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WORKING

WOMEN

AND

THE



CAPITALIST

CRISIS

BY

ROSE

SMITH

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COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

16, KING STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

WORKING WOMEN AND THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

INTRODUCTION.

"I don't know how many shillings a week were coming into her house, but she was always, I should say, below the starvation line.

"It's all very well to give advice that children should have a diet such as was ordered in this case—butter, meat, eggs and milk, but this woman did not have the wherewithal. I am convinced that there has been no negligence by the mother, and she has shown her love for the child by constantly going for medical attention."

Such were the comments of Coroner R. Stuart Rodgers on February 12 at the inquest on a fifteen-months-old baby, which the mother had carried 18 miles to Glossop, in an endeavour to get public assistance relief, previously refused by the Glossop P.A.C. It has its parallel in many working-class homes to-day where "malnutrition" (the polite name for starvation) is exacting terrible toll. The Ministry of Health speaks of "chronic invalidity" amongst young working women and of the spread of tuberculosis and rheumatism amongst school children.

"This is particularly marked amongst the children of harassed parents who are constantly struggling to make ends meet," comments Dr. Gerald Slot, Physician-in-Charge of the London County Council Rheumatism Supervisory Centre. He speaks with authority, being responsible for the treatment of 2,000 London school-children, certified as suffering from rheumatism.

This alarming incidence of sickness, of loss of life, because "we could not afford a doctor" forces working women, whether interested in politics or not, to ask pertinent questions as to the why and wherefore of the existing state of affairs. They search eagerly for a "Way Out" of their poverty and misery.

This little pamphlet is written in the hope that it may lead working-class women to the "Way Out." Let us therefore examine some of the most pressing problems.

ILL-HEALTH.

Unemployment, with high rents eating up one-third of income, dole stopped, is the lot of hundreds of thousands of British workers. The family budget is balanced at the expense of the health of its members. Two shillings per week cannot possibly maintain the healthy child of an unemployed worker.



When sickness comes, as a result of under-feeding and over-crowding, the price is paid in human suffering and loss of life.

Even sleep is denied in the crowded homes of the working class. Of 459 cases recently examined, only 44 children were found to be sleeping alone. The usual position is three, four and even more sleeping in an ill-ventilated room. When contrasted with the fate of 20,000 babies of well-to-do parents, who live in "baby hotels," one is given furiously to think.

These children pass from nursing homes through "baby hotels" to boarding schools. On the other hand, according to Sir George Newman, there are only 44 nursery schools catering for 3,000 children of the working class, and there are 2,000,000 children under five years of age for whom the Government does nothing.

The case reported by the *Daily Dispatch* (22/3/32), described as a "House of Real Heartbreak," is typical of many:—

"There are three young children ill. A week ago there were four, but six-months-old Clara Alice died on Sunday. She died because her parents could not afford a doctor.

"Now there is less than 30s. weekly going into this tragic household. Before the family spend a penny in food, nearly 10s. is taken for rent and other costs.

"The plight of the family was only partly revealed at the inquest to-day on the child Clara Alice. The father broke down at the close of the inquiry as he told the Coroner, Mr. J. Fearnley, that he had not the money to bury his child."

The facts of ill-health amongst young workers discloses an alarming increase in the number of chronic invalids. Last year the call of women on the "disability" section of the Insurance Fund exceeded that of men by 38 per cent., in spite of the "tightening-up" process. As only 15 per cent. of insured women are over 45 years of age, these figures reveal an exceedingly high degree of "chronic invalidity" amongst young women workers.

Speaking at the Conference of the National Association of Trade Union Approved Societies (Manchester, February 16, 1932), Mr. E. Cody, General Secretary, indicated that, "the societies whose members did the heavy, dangerous and unhealthy work of the community get relatively poorer each valuation."

Allegations of women "malingering" were frequently made during the period of office of the late Labour Government. The sequence is now found in the threat of the National Government to bring in a kind of Health Insurance Anomalies Act and to reduce Health Benefits, particularly to women.

