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The Stresemann Government The Lessons of Democracy

By Karl Radek.

On Wednesday, August 8, the German Chancellor, Cuno, began a great speech in the German Parliament. The communists gave him a demonstrative reception: "Down with the bankrupt! Living corpse!"—such were the shouts from the benches of the little communist Reichstag fraction. The Reichstag listened in silence to the Chancellor's speech, for what reply could it make to the torrent of words, words, and again words, flowing unceasingly from the lips of the speaker—and all words in which nobody believed. The Chancellor spoke against placing any hope in help from England. But who other than his government awakened this hope? The Chancellor said that Germany must help herself by an active policy. But he had no program for an active policy. The Chancellor said that the propertied classes must be prepared to make sacrifices for the salvation of the nation, but the program which he submitted was mere derision of the sufferings and ruin of Germany.

The Chancellor's speech was followed by addresses from representatives of all the bourgeois parties and of the social democracy. They repeated the speech of the Chancellor in other words. Not a single speaker ventured to say what every bourgeois newspaper, without exception, had written against Cuno's government. For when a writer writes, the reader reads, and nothing more happens. But to vote against the government in Parliament might overthrow it. And who was going to replace it, once overthrown? There is not one bourgeois party which knows a way out of the situation, and therefore no bourgeois party wanted to take the initiative in overthrowing Cuno's government.

The social democratic press had been howling against Cuno. A few days before the opening of the Reichstag, a section of the social democratic fraction resolved, at the Weimar conference, to demand Cuno's resignation. But the majority of the Reichstag fraction rejected this demand. Cuno's government was the government of the right wing of the Stinnes party, of the right wing of the centre party, and of the democrats, whose

right wing does not differ from their left. The removal of Cuno and his substitution by another person, by a representative of another combination of forces, signified for the bourgeois parties the choice between two alternative possibilities only: either the social democrats entered the Stinnes-Centre-Democrat bloc—this alternative was feared by the social democrats, for they are aware that at least one half of the workers composition of their party is against a coalition with Stinnes. Or, the second alternative, a bloc composed of social democrats, Centre, and Democracy—this was impracticable, as neither the Centre Party nor the Democrats would part from the Stinnes party, the German People's Party.

Thus there was not one bourgeois party that refused to accord Cuno the confidence which he demanded in his speech. All that the social democrats attempted to do was to persuade Cuno, behind the scenes, to abstain from causing them any unpleasantness, and not to insist on a formal division in the confidence question. "The will of the nation" was thus declared through the mouth of the Reichstag to be in favor of the Cuno government, for, as we have been sufficiently informed by democratic theory, the "democratic parliament is the best expression of the will of the nation". This expression of the will of the nation proved contradictory to another mode of expression possessed by the representatives of the nation. The Exchange lowered the value of the mark from day to day, and thus voted continuously against any motion of confidence in the Cuno government. The working people contributed to the want of confidence vote by demonstrating and striking energetically. In Chemnitz alone there was a demonstration of 150,000 workers, communists and social democrats, who demanded the resignation of the Cuno government. But as the parliament did not know what to do, it concluded that Herr Cuno was still the best man for the job, as he did not know what to do either. On Friday the newspapers announced that there was no government crisis whatever, that certain changes might be made in the

composition of the Cuno government, but nothing more. The central organ of the social democracy declared on Friday that the "brain of the working class" had expressed its thoughts through the mouth of Herr Hermann Müller, the representative of the social democracy.

But the brain of the working class, as embodied in Herr Müller, did not say what the workers said. On Saturday the printers' strike began, as well as the strike of the tramway and railway workers. The "brain" of the working class thus received a fresh stimulus. The printers' strike was most felt. Germany is at the present time covering two per cent of her expenditure (we repeat: two per cent) by taxation. The printers' strike made it impossible for the Reichsbank to print more paper money. The shops were closed. The police made an attack on the editorial offices of the central organ of our party, as this called upon the workers to extend the strike. But the editors of the central organ of our party do not print money. Hence the prohibition of the paper for one day and the indictment of high treason could not retard the fall of the government. The social democrats decided to make the jump. They demanded Cuno's resignation. Cuno handed it in. Germany and the whole world received a plain lesson that the famous democracy and parliamentarism are but a screen upon which shadows dance, now that we are living in such times of misery, want and acute antagonisms.

The Cuno Government.

What did the Cuno government represent? It was the government of the German industrial bourgeoisie. It was not led by Herr Cuno, but by Herr Becker. It was a union of the junker, the capitalist, and the bureaucrat. Becker was the representative of Stinnes in the government. Herr Cuno, whose career had been that of an official in the service of the greatest German shipping company, the Hamburg-American line, was personally opposed to Stinnes. Precisely for this reason he was pushed forward, in order to conceal the fact that his government represented Stinnes' policy. He is a man without any political experience whatever. Unsupported by any definite political party, he has been a plaything in Becker's hands, as Becker is the instrument of the People's Party. Second violin has been played in the government by Herr Hermes, a man of the Exchange.

