entry and the employment in their service of obviously expert crackmen, who have on two of these instances evidently gone beyond their orders, and as well as letters and papers taken away sums of money and pieces of silver ware. During the past week houses of prominent Republicans have been entered in this manner, including those of Mr Wm. O'Brien, Arthur Griffith, Maurice Collins, and James Lawless, where systematic searches were made. The households were not disturbed by these raiders, who evidently knew which rooms were used as sleeping apartments.

The following letter, which has been received from a resident at Hospital, Co. Limerick, describes occurrences which are now common in many parts of Ireland:—

Hospital, Co. Limerick,
18th August, 1920.

Dear ———,

Yours to hand. Yes, Hospital is getting its baptism of fire right enough. Since the soldiers took up their quarters here on Friday week they have carried on a campaign of terror.

The troops began on Friday night with general rifle and machine gun fire, and ended up with promiscuous bomb throwing. They first of all set fire to the creamery. Next evening the machine gun corps, many of them drunk, arrested, searched, pushed everybody's mouth, and capped their devilry by the awful murder of Paddy Lynch. On Sunday at Hospital everyone was at high tension. There was a fair exodus of refugees to the outlying country houses towards curfew time, but when all were well abed Hospital became a hell. Rifle volleys were fired into the houses, ploughing furrows through shutters and door jambs. The terrified inmates cowered under beds or ran out the back doors and lay flat in the cornfields in their night attire, bullets streaming round them, some plugging into the ground. Hay barns which received the machine gun fire are now like gigantic graters. Monday (funeral day) was a day of terror. The place literally bristled with bayonets. Early in the afternoon the general clear-out started. I happened to see the procession on one particular road, and recognised many old people who had not been out of doors for years. Only a few went far on the roads, most took to the fields. The roads are no thoroughfare on account of the military motor lorries that go tearing along, the occupants jeering and shooting at anything that may escape their wheels. Scarcely half a dozen remained in the village on Monday night. You can do no good by coming home. If I were fortunate enough to be away I'd stay away.—Yours,

The only law and order in Ireland is that of the Republican Courts, despite all attempts at suppression. The forces of disorder (British) continue to sack towns, wreck creameries and factories, and kill civilians. The forces of order organised by the Government of the Irish Republic continue to suppress crime. In the period from 9th July (when the efforts at suppression became general) to 31st July—in those three weeks courts were held in the following 27 counties:—Cavan, Cork, Dublin, Wicklow, Longford,

King's Co., Tipperary, W. Meath, Leitrim, Clare, Mayo, Galway, Wexford, Limerick, Meath, Tyrone, Kilkenny, Roscommon, Waterford, Donegal, Louth.

It will be noticed that five of these counties are Ulster counties.

As we go to press the Lord Mayor of Cork is defying the British Government in their attempt to crush his spirit. His fight is symbolic of Ireland to-day. The British Government may go on torturing, murdering, but it will be of no avail. When will the workers of Britain realise their position and responsibilities regarding Ireland? What of the Councils of Action, or will the Irish exiles in Britain be forced to make the first move?

A Communist Party for Scotland.

About a fortnight ago a number of rebels met in the "Worker" office, and decided to issue a manifesto calling together a conference of Scots Communists, who agreed on the following points:—

The Proletarian Dictatorship.

The Soviet System.

The Third International.

Non-Affiliation to the Labour Party.

It was stated at that meeting that there was a profound feeling of dissatisfaction over the decision of the recent Communist Conference to affiliate with the Labour Party. Very few Communist groups were prepared to link up with a party taking up this position, and they had therefore to be left in isolation or be linked up together in a Scots Communist Party.

It was decided that the latter course be adopted. About the same time John Maclean, M.A., issued a call for a Scottish Communist Council of Action. A number of meetings have been held around this project, the most successful being held on Saturday last. The meeting on Saturday decided to appoint a committee of twelve, with discretionary powers to meet the signatories to the manifesto, and seek if possible a line of agreement. All the signs point to an agreement being arrived at, and a strong Communist Party being formed. There will be old antagonisms to be overcome, of course. There will be many debatable points to be settled. But if the desire for an agreement is there, and we are positive that it is, then there will be no difficulty in hammering out a policy. If the rebels can win a victory over themselves, they can look forward with confidence to a victory over Capitalism. The first-mentioned group arranged their conference for Saturday, 11th September, and have booked a hall for that date. If the other group agrees a joint call may be issued for the conference to take place on that day.

John S. Clarke.

We have received word from Comrade Inkipin in London that the Norwegian authorities have climbed down, and John is now on his way home. When he arrives we will hear all about his adventures. I expect there will be a poem on the Norwegian authorities amongst his luggage anyhow.

READ

"THE COMMUNIST,"

Official Organ of the new Communist Party.

For detailed report of proceedings of the Congress of the Communist International, held in Petrograd and Moscow.

Commenced in No. 4. Completed this week, No. 5.

Out to-day (Thursday).

Publishing Office—21a Maiden Lane, Strand, London, W.C.2.

"WATCHWORD OF LABOUR."

(IRELAND'S FIGHTING LABOUR WEEKLY.)

Articles on National and International Affairs.

All Scots and Irish Rebels should read it.



SEPTEMBER 4, 1920.

All communications to be sent to the Editor, National Council's Offices, 31 North Frederick Street, Glasgow, and must reach this office not later than Monday. Advertisements are received till Tuesday morning.

Communications must bear name and address of sender, not necessarily for publication.

Subscribers' Rates—Weekly, 3d.; Quarterly, 3/1; Half-Yearly, 6/2. Post free.

The Need for Industrial Preparedness.

(To the Editor of the "Worker.")

Comrade,—The article on above subject in last week's "Worker" is one which every thinking worker should ponder over. Without exception, it is the most vital subject possible to discuss to-day. I trust, comrade Editor, that you will keep this subject very much in the lime-light, give it prominence, and encourage free discussion on the question. For undoubtedly it is a question of our emancipation.

Capitalism, the oppressor, is still with us. Its function has long since been performed. Human progress demands something which is beyond Capitalism's sphere. Hence Capitalism must go. This opens up two distinct questions: Who will abolish it? and, What will take its place? While the working class may be involved in the abolition of the present state, yet we must not be merely fatalistic in saying that Socialism will follow. Socialism it not inevitable unless we are industrially prepared.

The failure of craft unionism to-day is understood. It has also served its function, but changed conditions makes a more up-to-date weapon necessary. Science demands Industrial Unionism in place of the obsolete craft idea. Real Workshop organisation is thus all important. How far have we progressed in that direction? This is where I tread on delicate ground.

