# THE INTERNATIONAL.

The Organ of the International Socialist League (S.A.)

Registererd at the General Post Office as a Newspaper.

No. 16.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 1916.

PRICE 1d. WEEKLY.

# The League Conference.

The Conference of the League to be held next Sunday at the Trades Hall, Rissik Street, Johannesburg, promises to mark an epoch in the history of the South African Labour movement. The proceedings will start at 10 o'clock in the morning.

In addition to delegates, all members of the League are invited to attend, with the right to speak.

Naturally the Conference will not enter into the tedious details of Constituton and platform bullding. It will rather confine itself to defining and clarifying the few fundamental principles which mark our revolutionary advance from the old Labour Party standpoint, and round which the variegated membership of the League has rallied.

There will be resolutions for discussion from all the Branches. Benoni wants to make non-participation in all military pursuits whatsoever a test of membership.

Johannesburg Central brings forward the repudiation of war loans. This Branch also proposes to change the name of the organisation from "League" to "Party."

On the question of future organisation, Durban Branch urges that Trades Union affiliation form no part thereof.

But it is on the question of the War and the policies arising from it that most of the discussions wll centre upon. And the Management Committee are giving a lead to the Conference on this and kindred matters.

The Conference will be asked to declare as a point of departure that the League do not recognise any fraternal relations with any organisation whatsoever supporting the institution of Militarism and War.

The Zimmerwald Manifesto will also come in for review as a basis for the future policy of the League; and the question of affiliation with the New International Commission brought into existence by the Zimmerwald Conference will naturally follow.

From this the Conference will logically turn to the effect of the adoption of a class conscious anti-war attitude on method of organisation and propaganda. The Management Committee will bring up the question of Industrial Unionism, organisation along the line of industry irrespective of race, colour or creed, as the significant implication of our anti-war stand.

If the Conference adopt this resolution, it will be the great revolutionary fruit of an otherwise pointless agitation. This will be the permanent advance made in the outlook of the Labour movement. It will attempt a change, not only in our attitude towards the slave saces of South Africa, enlisting their co-operation in the emancipation of Labour, but will shift its adherence from political to industrial organisation as the primary method of wresting power from Capitalism. Assuredly it is not proposed to neglect political action, in fact the Conference will be asked to assert the contesting of elections to public bodies as necessary for demonstration and education.

Great responsibility rests on the members of the League. When the world is in flood and flames it behoves that we do not waste time in petty discussion on pet doctrinaire theories, on planks, sub-sections and points of Constitution. We are brought together by a great principle. Trust that principle ever to hind us.

Trades Unions and Labour Parties have lost the fire of revolutionary fervour, and have therefore lost life. We see the Federation confining its energies to co-operative ventures, picnics, and printing plants, and the Labour Party

cradled into its long sleep by a Deputy-Mayoralty and Chair-manships of Milk and Water Committees.

On the League then rests the burden of giving the new direction to the Labour movement in South Africa.

We have no doubt that, however small in number, or unheeded our ideal by the workers to-day, the Conference will deliberate under a full sense of the grandeur of our cause, and the certitude that we form part of a movement that is world-wide, that is marching in step with the inevitable forces of economic development, forces which, if we remain faithful to the heroes of the past and the ideals of the present, will carry the world from the savagery of capitalism into the as yet unimagined glory of the Socialist Commonwealth.

# The Van Ryn Strike.

The 3,000 Kaffir strikers on the Van Ryn did well for their race, but did better for the working class. The spectacle of the white workers being locked out by their black slaves is an unparalleled phenomena.

If ever there was a need for stilling the petty outcry against political action it is to be found in the necessity for the aboltion of the indentured system of native labour and the abolition of forced compound and passports. As the first step to his own safety the white worker must give the native a lift up to his own industrial status.

## Pioneers!

We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world;
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labour and the march.