What was the line followed by the Cuno government? It came into power, in the first place, as a result of the increased strength of the German trusts, which were supported by the Fascist organizations, and, in the second place, as a result of the growing antagonisms between the Allies. The German bourgeoisie speculated on the degeneration and inactivity of the social democracy, and on the controversies between England and France, and resolved to obtain the revision of the Versailles peace and a fresh agreement with the Entente, which would make it possible to solve the reparations question at the expense of the toiling masses of Germany by lengthening working hours and reducing wages. But as no understanding was reached by England and France with regard to the reassessment of the amount to be paid by Germany, and as the Cuno government, which had evoked such great hopes of a firm policy with reference to the Entente, did not venture to make any proposals satisfactory to France, Poincaré resolved to act. He occupied the Ruhr area. A struggle began which could have decided the whole conflict between Germany and France in favor of the former. For this it was only necessary for the Cuno government to desist, if but for the time being, from worsening the position of the working class, and to tax the capitalists in order to mobilize means for the Ruhr struggle, proving to France that it could not obtain any money by the employment of force. The Cuno government was in an extraordinary, an historical position. Although a government composed of enemies of the working class, it actually enjoyed the support of the whole working class for a time in the struggle against French imperialism. For although the communists carried on a campaign against the government, and did not conceal for a moment the real nature of this government from the masses of the people, still they stood for the resistance to French imperialism. But they did not do this for the sake of Herr Cuno and his government. They were actuated by the interests of the vanguard of the German revolution, and these interests demanded that the heart of the revolution, the Ruhr basin, should not be delivered over to French imperialism. They acted in the firm conviction that the bourgeoisie would not succeed in defending the Ruhr area, and that the leadership of the struggle would pass into the hands of the revolutionary working class. Whatever their motives and calculations, Herr Cuno and the German bourgeoisie could have relied upon the fact that the interests of the two hostile classes of Germany coincided for the moment, if only the German bourgeoisie had been able to

bring itself to sacrifice its profits, if but for a year, in their further common interests.

There will be new elections in France in the spring of 1924, and if Poincaré has not managed to get coal and iron out of the Ruhr by that time, but is still compelled to expend enormous sums for the Ruhr expedition, then he will be overthrown and the national bloc with him. This is clear. But the German bourgeoisie, which pillaged the masses of the people during the war, and which contrived to loot the German petty bourgeoisie after the war with a thoroughness unexampled in any workers' revolution, despite its shrieks about the defence of private property against Bolshevism—the German bourgeoisie wanted to win even the Ruhr war over the bodies and at the expense of the working class. Instead of carrying through a financial program of taxation, which would have enabled the government to draw from the profits of the bourgeoisie the means of paying wages, and of giving the workers in the Ruhr area the possibility of conducting their struggle against high prices, the German government began to print billion after billion, in order to supply the industrialists, who had been prohibited by the French from exporting goods from the Ruhr valley, with the means for supporting their workers. Billion after billion, in order to give the industrialists means for the purchase of foreign securities enabling them to buy coal and foreign raw materials. The result of this has been that the amount of money in circulation has increased between April and July from 2,000 to 70,000 milliard marks, and the rate of exchange of the dollar has leaped from 20,000 M. to 7 millions.

The high prices attendant on this procedure resulted in a strike wave, and the government, though owing its existence to the slogan of protecting Germany from the Entente, applied in Dr. Lutterbeck's letter to the commander-in-chief of the French occupation troops, General Degoutte, with the request for permission to use German troops for the suppression of a non-existent insurrection. This letter was not only the expression of the bankruptcy of Cuno's policy, it was the result of the desire to capitulate when it appeared certain that in this situation a further struggle in the Ruhr was impossible. The Minister for Economic Affairs, Herr Becker, proposed an extremely ingenious plan: To provoke a great strike movement, to oppose it with Fascist aid, to raise a loud outcry all over Germany that the communists had destroyed the anti-French front by their insurrection, and that the government was therefore forced to abandon all resistance in the Ruhr and to come to an agreement with the invaders.

The Central of the Communist Party forced the Cuno government to drop these plans for blood letting being prepared against the workers of the Ruhr. From this moment the Cuno government never managed to bring forward a new idea. It could scarcely just capitulate, for the Fascist organizations which it had summoned to defend the Ruhr would cease to be its weapons in the face of such capitulation. The German White Guard clique regarded the Cuno government as their signboard. They did not try to seize power, for they feared that the Entente, headed by France, would dictate even harder terms to them than to Cuno's government, and that the working class would rebel against the open dictatorship of Ludendorff, Stinnes, and Helfferich. But the white organizations of Germany do not consist only of those elements which are acting consciously in the interests of the large landowners and of heavy industry, but also of masses of proletarianized officers deprived of their careers, of students, and of petty bourgeois, all filled with burning and passionate zeal to defend their country against victorious French imperialism. One of the leading authors of German nationalism, Möller van den Bruck, wrote recently that at the beginning of the Ruhr events dozens of young people came to him, and declared that they would go over to the communists if the bourgeoisie turned traitor. Herr Cuno and his government feared the rebellion of the nationalist organizations, and entangled themselves in their own contradictions. During this time the mark depreciated at a catastrophic rate, and want and misery increased among the working and petty bourgeois classes. The attempt to incite the nationalist petty bourgeois masses against the working class has not yet succeeded, thanks to the skilful policy of the Communist Party, which has contrived to combine the mobilization of the working masses against the danger of armed nationalist organizations with a policy of agitation among the proletarianized nationalist petty bourgeoisie. This policy is beginning to open the eyes of the petty bourgeois masses to the real situation of Germany and to the fact that they are not serving the emancipation of Germany from the yoke of foreign capitalists, but the combination of German with French capitalists at the expense of the German people. Herr Cuno went bankrupt. He was ousted from his position as Chancellor.

Stresemann.

Not merely Cuno was bankrupt, but his policy also. But what new policy can Herr Stresemann pursue in cooperation with the social democrats who have resolved to replace Herr Cuno? The reply to this question will be found in Herr Stresemann's past.

Herr Stresemann, the son of a small tradesman in Berlin, after first concluding his university studies, began his political career with the left wing of the German bourgeoisie. He belonged to the small party of Pastor Naumann, the so-called National Social Party. This party wanted to combine the support of German imperialism with a policy of far-reaching social reforms. Naumann was not only the best speaker in the German parliament, but a sufficiently sensible man to realize that it was impossible to carry on a policy of imperialism, even after three years of a world war without simultaneously creating a labor aristocracy anxious to support imperialism. Therefore he drew up programs, in his well known book "Democracy and Empire", in his periodical *Die Hilfe*, and in his annual *Das Vaterland*, by which imperialism, personified by the Kaiser, was to be united with the working class. He strove for a democratization of the forms of state and for social reforms, and carried on a widespread agitation on this basis, mainly among the intelligentsia. His policy suffered shipwreck; for the social democracy, which actually pursued Naumann's policy during the war, was not yet ripe for this policy. And it suffered shipwreck besides because the old Junker class did not believe in any democracy whatever, and defended with all its might the privileges of the capitalist Germany of the Junkers. Herr Stresemann soon left the ranks of the Naumann group, and abandoned all philandering with democracy and reforms; he entered the National Liberal Party, before the war the principal party of German imperialism. While still quite young he became the secretary of the Saxon Manufacturers' Association, and with the aid of this society he got into parliament as a candidate of the National Liberal Party.