There are many Industrial Unionists. They are all prepared to fight the immediate questions and never lose sight of the ultimate goal—emancipation. Yet, strange to say, they are not putting up the scientific fight they are capable of. Their blows have not the essential sting. They have a common enemy. Yet they will not face him in concerted fashion. The attempts to build up an industrial army are feeble in comparison to what might be. Where is this leading us? Divided into several camps, we remain at the mercy of our strongly-organised enemy. And we know his idea of mercy, and also that we cannot fight him while we are so divided. You know the Yankee song goes:—

"United we stand—divided we fall;
Union for ever—Freedom for all."

Of course each camp claims precedence. They still hold on to old antagonisms, whatever they may say to the contrary. And senseless battles of words keep them asunder. That, and the lack of courage to come together and reason things out. That Workers' Industrial Army is possible when we quit hitting each other with mere words. Let us then get machinery in motion to bring about the solidarity necessary.

It is worth consideration, so let us hear your views on the matter.—Yours fraternally,

PITMAN.

The Wicked Miners.

"It is mere syndicalism for the miners to apportion the profits of the trade between themselves and the community, and to treat their allotment as final."—The Nation.

And it is mere swindalism for the idle classes of the community to live on the backs of the miners at all.

CIGARETTE PAPERS

Oh, Horatio!

That big, unclean mass of physical and mental blubber, the Editor of "John Bull," notices the "Worker" in his notes last week. He seizes a passage in which we denounce Communist affiliation to the Labour Party as being a mistake, and suggests that we have a repugnance to Labour—except with our jaw. Perhaps so, but Horatio's waist line hardly suggests that his labours have been strenuous. Some day perhaps, when we are tired of working and jawing, we'll open a bucket shop or run a successful failure, or squeeze through a case in court, then we will be able to pose as a patriot and a pillar of society. We will then be able to deliver homilies on the blessings of labour for other people.

More About Violence.

The "Forward" last week returns again to the debate on violence without bringing forward any new arguments, and carefully side-stepping the crux of the whole question.

For weeks the "Forward" has been repeating that if the workers get a majority in Parliament, they in virtue of that fact get control of Government. We have challenged this point of view, and have asked the Editor of the "Forward" to state by what process the majority can get this control in view of the fact that the administrative side of the Government machinery is staffed in all its key positions by tools of the employing class. That has not been replied to, and we venture to say cannot be replied to. Until this question is satisfactorily answered by the "Forward," a catalogue of what the working class majority would do in the event of them getting control of the machinery of Government is entirely beside the point.

The "Forward" has it that if the pivotal men of the bosses refuse to hand over the machinery of Government, we have got to enforce our decrees by any means at our disposal, from graded bread tickets to extraordinary commissions.

Quite so, but the Editor of the "Forward" has taken a big jump here, and I beg to point it out. In the first place he is discussing the refusal of the pivotal men of the boss class to hand over the effective control of the machinery of Government to a Socialist parliamentary majority, and is called upon to explain what he would do in those circumstances. He fences for a moment, and then, when he tells us what he would do, we find to our amazement that he has stepped away from the issue, and is calmly assuming the very point in dispute, namely, that he has already control over the Government. We ask him: "What will you do if the Capitalist bureaucracy, the Capitalist judges, the Capitalist officers refuse to hand over control of the forces of Government to your parliamentary majority?" and his answer in effect is, "I'll use the forces of the Government against them." Well, we can't beat that for dialectics anyway.

We are then given some facts to controvert, such as parliamentary action has not been tested in this country for the realisation of Socialism, and until we do test it we are not justified in coming to any conclusions on the matter. We disagree with this entirely.

When we are asked to use a certain kind of organisation for revolutionary purposes, we are justified in examining the structure and potentialities of that form of organisation. If we perceive that it is useless or that it has limitations from the revolutionary point of view, we are justified in saying so, and formulating our tactics accordingly. And in coming to conclusions as to its value we are justified in drawing inferences from the practice of similar organisations in other countries, particularly during revolutionary periods. We have instances of the first Russian Duma, the Constituent Assembly, and the German National Assembly.

The first two bodies had the allegiance of an undoubted majority of the Russian people. But it was largely an unorganised majority with no

force at its disposal, and these institutions, resting merely on votes, easily went down before the more compactly organised minority—in the first place the autocracy of the Czar, and in the second place the Bolsheviks. Our case is that an unorganised majority with no force at its disposal, with only constitutional right on its side, would be equally powerless before a well organised Capitalist minority in any other country in the world.

In the case of the German National Assembly, as in the case of the Curragh mutiny in Ireland, the commanding officers refused to obey the commands of a constitutional government, and were unpunished. We would not be Communists, we would be children playing at politics, if we refused to take those facts into account in coming to an estimation of the value of parliament, and particularly if we are prepared to test it, as it had not been tested already in the revolutionary struggle in Europe.

The second fact that the Editor of the "Forward" brings forth is that refusal to vote leaves the boss class in control of the Government. I am not discussing the refusal to vote. I am discussing the necessity of a physical force organisation over and above every other form of work-in-class activity.

What the "Forward" is called upon to show is how voting can take the machinery of government out of the hands of the boss class. Until he can do this he is merely going round and round in a circle like a squirrel in a revolving cage.

Then we are asked for details as to how a physical force organisation would go about the business. Where would it get the guns, etc., etc. We would be fools if we started to discuss this in public. All that we are called upon to do in the meantime is to point out the necessity for the organisation. It may be pointed out, however, that its functions are twofold. It would weaken the force at the disposal of the enemy, and organise a nucleus of working class force.

The first would be accomplished by propaganda in the armed forces, in the barracks, battleships, aerodromes and munition depots of the country. From these we would get a proportion of men and guns. In these we would develop the means of sabotaging the striking force of the boss class during a crisis. The second function would be to develop means of protection amongst the civilians. There would be the danger of the agent provocateur to be faced, just as in parliamentary activity there is the danger of the Socialist political twister to be faced. The remedy is not to sit down and helplessly contemplate the difficulty. The remedy is to formulate ways and means of overcoming it.

No body of men out to challenge the ferocious imperialism of the twentieth century can progress to their goal without running risks. This truth may jar on the sensitive natures of some of our Socialist pacifists, but the hard, cruel fact must be stressed. (We notice from another column in the "Forward" that one of them has been writing the editor a letter full of personal denunciations of the advocates of violence. If anyone has any thing to say personally or otherwise about this we are quite willing to allow him reasonable space in the "Worker." We can do our bit of denunciation if it comes to that.)