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

See, my children, resolute children, By those swarms upon our rear, we must never yield or

Ages back in ghostly millions, frowning there behind us urging,

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Do the feasters gluttonous feast?
Do the corpulent sleepers sleep? Have they locked and boltDoors?

Still be ours the diet hard, and the blanket on the ground, Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Till with sound of trumpet,

Far, far off the day-break call—hark! How loud and clear I
hear it wind;

Swift! To the head of the army!—Swift! Spring to your

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Walt Whitman.

The middle-class man, the professional man, the scientist, who persist in studying social questions from the standpoint of a property holder and not that of the propertyless, can never hope to come to a thorough knowledge of Socialist philosophy. Not one of the critics of Socialism, from Schaffe to Mallock, has deigned to study the question from the proletarian standpoint. No wonder they are all at sex.

H. S. Aley, M.D.

# Conscription.

'Among the great nations of modern times England is the one which most resembles the Middle Ages, not economically, but in its political form. Militarism and bureauctacy are there the least developed. It still possesses an aristocracy that not only reigns but governs. Corresponding to this, England is the great modern nation in which the efforts of the oppressed classes are mainly confined to the removal of particular abuses instead of being directed against the whole Social system. It is also the state in which the practice of protection against revolution through compromise is farthest developed.'

Thus wrote a celebrated Socialist writer before the War. The war is changing that condition of which he spoke at a rate so rapid as to be measurable from week to week. War is a great leveller of communities under the Capitalist system. The close of it will find not only Capital more International in its ramifications, but the great European States bereft of that diversity—in the case of England the appearance of civic liberty—by which patriotism is manufactured.

And so we have Conscription in England. The agitation for it was renewed with increased intensity after the announcement of the Triple Alliance of the Railwaymen, Miners and Transport Workers. How typically bourgeois in their deceit have been the steps and trap-doors of compromise by which the workers of England have been hoodwinked and hypnotised into the endorsement of this final buttress of Capitalist power. At the time of writing the great Labour Congress called to make a decision on the Conscription Bill has not yet pronounced. But there is nothing in the conduct of the majority of the Labour Leaders of England during the past year that gives us expectation of a stiff back just now.

Even those leaders who have not become the flunkeys of the Government seem to be dumbfounded that their Government should be no more scrupulous in methods, no less capitalist in motive, no less militarist in intention, no less desirous of circumventing an awakening working class than the German or French Governments as soon as opportunity offers.

While English political forms change, the outlook of the most advanced Labour leaders lag behind. The removal of particular abuses instead of a whole social revolution still dissipates the movement at the very hour when the workers of England should be organised in a strong party of Socialism united for emancipation. Our I.L.P. comrades have battled vigorously against specific abuses, but we are left in the dark as to its policy on the War. The Union of Democratic Control, and No-Conscription Fellowships, divert the attention of leaders who should be sticking to Socialist platforms and there announcing to a perplexed working class the root remedy for the root evil, the unity of the working class across all boundaries, allegiance to the International as a very real authority as against allegiance to Capitalist Governments.

While the German and Italian Socialists have made noble appeals for a return to International working class action as the only effective instrument for the termination of the war, no adequate response has been forthcoming from the whole English Labour movement. This indefiniteness of aim dogs all genuine English revolt. Indeed, we now learn that Ramsay Macdonald and Jowett still speak of "National Defence" and "Seeing the War through" by the conscription of capital. Sounding these tocsins, by what right or reason can they oppose a War Government? The only opposition to the present War that is at all tenable or honest, is opposition based on the completely international character of the working class.

Unless we can assure working men of all countries that National quarrels are not their quarrels, that no threatened change of language in the Capitalist regimes that dominate over them is worth the loss of an ounce of working class blood, unless we can tell them this, we must still bind ourselves to the wheels of National States, and participate in all their barbarities.