SPEED-UP AND ILL-HEALTH.

The cause is not far to seek. Five and a half million women are employed in industry, the majority in shops notorious for bad conditions. Moreover, the so-called women's industries have been the subject of particularly vicious wage attacks during recent years. Whilst the average wage reduction for all workers in 1931 was 4 per cent., the percentage is much higher in industries employing a large number of women. Woollen textile workers, 17-19 per cent.; hosiery workers, 8 per cent.; and pottery workers, 11½ per cent.

In addition, a policy of "speed up" is pursued, varying from the Bedaux system (every movement having a strict time limit) to the "more loom system" expressed in terms of the various industries by increased number of machines to each woman worker. Here is a typical case from a worker's letter to the *Daily Worker*:—

"Girls with no parents and in lodgings, walking home with 18s. or £1. How can they live?

"No wonder poor girls take the wrong road. What are they going to do if their landladies give them notice? Ask yourselves. Then a glorious full week on Bedaux—25s. for all the hours one lives.

"They are making one girl do two or three girls' work for less pay, and if the poor girl even stops to blow her nose she's put all behind. Why, when we even want to wash our hands, etc., we have to ask, and we're watched and timed.

"The Bedaux men stand over you, not giving you breathing room, with a clock and a board watching every movement and giving the girls all the sarcasm they think."

Working women are driven beyond their capacity and strength to produce the maximum in a given time. It can only result in increased sickness and unemployment amongst women, whilst big dividends are created for the masters.

"NIGHTMARE OF MOTHERHOOD."

Dr. T. D. Morr, at the Professional Nursing, Midwifery and Public Health Conference (2/2/32), spoke of the "Nightmare of Motherhood." Mr. Arthur Greenwood, Labour Minister of Health, stated on the same date at Leigh that he "used to go to bed feeling like a criminal. That it was very sad to know that in England and Wales 3,000 mothers died in childbirth every year, and half of these deaths could be prevented."

Yet the Labour Government did nothing to safeguard the mother. Rather, by its policy of wage-cutting, unemployment, disallowances and through Economy Commissions made

possible the National Government's Economy Cuts in regard to social services.

With all the screeching for national economy and their own difficulty in finding money for the midwife, women sometimes think that probably there is a shortage. The fact is, there is plenty of money to safeguard the health of the leisured women of the "upper class."

Lord Moynihan, President of the Royal College of Surgeons, at the opening of a nursing home and clinic on February 17, 1932, for the rich, said:—

"The poor, the very poor, have always had the very best. The well-to-do and the rich have had something almost the best, but never quite the best. But this clinic is something for people of moderate means who have never been able to afford to get anything like the best."

Who are the people of "moderate means"? Lord Dawson of Penn, President of the Royal College of Physicians, said: "The problem has been to provide a hospital of this scale and equipment for folks with incomes of from £500 to £800 a year who can pay only eight guineas a week, and if there are any fluctuations they must be downwards. We are catering for the cultured poor."

Contrast this with the following statement from a Manchester midwife to the *Daily Worker* (4/3/32).

"The conditions under which some of the women in Manchester are confined are horrible.

"Some of them have hardly a stitch of bedding—just a piece of rag for a sheet and two or three patch quilts, then a few old coats.

"There is very seldom a cot for baby. So it has to go in bed with mother. There is no change of bedding and no blankets. They have to be confined on brown paper and newspaper, which has been collected for weeks beforehand.

"The majority of mothers have to be confined in the kitchen, because the houses are very small, and there is no convenience in the bedroom and sometimes no fire grate. Where there is, the mother cannot afford two fires.

"Furthermore, the mother has to run the household and look after the rest of the family from her bed, and more often than not she has to wash baby's nappies in bed.

"If the family is too young, the father lights the fire, gets breakfast for the lot, and prepares water, etc., for the nurse before he goes to work—if he is lucky enough to have any. Then the mother has to depend on neighbours bringing her a meal in later in the day, otherwise she goes hungry, which is often the case.