Mr Johnston admits that considerable social changes have been brought about by minorities in the past, against the wishes and intents of majorities, but says that he is opposed to this. Well, he is quite entitled to quarrel with history if he likes. We were merely pointing out in reply to his plea that we must have a majority on our side if we are to bring about social change, that drastic changes have been brought about by minorities. That the factor which has made for success in social struggles in the past has not been numbers merely but strength of organisation, and that this is likely to be the governing factor in social struggles in the future.

Strength of organisation is dependent on a num-

ber of factors, such as the industrial situation, which may suddenly weaken the power of one class and increase the power of another. If it is admitted that minorities can bring about social changes, the whole question is lifted away from questions of majority and minority, and becomes a question of organised strength in a definite social situation.

"Forward" has at last admitted that in addition to using defensive violence on behalf of a Socialist state, it is prepared to use defensive violence in defence of the legal organisations of the workers. It still boggles at organising that defensive violence however, and makes no attempt to justify this glaring inconsistency, except by suggesting that a Capitalist attack on working class organisation might be more harmful to the bosses than to the workers by rousing public indignation, etc. To argue in this general way is meaningless. At present it might not pay the bosses to attack working class organisations, but as the workers awaken and begin to prepare for an attack on Capitalism, it would pay the bosses to postpone the day of working class victory by suppressing our organisations until the despised illegal organisations had been developed to make their power felt.

In conclusion we would like to re-emphasise a point which Mr Johnston has missed. We do not separate the physical force struggle from the general struggle of the workers. We cannot isolate it in this way; neither do we advocate that an insurrection should be timed, with reference only to military factors. That is Blanquism, and we are Marxists. We know we cannot make a rebellion to order, but we do know that the class struggle is intensifying. We do know that an industrial struggle may, through the opposition of the state, change into a political struggle in which force is used. We want to be prepared for that eventuality, because we know that the bosses are ruthless and the bosses will fight. That is not half-baker insurrectionism, that is sound sense.

The trouble with our pacifist friends is that they are looking at society through the spectacles of Capitalist prejudice. They regard society as an association of more or less equal persons, with equal power, rights, and duties. They think in terms of parliament majority and minority, and do not see the struggle of the contending classes whose arbiter is not necessarily numbers but power. This class struggle does not take parliament into account. Its crises do not coincide with general elections, but arise independently. Take, for example, the war crisis. We had a Government obviously working towards a war. We had the press doing the same. We had a paralytic parliament incapable of controlling the Government. When the crisis became acute the Labour movement threw up its own independent organisation and confronted the Government, and the Government gracefully retired. Such a crisis may arise at any time in the future. It may arise out of a miners' strike or out of any industrial struggle. The Government may make a move which provokes working class discontent. The movement locally and nationally organises to resist. There is no precise way of getting at majorities and minorities. Only the power of the contending sides can be vaguely estimated. It may result in the Government giving way or compromising, which would only add to the popularity of the tactic in the Labour movement and ensure its employment again. Or the Government may resist, and then the struggle becomes a life and death fight.

If the Labour movement goes down, the hopelessness and apathy resulting from defeat may dog progress for a decade. If the Government goes down, the Labour organisations become the de facto Government of the country. In such a crisis success would depend on how far we had undermined the armed forces of the Capitalists by propaganda, and on how far we had devoted physical force organisation ourselves. That will be the deciding factor. We have either got to prepare for a desperate struggle now, so that we will play our part when the issue is joined, or we can continue to go along the old lines, and find ourselves in a crisis without adequate organisation. The former leads to victory, the latter to betrayal. We are astonished at the audacity of those tender souls who are accusing us of desiring bloodshed.

Great Australian Conspiracy.

BY TOM BARKER.

On the 5th of August ten of the famous Twelve Australian I.W.W. prisoners were released from gaol on the recommendation of a Royal Commission, which was set up by the New South Wales Government to inquire into the case. They had been in gaol since September 23rd, 1916. Two of the boys are still left in, we suppose as a method of saving the face of the most rascally judiciary in the world. From the militant attitude adopted by the unions in Sydney, we may take it for granted, that it will not be more than a few days before they also are released.

It is worth noting that as soon as the Royal Commission ordered the release of the men upon the base of the injustice of the so-called trial of 1916, the Prime Minister, William Morris Hughes, made the discovery that his services were needed at Geneva at the League of Nations. It is more evident, however, that Australia has become too hot for this gentleman. Hughes it was who was responsible for the arrests and verdicts inflicted on the men. Hughes it was who went on the platform—when he was Federal Attorney General and guardian of the Constitution—while the men were waiting trial and committed the most gross contempt of court by attacking the men and charging them with all the heinous crimes in the calendar. Not only did he do this flagrantly, but he permitted and encouraged other working class enemies, political and journalistic, to do the same.

A maggotty-headed judge, bitter and venomous, and a carefully-selected conscriptionist and property jury made sure of their verdicts. There never was a trial when venom and spleen was so evident. There never was a trial in which so much perjury was committed by the Crown witnesses. Crook detectives, a forger, a disreputable pimp and a self-confessed arson-monger were the witnesses. They were all liberally rewarded, and the detectives promoted. It was a deliberate police and political conspiracy. The Bar were mixed in it. Even the counsel that were paid enormous sums by the defence were running with the other side, and expressing their hope, secretly, that the boys would be fitted. So what chance did the boys ever have?

The anxiety of the high officials to get Scully out of the State when he made the damaging confession in 1918, incriminating the police, proves beyond all doubt that they were mixed up in the conspiracy also. But canny fellows that they were, they covered up their tracks by deputing all the dirty work to their subordinates. One of these subordinates, prominent in the I.W.W. case, was afterwards concerned in a serious case of blackmailing prostitutes. Instead of getting imprisoned and thrown out of the force, as the dirty rotter deserved, he was permitted to stay on, and transferred to another district. The higher-ups were afraid to get crossways of Ferguson because he might say things about the I.W.W. case that would put the police chiefs in their proper place.

The Commission of 1918, following upon the Scully and Goldstein revelations, proved beyond

all doubt that the men were the victims of the blackguardly set of police and civilian pimps. But the judge, true to his craft and his ermined comrades, merely gave the police a nasty smack across the knuckles, and ignored the boys rotting in gaol. The New South Wales Government had such a high opinion of their precious judges that they took the recent Royal Commission and placed it in the hands of a Tasmanian judge. And after his decision, it is surely time for the Government to insist upon the immediate recall of those ancient rascals, as well as the immediate arrest of the perjurers, and the ex-Attorney General, David Robert Hall, a person who subsidised liars and supplied them liberally with taxpayers' money.