But while leaders lag, the education of the workers in the elemental cause of their enslavement grows apace. The veil of "Free Institutions" which has hitherto hidden th truly oppressive character of all Governments under Capitaliam is being drawn aside in England. Slowly the workers are realising, only subconsciously as yet, that the Empire over which the British chest never ceases to inflate is after all a commercial abstraction and an instrument of tyranny, When that disillusionment becomes articulate, many leaders who are to-day laying up treasures in the politics of the future will have been shoved aside for new men who to-day are in obscurity because they are fanning the revolt along the lines of the new International.

## Where Oceans Meet.

Obedient to the "call" of the railway posters the General Secretary took his fortnight's holiday at the Cape, 1,000 miles from home (our equivalent for a run down to Margate or Southend), where he was joined a few days later by yours fraternally; and of course (Colin Wade please note) we hunted up the comrades there, eventually finding some of them at the "International Debating Society" (meeting every Tuesday at "Whitehall;" Greenmarket Square), and several of these again, with others, next evening at the meeting (every Wednesday at the same place) of the Social Democratic Federation. Here we all exchanged apologies pro vita nostra; and found the onus on us, for visitors from "the North" are looked at with a certain suspicion down below: they are politicians, or they come to promote discord in the Cape dovecot, or they are upstarts getting easy notoriety through "War on War," instead of just advocating abolition of Rent. Interest and Profit—Resting in Peace "like Gods together, careless of mankind."

The S.D.F. here is, as a body, "divided on the war," and has not yet realised that such division is inevitable soon-or later, and better seen through and got done with as quickly as possible. Some may hope by Guild Socialism, or by Dutch or English Nationalism, to distract attention from the touchstone issue; others may seek by sentimental tolerance or mere evasion of the vital topic to preserve the show of unity. Whereas to-day not only a pro-war working class but even (so we thought in that hot upper room) any "Labour" or "Socialist" body including a considerable pro-war element is doomed at best to impotence, respectability, logic chopping, and complacency.

Ekskuus! In describing an aspect we describe neither the whole or any single member. Wilfrid Harrison and Secretary Vermont are taking their chances of hooligans, police and goal of a Sunday night, preaching to big open air crowds the class struggle and anti-militarism; and the S.D.F. majority do not disown them—are proud of them in fact. We hope that a Cape S.D.F. delegate may yet attend our Conference the day after to-morrow. At any rate we were able to guarantee that any idea of reuniting with the S.A. Labour Party was about the last thing the League were likely to consider; which—curiously enough in view of the preceding paragraph—was the mortal dread/we found in the minds of the Comrades there. It struck us that the S.D. Federation's considered, Athanasian contra mundum, fraternity might be more readily extended to a dead body with a doctrinally "correct" credo than to a live, alert, up-to-date one without. (Apparently it is not considered a point of cotrect dogma to see in this war the most unmistakeable and inhuman outburst of capitalism ever yet known.) Again, we found very pronounced that formula of Death to Politics. because it produces Labour fakirs, but not to Industrialism; though all the Industrial Federations kissed Smuts' papal toe. Well, well; after all the movement must flourish before long at Capetown; the planters and waterers are there right enough.

You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

Karl Marx.

#### GERMAN SOCIALISTS.

In the Social Democratic Party, unity has been a fetish commanding such homage as to have for a quarter of a century stood the shock of the most violent clash of opinion as to party methods and Socialst theory.

Now we learn that twenty one anti-war Socialist members of the Reichstag have seceded and formed a separate party. They will probably be joined by the other members who have abstained from voting the war credits.

The same hesitation between Party unity and principle which preceded the schism in South African Labour is observed in the German Socialist Party.

Likewise in England, forces are asserting themselves on both sides of the Labour movemen, which make for a secession or expulsion of the I.L.P. from the larger pro-war body of the Labour Party.

In France the anti-war minority in the Confederation is growing bolder; what time Guesde and Sembat, the Socialist ministers, and "L'humanite," the official organ, tolerate and even advocate the most reactionary and repressive measures, alarming even in a country which is the home of the "state of siege."

