

control of intellectual and cultural activities is the Cultural League. As an example of its kind of control an artist writing in May 1946 affirmed that pictures were only accepted for exhibition if the painter was a member of the League. Directives are reported to be received directly or indirectly from Moscow. The Peasants' Mutual Aid Association helps in the building of farm houses, runs tractor loan stations and co-operates in fixing delivery quotas. Its newspaper *Der freie Bauer* leaves no doubt that the Association is dominated by the SED. It may serve later as the instrument for introducing a system of collective farms. In practice, the position of new farmers is more like that of members of Russian collective farms than of independent farmers. A Zonal agricultural directorate ensures planned output. In 1945 farmers received stern orders to complete harvesting and threshing by certain dates. Rigid scheduling, although standard in the Soviet Union, was new to the German farmers and many complaints were made against the Administration with the result that the Peasants' Mutual Aid now plays a more important part in the system.

#### The Organisation of Labour

Labour in the Soviet Zone is organised through the all-embracing Free German League of Trades Unions, which includes among its members all recipients of wages, salaries and fees. There is also in every factory or office a Works Council elected in accordance with Control Council Law No. 22 of April, 1946. In addition, there are *Chambers of Industry and Commerce*, *Chambers of Handicrafts*, and a *Chamber of Technology*. These organisations, however, do not represent the professional interests of their members over against the workers or the public authorities, but are an integral part of the administration, assisting the latter in the preparation and execution of laws. The majority of the members of the executives are not elected, but are appointed by the public authorities and the FDGB.

The main difference between the organisation of trades unions in the Soviet Zone and in the Western Zones is that in the West there has been a gradual development in each branch of industry from local unions, to a final loose association of zonal unions—except in the French Zone—whilst in the Soviet Zone the organisation has been centralised on a zonal basis from the beginning. The FDGB is a unitary

organisation centred on Berlin with 19 constituent unions representing the various trades and professions organised vertically. Thus doctors are organised not as a Medical Association, but in the Health subsection of the Trade Union of Public Services and Administration. Elections for all committees take place once a year on a non-party basis.

The whole organisation is similar to that in the USSR, and Walter Ulbricht, in a recent pamphlet urges German trades unions to take the Soviet unions as a model. As private enterprise is gradually eliminated in the Zone the trades unions tend to lose their function of representing the workers' interests over against the employers and to become agents of social security, educational organisations and cultural and welfare bodies. Above all, however, they are an additional instrument of control on behalf of the SED. The FDGB organ, *Die Tribüne*, pursues an SED line; and the key men in the organisations are all SED. Further, the SED has demanded that the coming Government of all Germany shall contain ministers from the FDGB. Membership of the FDGB is nominally voluntary, but according to all reports is in most places virtually compulsory. The total membership in the Soviet Zone is about 4 millions out of 6 million trade unionists in the whole of Germany.

In the Weimar Republic the Works Councils had no coercive powers and in the end performed little more than welfare functions. And, whereas in the British and US zones Works Councils do not seem to have any greater powers than under the Weimar Republic, in the Soviet Zone the tendency is to give the Works Councils coercive power over private employers, such powers being provided for in the Works Agreements which employers have to conclude with workers. Elections for the Works Council are, as for the FDGB, nominally non-party, but by a recent (secret) order of the SMA the SED has been given direct control of the Works Councils. This order provides for the inclusion in every Works Council of two members of the SED, not elected by the workmen but nominated by the military authority, often without reference to other qualifications. Their duty is to report all proceedings of the Works Council to a higher SED authority, with the object of ensuring that no "undemocratic decisions" are carried out.

(To be continued)

#### GERMANY

Two welcome agreements were secured before the Moscow Conference ended. On the 23rd April, Mr. Bevin repeated his proposal that all German prisoners-of-war should be repatriated by the end of 1948, and M. Molotov agreed. The Control Council will submit to the four Powers by the 1st July, 1947, a plan for absorbing these prisoners. M. Molotov made it clear that all German nationals were covered whether they had served in the armed forces or in the auxiliary services. Earlier the Deputies had agreed in principle on free interchange of information and opinion between the zones. This is subject to considerations of military security and the need to prevent a revival of National-Socialism. The matter had already been discussed in the Control Council, but the French had been unwilling to admit newspapers freely to the Saar.

On the 23rd April and at the last meeting of the Conference the following day there were further fruitless exchanges between M. Bidault, Mr. Marshall and M. Molotov on the proposed Four-Power Treaty. The best that can be said is that this proposal has not been formally withdrawn from the agenda. The American suggestion for a limitation of the number of occupation troops was discussed. M. Molotov wanted 200,000 men for the Soviet Zone, 200,000 between Great Britain and the United States and 50,000 for France. Mr. Bevin pointed out that there was not a common Anglo-US army and said that the minimum figure for the most populous area of Germany must be 145,000. The French could not agree to less than 80,000 at present. British military strength is at present somewhat over 131,000, but allowance must also be made for contingents from Allied countries such as Belgium. In mid-March US forces numbered 165,000 including 30,000 constabulary but it is planned to reduce this figure to 117,000 by the 1st July. The matter is to be studied by the Control Council. The Deputies are to study the provisional political organisation of Germany. Mr. Bevin told Dominions' representatives on the 24th April that the United States' attitude to the political structure had only lately become clear. They wanted the *Laender* to control the electoral machinery but would agree to direct election to the Central Parliament. This scheme was much more practicable than the one clung to by the French who insisted that representatives to the Central

Parliament should be elected indirectly by representatives of the *Laender*. The French, he said, wanted to put the clock back to Napoleonic times and it would not work. The next session of the Council is planned for November in London. No agenda has been prepared. Mr. Bevin left Moscow on the 28th April for talks in Berlin with British advisers and with Lord Pakenham, successor to Mr. Hynd.

Deep gloom over the end of the Conference permeates the press of nearly all regions or groups in Germany except the Communists. A typical comment by the Berlin *Telegraf* was that even those who did not expect success must be deeply concerned about the far-reaching extent of this failure. By contrast the Socialist Unity Party organ, *Neues Deutschland*, writes "only those have cause for pessimism who would like to preserve nazism." The paper adds, more reasonably, that no one can expect all-round agreement in seven weeks. Berlin Radio on the 25th April indulges in deliberate distortion. After dissociating itself from the "shouting about failure . . . which helped to sabotage agreement" it claims that much of the preparatory work of a Peace treaty has been completed. M. Molotov is represented as the champion of German interests battling against the "powers of darkness." The broadcaster makes out that Mr. Marshall did not want to destroy cartels or to further democracy and that it was he who "caused the fiasco of the whole Four Power Pact."

Final results of the *Laender* elections in the British Zone, of which a preliminary report was given last week, show that the SPD has 39.7 per cent. of the seats, the CDU 33 per cent. and the KPD 8.3 per cent. (In the District elections last year the CDU had more seats although less votes than the SPD.) In Schleswig-Holstein the SPD has an absolute majority. The only other parties represented are the CDU and South Schleswig Association. In Lower Saxony the SPD has a majority but not a clear one while in Rhineland-Westphalia the CDU just leads. In both States the Centre holds the balance between Right and Left. The KPD in Rhineland-Westphalia has increased its representation to 28 seats. The CDU is really the only loser by the election. This is not surprising in view of the conglomeration of voters from different walks of life which it has collected in the past, many of whom may have since wavered in their views or may not have voted at all. On the whole there was remarkably little tendency to vote for extreme parties in spite of the hardships