Hughes is now coming to Europe. We may be quite sure that he will not return to the Island continent. He is hated and despised even by the people who bought him in the early days of the war. "Dear Mr. Hughes" will probably not be so necessary to the soul uplifts of the Park Lane dowagers as he was when they wanted to stampee Australian manhood into the trenches. It is necessary to show unmistakably that he is not to be tolerated in this country in any shape or form. For my part, I am going to act as an advance agent for the gentleman, that he will wish that he had instructed his precious Commonwealth cops to have dumped me overboard instead of landing me in Chile.

While the boys were in gaol they were treated much worse than ordinary criminals. Some of them almost lived on the bread and water. The authorities went their hardest to kill them. That big rotten scoundrel, MacCauley, the Controller-General, had them treated as bad as possible. He is dead now, and he is a good riddance. If ever there was joy in those fiendish gaols of N.S.W. it must have been on the day that "Brutus" died. A big gross, bloated-faced tyrant with an arrogant belly and a scurrilous tongue.

Now that ten of the boys are out, we can be quite sure that they will neither forget nor forgive a single one of their enemies. Justice will be dealt out to the conspirators, and neither their high public position nor their care in covering up their tracks will save them. The I.W.W. believes in an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. And bad as that punishment will be, it will be lenient alongside of Donald Grant's fifteen years for fifteen words, or Jack King's five years for having in his possession three industrial stickers. I know that Tom Glynn will see justice done, and that every one of those rotters will get proletarian justice, stern and salutary.

On behalf of the Australian Workers' Defence Committee, I have to thank the "Worker" for its good work for the boys, and also all the workers in Scotland who have done their share towards giving publicity to the villany and injustice prevailing in the land of the Southern Cross.

And full and hearty congratulations to the Twelve gladiators and confusion to their enemies.

MORE ABOUT VIOLENCE.—Continued.

The writer has had some experience of modern warfare, and he detests bloodshed. But he is realistic enough to face the facts. We cannot build a working class policy upon sentiment, but on a knowledge of the nature of the class struggle. Being averse to bloodshed, and being realist, we wish to record it as our considered conclusion that those who are asking the workers to participate in a desperate class struggle armed only with votes and legal industrial organisation are inviting defeat and bloody suppression, followed by a Capitalist military dictatorship. Those who are advocating preparation are striving to minimise this danger, and to prepare their class for victory.

We leave it at that, except to say that, as Mr Johnston has raised the question of the naval blockade in the event of a revolution, we refer him to our reply to Mr Geo. Benson in our issue of August 21.

CRAFT UNIONISM.

I believe in the one-eyed, wooden-headed policy of "going it alone."

I stand for antiquated craft DIVISION and DEFEAT.

I am craft-conscious; I think, talk, and dream nothing but MY TRADE; I have not understanding, no interests, no time for my class.

I believe in the divine right of Capital to fleece and oppress wage-earning mankind.

I swear by arbitration; I advocate "harmony interests" between the class that make and the class that take.

I resign myself to unemployment; it is a necessary evil; it always has been and always will be.

I believe in any old durned thing provided it does not stop my meals or my job.

Workshop Notes.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE WITH BABCOCK'S?

O Lord, will someone tell us what is to be done with this plant. Since we commenced workshop notes we have been inundated with letters and complaints from this particular firm. In fact, we could issue a special Babcock's supplement if the price of paper permitted it. It would make the summer number of "Punch" dull and unentertaining in comparison. Now that the Charlie Chaplin stuff is beginning to pall, we suggest to some enterprising cinema firm that they send a film writer to Babcock's. He'll get enough material to weave screen comedies out of it for the next fifty years.

And perhaps a hundred years hence, when some future Tom Johnstone is writing a history of the working class of Scotland, he'll be pouring over a dilapidated copy of the "Worker," and marvelling at the antics of Babcock's woolly brained wage slaves. There's the latest thing from this establishment vouched for by our wireless correspondent:—

Comrade,—Just a line in reference to B. & W. circus again, this time the "old marine shop." A meeting was called by the Shop Stewards of the A.E.U., and it was unanimously agreed to take the day off on Monday. Well, one of the Shop Stewards, the "Great M'Kay," hoped we would stand firm; he also appointed pickets for the gate. Imagine our surprise when, arriving at the works one Tuesday, to find that M'Kay was at work all day on Monday. How he got past the pickets we do not know, unless he remained overnight in B. & W., or perhaps he crawled through a rat hole; our sympathy for the rat. Another of the reptile breed is called Joe, better known as the "Spaniard." He works all zee time every time and any old time, if you can only give him zee winner of zee next big race. There is another known as "Jack Bobbie," who also loves his work. Now I should like to know the position of the men who remained out, if the management had discharged them seeing that their Shop Steward was working. However, as he himself (the S. T.) is of a religious turn of mind, he will probably remember what the "Great Book" says: "After God made all reptiles and creeping, crawling vermin, He had some stuff left, and He made a scab." I hope it was "Jack Bobbie." Zee Joe, not zee? Great M'Kay!

"WATCHDOG."

We have further information that six of the men who took the day on Monday were laid off on Wednesday for lack of material. The rabbits were allowed to work as usual.

✱ ✱ ✱

A BANQUET FOR THE BOSS.

M'Ghee's, Laighpark, Paisley, contains some very good men, and some hopeless deadheads. Whether the latter predominate or not we do not know, but an incident that took place a week ago certainly suggests that they do. A shop meeting was called to discuss the rent strike, and a vote was taken. The vote showed a majority of eight in favour of the strike. The chairman of the meeting was no ordinary individual. He is clearly a man who possesses all the necessary qualifications for making a first class Labour "twister." This man, Johnstone by name, ruled that there could be no strike, as it required a two-thirds majority under A.E.U. rules before a strike could be declared.

We would point out to this poor bewildered Dubb that it was not an A.E.U. strike, and the rules did not matter, but why are people of this mentality allowed to drift into key positions on Works Committees and Trade Union branches? They are a menace to themselves and the men whom they misrepresent.

There is a beltman employed in this shop, and he is sure some guy. He happens to live in the country, and every week for a time, he was observed bringing in a bouquet of flowers for the manager to beautify his room at the works. If that doesn't knock the various workshop celebri-

ties that we have been describing in our notes into a cocked hat, I don't know what does.