"Is it any wonder that a mother often gets out of bed, not knowing the grave risk she is taking?"

These are the horrors of childbirth that no drugs will remove, but only the united action of the workers who suffer them.

THE HOUSING QUESTION.

The Ministry of Labour states that there are at present 200,000 building workers unemployed. These figures have been rising gradually throughout the period of office of the late Labour Government, which pursued a policy of spending 27 times as much on War Materials as on Health and Housing.

The present National Government has cut down building schemes by £55½ million whilst continuing to spend £200 per minute on war.

In a recent Ministry of Health Circular (1238) it was admitted that: "The needs of the poorer workers are not, in fact, being adequately met."

The rents of municipal houses are far too high for the workers to pay. Private landlords in many instances have doubled rents since 1914, and often demand key money up to £5 from ingoing tenants.

Increasing rents at a period of declining wages, together with a widespread movement to throw the responsibility of rates directly upon the tenant, are leading to numerous evictions and sales of household goods.

On March 23, 697 summonses were heard in Manchester alone for non-payment of rates. In 1931 over 14,000 tenants in Cardiff were summoned for non-payment of rates. 7,000 is the yearly average for Sheffield. Bradford, in 1931, issued 16,744 summonses, 2,722 distraints and authorised 59 sales of furniture by bailiffs.

The worry and horror of this is known only to working women, who count each day as a day of terror until the dreaded Court Bailiffs finally appear to wrest their coveted household goods from them.

Housing conditions go from bad to worse. Fifty families with 100 children were recently found to be living in a Glasgow tenement, without either water or sanitary facilities.

Whilst the conditions in privately-owned houses beggars description, the impudence of the private landlord is exceeded by that of the Council Authorities. Detectives are employed to see that working women are not guilty of trying to keep clean their scanty household linen by washing on a Sunday. Fleetwood Council refuses to let houses unless the tenant promises not to be guilty of such a heinous crime.

"On the one hand, children live in basements, subject to flooding at times of heavy rain. As the floods brought a backwash of sewage from the drains, the houses are totally

unfit for habitation." (Report of Westminster Survey Group, February, 1932). Whilst, on the other hand, the Princess Elizabeth has her toy house insured for £750, with furniture valued at £500.

Certainly, mothers of the working class are forced to ask, how and why?

UNEMPLOYMENT AND WORKING WOMEN.

Working women have suffered particularly from unemployment. Margaret Bondfield, as Minister of Labour in the Labour Government, initiated the move for the compulsory acceptance of employment by women in Army Canteens and in Domestic Service. It is calculated that 90,000 women have already been thus forced to enter an uninsurable occupation.

The Labour Government's Anomalies Act was directed particularly against women. It ruled that married women would not be entitled to unemployment benefit unless they could prove they had prospects of a job. In addition, they must have at least 15 contributions since marriage or 8 in the quarter prior to signing on.

It also restricted benefit to seasonal and part-time workers, many of whom are women.

Since November last this has meant that over 170,000 women have been deprived of benefit.

The percentage of disallowances is particularly high in districts where women are customarily employed, ranging from 50 per cent. in Burnley (Lancashire) to 3 per cent. in Glamorganshire.

The following example, taken from workers' letters to the *Daily Worker*, speaks for itself:—

"Mrs. Elizabeth Tipping, of 26, Curzon Street, Burnley, is a widow and has one child aged one year and seven months. She and her child have to feed and clothe themselves on 4s. 10d. per week. The child looks very sick and is continually crying, the reason being, the mother states, that the child had nothing to eat for over a day.

"She was getting 17s. 6d. relief, and had to pay rent for a furnished room, 8s. 6d.; coal, 3s. 6d.; and club, 8d.; total 12s. 6d. This leaves 4s. 10d. for food and other necessities."

"The strain of such conditions is wearing down the health of both parents and children.

"A mother, who died recently, left seven children, and the doctor signed her certificate as 'death from starvation.'"