There was a struggle going on in the National Liberal Party between heavy industry and the "working up" industry. Stresemann was the leading advocate of the interests of the latter. As the iron and coal kings had not yet completely outstripped medium in industrial undertakings, Stresemann's importance increased with every year, and after the death of Bassermann, the leader of the party, he became its parliamentary leader.

During the war Stresemann belonged to the most determined advocates of fighting to the end; he also championed the submarine war against England, and belonged in every respect to the German capitalist party most hostile to England.

The war ended with the dissolution of German imperialism by the German revolution, and with a regrouping of parties. The People's Party rose from the ashes of the old National Liberal Party. Stresemann appeared at its head. But during this time the centre of gravity had shifted in a surprising manner to the side of heavy industry, headed by Stinnes. A few great trusts began to rule over the whole economic and political life of the German bourgeoisie. Stinnes is capturing not only one economic position after another, but one newspaper after another. He dictates to the People's Party its anti-republican, anti-democratic line; he is surrounded by a staff of former officers of the army and navy, who are his chief political advisors, and he rejects the policy of fulfilling the Versailles treaty in the hope that, as is invariably the case in a coalition war, the victory won by the coalition—in this case France and England—will lead to conflicts between the former allies, as a result of which the burdens imposed on Germany by the Entente may be decreased.

Stresemann blows Stinnes' trumpet. But the piratical trusts of the heavy industry, which levy tribute from the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, as well as from light industry, force these to rise up in their own interests. Stresemann is again the exponent of this policy. He seeks to find support in the new regroupings of capitalists which have begun during the process of Germany's economic collapse, a process which has also led to the formation of a large number of new trusts of varying dimensions, competing with the old magnates. Haniel, Krupp, and Stinnes—this last a magnate who came into power during the war. Stresemann looks for support to the Otto Wolff concern, which is headed by the Russian Jew Litwin, who supplies him with the means of publishing newspapers independent of Stinnes. It goes without saying that Stresemann has sufficient sense to know that in the case of a conflict with Stinnes he has to look for support to the democratic masses, that he has to stand for a foreign policy against which the social democracy—a party shrinking from any shock—would not rebel. Stresemann begins his agitation with the argument that the state is of greater importance than economics, and that, if the salvation

of Germany require that she pay more to the Entente, there is no sense whatever in quarrelling about a milliard here and there. He is beginning to talk about the sacrifices which capital has got to make. At the same time he attempts an approach to England, where he is regarded as a counterpoise to the Chancellor Wirth, whom English imperialism held to be an advocate of a pro-French policy. But in proportion as it appears increasingly clear to everyone that England is not going to quarrel with France for the sake of Germany, Herr Stresemann begins to regard a compromise with France with growing favor. Stresemann's latest ideas are not to be found in his own articles, but in articles written by Georg Bernhard, the editor of the *Vossische Zeitung*, an organ preaching the so-called continental policy, the policy of a concert of European states against England. This newspaper also published an article by the Councillor of Commerce Litwin, in which a program was drawn up ceding a certain part of Germany's industrial shares to France. Stinnes' press, well informed as to Stresemann's newest ideas, has already commenced agitation against him as a capitulator; for Herr Stinnes is still hoping to come to an understanding with France enabling him to become lord of the Franco-German coal and steel trust. The Fascist press represents Stresemann as a second Erzberger, and threatens him with the fate of this Minister of Finance, who was murdered by the nationalists. Herr Stresemann, in the speech which he delivered on the Thursday in the Reichstag, declared himself in favor of the continued defence of the Ruhr valley, and of taxation of the bourgeoisie as the means of raising the money required for this defence. But at the same time he attempted, as he has already done several times before, to open the way for negotiations with France.

Stresemann thus represents, from the social standpoint, the German middle bourgeoisie. Politically, he represents the attempt to achieve financial reform by taxing the bourgeoisie, the attempt to make a fresh compromise with the social democracy. In respect of foreign policy, he represents the attempt to find a way out of the blind alley by negotiating with France.

The Great Coalition.

The social democrats have for a long time been preparing it, with Stresemann as its head. Rudolf Hilferding, at present the brain of the German social democracy, is closely connected with Stresemann. The social democrats hope that Stresemann will succeed in counteracting Stinnes' influence, and that, as a result of this, the coalition with the whole of the parties of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie will not bear so odious a character as if Stresemann were not Chancellor. The social democrats hope that certain financial reforms will now put a stop to the depreciation of the mark and to the rising prices, and will discharge the electricity from the social atmosphere; they hope that Stresemann will take up the struggle with the nationalist organizations and come to an understanding with France. They put precisely the same hopes in Stresemann as they put in the government of Prince Max of Baden in the autumn of 1918. They have utilized the moment of a new wave of revolution to throw overboard the Cuno government, which they were anxious to save only yesterday in order not to be obliged to enter a coalition. They thereby prove that they themselves do not believe in any saving measures to which Herr Stresemann may resort.