Adjacent to M'Ghee's is a work called "White's," though a majority of the workers employed therein are yellow. There are usually about a third of the men employed in this mortuary who stay in at dinner time, and take their meals in the canteen. On Monday week fully two-thirds of the men employed partook of their meals in the canteen inside the works. It was rent strike day, and they anticipated a mass picket coming along to detach them from their dearly loved job for half a day, and determined that if a mass picket came along it would have to storm the works and dig them out of their funk holes.

✱ ✱ ✱

GREENOCK GETS GOING.

A little authority over their fellow men has an intoxicating effect on some people. They get into a kind of spiritual delirium, and go around making first class idiots of themselves. A new foreman, who has been appointed in Kincaid's in Greenock has been illustrating this truth, and has got himself into trouble in consequence. The first day of his appointment he went round the shop as if the whole firm belonged to him, and was irritated to find that no one seemed to take any notice of him. His next move was to post up a notice forbidding anyone from entering the store.

An apprentice decided to annoy the great men by pulling down the notice. The store-boy immediately went and informed the new gaffer, who decided to demonstrate to the rascal multitude that he was no ordinary workshop dictator. The result was that the venturesome apprentice was suspended for a week.

This was naturally resented by the pattern-makers in the shop, who held a meeting and decided to strike if the boy was not reinstated. The new foreman was consulted, but he refused to reinstate the boy, and the men walked out "en masse." A delegation next morning visited the manager, who informed them that the Bolshies were at the bottom of the trouble, and refused to give them his books. Heaven knows what the Bolshies are not at the bottom of nowadays. If there is war in Ireland, it is not due to the legitimate grievances of the Irish people; it's a Bolshie plot. If there is unrest in Egypt, it's not due to a sense of suppressed nationality; it's a Bolshie plot; and even the rainstorm of a fortnight ago was not due to natural causes, but was a Bolshhevik attempt to interfere with the constitution of the universe.

But to return to the issue. The men then put in their notices, which were due to expire on Monday, the 23rd of August, and went back to work out their notices. On the Saturday previous to their notices expiring word came to the Shop Steward that the manager was very sorry that the thing had happened, or that he would have reinstated the boy to his former position.

The foreman who is responsible is a Christian, who took the minister's place during the war at a salary of £250 per annum. Whether he preached Christianity in this job we do not know, but he is evidently not practising in Kincaid's; but he has been taught a salutary lesson this time, and he should be all the better for it in the future.

✱ ✱ ✱

THE WORKSHOP MYSTERY.

We have received a dire threat from a correspondent, who signs himself "Tubal Cain," ancient our remarks on the workshop mystery. He tells us that we are under no less a penalty than to have our throat cut across from ear to ear, our tongue torn out by the roots, and our body buried in the rough sands of the sea a cable tow's length from the shore where the tide ebbs and flows twice every twenty-four hours. We tremble with apprehension, but at anyrate if the worst befalls us we will rise again "from a dead level to a living perpendicular."

ARE HIS BRAINS IN HIS BOOTS?

The average man venerates the successful football player. He allows his imagination to run riot, until an ordinary individual begins to resemble a demi-god. Some of the football players, however, are pretty small fry outside of their particular 'speciality.' There is a player in the "bully wee Clyde" called Brown, designated sometimes as airman Brown, and he's sure some flyer. This individual has been in the habit of going round deriding the workers of this country as compared with those of Canada. Well, there are some pretty poor specimens of workers in this country, but the worst of them is better than Brown, who, in spite of all his tall talk, crawled into his work on rent strike day. This individual recently got a "wee bit chairgle," and he was one of six of two hundred men who crawled back to the Caley Works on Monday. This is playing a dirty game as far as his class is concerned, and that is worse than foul play in the football field.

—X—

West London Vigilance Committee.

60 Antrabus Rd., Acton, W. 3. 21/8/20

(To the Editor of the "Worker.")

Dear Sir,—I am directed by the above committee to forward to you the following resolution, which was unanimously passed in the hope you will give the same publicity for the benefit of your readers:—

Resolution carried at Conference.

"That this conference of Delegates, representing the London Branches of the A.S.U., having fully considered the circumstances of Mr. J. T. Brownlie's relationship with the Hulton Press, Ltd., call upon the West London Vigilance Committee to proceed with calling a National Conference, and that delegates get a mandate from their Branches as to whether Bro. Brownlie is a fit and proper individual to represent the organised workers in the Engineering Unions."

I am, etc.

F. V. ROON, Secy.

—X—

"WORKER" MAINTENANCE FUND.

—✱—

Already acknowledged	£84 10 8
A few "Workers," Denny	1 0 0
Comrade Watton	0 5 0
J. M'Atter	0 2 6
E. West	0 18 0
Jolly Beggars	0 4 0
Rosyth Coppermiths and Turners ...	0 6 0
Per J. Duffy—	

P. Marr, 2/-; G. Grandison, 2/-;	
D. M'Grath, 2/-; A. Hercus, 1/-;	
T. Duffy, 2/6; Mrs T. Duffy, 2/6; D.	
Flockhart, 2/-; E. Robertson, 2/-;	
D. M'Caig, 1/-; J. Brown, 2/-; P.	
Hamilton, 1/-; J. Smith, 2/-; H.	
Keenan, 2/-; "Jock," 6d; H.	
Wheelon, 1/-; J. Moyes, 1/-; R.	
Yeoman, 1/-; A. Morton, 1/-; Two	
Italian Rebels, 2/-; E. Pearson, 1/-;	
G. Murray, 2/-; A. Thomson, 2/-;	
R. Barbour, 1/-; R. Logan, 2/-; J.	
Scougall, 1/-; C. M'Dowd, 1/-; J.	
Kemp, 2/-; A. Kemp, 1/-; R. Simp-	
son, 1/-; J. Henderson, 1/-; J. Wil-	
son, 2/-; G. Allison, 10d; A. Fire-	
man, 1/-; G. Gibbons, 5/-; T.	
Donaldson, 2/-; J. Flockhart No. 1,	
2/-; J. Flockhart No. 2, 2/-; D.	
Thomson, 2/-; G. Findlay, 2/-;	
T. Storry, 3/-; T. Anderson, 1/-; J.	
Donaldson, 5/-; W. Heron, 2/-; W.	
Watson, 2/-; Irish Rebel, 2/-; A.	
Rollo, 1/-; R. Dobson, 2/6; J. Hamil-	
ton, 1/-; F. Osborne, 1/-; J. Ram-	
age, 1/6; A. Murray, 5/-; T. Steven-	
son, 1/-; P. Duffy, £1; Mrs P.	
Duffy, 10/-—Total	6 14 6

£91 5 2

PIT COMMITTEE ORGANISATION IN THE SOUTH WALES COALFIELD.