Thus the fundamental character of the divergence on the war issue is becoming plainer and plainer among all the Socialists of the world, and the emergence of a new world party is inevitable. Those who cling to unity and those who hope for reunion are alike trying to bridge an earthquake yet in convulsion. Socialists can only remain united on the war by remaining in back rooms and burking living issues.

# THE WIDOWS & ORPHANS FUND.

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We continually hear enquiries regarding the state of the Widows and Cophens Fund which was collected on July 3rd last.

For the satisfaction of the public at large and the good name of the Labour Movement in which we all involved we suggest to the Transval Federation of Trades that no time should be lost in issuing a Finalized Statement in detail. The Pederation Secretary should have with all the more despatch brought out these statements, since the large amount of printing involved in that Collection and other Federation 'ventures' is invariably executed by a printing firm with which he is most intimately associated.

Disciplined armies are the means by which the ruling classes, without using their hands, accomplish the greatest atrocities, the possibility of perpetrating which gives them power over the people.

Tolstoy.

#### OUR PICNIC.

#### By one who was there.

Where is Jackson's Drift? Ask Comrade Dunbar. He knows. U. Comrade Weinstock. He knows. Or the Women's Entertainment Committee. They know. But don't ask me or any of the other 170 persons who were at the picnic. We don't know. After trekking for hours and hours we arrived there. Where? Why, at Jockson's Drift to be sure. Where else? Didn't it say so on the ticket? But where is it? Oh, somewhere in the Transvaal. Ask Comrade Roux. He knows. Jackson's Drift is situated in a wild country of deep ravines, green and fertile valleys, hemmed in by steep, irregular hills, the slopes of which are wrinkled into watercourses and gullies, so that the whole landscape takes on an aspect of stern grandeur. A rich land it is , well watered, and with a heavy and generous soil. Partridges, hares and woodcock abound everywhere, and the valleys are strewn with waving corn and great mealie pods.

To this delectable spot our cavalcade wended its way on Boxing Day, and arriving there found friend Weinstock, all smiles and happy, with the pot a-boiling and a delicious cup of tea all a-ready for the ladies, and Comrade Dones standing guard over the bung hole of the beer barrel and lamenting on the proportion of ullage therein. Comrades Light and Cling-man were told off to watch the ice and keep it from melting, while friend Watson lav down among the watermelons and vegetable marrows and refused to budge, murmuring something about 'pie in the sky.' After a delicious repast of onions and oucumbers and more tea-Comrade Rabh swore it was tea, morts were indulged

At 5 p.m. the homeward trek was commenced, several of the Comrades who preferred to go on foot leaving half an hour later, in order that they might arrive at the Trades Hil in time to welcome the waggons.

It was a great picnic. And so say all of us. Coinrades Weinstock and Dunbar are talking about another for next month.

Socialists Capetown come in for the attention of authorities. Comrade Wilfrid Harrison has been prosecuted and fined £3 or 30 days for certain remarks at one of his open air meetingbs. The fine was paid by the Social Democratic Federation. The authorities have now prohibited all meetings at the bottom of Adderley Street, the anti-war pitch, except for the Salvation Army. Reasons for the preference being that the Salvationists are harmless and preach a doctrine that is good for the people.

Comrade Harrison is however pursuing the propaganda in District Six. He is a dauntless idealist, and we wish him luck.

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The Durban Branch is sending four delegates to the League Conference on Sunday.

#### "THE SOCIALIST."

Comrade Rabb, Box 696, Johannesburg, that indefatigable disseminator of Socialist literature, informs us that he is now receiving batches of "The Socialist," the official organ of Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain, issued monthly. Mr. Rabb will reissue here at 2s. per annum, and invites subscriptions. Note the address.

The Socialist," while not supplying the amount of information on the progress of the International Movement furnished by the "Labour Leader," affords that definiteness of Socialist outlook so lacking in the I.L.P. organ, a corrective very much needed in these days, when the revolt against Capitalism in England threatens to dissipate itself in the sands of sentimentalism.