There is no doubt whatever that Stresemann is a more experienced politician than Cuno. But adroitness and eloquence will not suffice to extricate Germany from her present straits. Even should the wave of the labor movement which swept Cuno away now subside for the moment, as is quite possible, Herr Stresemann and the social democrats will nevertheless encounter the savage resistance of the heavy industry, which is determined not to pay, and which is endeavoring to unchain every nationalist passion against Stresemann as the politician of capitulation. Social democracy has already demonstrated that it cannot exercise pressure, and cannot fight. And Herr Stresemann has never been the man for a determined struggle. The coalition with Stresemann will not yield the result hoped for by the social democrats, but merely that which they dread above all. It will render the antagonisms in their own ranks more acute. It is obvious that from Moscow it is not possible to form a correct judgment of the extent and profundity of the movement. It is possible that in spite of everything Herr Stresemann signifies a stage at which the movement will come to a standstill for a time. Should this prove the case, then the German communists will utilize this time to improve their organization, to gain the majority of the working class, to create forms for its unity and the unification of its actions, and to permeate the petty bourgeois masses and bind them to the proletariat.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The Conflicting Tendencies in the CGTU.

By A. Lozovsky.

After Frossard had received unlimited leave of absence from the Communist Party of France, he organized the "Group of Resistance", which then became converted into the "Unitarian Communist Party". Frossard, as a man of experience, directed the whole of his attention to the "salvation" of the Unitarian General Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.U.).

Up to the time of the formation of Frossard's diminutive party the C.G.T.U. possessed a united majority and a minority drawing its main support from the Building Workers' Federation, the minority being organized in the "Committee for the Defence of Syndicalism". This opposition, comprising the whole of the anarchist elements dissatisfied with Moscow and communism, has been carrying on a continuous and bitter struggle against the Communist International, the R.I.L.U., the French Communist Party, and the majority of the C.G.T.U. Every possible fantastic legend relating to Soviet Russia has been brought to light by this opposition whose speciality has been the salvation of syndicalism from the supremacy of Moscow. In the ranks of this opposition there are individuals to be found who devoted themselves for months almost exclusively to chewing the cud over the Charter of Amiens, occasionally varying this with the famous § 2 of the Statutes of the R.I.L.U., which deprived the anarcho-syndicalists of sleep for a considerable time. And although the II. Congress of the R.I.L.U. altered this section in accordance with the wishes of the French syndicalists, that is, annulled the reciprocal representation of the C.I. and the R.I.L.U., the opposition continues to explain and harp on this unlucky section from every conceivable standpoint, with a perseverance worthy of a better cause.

When the "Unitarian Communist Party" arose from the ashes of the "Group of Resistance", and then underwent a further transformation into the "Socialist Communist Union", a bloc of the pure and simple syndicalists, the anarchists, and the followers of Frossard, was formed within the C.G.T.U., with the watchword: "Syndicalism in danger!" This Anarchist-Resistance Bloc conducted an inexorable struggle against the majority of the C.G.T.U., and strove to discredit Monmousseau, Sémard, and other sincere friends and adherents of the Russian Revolution, at any price.

About two months ago this bloc found fresh material for agitation in the trade union commissions created by the C.P. Scarcely had the Central Committee of the French C.P. issued an appeal on the subject of the trade union commissions which had been formed by it, when the anarcho-resisters raised a savage outcry against the Communist Party. "The commissions—this signifies the interference of the Party in the trade union movement, the loss of independence, the violation of the Charter of Amiens", etc. In a word, the trade union commissions of the Communist Party became the central point of the struggle between the different tendencies, and for two months the question of these commissions has been filling the columns of the anarchist, anarcho-syndicalist, and reformist press. The national bloc, the Ruhr occupation, the rule of the French bankocracy, the rapprochement of the radicals and the socialists and the formation of the left bloc, the aggravation of the economic struggle, the appalling impoverishment of the German proletariat and the growth of revolution in Central Europe—all this has been forced into the background. The central point, to which all attention is directed, is the "danger" threatening the French labor movement.

On this question we find many elements in agreement: the anarchists, the anarcho-syndicalists, the resisters from the Frossard party, Henri Fabre—who adheres to the left bloc—the socialists and the syndical reformists. The whole of the enemies of communism discovered a common speech, formed a united front, and threw themselves into the struggle against the trade union commissions. This unhealthy bloc, founded on impudent demagoguery, and the disturbance created by the commissions question, caused a section of the former majority of the C.G.T.U. to vacillate. This section formed a new group called the "Group of Revolutionary Syndicalists". This group is headed by the two secretaries of the C.G.T.U., Guillot and Cazals. It is for the R.I.L.U., but against the trade union commissions of the Party.

The majority of the C.G.T.U. declared, after the discussion on the question of the trade union commissions, that it held it to be impossible to interfere in the affairs of the Communist Party, which has the right to form any organizations which it requires.

This decision of the majority of the executive organ of the C.G.T.U. was the ground for severe conflicts at the recently held conference of the National Council of the C.G.T.U.

The central point round which the struggle of the different tendencies here raged, was that of the trade union commissions of the Communist Party. The position taken by Monmousseau and Sémard won by 58 votes to 37. The anarchists, the pure and simple syndicalists, and the Frossardists—resisters of every complexion—were in the minority. The struggle reached such a degree of acuteness that the National Council, in order to prevent the split threatened by the minority, resolved to convene an extraordinary conference for November, at which the whole policy of the C.G.T.U. is to be discussed.

Thus a fresh crisis has arisen in the revolutionary trade union movement of France. This is not to be specially wondered at, when we consider the inheritance bequeathed to the revolutionary workers of this country by the Anarcho-Syndicalism of the war and pre-war periods. Communism opposes every anarchist and reformist tradition. It sweeps away all old customs, it runs counter to all the demoralization which anarchism and reformism have systematically carried into the labor movement of France. For this reason the anarcho-reformist bloc was formed a considerable time ago, with the object of "freeing itself from Moscow" at any price, that is, of freeing itself from the social revolution and communism. This is the meaning of the whole outcry against the Moscow danger; this is the basis of the whole anarcho-syndicalist theory of independence.