Contrast this with the report in the *Daily Express*, March 10, 1932, to the effect that: "There are persons going about at present prepared to spend £2,000 to 'launch' a debutante successfully in Society."

ATTACKS ON WOMEN'S WAGES.

Three hundred thousand women cotton textile workers received 1s. 3d. in the £ wage reduction through the medium of the Labour Government's Arbitration Award in August, 1929. Subsequently the Graham Commission was set up, which recommended, among other things, the More Loom System, a recommendation the masters were quick to take advantage of, with the result that finally the trade-union officials and the masters came to terms involving heavy wage reductions for the women and proposals for the working of six looms per weaver instead of the four-loom system, previously the custom.

These terms were subsequently repudiated by the delegates to the Weavers Amalgamation meeting, under pressure from the membership, 60 per cent. of whom are women.

In the woollen industry, similar tactics have been pursued. Margaret Bondfield, being responsible for the appointment of the Macmillan Commission to inquire into the position of the Woollen Textile industry. Again a decision was given against the workers, 100,000 women being affected. Cuts were put over varying from 10 to 25 per cent. The year 1932 sees a repetition of the masters' demands for wage cuts in the heavy section of the industry, situated in the Dewsbury area.

In the pottery trade a 10 per cent. cut in basic wages was effected in 1931, whilst thousands of women workers have been recently engaged in a fight against the Bedaux system, with its speed-up and reduction in wages.

Such has been the lot of working women under the Labour Government and this has continued under the National Government. The future attack in regard to wage standards is indicated by the words of Mr. R. S. Dalgleish, President of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom. He declared:—

"Excessive taxation has induced a spirit of reckless spending. Wages on the Continent are 25 to 61 per cent. lower than in Great Britain. The choice is between reducing wages to that level or facing starvation. The whole country has been living too luxuriously. The standard has been higher than we can afford" (18/2/32).

Sir William Hinbury, manager of the British Cotton Growing Association, in an interview with the *Daily Dispatch* (21/2/32) said: "Up till now Labour has done practically nothing to help, but it must help, even to the extent of working more looms at lower wages."

These statements make it fairly plain that further attacks upon workers' wages and conditions are already being planned. This, coupled with the new tariffs, means still greater attacks upon the workers' standards of life, and these attacks bear doubly hard upon the women, involving additional work and worry to industrial worker and housewife.

FOOD PRICES.

The lowering of wages, reductions in unemployment benefits and widespread disallowances have involved big economies in working-class households. Housewives are compelled by poverty to buy in smaller quantities, living from hand to mouth, so that again the workers are the losers, and the additional halfpennies involved mount up to a considerable sum out of the small family income.

The Incorporated Association of Retail Distributors comment on this, in their annual report, February, 1932: "Where, previously, customers were accustomed to make one bulk purchase, they now make a number of small purchases as and when the goods are required."

The effect of lowered income is rapidly expressed in the housewife's search for "cheaper markets." Quality has to be sacrificed to quantity, with the result that children are forced to be fed on inferior goods.

Sir James Martin, J.P., Chairman of the Maypole Dairy Co., in addressing the shareholders' annual meeting, stated:—

"Another feature of the year's trading, which I think is entirely due to the economic conditions under which we are living has been a demand for cheaper qualities. In other words, price rather than quality is of necessity the prime consideration with many people at the present time" (15/3/32).

This is, of course, only one aspect of the food problem. Huge combines like the Maypole Dairy Co., with their subsidiary companies, control nearly 4,000 retail shops in Great Britain and Ireland. They depend for their 15 to 25 per cent. dividends on the coppers of the working class. Through their national and international financial holdings they are able to control the markets in such necessary commodities as tea, butter, bacon, sugar, bread, etc.

HOW WAGE CUTS AND "ECONOMIES" ARE ENFORCED.