By W. J. HEWLITT.

The outstanding need of our time is broad and definite Industrial Organisation, e.g., all who are engaged in the production of the Commodity Coal should be in one union; which in itself suggests the elimination of all forms of petty craft unions which tend to divide the workers.

To be understood, I lay no claim that in S. Wales we have achieved this perfect state of organisation, but at the same time, I do claim that we have an organisation that is closely akin to it, and ever developing in the right direction.

Having been invited by some of the Scottish comrades to give an outline of the methods and mode of organisation in the S. Wales Coalfield, I make no apology for complying with same.

CONSTITUTION OF THE S.W.M.F.

The Federation is open to all persons employed in and about the Mines.

OBJECTS.

Whilst not giving the whole of the objects, I will give three of the most important:

(a) To secure the entire organisation of all the workers employed in and about the collieries situated in the South Wales and Monmouthshire coalfield, with a view to complete abolition of Capitalism, and that membership of the Federation shall be a condition of employment.

(b) To acquire or to join in with any other organisation in acquiring premises for the purpose of educating and training trade unionists in social science, and to take part in the political and industrial life of the Labour movement, and to manage or administer, or to join in with any other organisations in the management and administration of such premises when so acquired, and the educational and training work carried on therein and thereby, and to adopt and to join in with any other organisations in adopting all such other means or methods as may be found necessary or expedient for furthering this object.

(c) To appoint persons on the workmen's behalf to make inspections under the provisions of the Coal Mines Act, 1911, and any other enactments which may for the time being be in force, of the coal mines in which members of the Federation may be employed.

To all my readers I would commend a close perusal of the above three objects, for it gives enormous scope into the hands of the rank and file.

MODE OF ORGANISATION.

Central E.C. Committee, with headquarters and offices at Cardiff. The function of the E.C. is to administer the affairs of the organisation. The existing method of appointing E.C. is: The coal field is divided up into districts or geographical areas. Each district appoints its representatives, one or two according to numerical strength. It is also the duty of the E.C. to deal with general wage demands, disputes, and any other matters pertaining to the industry.

DISTRICT ORGANISATION.

A District Committee is made up of one member from each lodge or colliery within the district, which again is geographically defined. The District Committee meets once a month. Special meetings are held when urgent business demands it. The function of this District Council is to deal with disputes, price lists, all matters in connection with the industry within the district. The agent for the district attends the monthly council, and gives a report of his month's work. The delegates assembled again take back to their respective lodges a report of all business transacted.

This leads me to the next link in the chain, and in fact the most important one of all, namely, the "Pit or Lodge Committee."

APPOINTMENT OF LODGE COMMITTEE.

The annual meeting, which is held in December, is responsible for the appointment of the Pit Committee, each member holding office for twelve months, that is, providing his conduct is satisfactory to the general members.

When the selection of this Committee is made, due regard is taken for every branch of the industry; e.g., colliers, horse drivers, night workers, traffic men, surface workers, and crafts men have their representative upon the Pit Committee. This provides an avenue for dealing with all disputes and all phases of mining life at the particular colliery.

FUNCTION OF PIT COMMITTEE.

The function of the Pit Committee is to deal with all wage disputes, making of price lists, enforcing that the Mines Act shall be carried out by the management, particularly in relation to the safety of the mines and the general improvement of working conditions. The two phases of the Pit Committee which I want to lay stress upon is the following: In the first place it is directly under the control of the general body of the workers, being democratically elected, and each member subject to recall should he fail to carry out his duties in accordance with the general terms laid down, and to the satisfaction of the general body of the workers. In the second place it is at grips with all disputes at the point of production, i.e., it is right on the spot where the dispute arises; it is able to investigate all the conditions which gave rise to the dispute; and in nine cases out of ten it settles at the colliery office with the colliery officials without sending them to the district or the Council Executive, which latter is held by many of our members to be the home of lost causes, where disputes are held up for twelve months or two years. To make matters perfectly clear, a Pit Committee is composed of say twelve members, exclusive of chairman and secretary. Each branch of the mining industry is represented. A dispute arises, e.g., a collier or hewer has a wage dispute with the management. He gets in touch with the Pit Secretary, informs him of the dispute, and the secretary will then call the Pit Committee together. The committee with the aggrieved worker will then investigate the whole of the circumstances which gave rise to the dispute. A deputation is appointed from the committee, including the injured worker, to proceed to the colliery office, and there with the officials thrash out the case and demand redress, also settle the dispute; and as I have stated in nine cases out of ten a satisfactory arrangement is reached. This method of dealing with disputes rarely involves any loss of time upon the worker. One other important point to notice is the control and settling of disputes is kept in the hands of those who have to work under the arrangements that are made, i.e., the mass of the workers. I profoundly believe that Workshop and Pit Committees should be encouraged and established all over the industrial world, for it does develop self-reliance and initiative in the workers, which is very essential if the workers are to take over the administration of the industries on behalf of the industrial community.

I take it one need hardly emphasise that the limited space of the "Worker" does not permit a long and detailed elaboration of the question, and I am afraid that I have trespassed too far upon its valuable columns. To summarise the method and mode of organisation in the S. Wales coalfield is as follows: Pit or Lodge Committees, Joint and Combine Committees, i.e., of groups of collieries under the same company. "District Councils" where every lodge is represented "Central Executive Council" where every district is represented. Central E.C. will send out agendas for all conferences to the districts and lodges, where all matters are discussed, and delegates to District Councils and coalfield conferences will be mandated by the general body of the workers. Thus it is now quite clear that the last word upon all questions remains with the rank and file, and not with the officials. If this principle is violated the workers are responsible. They do not mind their own business.

UNOFFICIAL COMMITTEES.

I know there is an idea abroad that S. Wales is covered by a network of Unofficial Committees.

This is not so. In fact there is no permanent unofficial organisation in the coalfield. What does happen when it is necessary is that the advanced or rebel element does meet and discuss matters, arrive at decisions, then go back to their respective Pit Committees and Lodges, put their views forward, have them thoroughly discussed, and if their opinions are accepted the delegates to the Councils and Conferences are instructed to act accordingly. Thus we are enabled to carry out our advanced policy in a constitutional manner. This is a very important factor, for we can always smash up the renegade and the milk and sop mongers by referring them to the constitution. It is fair to claim that the major portion if not the whole of the advanced reforms in the coalfield is attributable to the unofficial or rebel element. This element is generated and developed in and through the "Central Labour College Evening Classes," owned and controlled by the N.U.R. and the S.W.M.F. This again is provided for in the constitution, as evidenced by Section B in the Objects. In conclusion I would urge upon my Scottish mining comrades to form up their evening classes for the study of Industrial History and Economics (Marxian) this winter, develop them to their fullest capacity, impart to the rank and file all the knowledge possible, then I do not fear the result. Experience has taught me the source of our strength and the secret of any success we have attained.