These gentlemen are anxious to be independent of the revolution and of communism—that is their own affair. The anarchist and reformist fraternities may make themselves independent in this sense, but the working class cannot and will not be independent of the revolution and of communism.

There is no doubt whatever that at the next congress of the C.G.T.U. the anarchist-reformist bloc, despite Frossard's support, will meet with an even more annihilating defeat than it encountered at the Congress of St. Etienne. The time for anarcho-syndicalist phrases is over. This is the reason why the working class of France is putting on the shelf, if only gradually, all its anarcho-syndicalist talkers and dealers in confusion.

The Election of Delegates to the German Metal Workers' Conference

By Fritz Heckert (Berlin).

Up to the time of writing, the following results have been published of the elections of the Metal Workers' Union which took place on July 22 and 23. 239 delegates have been elected so far. Of these 116 belong to the opposition and 123 to the reformists. As the Union Conference will consist of a total of 400 delegates, this result is still only partial. But even this partial result already shows two things. Firstly, that the workers are beginning to take an ever growing interest in the conferences of their organizations. Never before has there been such extensive participation in the elections, either in the history of the metal workers' organization or in that of the other trade union organizations of Germany. Almost everywhere there has been a 50 % participation in the elections, and in many cases even more than 50 % of the members took part. At former elections to the Metal Workers' Conference and to other trade union congresses only very small numbers of members could be induced to approach the ballot box. It was no rarity for only 5 to 10 per cent of the members to take part in the elections. At the election to the Trade Union Congress in the year 1919, a considerable number of the delegates were elected by the votes of only 2 % and less of the members. The enormous participation of this year is due to the tremendous work of enlightenment which the communist fractions have performed of recent years. The German worker has thus been given a greater interest in the life of his organization, and even the Amsterdamers have found it necessary to occupy themselves somewhat energetically with the mobilization of the trade union members, in order to maintain their position. This rousing of the masses of members is regarded with extreme disfavor by the reformist trade union leaders. The workers now taking part in the active life of the meetings, and casting their votes against the reformist policy, are designated by the Amsterdamers as cranks, grumblers, fools, chatterboxes, etc. The reformists do not observe that they are lowering the whole trade union movement in the eyes of the public by such railing against their members. And there is no doubt that the reformists would be delighted to witness this mass participation of the trade union members in the meetings, etc., if these masses would give unanimous assent to reformist methods. But in this

respect the reformists have become unassuming. The fewer the members taking part in trade union activities, the better they are pleased. Indeed, a leading German trade union organ informed its readers, in the spring of this year, that the extremely poor attendance at the trade union meetings convened by the reformist officialdom was "no sign of mistrust of reformism on the part of the members, but a manifestation of confidence. The absent members show by their absence that they possess full confidence in the reformist leaders."

Secondly, the results of the elections to the Metal Workers' Union Conference show an enormous increase in the opposition votes, cast for the communist lists. Although the reformists have not everywhere met with such annihilating defeat as in Berlin (here the opposition list received 54,000 votes, while the reformists, though controlling the whole union apparatus, only managed to obtain 22,000) and in Westphalia, the advance made by the opposition is none the less so mighty that every reformist must give it his serious consideration.

Even though the number of opposition mandates will probably fall short of half the total of 400 mandates composing the Union Conference, it is even now almost certain that the majority of all the votes cast will fall to the opposition. In any case this is very largely true of the results already reported. How can we explain this? The ruling union officialdom has contrived to introduce a geometry of electorates and such methods of arranging the candidates, that the bosses of the union gain the majorities, even when the overwhelming majority of their members' votes is registered against them. The candidates are generally nominated at delegate meetings; these delegates have the right to set up two lists, a majority and a minority list. The minority list must unite at least 10 % of the votes of the delegates present at the meeting. On the face of it, this seems an extremely democratic arrangement, but as soon as we observe the constitution of the delegate meetings, we see that it is a most ingenious artifice for killing off the opposition from the very beginning. Let us take an example in the administrative headquarters at Dortmund, in Westphalia. The delegate meeting was elected in the spring of 1923 by a number of district meetings, as a matter of fact after a list election. (The Executive of the German Metal Workers' Union has rejected proportional representation on principle.) At this election it turned out that the communists united in their lists 40 % of the votes cast everywhere, but nowhere 50 %. The whole of the mandates to the delegate meeting therefore fell to the social democrats. Thus when the candidates were being nominated at the delegate meeting, no communist list could be submitted. The result was that the four delegates to be elected for Dortmund were nominated and elected by the United Social Democratic Party of Germany only, while a communist list, had one existed, would have received the overwhelming majority of votes, as was the case in the other Rhenish-Westphalian towns. Another example of electorate geometry. The Union constitution enacts that there shall be one delegate to every 4000 members. Several administrative headquarters can be amalgamated to form one electoral district. In order to ensure a favorable result for the reformists, the administrations of Altenburg with 3223 members, Jena with 3225, and Schmalkaden with 3533, were combined in Thuringia into one electoral district entitled to 3 delegates. The reformists speculated on the fact that Altenburg is a stronghold of reformism, and was likely to yield such a surplus of reformist votes that the victory over Jena and Schmalkaden would be assured, whereas, had each administration elected its own delegate, Jena and Schmalkaden would have fallen to the opposition. And a third example will show how still other means may be employed to manufacture favorable results for reformism. In Pforzheim 6 delegates have to be elected. The reformist local administration called the meeting at which the candidates were to be nominated, but not till the day before, and without stating the business of the meeting. (This is against the constitution, but the constitution is only valid for the reformists when it can be used against the communists.) The reformists set the whole of their official machinery to work before this meeting, settled the candidates, and took the members completely by surprise by suddenly placing the nomination of candidates to the Union Conference on the agenda. This manoeuvre enabled them to prevent an opposition list from being submitted.