"We have seen that when the question of reduced wages has been under discussion, that State machinery, such as the Trade Board Act, has been used to reduce the wages of pottery and jute women workers. The same applies to the tailoring trade, and to most other industries in which women are occupied, for they come under the category known as "sweated trades." (It is noteworthy that these industries are mostly confined to women workers, that is the section of the working class which is least organised.)

In textile industries the Labour Government intervened with Arbitration Courts and Commissions of Inquiry, with like results against the interests of the workers.

Similarly also, when Philip Snowden, Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, was faced with the task of balancing the Budget, another Commission was established to discover ways

and means of economising. The Labour Party re-echoed the cry of the masters that there was a grave national crisis, and proposed that sacrifices must be made to the tune of over £120 million. It prepared the programme of economies, which have since been put into operation by the National Government, involving terrific attacks upon the unemployed workers, throwing thousands of workers out of jobs through stoppage of road and building schemes, reducing the standard of education by maintaining large classes, old and unhealthy school buildings, impoverishing child and maternity welfare, raising food prices through tariff barriers, reducing wages in the Public Services and paving the way, in the words of Sir Abe Bailey (October 24, 1931) for "an economic restoration plan, beginning with an all-round reduction in wages and salaries in sheltered industries."

The Labour Government authorised batoning and imprisonment of dozens of women workers in the textile disputes. It went further and actually used bombs and machine guns against working women in Kenya and India, when they demonstrated against worsened conditions in the mills, and the imposition of heavy taxes.

Police tyranny of undreamt-of proportions is at present being operated by the National Government against women in the textile areas, demonstrating against "more looms and lower wages." Women members of workers' strike committees have actually been threatened with arrest if even seen in the streets. In both cotton and woollen areas the centre of present attacks the following scenes are familiar:—

"DEWSBURY.—Yesterday there were exciting scenes outside the mill of J. Taylor, when a strong mass picket of over 2,000 endeavoured to extend the strike to this mill. Large forces of foot and mounted police were there, and, as is usual, endeavoured to break up the mass picket.

"SOUTH WALES.—Last week in Caerau it took 26 burly policemen to evict an ex-Serviceman, with eight children, from their home because they owed £4 rent.

"On Thursday, over 30 police were used by a hire-purchase firm to recover a gramophone purchased by an unemployed worker, during a period when he was working.

"The police knocked two women unconscious.

"This is how the Glamorgan County Council, which has a Labour majority, carries out economies for the National Government.

"It refuses to put into operation the school-feeding Act. Refuses to grant coal to the unemployed. Putting into operation the Means Test, because they say that they have no money, but spending over £288,000 on the

Police Force to protect private property." (*Daily Worker*, 22/2/32).

These facts expose the brutality of the capitalists, but they also reveal the heroic resistances of working women to the offensive of the capitalists.

The trade-union officials and the leaders of the Labour Party speak of the apathy of the workers and spread such lies as "The workers are apathetic and will not fight" in order to cover up their treachery.

This is a libel on the working class. The stubborn resistance of the workers of all sections since 1921 is proof of the desire of the workers for struggle against capitalism.

The working women have a wonderful record of struggle. In the miners' fights the womenfolk fed the strikers and their families, went on picket, participated in mass demonstrations, etc., and have thrown their full weight into the struggle of the miners. In the textile struggles the women have held out tenaciously against police intimidation and against the repeated betrayals of their officials.

They have faced the baton charges of the police, their militant leaders have been imprisoned, but they have fought courageously on, and are still fighting.

It becomes obvious that the State apparatus, whether operated by Labour or National Government, is used to reduce wages, to penalise the unemployed, and to brutally ill-treat those who would revolt against such vile conditions, to increase the dividends of the food profiteers and precipitate war by building tariff walls.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT PREPARED THE WAY.