#### SOLIDARITY GROWING.

To the Editor "International,"

Dear Comrade,—I am directed by the Social Democratic Federation (Capetown) to forward you the following resolution for publication:—

"That this meeting of the S.D. F., Capetown, send fraternal greetings to the Socialist Conference held in Johannesburg on the 9th January, 1916, and hope that the deliberations there will result in the possibility of our unification as an International Socialist Organisation of South Africa to work in common with the various nations of the world for the destruction of International Capitalism."

I am, etc., L. VERMONT, Assistant Secretary.

#### REVIEW.

I have received a copy of "The Beacon" from Durban. This is the first issue and I offer my congratulations to the Editor, Mr. R. J. Hall, and all wishes for the success of the Got up in an attractive style, nice size, we have here an organ that should prove of great benefit to the movement. No doubt experience will eliminate a certain, shall say, apologetic tone which seems to pervade the first issue. With that & bsent and shorter articles a less middle-class tone, I feel sure the paper will obtain the success it deserves. H.W.H.

To the Editor "International,"

Dear Comrade,—To my great regret I shall be compelled to be absent from Johannesburg during our first League Conference. I therefore write to wish the members all success in their great work of laying the foundation of that Socialism to which I afeel is entrusted the final stage of working class emancipation.

Yours fraternally, M. I. ISAACSON.

#### THE LETTER BOX.

with reference to attacks upon the "International" in the Federation organ. We thank him for his championship of us, though his remarks are too length for insertion in our limited space. The "International" goes straight ahead and cannot waste time on personal reflections on so-called Trade Union "leaders," whom the course of events will inevitably reveal in their true time-serving character.

Mr. A. F. Symons, Secretary of the Oudtshoorn Branch of the Labour Party writes us that he has severed his connection with the S.A.I.P. "I had communicated with them before," he says, "suggesting refforts to unite with the Socialists, but met with a rebuff, and after deep consideration, as it appears to me to be indisputable that the Socialist is the real people's or workers' party, I decided to leave the Labour Party. I would like to associate myself with the Internation. al Socialist Party as a detached member. Congratulations on 'The International." It is the best paper in South Africa now, because the only sane one."

#### GUILD SOCIALISM.

Mr. J. H. Deans, Capetown, gives the writer of an article in a recent issue on 'Back to the Manifesto,' some rough jousts in return for his quips at the Guild Socialist idea.

"Tell the workers what the New Age' tells them, that labour (life) should not be a commodity subject to the law of supply and demand. That while wage-slavery lasts they are the fellows to consider what labour shall be sold in That the organised man can quote his price for it, and if the unorganised man suffers, this is as it should be, is his own fault. That when he is sufficiently organised industrially (let politics come second) he will begin to see that labour should not be bought, not be sold, because it is human life and should not be treated like coal or lard. 'Clear the cobwebs,' and you can do it without pondering Marx or quoting Kautsky. (Or 'New Age,' eh, what?) Tell them, having found themselves here they have as much right to life as any living soul, be he either King or Potentate. Tell him machinery must be the slave of man in the future. He was not made specially for work Elone. Hard, long, physical work is degrading. Life is short, now is the time to enjoy life and now is the time to create strong Labour guilds with which to menace Rent, Interest and Profit, and to eventually say, with a united voice to those who live on them, your time will be up, gentlemen, on January, 1917. (After the war, Comrade Deans?) Guild Socialism is straight to the point, clear, concise; the way to do the job instead of talking about it any longer,"

This is the gist of the letter, Mr. Deans will pardon the omissions, which include a reference to the "rambling" nature of the offending

article (it was barely a column of our precious space), and its incoherency, all of which the writer will take to heart.