But however cunning the artifices with which reformism strives to save its position, in the German Metal Workers' Union as everywhere else, the election results show that these methods will not work for ever, and that these artifices, this ignoring of all democracy in the organization, will end in such tremendous defeats as that of Berlin. The reformists feel that their position is threatened, and therefore they are doing their utmost to hide their defeat, or to cover it by savage agitation against the opposition. They declare quite openly that they would

not submit to an opposition majority, and are adopting means for stemming the advance of the opposition. They refuse to grasp the fact that the results of the elections are a condemnation of their policy, and continue their efforts to suppress the opinions of others—even at the risk of destroying the organization—by setting up a ruthless bureaucratic dictatorship. To those who have eyes to see, the results of the elections in the metal workers' organization show that no artifice and no dictatorship on the part of reformist trade union officialdom can hinder the advance and the victory of the revolutionary idea.

The Bloc of the Amsterdam and Cooperative International against Class Struggle

By Karl Bittel (Weissenfels).

At the Conference at the Hague an incidental event which took place on December 8, 1922, was the betrothal of the reformist Trade Union International (Amsterdam) and the Cooperative International (London). As cautious citizens of the petty bourgeois type, they are utilizing the period of betrothal to accord the marriage contract the most careful consideration, for which purpose a sub-committee has already held two sessions (in Brussels and Amsterdam). In order to avert the danger of bringing "illegitimate children" into the world, the actual marriage will probably not be postponed for long, and a bloc will be formed of the reformist trade union and cooperative organizations in all countries, the main object of which will be without doubt an organized struggle against the class conscious labor movement. Amsterdam is seeking reinforcements against Moscow!

At the Conference at the Hague the members of the International Federation of Trade Unions present were: Thomas, Jouhaux, Mertens, Leipart, Fimmen and Oudegeest; of the International Cooperative Federation: Goedhart, Poisson, Serwy, Suter, and May. The theses submitted were as follows:

1. Formation of a real "Entente" for all common aims.
2. Regular exchange of delegates at congresses and conferences.
3. Common propaganda, showing the economic dependence of the two movements on one another, and the necessity of joint action to secure social, economic, and political liberty.
4. Establishment of "Consumers Councils" in all countries, composed principally of representatives of the trade union and cooperative movements. These councils would have carefully to watch the sources of production and the methods of distribution, in the interests of the consumers.
5. Appointment of a mixed committee to meet regularly for the discussion of difficult problems, for instance, for consultation on questions of work and wages, or for the settlement of disagreements, and for the purpose of laying down lines of policy to be pursued in questions of peace and war, disarmament, free trade, and protective duties.
6. Joint action in order to secure for both movements direct representation on international bodies, for instance, the International Labor Office, the Economic Department of the League of Nations, etc.
7. Examination of the possibility of joint propagandist activity for the labor movement in the broadest sense of the word (trade union and cooperative movements, anti-war movement, etc.), with the aid of handbills and pamphlets, issued jointly by the trade union and cooperative movements.
8. Discussion of the question whether it is desirable and possible to establish an international bank conjointly with the trade union and cooperative movements.

For the class conscious workers the important question with regard to this bloc is: will it prove a new instrument of the united front of the proletariat? This question has to be answered flatly in the negative, for the reformist leaders have refused to include the millions of workers belonging to the Red International of Labor Unions (Moscow), in the alliance. This fact is not only the clearest proof that the reformists intend the formation of a fighting union against the revolutionary workers of the world, but it is an open provocation of the communist cooperative members organizationally united with the reformist cooperatives in the "International Cooperative Federation". It is a direct provocation to an open protest, not only from Soviet Russia's cooperatives, which comprise the greatest number of members organized in cooperatives in the whole world, but also from the communist cooperative members in Germany, France,

England, Czecho-Slovakia, the northern countries, etc., who are cooperatively organized in the International Cooperative Federation, are trade union members of the RILU, and politically organized in the Communist International.

Thus the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern was right when it demanded, at its session held on June 23 in Moscow, in its theses on the joint work to be undertaken by cooperatives and trade unions, that this bloc should represent the fighting united front of all cooperative and trade union members, and that it is an absolute necessity that all revolutionary trade union organizations belonging to the RILU be summoned to take part in this work. The like demand was made by the III. Session of the Central Council of the RILU. The concrete demand was as follows: The immediate summoning of a world conference of the proletarian cooperatives and trade unions, for the purpose of working out a concrete program of action with the following aims: Against the ideology and organization of Fascism; against reduction of real wages and prolongation of working hours, against increased war armaments and provocations of the capitalist states; against the taxation of the working masses and their cooperatives, against all exceptional laws and exceptional ordinances against revolutionary workers' parties. For the proletarian control of production and of markets; for the annulment of the Versailles peace treaty; for the release of the imprisoned revolutionists; for the arming of the proletariat; and for the workers' and peasants' government.

The cooperatives must attach special importance to the establishment of contact between the industrial proletariat, and the working population in the country.

The cooperatives must take active part in all action undertaken by the revolutionary proletariat.

In order that, within national limits, the work of trade unions and cooperatives may at once become closely associated, the following demands were formulated:

Joint agitation for increased membership of trade unions and cooperatives.

Joint appeals against Fascism, war danger, capitalist offensive, taxation of workers.

Fundamental propaganda for the cooperatives in the trade union papers, and, vice versa, for the trade unions in the cooperative papers.

Joint preparation of parliamentary action in state and municipality.

Cooperative aid in economic and political strikes.

Trade union aid against attacks on the workers' cooperatives.

It is necessary that cooperative members and trade unionists both devote close attention to these questions of joint work in the cooperatives and trade unions. It is of particular importance for the consumers' cooperative societies that the mass of the members be made fully conscious that the resolutions adopted by the International Cooperative Federation have put an end to the nonsense of "political neutrality", which has been finally superseded by the fighting alliance with the trade unions. The practical consequences must now be drawn with all speed in the different cooperatives, that is, the communists in the consumers' cooperative societies must move resolutions in support of the slogans stated above.

