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THE INTERNATIONAL

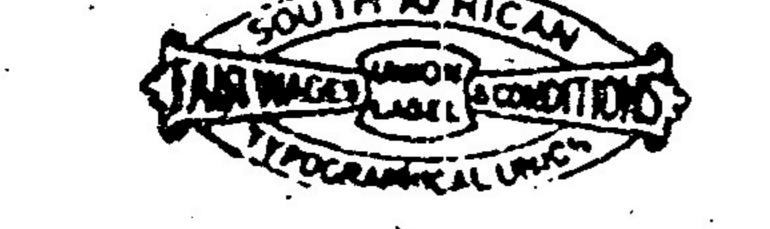
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International Socialism and the Native.

No Labour Movement without the Black Proletariat.

The Management Committee of the LS.L. has issued the following statement to the Branches as a basis of discussion at the Annual Conference. The M.C. recommends this statement of our attitude towards the native worker to be embodied in the League platform for 1918 propaganda. Comrades are invited to read it with a view to discussion, and amendment if they so desire, at the Conference of the League, which will be held in January 6th next.

The abolition of the Native Indenture, Passport and Compound Systems and the lifting of the Native Workers to the Political and Industrial Status of the White is an essential step towards the Emancipation of the Working-class in South Africa.

Society is divided into two classes: the working-class, doing all the labour; and the idle class, living on the fruits of tabour. Strictly speaking therefore there is no "Native Problem. There is only a working-class problem.

But within the working-class arises the problem of the native worker. In all countries the influx of cheap labour is used as a whip wherewith to beat the whole of the working-class. In South Africa the cheap labourer, being black, is doubly resented by the higher paid worker. And the employers foment this colour prejudice through their newspapers, and are thus able to wield the whip of cheap labour with double effect.

The suicidal prejudice of the white workers against the coloured workers is the only native problem. This prejudice manufactures the scabs that beat both black and white in the day when the solidarity of all the workers is essential to victory.

We speak therefore to the workers, and above all to those workers who look forward to the emancipation of labour from wage slavery. There can be no appeal to any section of society outside the working-class, as their interests are opposed to labour, and their opinions therefore of no accounts to us.

One section of the workers cannot henefit itself at the expense of the rest without betraying the hope of the children. Those who receive favours from the master class may lift themselves out of the propertiless proletariat; but their children will inherit the

fear of the abyss which their tathers helped to create.

The power of labour lies in its ability to stop, or to control industry. All the workers are needed for this.

Labour, not Colour, is the watch-word of solidarity.

If all those who labour cannot share in the emancipation of Labour, none can be emancipated.

"Labour cannot emancipate itself in the White while in the Black it is branded." (Marx.)

So long as we refuse to admit the native worker into the ranks of Labour, solidarity, so long will cheap labour pull down the white worker to the native standard of existence.

But so soon as we welcome the native worker into equality on the industrial field, then is he forthwith lifted up towards the white standard of living.

White standards are not in danger from the ambition of the native to improve. White standards are endangered by the attempts to keep him down.

White standards will not be saved in South Africa by the White Labour Policy. White standards will only be saved by the Black workers organising industrially.

The highest social culture is safest in the keeping of the lowest paid labourers.

What makes native labour so cheap and exploitable in South Africa? Laws and regulations which, on the pretense of protecting society from barbarism. degrade the native workers to the level of serfs and herded cattle for the express uses of capital. These are:—

The Passport system.

The Compound Sytem.

The Native Indenture system.

The special penal laws which make it a crime for a native to absent himself from work.

The denial of civil liberty and political rights.

All those things which place the native workers on a lower social plane than the white workers are weapons in the hands of the employing class to be used against all the workers, white and black.

These tyrant laws must be swept away. For these degrading conditions of native labour are the abyss into which masses of the white workers are continually being hurled by Capitalist competition.

Sweep them away! What pious horror is aroused by this demand! Unspeakable calamities will follow, we
are told. But are they not the very
cause of the social calamities they are
supposed to guard against? Indeed,
they are themselves the greatest of social calamities.

The cause of Labour demands the abolition of the Pass, the Compound, and the Indenture; and as the native workers gain in industrial solidarity, demands for them complete political equality with their white fellow workers.

Only thus can the whole of the working class, white and black, march unitedly forward to their common emancipation from wage slavery.

TROTSKY'S "INSOLENCE."

"All the chorus of calumny, which the party of order never fail, in their orgies of blood, to raise against their victims, only proves that the bourgeois of our days considers himself the legitimate successor to the Baron of old, who thought every weapon in his own hand fair against the plebeian, while in the hands of the plebeian a weapon of any kind constituted a crime."

MARX.

EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW?

A Government Gazette Extraordinary sets out two Draft Bills for the next session of Parliament. A Factories Act and a Regulation of Wages Act. The worker in a factory may not work more than 50 hours a week or more than 9½ hours a day, excluding meal times. Under 16 he, or any female, has a maximum of 45 hours a week or 8 hours a day, and weekly half-holiday, and may not work between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. or during meal hours, or more than limited overtime.

The most startling feature of the Bills is the complete absence of any colour bar; so that presumably Jim Sixpence, shares in these provisions.

League Picnic.

Next Sunday week, the 16th December, the League will hold another Picnic near the Zoo Lake. Comrades are invited to roll up for another happy day among the trees. Bring your own skoff, but tea provided in common. Sports and games again, and more prizes for the children.