Trusting, dear Editor, that I have not unduly trespassed upon your columns, or wearied you in my attempt in simple terms to outline our organisation in S. Wales, and to state that if some good will accrue as a result I shall be amply repaid for my feeble effort.

Communism and the Ex-Service Men.

LETTER REJECTED BY THE "CALL."

By J. GORMLEY (President, International Union)

The articles by Comrade Albert H. Hawkins have brought before the readers of "The Call" a very important field of activity for Communists. His appeals for the assistance of B.S.P. members in furthering Communist ideas amongst the Ex-Service Men are very timely, but, unfortunately, there are many grounds for criticism in the case presented by him.

Nobody will deny that the Ex-service Men, as such, have need for a special organisation to deal with pensions, allowances, and gratuities. Nobody can rightly dispute that it is necessary for the ex-service man to ally himself with the working class movement and, in the final form, with the Communist movement. But it must be borne in mind that in the endeavours to construct a form of organisation which will meet to best advantage the needs of the Ex-service Men there has sprung into existence a variety of bodies which are almost a complete counterpart of the several organisations now catering for the political and industrial needs of the general body of workers.

In the first instance you have the "Kamerades". This is an avowedly reactionary body, and its status is not in dispute. It is quite apparent anti-Labour, existing only to divert the activities of its members into channels which will be pleasing to the exploiting class.

In the second place, you have the National Union of Ex-Service Men, for which Comrade Hawkins seeks to get B.S.P. support. Now, it is my intention to demonstrate that the part played by this body is in all respects similar to that played by the anti-bolshevik, bourgeois ideologists of the Labour Party in the political and industrial activities of the workers.

Comrade Hawkins has been at pains to point out that in its programme the National Union endeavours to meet the attacks on Trade Unionism by Haig, and stands for the abolition of the capitalist system, and is also anti-militarist. But, as with the Labour Party, these principles are confined to their programme and do not appear reflected in their activities. They are rendering lip service, as do the Labour fakirs, but shirk the working responsibilities of their programme. Let us instance their anti-militarist position by quoting Mr. Alexander Scott, who represented

(Continued on page 8)

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF EX-SERVICE MEN

On Tuesday evening, 17/8/20, the Edinburgh Branch of the National Union met in conference with the Edinburgh Branch of the International Union to discuss (after stating our separate positions in the Socialist movement) and to try if local fusion was possible; to unite our forces during any crisis that might arise, and in which both Unions held similar views as to tactics or methods of propaganda, as for example the present Russia-Poland crisis, which really was the means of bringing about the above suggested conference. After lengthy but futile discussion by both sides, the suggestion of fusion was dropped by common consent. Our aims were antagonistic; the helplessness of fusion must have been apparent to all present as the Russia-Poland crisis, the only form of co-operation discussed was the formation of a joint committee of six; three members from each Union with convenor, and the discussion as to even that was little enough. But it was just as well; no other scheme was discussed, for the talk of joining forces is merely talk, nothing else. Perhaps in this matter we are too literal for the N.U.X., nevertheless, we maintain (especially since Tuesday's conference) that the N.U.X. is not a force for the overthrow of Capitalism, and can never be so long as it boasts of being recognised by the Labour Party. Mr Hart, chairman of the Edinburgh branch of the N.U.X., in his answer to comrade Morton of the I.U.S.M., made as good an evasive speech as ever we heard. It was merely a speech that gave us the impression that he was trying to confuse us. Instead of being present to state the position of the N.U.X., he was there to defend its position right or wrong, and to attack ours. His one point of attack was upon the name of our union. He stated that the only point of difference was in the five letters—**I-n-t-e-r**—otherwise we were practically the same. If that is so, the the N.U.X. should never have been in existence. The I.U.X. was formed first. Why then was another union started with the same aims and objects? Was it because the prefix "inter" did not suit them? Not at all. For what does the name of an union matter to anyone who believes the aims objects, and principles are correct? Yet our name was all Mr. Hart could find with, and saying we must be National before we could be International. Well, we are not going to argue about that, it may or may not be right; we would only say that is our outlook, and in our policy we are international—therefore let our name be International if for no other reason, though other reasons we have. After hearing our position stated, Mr Hart declared that the N.U.X. stands for practically the same. If such is the case, then the existence of two separate Unions with a common platform is utterly absurd and stupid. In our case for fusion, nothing more need be said to bring us together under one lurid red banner. But such is not the case, as was proved conclusively to our members in the discussion that followed between Mr Hart and the writer. Mr Hart unconsciously stated one great difference between us, when he stated that the N.U.X. stands for exactly the same; the I.U.X. moves for it. Though there is in both unions the fundamental idea of Socialism—namely, the collective ownership of the land and industrial capital—in our tactics (or should we say in our past actions?), and in our policy we differ so much as to be in many respects conflicting and opposing movements. The N.U.X. is no more revolutionary than its insipid mother, the Labour Party. Individual members may be revolutionary. We trust there are more than we are aware of, but the N.U.X. as a whole is reactionary so long as it clings for support to the Labour Party M.P.'s. Our Union stands upon its own legs, unfettered to any party or clique. True, we are all out for unity, but we learned long since that oil and water will not mix. If the N.U.X. wishes fusion with the I.U.X. (but perhaps they prefer the Comrades and the Federation), let them cut the painter, drop the Labour fakirs, accept the principles of the Workers' Committees, come to us accepting our policy in its entirety. At the conference the subject was raised of numerical strength and moral strength. The strength of the N.U.X. is numerical, ours at present is moral. We, too, desire numerical strength; we do not want numbers, not a mob. We want an army, and a Red army. The difference between an army and a mob is not in numbers but in organisation. An army is an organised force: United by training, disciplined by knowledge. A mob is a crowd untrained, uneducated, unscrupulous, unthinking,

ready for violence merely for violence's sake, and is scattered at the first onslaught of the enemy, as sheep before the wolf. The mob is the raw material; the army is the finished article. It is from the mob, the dumb, stumbling multitude, so called, that we recruit our army. Amongst them we must send our recruiting agents to enlist them and train them; educate and organise them into one united force—an army. Our appeal is not to those who have been doped by the Labour fakirs, but to the ex-service men and workers outside the N.U.X. who have not yet had his vision distorted, nor his mentality twisted by distortors of the truth. As to a scheme of a joint-committee, we of the I.U.S.M., Edinburgh branch, are against it. If the N.U.X. members are Communists as they say they are, let them come and join us—the first in the field. If they are in earnest in their desire for revolution, they will sever all connection from a party which does not stand for the Third International, no matter what support they received or receive, moral or otherwise, let them stand clear of it, and fusion will come of its own accord. We will then be well on our way towards the formation of a Red Army, that will excel Russia's Red Army, morally and materially. —For the Edinburgh Branch, M. ROBERTSON.