The Congress of the Roumanian Trade Unions

By N. Vitosa (Bucharest).

At the end of August of this year a General Congress of the trade unions of Roumania will be held. It will be the second General Congress since the general strike of October, 1920, which was followed by the partial destruction and complete paralysis of the trade union movement.

The first Congress took place on July 3, 1922, when the majority of the leaders of the workers were imprisoned or being brought before courts martial on the charge of "high treason". At that time the social democrats, especially those of Bukovina, believed the moment to have come when they could take the trade union movement in their train. The trade unions were declared "autonomous", and their newspaper fell into the hands of the social democrats, who concealed their identity beneath the designation of "centrists". In consequence of the bad economic position of the working class on the one hand, and of the work accomplished by the communists in the trade unions on the other, the trade union organization has kept its head well above water. But the leaders, the General Commission, completely failed to

do their part. Apart from the fact that the General Commission did not lead the movement, and that it would not publish any organ for the lingual minorities, even the *Viata Sindicala* (in the Roumanian language) has not appeared for several months.

The social democrats are preparing energetically for the coming Congress. Communism must be nipped in the bud! This slogan of the new Hamburg Socialist International is at the same time the slogan of Roumanian social democracy.

The offensive has been led by the social democrats of Bukovina. At the Bukovina Conference in April of this year the social democrats wanted to rush through a resolution for immediate affiliation to the Amsterdam International. Immediate affiliation was not agreed to, its advocates being defeated. But they succeeded in whipping through a resolution to the effect that the question of "affiliation to the Trade Union International" be placed on the agenda of the next General Congress.

The social democrats are prepared to "make any sacrifice" in order to bring about affiliation to the Amsterdam International. In view of the radical tendency prevailing among the majority of the workers of Roumania, this resolution has aroused much ill-feeling among our comrades. They are fully determined, in spite of this, neither to split the organization nor to permit it to be split by their adversaries. We reply to the propaganda of the social democrats with the slogan: Against Amsterdam; against the split; for the unity of the trade unions; and for the united front. The social democrats maintain, however, that the slogans "Against the split" and "For unity in the trade unions" are social democratic slogans; it is not possible that the communists can be taking these slogans seriously, for the theses of the C.I. contain precisely the contrary. And the conclusion reached by the social democrats is: "No communist in the future General Commission" and "The whole trade union movement for Amsterdam".

This we may read in the *Lumea Noua* (organ of the Social Democratic Party) of July 1, 1922. The same number publishes an interview with M. Danian, who made the following declaration:

"The affiliation of the trade union Central with Amsterdam is settled by the existing state of affairs, for the craft unions in the great majority of cases stand on the platform of the Amsterdam International. We may add that this affiliation must take place for the following reasons: 1. We are completely impotent against the capitalist offensive without the aid of the organizations of the international proletariat. 2. The lines laid down for the guidance of the trade union movement must be made plain once and for all. The present ambiguous conditions can only be damaging."

The meaning of these words will be clear to every worker: If there is a majority against the affiliation with Amsterdam, then the social democrats split off and realize for themselves their desire to join Amsterdam. If the socialists remain in the minority, even then "self-government!", no communist in the future General Commission! In reality the socialists are striving for the subordination of the trade unions to the Socialist Party, as is the case in Bukovina. If this does not succeed, then they will attempt to make use of a schism to incite a new hunt of the bourgeoisie and its police against the radical workers.

In view of the situation described by Comrade Vitosa, the Executive Bureau of the R.I.L.U. has directed the following communication to all the adherents of the R.I.L.U. in Roumania:

In consequence of the oppressive measures undertaken by the police, and in consequence of the terror reigning among you, it has not been possible for the R.I.L.U. to maintain constant communication with all the revolutionary workers of Roumania. The Roumanian labor movement is, however, organizationally connected with the world labor movement; it cannot and must not remain isolated. As in other countries where police rule is supreme, the reformists of every shade designate themselves as the real and only representatives of the working class. With the aid of the police they succeed in occupying the trade union buildings, in taking possession of the union treasuries, and in putting themselves forward—even if against the will of the working class—as union representatives. The Roumanian Trade Union Congress is to take place at the end of August. The R.I.L.U. is firmly convinced that its adherents will be in the majority at this conference, if the terror of the police and the insolence of the Boyars do not have to be reckoned with. The burden resting upon the working class

of Roumania is, however, so great, and the revolutionary elements are persecuted with such arbitrariness, that the reformists are very likely to gain the majority. They will doubtless make good use of their majority, and consummate the affiliation to the Amsterdam International. They are only too well aware that this affiliation binds them to nothing.

What are the followers of the R.I.L.U. to do under such circumstances? Leave the Congress? Split the trade unions? Not on any account. They must continue to take part in the conference, and they must remain in the trade unions, whatever the decision come to by the Congress. The R.I.L.U. is fighting for the unity of the trade union movement. For us the question of unity is no mere phrase. The R.I.L.U. has proved this by a whole series of deeds. Do not allow yourselves to be intimidated by the formal majority of the reformists. Be active among the masses, be persevering in spreading our ideas, gather together the separate groups of the Roumanian revolutionary proletariat into a single whole! In doing this you will render the R.I.L.U. a greater service than the reformists can render Amsterdam by their formal affiliation to that International.

Moscow, July 25, 1923.

The Executive Committee of the R.I.L.U.

Gompers Faces Triple Revolt

Problems of the Coming A. F. of L. Convention

By Wm. Z. Foster.

