

(Continued from Page 7).

of provision for those who must be unemployed, because the industrial organization of the community so far breaks down as to be temporarily unable to set them to work, is the Out of Work Benefit afforded by a well administered trade union. This is a special tax on the trade unionists themselves which they have voluntarily undertaken, but towards which they have a right to claim a public subvention—a subvention which was actually granted by parliament (though only to the extent of a couple of shillings or so per week) under Part II. of the Insurance Act.

The arbitrary withdrawal by the government in 1915 of this statutory right of the trade unions was one of the least excusable of the war economies; and the Labor party must insist on the resumption of this subvention immediately the war ceases, and on its increase to at least half the amount spent in Out of Work Benefit. The extension of state unemployment insurance to other occupations may afford a convenient method of providing for such of the unemployed, especially in the case of badly paid women workers and the less skilled men, whom it is difficult to organize in trade unions. But the weekly rate of the state unemployment benefit needs, in these days of high prices, to be considerably raised; whilst no industry ought to be compulsorily brought within its scope against the declared will of the workers concerned, and especially of their trade unions. In the twentieth century, there must be no question of driving the unemployed to anything so obsolete and discredited as either private charity, with its haphazard and ill-considered dolers, or the Poor Law, with the utilities and barbarities of its "Stone Yard" or its "Able-bodied Test Workhouse." Only on the basis of a universal application of the policy of the National Minimum, affording complete security against destitution, in sickness and health, in good times and bad alike, to every member of the community can any worthy social order be built up.

THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF INDUSTRY.

The universal application of the policy of the national minimum is, of course, only the first of the pillars of the house that the Labor party intends to see built. What marks off this party most distinctly from any of the other political parties is its demand for the full and genuine adoption of the principle of democracy. The first condition of democracy is effective personal freedom. This has suffered so many encroachments during the war that it is necessary to state with clearness that the complete removal of all the war time restrictions on freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of the press, freedom of travel and freedom of choice of place of residence and kind of employment must take place the day after peace is declared. The Labor party declares emphatically against any continuance of the Military Service Acts a moment longer than the imperative requirements of the war excuse. But individual freedom is of little use without complete political rights. The Labor party sees its repeated demands largely conceded in the present Representation of the People Act, but not yet wholly satisfied. The party stands (as heretofore, for complete adult suffrage, with not more than a three months'

residential qualification, for effective provisions for absent electors to vote, for absolutely equal rights for both sexes, for the same freedom to exercise civic rights for the "common soldier" as for the officer, for shorter parliaments, for the complete abolition of the House of Lords, and for a most strenuous opposition to any new Second Chamber, whether elected or not, having in it any element of heredity or privilege, or of the control of the House of Commons by any party or class. But unlike the Conservative and Liberal parties, the Labor party insists on democracy in industry as well as in government. It demands the progressive elimination from the control of industry of the private capitalists, individual or joint stock; and the setting free of all who work, whether by hand or by brain, for the service of the community, and of the community only. And the Labor party refuses absolutely to believe that the British people will permanently tolerate any reconstruction or perpetuation of the disorganization, waste and inefficiency involved in the abandonment of British industry to a jostling crowd of separate private employers, with their minds bent, not on the service of the community, but—by the very law of their being—only in the utmost possible profiteering. What the nation needs is undoubtedly a great bound onward in its aggregate productivity. But this cannot be secured merely by pressing the manual workers to more strenuous toil, or even by encouraging the "Captains of Industry" to a less wasteful organization of their several enterprises on a profit-making basis. What the Labor party looks to is a genuinely scientific reorganization of the nation's industry, no longer deflected by individual profiteering, on the basis of the common ownership of the means of production; the equitable sharing of the proceeds among all who participate in any capacity and only among these, and the adoption, in particular services and occupations, of those systems and methods of administration and control that may be found, in practice, best to promote the public interest.

IMMEDIATE NATIONALIZATION.