BRANCH NOTES.

DUNDEE.—The Boys are having a busy time of it. They started on their own to waken up the laggards, but after doing their best and shouting themselves hoarse, they were compelled to wire to Glasgow for assistance. Comrade Cheyne, assistant organiser, was soon on the scene of operations, and kept the fire burning till Saturday. Word came that the branch officials were in trouble, so a deputation was elected from the rank and file, but the deputation was a failure, and proved a disaster as far as money was concerned. They accepted anything that was offered—15/- for non-pensioners and pensioners' money made up to 15/-. No good fighting for b—— like that, so were told off at the next meeting, but on the whole 300 good members were enrolled, and they are still pouring in.

WEST LONDON.—Serious developments are expected, and we will possibly have to appeal to the movement as a whole to assist in providing for the wives and families of any of our comrades who are put in prison. We are not worrying; we are quite confident that the movement will not allow any of our dependents to starve even if we have to go to prison. As we have to be very guarded meantime, further report is held over.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—The goods are being delivered, and delivered in good style. Secy. Lyle's report is very encouraging. Members are rolling in, and the head office is finding it difficult to cope with the demand for cards. Next week or perhaps later I hope to be able to give Comrade's Steel's report, but meantime, for reasons already stated, I do not wish to say too much about London.

EDINBURGH.—To whom it may concern and branch secy's, in particular. Take note that W. S. Taylor, late treasurer of Edinburgh Branch, is no longer a member of the I.U.X., having been expelled from the Edinburgh Branch.

PAISLEY.—Some of the wisecracks will be surprised to see Paisley still being mentioned in these reports, but let the persons concerned take heed. Paisley Branch is not dead, nor is it even dying. On the contrary it is very much alive. As to their activities, keep your eye on the "Worker."

SOUTH SIDE.—Monthly meeting of the above branch was held in the National Halls last Wednesday. Good turnout of members. Business of important nature was transacted. Comrades McKimmie and Mrs Connolly were appointed delegates to the District Council. Ten new members have been enrolled since the holidays. Outdoor meetings will be held every Friday at Gorbals Cross. Ex-service men are invited to come and hear the gospel (not according to Lloyd George). Members who have not returned collecting cards are requested to do so at once with all monies collected to J. Wardle, 65 Dale Street, Tradeston. Next meeting, 10th September. Now don't forget, Boys. Get a move on.

CLYDEBANK.—Outdoor propaganda meeting held at Kilbowie Road on Wednesday night. Speakers, Comrades Smillie and Hughes. Comrade Smillie's subject was "War," a very topical subject considering the many wars that are raging at present. Comrade Hughes followed and delivered the goods. The speakers were continually interrupted by drunks and ignoramuses,

especially the latter, but as usual when question time arrived the interrupters were conspicuous by their absence. Outdoor meetings will be held every Wednesday at foot of Kilbowie Road.

GOVAN.—This branch has been going great guns since we decided to make joint cause with the International Union of Ex-service Men, and we have held three meetings to date, which have been an unqualified success, and because of these meetings the ex-service men in this district are beginning to again take an interest in their own affairs. For some time now we have been having a continuous stream of complaints from these men as to the way they are being treated in regard to their pensions. But all the prompting on our part to get them to join up seemed to be of no use; but now the pressure seems to be coming greater, and they are beginning to understand that there is a conspiracy on the part of the powers that be to wipe them off the pension list. We are also aware that the shipyards in our district are paying strict attention to a Government instruction to throw the man who is a trained man on to the industrial scrap heap, with a view to getting him to return to the military fold. We are also aware of this, and we want all ex-service men in this district to pay attention to it that there is a species of spineless worm who has had his case carried through successfully by this Branch, and who is either too mean to pay his 3d per week, or because of the fact that while he was a member he was a traitor to his comrades. He is going about trying to belittle the organisation, that their gutter type of mind cannot understand. And also they are claiming to be able to take up cases of hardship and attend to them better than we can. Get this well down your neck, ex-service men, that these slimy, creeping, crawling tapeworms are a menace to you and the dependants of our comrades who have gone west. Watch them well, comrades, and when you find them use direct action. The Govan Branch meets on the first Sunday of every month in the Boiler-makers' Hall, Greenhaugh Street, next the Subway, at 3 p.m. Outdoor meeting will be held every Tuesday night at Govan Cross.—Gen. Wylie, Hon. Secy.

J. GORMLEY'S LETTER—Continued.

the National Union at the Peace Congress in Glasgow, as reported in the "Sunday Mail":—"He (Mr Scott) did not think Capitalism was the one and only cause of the war, and that the abolition of capitalism was the only remedy."

Reading this carefully you will notice the statement that capitalism is not the only cause of wars. Now, we quite recognise that other elements besides capitalism do exist, but their influence is so insignificant as to be negligible, and you will see that this statement is identical with the pacifist-cum-Socialist, cum-Ramsay MacDonald, Kautsky, Longuet, Second International type. These individuals are admitted to be a positive danger to the Communist Movement. If that be so, then the spread of their conceptions amongst ex-Service Men is also a positive danger to our movement and must be combatted.

It is also reported in the "Daily Herald," 6/5/20, that the National Union at the International Ex-Service Men's Conference at Geneva put forward the proposal that the International was to be purely for anti-war work and not to be used for political propaganda.

Having now seen examples of the reactionary and centrist elements, what is the counterpart of the Communist movement? That counterpart is to be found in the International Union of Ex-Service Men and Adult Dependents. It is an organisation definitely out for the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of an Industrial Republic. In its endeavours to secure this object the International Union aims at the political and industrial unity of all workers. Industrially we co-operate with the Workers' Committee Movement; politically with the Communist movement. I appeal to B.S.P. members, as a member of the B.S.P. myself, to rally to the Left section of the Ex-Service Men.

Printed by Kirkwood & Co., 127 Stockwell St. Glasgow, and published by the Scottish Workers' Committee, 31 North Frederick St. Glasgow. J. M. Messer, Secy.