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Soviet Barriers to Understanding

From our Our Special Correspondent

Brighton, Thursday.

The Prime Minister addressed the Trades Union Congress this morning. When he spoke to them last year at Blackpool, he said, the Labour Government had been in power only for a few weeks, and he told them frankly of the difficulties which would inevitably have to be faced. Many difficulties remained, although great progress in reconstruction had been achieved. The change over from war to peace economy had been a remarkable achievement, reflecting credit on civil and military authorities, the workers, and the employers.

But what had been accomplished so far was only the beginning. " We still have great problems to solve. Mr. Isaacs has spoken to you of the shortage of man-power. There are also world shortages of food, timber, and raw materials, while the flow of consumer goods, largely as it has increased during the past year, cannot yet overtake the deficiencies due to six years of war. While a good start has been made in rehousing, the task is immense and cannot be accomplished in a few months."

Out-of-Date Practices

After a tribute to the breadth and wisdom of the speeches of Mr. Charles Dukes and Lord Citrine, in which there was " more practical statesmanship than in all the orations delivered at the Conservative conference at Blackpool."* Mr. Attlee continued :

"There is to-day in this country a far wider appreciation of economic truth than ever before. I think that everyone realises now that our standard of life depends on what we can produce. Labour is the source of our well-being. It must be applied intelligently and economically and energetically if we are to produce for all our people the material basis of good life. I can remember not so long ago when our rulers told us it was more economical to keep men idle than to find work for them. No one says that to-day. We are living in a period when there is a pronounced shortage of labour.

"Full employment is a policy not only socially desirable but economically necessary. This fact requires a new outlook from those engaged in industry, employers and employed alike. To match the economics of full employment we need the 'ethics of full employment. Employers

Correspondents

peace on sure foundations, but they could not ignore disturbing features in the world to-day.

"We must, until we have made greater progress in building up a world organisation. maintain the armed forces necessary to fulfil our obligations. It is never easy to do this in the years that follow

a great war, but I would ask all of you to do your utmost to help us in these difficult times to get the men we must have for the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force.

"We have already done much, despite the stringencies of the present time, to make conditions for the fighting forces more attractive. We have the lessons of two great wars to take to heart. We cannot afford to run risks. We must keep our forces up to the strength required."

There was not much left to add to what had been said in the Commons debate on foreign affairs, but there was a small but vociferous section in the country that sought on every occasion to attack the policy of the Government and which seemed resolved to declare that whatever was done Britain was always wrong. He claimed that they were carrying out Labour's international policy based on their belief in freedom and democracy and the right of nations to decide freely for themselves the kind of Government and society they desired.

Communists* Methods

"Let me say, democracy is becoming a much-abused word. It is often used by those who have never understood or practised democratic principles to mean the achievement of power by book and, more often, by crook—by the Communist party—while freedom means the denial of liberty to all those who refuse to accept the Communist philosophy. Everyone who does not take his orders from the Communists is described as a Fascist.

"The criterion by which these people judge their action is a simple one. If in any part of the world the Communist party, by no matter what means, is in power, that is democracy. If anywhere the Communists fail, then, however fair the conditions, it is regarded as Fascism. Thus an election in Greece, supervised internationally, which results in an anticommunist majority, is at once denounced. On the other hand, a plebiscite taken where the Communist party is in power is regarded as the sacred voice of the people. We as democrats are not concerned to decide for other people how they should vote; we are concerned to see that the method of arriving at the conclusion should be just and fair."

They had put their principles into practice in Ceylon and in other colonies, in Transjordan, in Burma, and in India, where the action of the Government had received approval throughout the world except in those areas where the people were not allowed to hear of it. Vo* iko,» —

Transjordan, in Burma, and in India, where the action of the Government had received approval throughout the world except in those areas where the people were not allowed to hear of it. Yet there were still people who continued their shrill cries of denunciation of Britain.

"I say that no country has given greater and more practical proof of its desire to put these principles into practice than has Britain. No great Power has any record comparable to it.

