

**DOCUMENT 3:**

**'The New International, By the Editor', published in *The International*, September 10, 1915.**

Here we plant the flag of the New International in South Africa. Like all pioneer banners, it cannot be an elaborate one. Let us briefly trace the journey hither.

The East London Conference of the Labour Party, with a view to preserving working class unity, adopted a resolution on the war leaving the question to the dictates of each member's individual reason and conscience. At that Conference the Internationalists were in an overwhelming majority. Not, let us admit, that that majority represented the exact feeling of the rank and file on the war; but the passions of war and the electioneering virus had not as yet clouded the sense of the branches to the value of the Internationalists to the Party.

On this compact the Party worked for seven months. Then, with the approach of the General Election, the growing agitation to define the Party's policy on the war resulted in the Special Conference held at Johannesburg on August 22 last.

At this Conference the Party adopted by a majority of 82 to 30 the Bezuidenhout War Policy which pledges it wholeheartedly to support the Imperial Government in the prosecution of the war.

We need not refer to the domestic provisions for the succour of the disabled and the destitute contained in the subsidiary clauses of that resolution. They comprise the ordinary duties of a Labour Party at all times; and the only effect of their inclusion in this war policy is to throw a lurid light on the so-called 'destiny and liberties' of our country so flamboyantly heralded in the principal clause.

The 'see it through' policy has imposed upon a movement of revolt against Capitalism a pledge to support Capitalist Governments in the prosecution of their supreme crime War.

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Militarism is the instrument by which the Masters impose their will upon the Workers. The pro-war majority have enthroned militarism as the first essential of a working class representative.

Part of a movement based on the recognition of no boundary other than the boundary between exploiter and exploited, the Party now demands Labour representatives to range themselves on the side of one set of exploiters in this inhuman sacrifice of working class blood.

Up to the Special Conference all that the Party pledge implied was a guarantee of devotion to working class interests. To paraphrase the words of the Hebrew sage slightly, the Party in effect said:

‘This is the pledge that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke’

The Bezuidenhout Policy commits us, and its rough-shod supporters insist upon it, to what we hold to be a policy of aggravating the heavy burdens, to let the oppressor go free, and that we place the yoke heavier and heavier on the neck of the workers. That the workers, educated by their masters, demand it, makes not the slightest difference to our responsibilities in the matter.

The adoption of this policy left the Internationalists torn between their allegiance to the necessity for working class unity and to the fundamental working class interests which it violates.

To compose the two necessities is the object of the formation of the International League within the Party, to propagate the principles held by us to be the very essentials of working class emancipation. These are the principles of International Socialism and anti-militarism.

‘The International’ will be the organ of the League. In its columns the point of view of the Internationalist will be presented in its manifold phases. Like all young conceptions it is never fully told. Karl Marx, in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, strikingly remarks that the literary expression of middle class revolutions were always grander than their actual content; but that the working class ideal struggles through to as yet inadequate expression. The substance of it is infinitely finer than the articulation.

In the conception of the Working Class International, however, there emerges to unawakened earth the trumpet of a prophesy. Even in the hour of its numerical supremacy we see the national sentiment fading before our eyes, and slowly reforming into the vaster constellation of International working class unity. This is now the only way of advance for Labour. The other way presents a vista of interminable despair with bayonets and cross bones stacked on either side. By this way of the New International alone can mankind hope for a release from the toils of the brute, and rise to that higher plane when men shall scorn all conflict other than the conflict of mind with mind in the realm of intellect.