The Labour Party in 1929 promised to deal with unemployment, with maternity and child welfare, with housing and the war question. It broke every one of its pledges, participating in the impoverishment of the workers and preparing war. Out of every 20s., it spent:—

<i>For War.</i>		s.	d.		s.	d.
To War Debt	...	9	2½	Education	1	3½
Army, Navy and Air Force	...	2	11	Old Age Pensions ...		11
War Pensions	...	1	4¾	Widows' & Orphans' Pensions		1¼
				Health and Housing		6½
		13	6¼	Unemployed		6
				Other Services	3	1½
				<i>For Social Services.</i>	6	5¾

Its record against the workers led to mass demonstrations throughout the length and breadth of the country.

When the "crisis" came last July, the Labour leadership broke up, the principal leaders remaining with the National Party to carry out the economy cuts which they had prepared.

The remainder of the leaders are meanwhile engaged in trying to win back the confidence of the workers by appealing for 1,000,000 new members and a majority in the House five years hence.

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

The National Government is best explained in the words of its own manifesto.

It is composed of members of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Parties.

"The specific object for which the new Government is being formed is to deal with the national emergency that now exists . . . proposals will be submitted to the House of Commons for a very large reduction of expenditure and for the provision on an equitable basis of the further funds required to balance the Budget."

It has never made any secret of how the Budget was to be balanced, and opened up its attack upon the workers by first of all reducing unemployment benefits 10 per cent. and by carrying out the drastic and disgraceful measures "previously advocated by the late Labour Minister, Mr. Snowden."

Its tariff policy is based on the cheapest possible production at home in order to dump British goods abroad.

The heavy cuts in wages of Government employees has been quickly followed by that of municipal employees, so that the factory owners now drive forward confident of Government support.

IS THERE A CRISIS?

The position is very ably described in the pamphlet by William Rust, "Down With the National Government."

"Yes, there is a real crisis of British capitalism, but not because the working class is getting too much, but because they are getting too little.

"They cannot buy back what they have produced; the capitalists keep the factories closed and even destroy machinery; wealth is wasted on armaments and luxury; the channels of trade are choked by tariffs; war debts and reparations prevent the functioning of industry, and enormous quantities of capital and credit are immovable and useless.

"For this situation the working class has no responsibility, but it has the burden to bear."

Responsible members of the governing class, like Mr. J. Beaumont Peace, Chairman of Lloyds Bank, have to confess (February 5, 1932):—

"In such a mad world a return to prosperity, the one

thing we all want, has, for the time being, been made an impossibility, and international trade has been brought largely to a standstill.' ”

“ War to regain this prosperity is the capitalist way out of the crisis, and the war which rages in China is spreading and will inevitably involve all countries.”

The system of capitalism is now confronted with the system of Socialism in the Soviet Union. The capitalist system is one of starvation and war; the Socialist system one of Socialist industry and improved conditions for the workers.

A WAY OUT FOR THE WORKERS.

Yes, there is a way out. It is the way of struggle for Socialism. A free Socialist Britain is the way forward for the British working men and women.

There must be no more surrender to the capitalists.

The more quickly we build up our united fighting front in the fight against the Means Test, wage cuts, cuts in social services, police brutality, etc., and the greater the number of workers who are drawn into this struggle, the sooner shall we fight our way out of the crisis. Socialism can only come as a result of the fight of the workers against the offensive of the capitalists.

Contrast the situation which obtains in the Soviet Union with that in the countries of capitalism. There is no unemployment, wages are rising, while here in Britain we are being driven down to starvation.

In Soviet Russia there is no Budget deficiency, but the reserve balance is expected to treble that of 1930, and to be somewhere in the region of £150 million.

In capitalist Britain, the shipyards of the Clyde and Mersey lie empty, hundreds of mills are being dismantled in the textile area of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

In Soviet Russia, with industry State-owned, the expenditure on the development of industry and agriculture was £1,534 million.

The expenditure on the social services in U.S.S.R. in 1931 increased by £40 million, whilst the allocation for health services for 1931 (£220 million) was nearly treble that of 1927 (£69 million).

Unemployment is non-existent. Wages rise consistently, whilst all social insurance is free, and it is forbidden to charge more than one-tenth of income in rent. It makes pleasant reading to learn that the social insurance includes:—

1.—Medical help.