The Labor party stands not merely for the principle of the common ownership of the nation's land, to be applied as suitable opportunities occur, but also, specifically, for the immediate nationalization of railways, mines and the production of electrical power. We hold that the very foundation of any successful reorganization of British industry must necessarily be found in the provision of the utmost facilities for transport and communication, the production of power at the cheapest possible rate and the most economical supply of both electrical energy and coal to every corner of the kingdom. Hence the Labor party stands, unhesitatingly, for the national ownership and administration of the railways and canals, and their union along with harbors and roads and the posts and telegraphs—not to say also the great lines of steamers which could at once be owned, if not immediately directly managed in detail, by the government—in a united national service of communication and transport; to be worked, unhampered by capitalist, private or purely local interests (and with a steadily increasing participation of the organized workers in the management, both central and local, exclusively for the common good. If

any government should be so misguided as to propose, when peace comes, to hand the railways back to the shareholders; or should show itself so spendthrift of the nation's property as to give these shareholders any enlarged franchise by presenting them with the economies of unification or the profits of increased railway rates; or so extravagant as to bestow public funds on the re-equipment of privately owned lines—all of which things are now being privately intrigued for by the railway interests—the Labor party will offer any such project the most strenuous opposition. The railways and canals, like the roads, must henceforth belong to the public.

In the production of electricity, for cheap power, light, and heating, this country has so far failed, because of hampering private interests, to take advantage of science. Even in the largest cities we still "peddle" our electricity on a contemptibly small scale. What is called for immediately after the war, is the erection of a score of gigantic "super-power stations," which could generate, at incredibly cheap rates, enough electricity for the use of every industrial establishment and every private household in Great Britain; the present municipal and point stock electrical plants being universally linked up and used for local distribution. This is inevitably the future of electricity. It is plain that so great and so powerful an enterprise, affecting every industrial enterprise and, eventually, every household, must not be allowed to pass into the hands of private capitalists. They are already pressing the government for the concession, and neither the Liberal nor the Conservative party has yet made up its mind to a refusal of such a new endowment of profiteering in what will presently be the life blood of modern productive industry. The Labor party demands that the production of electricity on the necessary gigantic scale shall be made, from the start (with suitable arrangements for municipal co-operation in local distribution) a national enterprise, to be worked exclusively with the object of supplying the whole kingdom with the cheapest possible power, light and heat.

But with railways and the generation of electricity in the hands of the public, it would be criminal folly to leave to the present one thousand and five hundred colliery company the power of "holding up" the coal supply. These are now all working under public control, on terms that virtually afford to their shareholders a statutory guarantee of their swollen incomes. The Labor party demands the immediate nationalization of mines, the extraction of coal and iron being worked as a public service (with a steadily increasing participation in the management, both central and local, of the various grades of persons employed); and the whole business of the retail distribution of household coal being undertaken as a local public service, by the elected municipal or county councils. And there is no reason why coal should fluctuate in price any more than railway fares, or why the consumer should be made to pay more in winter than in summer, or in one town than another. What the Labor party would aim at is, for household coal of standard quality, a fixed and uniform price for the whole kingdom, payable by rich and poor alike, as unalterable as the penny postage stamp.

But the sphere of immediate nationalization is not restricted to these great industries. We shall

never succeed in putting the gigantic system of health insurance on a proper footing, or secure a clear field for the beneficent work of the Friendly Societies, or gain a free hand for the necessary development of the urgently called for Ministry of Health and the Local Public Health Service, until the nation expropriates the profit-making industrial insurance companies, which now so tyrannously exploit the people with their wasteful house-to-house industrial life insurance. Only by such an expropriation of life insurance companies can we secure the universal provision, free from (To be continued.)

...PARTY ANNOUNCEMENTS...

The Dominion executive committee meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 363 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, secretary, I. Bainbridge.

The Ontario provincial executive committee meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 363 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, secretary, I. Bainbridge.

Saskatchewan Provincial Executive Committee—Meets on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. All comrades desiring to join party or organize Locals are requested to write, F. G. Wetzel, Box 151, Vanguard, Sask.

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