Mr. Deans is Secretary of the Cape Federation, and as such should have read sufficient of the literatur? and history of Socialism to know that the stupendous achievement of Marx seventy years ago was to prove, among other things, that labour was a commodity, that the root of slavery lies in the inseparable and tyrannical relation of wage-labour to Capital, in wage-slavery. The titanic mind which unanswerably exhibited the subjecion of labour in language which once read is unforgetable,—this man, Marx, was hounded from Germany, from France, from Belgium, and through abject poverty still wrote, and organised, and fought in the cause of the working class, and died a martyr, if ever there was one. Now comes the "New Age," with a word, that is all Mr. Deans gives—Guild Socialism, and exploits a brilliant literary style to combine, with never a word of recognition, some of the great affirmations of Marx to the effete and ever treacherous dogmas of Nationalism. To wean the workers from the latter Marx considered to be the first

step to freedom. With the humanitarian sentiments which form the bulk of Mr. Dean's letter, and are the very alphabet of our cause, of course we agree. But how to make them fecundate into the Social revolution? Mr. Deans gives a word, Guild Socialism, on Nationalist lines. We give a word. Industrial Unionism, based on the principle of the class struggle laid down by Marx. Mr. Deans says that the workers' life is short. Guild Socialism is a very present help just now for those dilettanti who, while still wishing to be called Socialists, are also provided with an excuse for supporting Capitalist Governments in their infamous work of making life still shorter for millions of our fellow workers, and of diverting the working class from the path of emancipation into the shambles of international fratricide.

#### IF THEY HAD FAITH.

The "Socialist Review" asserts that at Moscow and Petrograd extensive preparations were being made at the outbreak of War for a general strike against mobilisation, when the fatal news that the German Socialists had voted the Military Credits took all the heart out of the resistance.

The action of the German Socialists in rushing to the succour of their own national Government and forsaking the International, instead of seeing it through, only served to encourage the militarist forces of the other countries. What better answer can we give to those who accuse the lnternationalists of helping the 'enemy." When will those who claim to speak for Labour realize that International working class unity alone commands their allegiance and by it alone serve the workers. You cannot serve Labour and Capital, you cannot serve National States and the working class at the same time..

# A VERTEBRATE TRADE UNION.

The officials of the Tramway Union of Johannesburg have been forced to resign. A vote of censure was passed upon them by a General Delegates meeting for bartering away the workers' independence to Smuts at Capetown. A new election will be held immediately, which the retiring officers are contesting. The result will be interesting, for this is one of the best organised unions in the country.

#### BRANCH DIRECTORY.

Benoni.—T. Chapman, P.O. Box 279. Meetings, Smith's Studio, Lake Avenue, every Monday evening.

Capetown.—Intending members see Comrade Wilfrid Harrison, Secretary S.D.F., Box 1176.

Durban.—W. S. Mabbott, 353, Point Road. Meetings at Auld Kirk Hall and Trades Hall.

Hall and Trades Hall.

Eastern Districts. — Secretary,

c.o. 249, Marshall St., Jepne.

Germiston.—E. H. Becker, 54, Queen Street. Meetings in Colin Wade's surgery.

Johannesburg.—T. W. Ward, P.O. Box 1981. Meetings, Trades Hall

Pretoria.—Intending members see Mr. W. Blake, Secretary, Socialist Society, Box 618.

Head Office.—D. Ivon Jones, Secretary, 6, Trades Hall. P.O. Box 4179.

#### BENONI BRANCH SYLLABUS.

Jan. 10. T. C. Davies. Why are we anti-war.

Business meeting.

,, 24. J. Den Bakker. Socialism and Anarchism.

The above meetings will be held in Smith's Studio, 14, Lake Avenue, Benoni.

## ARE YOU A SOCIALIST?

If you feel that we are doing the work that matters fill in this form and send your subscription to "The International" and to the funds of the League. Have you friends who should read "The International"? Send us a list of their names and addresses.

To the Secretary, International Socialist League,

Box 4179, Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,—Enclosed find my subscription, 5s., for one year, post free, to "International." Also a donation of £: s. d. to the funds of the League.

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Full Address		