2.—Temporary incapacity relief (including two months before and after childbirth), and an allowance of £1 to £1 12s. monthly.

3.—Permanent disablement relief (two-thirds of wages).

4.—Assistance for dependants of deceased bread-winner (that is up to two-thirds of wages, according to size of family and other circumstances).

The Russian workers under the Czar suffered privation, the most brutal police tyranny. If Russian men were slaves, the women were doubly enslaved, being regarded as mere goods and chattels, and with practically no rights before the law.

These changed conditions have been brought about as a result of the United Struggle of Russian men and women for “ Freedom, Bread, and equal rights for men and women.”

It found its first expression in the midst of the World War, when hunger and privation, misery and death was the lot of the soldier-worker.

The Russian Bolsheviks called upon the workers to take power into their own hands, to strike off the shackles of private ownership of the factories, to dispossess the landlords and to establish working-class rule based, not on Parliaments, but on Workers' Councils.

What the Russian workers and peasants can do, we can do.

We must destroy the power of the capitalists and take over the factories, mines and railroads, and use them in the service of the working class. In short, we must conquer political power.

The conquest of power is not merely the setting up of one government in place of another. We must smash the state of the capitalists and set up a workers' state. In the words of the Communist Party Election Manifesto:—

“ It is not to be won by Parliamentary humbug. The workers' power can only be realised by the workers themselves, *through their own Workers' Councils, elected from the factories, from the propertyless masses, and holding absolute power they will carry out the social changes throughout the country. This is the Workers' Dictatorship, the rule of the overwhelming propertyless majority in the interests of the majority, in place of the present rule by the propertied few.*

“ *Then for the first time will there be a real democracy, in which the great mass of the population will make decisions and carry them out unhindered by the claims of parasites and exploiters.*”

The capitalist world is determined to crush the workers' republic and war plans are being feverishly prepared.

We were told that the last war was “ the war to end war.” We were promised wonderful things when the war should end.

What do we find? Three millions unemployed, the operation of the Means Test, and Anomalies Act. We have suffered no less than £700 million a year in wages cuts every year since 1921. Everywhere there is poverty, misery and premature death.

This is what the last war meant for the workers.

Again war is raging. The Japanese imperialists, with the backing of British and other imperialist Powers, have slaughtered in Shanghai alone 6,080 civilians and 2,000 wounded, 10,040 are missing and 160,000 Chinese families have been effected by the war. These are workers and are in addition to the thousands of soldiers who have been hurled to destruction; and British munitions helped in this bloody slaughter.

These few facts give some indication of how in wars to-day the workers' population are as much exposed to the horrors of war as the soldiers in the trenches.

Working women can defeat the plans of the war-makers by fighting against their own capitalists.

In the factories and mills we must fight against wage cuts and speeding up, high rents and rising prices, and bring all workers into the movement to stop the transport of men and munitions to China.

By fighting so we can draw all workers together in a united front to defeat the war plans of the capitalists, and overthrow them and place our feet firmly on the path to a free Soviet Britain.

The way out of the crisis for the workers is the fight for a free Socialist Britain, which will abolish poverty and put an end to all exploitation of the workers in Britain and the oppressed workers and peasants crushed under the heel of British imperialism.

The Communist Party presses forward to the offensive against capitalism and the conquest of power, by the workers, and the building of Socialism.

The Communist Party of Great Britain fights with the workers' women in their present battles against Bedaux and more looms, against the Means Test and the Anomalies Act, against any economies in Health Insurance and social services. It is pledged to fight against high food prices and rents. It calls upon all working women to defeat the plans of the imperialist war-makers by building workers' committees in the workshops, by mobilising the utmost possible support against the shipment of men and guns for imperialist war purposes, and by building a party of iron, steeled in the struggle, enjoying the confidence of all honest elements in the working class, knowing how to observe the state of mind of the masses and to influence it. That party is the Communist Party.