"I notice on your agenda that the only resolution on foreign affairs is one which, I must say, seems to me to be filled with the kind of misrepresentation to which we have become accustomed from the members of the Communist party, their dupes, and fellow-travellers.**

"Ignorance and Suspicion"

They could not expect all the difficulties of a tortured world to be straightened out easily. This fact requires from those engaged in industry, employers and employed alike. To match the economics of full employment we need the

"Full employment is a policy not only They had put their principles into socially desirable but economically needs- practice in Ceylon and in other colonies, in This fact requires a new outlook

ethics of full employment. Employers have to realise that those they employ are a national asset that must not be wasted. Labour must not be misdirected owing to failure to use up-to-date methods.

On the other side, workers also must realise that whether they work for the State or for a private employer they are producing the stock of goods and services from which we all derive the necessities and amenities of life.

Restrictive practices on either side, which 'often had a justification in the conditions of a past economy, are out of place to-day. The provision of houses, coal, capital, and consumer goods to the extent to which the nation requires them depends on the earnest efforts of all those engaged in production and distribution. Unless they give of their best the nation will go short.

It is therefore natural that I should ask in fifteen months not to pass from the dis- you to do your utmost to impress on all the orders of the past decade to complete and

United Nations Organisation. They were not following selfish imperialistic aims, but that did not

mean that at every point they would concede the claims of others. The Reviewing the way in which Labour's Government would do its utmost to try programme had been implemented, Mr. and promote harmony in the world, but the Attlee said some of their opponents seemed task of building on secure foundations the to think it dreadful that Labour had been KfSS.

faithful to its election pledge. Nor had must also be a union of hearts between they escaped criticism for doing the sane peoples.

thing and consulting as fully as possible **Xt is one °* th,e tragedies of the world with the trade union movement. "The less dS£cra\h0?v to*'nreSSnt^tS!

responsible organs of the Conservative course tetSm mUm Sonic and press seex to discover a sinister conspiracy, the rest of tee world The^ are not avowed to know what is bcin? done and

toss with somebody's profit, but with the sct themselves to work with all other standard of life of the nation and, indeed, nations in building up the authority of the with the very life of our country."

A Coherent Plan

thought by their fellows in other parts of the world. The growth of personal friendship between individuals is frowned upon; the Russian newspapers give fan- not less essential in peace than in war, tnstic misrepresentations of the world out- the dangers of a State within a State. We shall not be deterred by this kind of talk from continuing the close co-operation of ihc State with organised labour, which is when it met with no such strictures."

He could not tell them the future legislative programme because the new session had not yet begun, but they could be assured that Labour's programme, based on a well-thought-out plan, would be steadily implemented. It was no hasty improvisation of measures designed to appeal to sectional interests, nor was it a collection of platitudes such as was

side Soviet Russia. A wall of ignorance and suspicion is built up between the nations.

" One would have thought that the rulers of Russia, justly proud of their achievements in peace and war, believing that their system is the best for the workers, would have welcomed every opportunity of closer intercourse between the workers.

recently served up instead of a programme of friendship and co-operation.

^the*lishecn^ocked^»m"h?it^p^annt you '<* We must have for a chance-

fed " ?nhor?nt ffr 1hc meantime, wherever it is possible, we

adapting our economic and social structure to the needs of the nation in the modern world. They had the double task of dealing with their internal problems and of playing their part in establishing the political and economic conditions in the world whereby the nations might advance in peace and prosperity.

fed. Labour's was a coherent plan for must do our utmost to promote understanding.'

To that end the trade union movement could be a powerful instrument for promoting peace discussions with men and women of other countries—the giving and receiving of hospitality, the joining in games and competitions and visits abroad

Turning to the international situation, all serving to bring home the great truth. Mr. Attlee said they would do their utmost that in the simple things of life there to make the United Nations Organisation was far more to unite than to separate the a success with the object of establishing members of the human family.

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