

# **Persecution of Indian Workers under the MacDonald Government.**

By G. P. (Paris).

The English Government, of which Ramsay MacDonald is Premier, the Socialist Clynes Home Secretary and, finally, the Socialist Sidney Webb Secretary for the Colonies and the Dominions — this government has commenced its existence with a most repulsive act. It has allowed the secretary of the Indian trade-union organisation "Girni Kamgar" (Red Flag) to be arrested in Nagpur.

This latest victim of British repression in India, **Leslie Hutchison**, is not and never was a Communist. He is a young journalist, who came to India to work on the Indian "Daily Mail", but not for long, as, under the impression made by the mighty revolutionary movement and revolted by the regime of terror of the wire-pullers in London and Delhi, he shortly left the "Daily Mail" and became editor of the "New Spark", the organ of the Workers' and Peasants' Party.

With what "crime" is Hutchinson actually charged? He was elected by the Indian workers president of the Red Trade Union, the so-called "Girni Kamgar", which at present embraces about 65,000 members. He is the leader of the big textile workers' strike in Bombay, which the reformist union (with scarcely 10,000 members) did its best to sabotage and betray. In spite of threats and persecution of all kinds 90,000 textile workers are still fighting for the reinstatement of comrades penalised by the employers and condemned to starvation.

As is well known, immediately after the victory of the Labour Party the General Council of the trade unions disavowed the workers on strike. The Viceroy, who felt his position thereby strengthened, declared the movement in Bombay to be illegal. He had 31 Labour leaders arrested and their trial began a week or two ago in Meerut.

The accused in this monstre trial were arrested in Bombay and transported to Meerut, where, it was hoped, the law might be violated with impunity. His Majesty's Government declared

that the 31 workers should not be tried by jury but by a court composed of carefully selected officials. The Government of India also selected counsel for the prosecution. The choice fell upon Langford James, a well-known enemy of the Indian people. The trial, which began on the day after the election, was postponed several days in view of the Mahommedan holidays and resumed on June 24th.

The counsel for the prosecution has already made his debut. His speech, a selection of the most bigotted counter-revolutionary absurdities and anti-Bolshevistic incitement, strings together the most amazing contradictions. But the whole of it is characterised by blind hatred of the Soviet Union.

It is the Soviet Union against which the charge is directed. It is against that country that the "empire" of MacDonald is mobilising its judges before sending out its armed cruisers.

In his efforts to please his employers, the counsel for the prosecution has, however, overshot the mark. The anti-Bolshevist specialists in the London editorial departments decided after seeing the "document" from Meerut (which describes Stalin as president of the Comintern) not to publish it.

The 31 prisoners addressed a telegram to MacDonald about a week ago, protesting against the emergency court. The socialist Prime Minister has not replied to their protest.

The socialist Prime Minister is no beginner. Under his first government in the year 1924 four Indian workers in Cawnpore were sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment.

Much has happened since 1924. The Labour Party has zealously put itself at the service of colonial oppression. It is characteristic of the evolution of Social Democracy that the hangmen of the Indian people can to-day count upon the co-operation of a Lansbury, who but yesterday was president of the League Against Imperialism.

But, while the leaders of the Labour Party have entered into an alliance with the Conservatives, the Indian workers have broken away from the policy of compromise of Gandhi and his supporters. They declare their solidarity with the October revolution, and support the Workers' and Peasants' Party. One strike follows upon another. To them it is a question of a fight against those who have oppressed them for hundreds of years. Their fight is being followed with intense interest by the international proletariat, and especially by the proletariat in England and France, which sympathises with the Indian workers in their struggle against Franco-British imperialism.

Those who conquered India by the sword are now calling upon the leaders of the Labour Party for help. They command them to suppress the Indian revolution with the sword. It is, however, too late!