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Labor Delegation to Russia.

The following is the interim report of the British labor delegation to Russia. Ben Turner, Mayor of Batley, whose personal report of his impressions of the country as he saw it was so distorted by the press, acted as chairman of this delegation.

The report is signed by him and by A. Purcell, Tom Shaw, Margaret Bondfield, Clifford Allen, Ethel Snowden, H. Skinner, Robert Williams, R. C. Wallhead, L. Hayden Guest, and C. R. Buxton.

The report was brought direct from Moscow by Ben Turner and Tom Shaw, M. P. for Preston. Investigations are not concluded, and the report deals with matters which the delegates consider as being immediately urgent.

WE have been profoundly impressed by the effects of the policy of intervention and blockade upon the Russian people. This policy has been pursued by various foreign governments since 1918, and under various forms, direct and indirect, it is still being pursued today. It is at the root of the worst evils which are afflicting Russia at the present time.

While the stoppage of exports from Russia is injurious to the world outside, the stoppage of imports is disastrous to the interior economy of Russia itself.

The problem of food exceeds all others in immediate importance. We are appalled by the conditions of virtual famine under which the whole urban population—the manual and the intellectual workers alike—are living.

A particularly serious effect of the blockade policy has been the cutting off of soap and of medical supplies. Epidemics of typhus fever and of recurrent fever have swept over the whole country.

It is true that a great and efficient sanitary organization has been created by the commissariat of public health. The movement on railway lines is controlled by regulation and the provision of numerous observation, diagnosis and disinfection stations. Every train in Siberia and European Russia has to be provided with a special coach for the use of suspicious or actual cases of illness. Large numbers of

hospitals have been created both in Siberia and Russia. A great sanitary propaganda has been carried out through Soviets and trade unions in both towns and villages, and these epidemics are now controlled. In addition, compulsory vaccination has been carried out over the whole of area of Siberia and European Russia for the first time.

But despite this organization, the fact that the blockade has cut off soap and disinfectants has been responsible for the loss of thousands of lives by infectious disease.

Russia is a rich country agriculturally, but the peasant cannot supply food to the towns except in exchange for manufactured articles. The stoppage of imports makes it impossible for these articles to be manufactured in the towns or obtained as finished goods from abroad.

The situation is rendered still more disastrous by the partial breakdown of transport—the direct result of the attacks from without and the fomenting of civil war on Russian territory.

A partial respite was allowed to Russia after the defeat of the armies of Kolchak, Denikin and Judenitch. Advantage was immediately taken of this respite to inaugurate a great effort towards economic reconstruction, backed by a far-reaching and well-conceived educational campaign. The natural energy was largely diverted from military operations to the improvement of the means of transport, the manufacture of articles for peaceful purposes, and the restoration of sanitary conditions.

Perhaps the worst disservice rendered to Russia by the recent renewal of hostilities on the Polish front has been the forcing back of the Russian people against their will from the paths of peace into the paths of war. We ourselves have witnessed scores of examples of this baneful process.

The appeal for creative work is being once more set aside in favor of the appeal to military enthusiasts, while war conditions provide new pretexts

for restricting individual liberty and preventing freedom of discussion. These conditions cannot be changed while war continues.

One effect of the present crisis has been to rally practically all parties to the support of the government for the purposes of national defence—whatever their differences on questions of internal politics. This demonstrates the futility of supposing that communist principles, whether they be good or bad, can be destroyed by hostile pressure from abroad. Such pressure only increases the stability of the government so far as internal politics are concerned.

In view of the above facts, we wish to register our unanimous and whole-hearted protest against the policy whose effects we have described—a policy as foolish as it is inhuman.

Russia's supreme needs are immediate peace and free intercourse with the outside world. We recommend that the entire British labor movement should demand the removal of the last vestige of blockade and intervention, and the complete destruction of the barrier which imperialist statesmen have erected between our own people and our brothers and sisters of Russia.

As a first step to attaining these objects the present Russian government should be unconditionally recognized. It has shown its stability by resisting for two and a half years the many efforts made to destroy it. It has repeatedly shown its will to peace. We can ourselves bear witness to the fact that it has made vigorous efforts to carry on the work of economic reconstruction.

We do not think it necessary to deal in detail with the argument that the Russian government cannot be recognized and peace can never be made with it because some of its actions are disapproved by other governments. In our opinion this is a question for Russia herself and not for any foreign government.

A Philosophic Paradox.

A PARADOX is a fact that, on first examination, looks absurd; but, on deeper scrutiny, is found to be entirely true. The universe contains many such illusions. For example, it was once generally believed that the sun rose in the east, travelled across the sky and finally sank under the earth in the west. It was not possible for people to think otherwise, because every day they saw the whole process taking place. Now we know the facts are quite the opposite. The doctrines of determinism are, at first sight, equally as unbelievable, and even more revolutionary and irreligious than, to our ancestors, appeared the discovery of the earth's rotation on its axis, whilst the sun remained relatively immovable.

"Determinism" holds that all our actions are produced by an efficient cause. The contrary doctrine maintains that we have a free will. Determinism, therefore, means that the human will is not free; that, in short, its every action is necessitated by previous causes. Because we see every day, and feel within ourselves, apparent acts of free will; it is this that makes of Determinism, such a startling paradox. The anti-determinists admit that, in Nature, nothing happens without a cause; but they assert that this does not apply to the

(human) soul, because it is a part of the Sovereign Power that is above, and rules over, Nature. That they are wrong in this view, will be clear from the following:

All our actions spring from motives; and a motive is something that moves or excites to action. It is the most powerful motive that finally effects the act; just as a heavier weight will tip down a scale, against a lighter article in the neighbor scale. But, motives themselves have a cause; or, rather, a set of causes. These are, one's physical and moral tendencies, which are mostly inherited from parents and ancestors. Next, come the force of training, education and example acting on the inborn character, and producing thereon, sometimes a good and sometimes a bad effect. Then come the influence of country, climate, natural conditions, manners and customs, etc. Lastly, the special circumstances of health nutrition, wealth or poverty, social position, happiness or misery, and so on. If we knew all of these causes acting on a person, we could predict to a hair, (as writers do with their creations), exactly what he would do at any future moment. To sum up; all a man's actions at any particular moment are inevitably caused by the totality of his Heredity and Environment; since our

motives are made for us and not by us.—"Progress."

SOVIET RUSSIA MEDICAL RELIEF COMMITTEE.

Local (Vancouver) No. 1, Socialist Party of Canada.

Hereunder is statement of contributions received for medical supplies to relieve suffering in Soviet Russia.

Dr.	
From collection at Special Propaganda Meeting, Empress Theatre, Vancouver, B. C., June 20, 1920	\$ 45.60
Donations—	
Jim Fletcher	5.00
R. Emery	1.00
J. Pike	2.00
E. J. Nicholson	50.00
T. Richardson	1.00
	\$104.60

Cr.
Cheque sent to Dr. Wm. Mendelson, 362 De Kalb Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. \$104.60
Jack Shepherd, Secretary,
Local (Vancouver) No. 1, S. P. of C.
6th July, 1920.