

RE-FORM THE FRONT

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

IT is now more than three and a-half years since the armistice was concluded. It is in fact almost three years since the Peace was signed. Germany has long since surrendered her Navy—that lies rusting at the bottom of the sea; whilst her Army is disbanded and its armaments handed over or dismantled. The enemy is (except so far as it has been encouraged to strengthen its forces for internal repression), to all intents and purposes disarmed.

The Allies have won the War, enforced a vengeful Peace, and yet there are more men under arms and more money being expended on armies in 1922 than there were in 1914.

Not only have the so-called enemy countries yielded up their weapons and discharged their soldiers, they have given up their richest iron-fields, been deprived of valuable coal-fields, transferred tens of thousands of railway engines and wagons, and forfeited their shipping which now, auctioned off to British and other owners, sails, for the most part, under the Union Jack. The menace of German industrial and commercial rivalry, that bogey of ten years of sedulous and subsidised propaganda, has been removed. Yet, there are more damped-down furnaces, more silent rolling-mills, more idle factories, more deserted docks and more ships laid up to-day in this country than has been the case within living memory.

The Capitalist Advance

More than three years have elapsed since the workers gave to Mr. Lloyd George and his Coalition of war profiteers and usurers the overwhelming majority which he asked for at the election of December, 1918. More than three years have gone by since his "coupon" candidates were given *carte blanche* to make this "a land fit for heroes to live in," to build hundreds of thousands of new houses, to provide for the men who fought and to put beyond the reach of care the dependants of those who died "that liberty might not perish from the face of the earth." Every one of this charlatan's pledges to pay the debt of honour has proved an unbacked bill. Every promise that passed his lips, every phrase that he so glibly coined and put into vote-catching circulation has turned out to be an idle hoax.

The very concessions that the Government made to appease the unions and to gull the leaders when the army was seething with mutiny and there were "soviets" even in Belfast, are now being taken from you when they no longer fear you. Then, they

extended the franchise. Now, they attack the political rights of the trade unions. Then, they were setting up Joint Industrial Councils and encouraging Works Committees. Now, they are fighting ruthlessly for "managerial rights." Then, they were granting or recommending the shortening of the working day. Now, they are demanding everywhere the abolition of the seven and the eight hour days. Then, they were setting up the Coal Commission and the Dockers' Inquiry in the most exalted settings and under the most spectacular guise. Now, they are refusing you courts of enquiry or fobbing you off with "MacKenzie."

True, they still continue the "dole" to the unemployed, but they are relentless in their hostility to Poplar and are, everywhere, renewing the class tyranny and degrading tests which formerly made Poor Relief an instrument of infamy and a stigma of shame.

The attacks of the capitalists upon the hard-won rights of labour, upon the power of the trade unions, upon the standard of life of the masses will continue and, with every defeat and with every surrender, become more merciless. Why? Because the capitalists must get an increase in the amount of surplus wealth that they can take from the workers. Thus they need to do three things. First, to maintain the profits of firms that are working. Second, to compensate them for losses on firms that are not working. Third, to pay the enormous burden of interest on war debts. The amount needed for the first has grown greatly. The amount required for the last becomes ever larger and larger.

In all countries—except Russia—the capitalists have enormous sums invested in war loans. Some companies, many companies, are getting nearly all their "profits" from interest on war loan investments. If the Governments cancel their debts, if the war loans are "written off," then there will be a frightful and ruinous crisis all over capitalism.

The French have a Budget deficit of more than £80,000,000. They must either get a payment of Reparations from Germany or a loan from America. The British are not paying the interest on their debt to America and are borrowing the money to pay the interest on the debt owed at home.

If the French get payment from the Germans it will be ruinous for British trade and industry.

If the French do not get payment from the Germans they must borrow from the Americans who are unwilling to lend any more money.

This problem of lending money and of getting interest on it is at the back of every problem of European reconstruction.

It is at the back of the Russian problem.

On the one hand, the capitalists want to trade with Russia because they want to get their factories going again. On the other hand, the capitalists do not want to trade with Russia because they want early or immediate payment and that the Russians are unable to give. The capitalists of all countries dislike the idea of lending money and getting no interest for years upon years. To make matters worse, when Russia begins to pay interest she will have to pay it in just those things—grain, timber, petroleum, meat, etc., which the U.S.A., Canada, and Argentina have to sell, and the exporters of these commodities and investors in these countries do not wish Russia to be put into a position to compete with them. They know that the Communists who rule in Russia would take a delight in flooding the markets with cheap foodstuffs to feed the masses and cheap commodities in order to ruin capitalism!

The capitalists are in a cleft stick. Trade with a Communist Government is desperately dangerous to them. Not to trade with Russia is, also, desperately dangerous to them.

The Line of Battle

Trade with the Communist Government of Russia means work for the workers here. No trade with the Communist Government of Russia means continued and aggravated unemployment, lower wages, longer hours, and harder work for those who are working.

Workers, you want work. You want to make things. You want to make things for which you will be paid. As long as you are paid it does not concern you how the capitalist, in his turn, gets paid. It is true Russia cannot pay him, at any rate, not at first.

Insist, therefore, that the Government shall lend enough to the Russians to pay the capitalists to pay you!

It was such a loan that the Russians asked for at Genoa. They were told it was impossible.

Insist that it is not impossible, but imperative!

Insist that what was refused at Genoa shall be granted at the Hague!

Insist on a loan to Russia to pay the capitalist to put you to work at trade union rates and under trade union conditions!

Then, insist that the Government taxes the capitalist to provide the loan and the interest thereon!

Help the Russians and so help yourselves

Communist Party of Great Britain

16, KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.2

PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT

Between
Red
and
White

By Leon Trotsky

An exposure of Menshevism
and counter-revolution.

Price 2/-

Post free 2/3

Communism and
Society

By W. PAUL

ALL readers of "The State"
must read this book

Price 2/6

Post free 2/9

Communist
Cartoons

The best of Espoir, Westral and others.

Reproduced from "The Communist"

Price 2/-

Post free 2/3

A.B.C.
of Communism

By N. BUHARIN and

E. PREOBRAZHENSKY

Simple, direct, convincing. 420 pages.

No worker's library is complete without
this book

Paper 3/-

Post free 3/6

Cloth 5/-

Post free 5/7