So completely reactionary is the Gompers bureaucracy that every movement for progress in the A. F. of L., no matter how mild its character, assumes the nature of an open revolt against the administration. Gompers proposes absolutely nothing constructive himself, nor will he allow anyone else to do so if he can prevent it by hook or crook. Backed by the united reactionaries he has choked to death every important progressive movement in the trade unions for many years. One such defeated movement was that of the Socialists. Before the war it looked as though it might break the death clutch of Gompers. But nothing came of it. Gompers scattered the Socialist forces to the four winds domesticating those that he did not destroy outright. Another wave of progress that dashed futilely against the rocks of reaction was the Plumb Plan movement of 1918-20 for government ownership of the railroads. Although this movement gave Gompers the worst beating of his career, at the Montreal convention, nevertheless he eventually crushed it back and now it is only a memory. Consequent upon this desperate resistance of Gompers and his clique to every form of progress, the A. F. of L. has for a generation remained almost completely unresponsive to the insistent and persistent urge for Labor development set up by our rapidly evolving capitalism. Its social outlook, its tactics, and its structure are practically the same now as they were thirty years ago. Stifled, cramped, and repressed by its own leaders, the A. F. of L. is a weak and insipid organization dangerously unfitted to cope with its militantly capitalistic environment.

Although Gompers has decisively beaten all forms of progress in the A. F. of L. in the past, he is now confronted with a greater progressive revolt than ever. This is much more profound and far-reaching than either the Socialist or Plumb Plan movements. It is of triple character, developing in three broad streams: viz. the great movements for (1) amalgamation, (2) the labor party, (3) recognition of Soviet Russia. This triple revolt attacks frontally three fundamental policies of Gompers. Victory for it in any one of its aspects might well shatter the Gompers machine and break down the Chinese wall that has been set up against the development of the A. F. of L. Hence, to dissolve and destroy this deep-seated movement, so dangerous to his rule, will be the supreme problem of Gompers at the Portland Convention of the A. F. of L., in October.

The Amalgamation Movement

One branch of this three-phased revolt is the movement to amalgamate the craft unions into industrial organizations. Gompers has long been a bitter opponent of industrial unionism. He has fought it consistently since the days of the American Railway Union, whether it manifested itself within or without the trade unions. Already at the Cincinnati Convention of last year the present movement for amalgamation developing under pressure of the terrific and disastrous "open shop" drive, was beginning to make itself felt. Gompers attempted to head it off by denouncing it as the work of Russian agents, and by digging

from its peaceful grave the A. F. of L. declaration of 1901 on industrial unionism, which was written before the era of the modern trusts. But despite all this, the movement ran on acquiring constantly more weight and volume. In the past 18 months, a great number of state federations, international unions, city central councils, local unions have endorsed the plan of combining the craft unions into big industrial bodies. So widespread has the movement become among the broad rank and file hitherto deemed practically immune to industrial union propaganda, that undoubtedly if the question of amalgamation were put to a referendum vote it would carry by an overwhelming vote. Gompers, on pain of complete defeat, will leave no stone unturned to defeat this vital and fundamental movement.

The Labor Party Movement

Another branch of the triple revolt confronting Gompers is the swiftly spreading movement for the establishment of a labor party. This touches Gompers at his very heart. With almost fanatical zeal he has fought against the workers going into politics on their own score, and, unfortunately, with too much success. Nevertheless, for the last two years the demand for independent working class political action has been mounting higher and higher in an irresistible flood. The capitalists' ruthless use of the Government in crushing strikes and sweeping aside all legislation beneficial to Labor is arousing the workers as never before to the necessity for a political party of their own. A broad and deep movement is under way for the formation of a labor party. So many unions have declared for the project that one no longer keeps count of them; State and city labor parties are springing up all over the country; the Workers Party and the Trade Union Educational League are carrying on a militant and successful labor party campaign among the organized masses; the old Farmer-Labor Party and the Socialist Party have contributed their mite to the general stream, and even the Johnston Conference for Progressive Political Action, despite its vague aims and timid leadership, has done much to popularize the need for independent working class political action. But the most striking manifestations of the movement were the election of Johnson in Minnesota and the formation of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party at the historic Chicago convention of July 3-4-5. Unquestionably the overwhelming mass of the labor movement are for the formation of a labor party. At the coming A. F. of L. convention it will be the task and necessity of Gompers to thwart this will of the great rank and file for a party of their own and to keep them shackled securely to the political chariots of their industrial masters.

The Recognize Russia Movement

The third branch of the triple revolt now taking shape in the A. F. of L. is the movement for the recognition of Soviet Russia. From the outbreak of the Bolshevik revolution, Gompers has distinguished himself by the most violent hatred and opposition to Russia. He sees in the Soviet Government the personification of the "red" hobgoblin that he has exorcised for so many years and he froths at the mouth when it is even mentioned. Not even the blackest Russian aristocrats outdo him in propagating vicious misrepresentations about the first Workers' Republic. But in spite of him the movement for the recognition of Soviet Russia constantly grows in the ranks of Labor. Already at the A. F. of L. convention last year many prominent labor leaders had declared for it and Gompers was desperately pushed to defeat a resolution calling upon the United States to recognize the Soviets. And since then the movement has made rapid strides. The flood of news from Russia to the effect that the Government has been stabilized, the famine overcome, and the industrial crisis relieved, is having its effect. Consequently many additional labor leaders and organizations have expressed themselves in favor of recognition. Besides this there is the profound effect of the open campaign for recognition being carried on by La Follette, Borah, Johnson, Brockhart, Wheeler, Shipstead, and other liberal politicians whom Labor follows. Gompers at the coming convention will have a far greater movement in favor of Russia to fight than ever before.

What Gompers Will Do

To suppose that Gompers, at the Portland Convention, will condone or support any one or all three of these above-mentioned movements would be ridiculous. On the contrary, it is perfectly safe to assume that he will carry on a life and death struggle against them, even as he has against every other progressive movement for decades past. His motto is the most determined resistance to every forward step of Labor. He will smash or demoralize them if it is humanly possible for him to do so. And his principal means to this end undoubtedly will be to smear

them all over with red. Once again he will conjure up the red peril, which has so many times served his purpose, and thus try to scare the timid and colorless reactionaries into line behind him.

Of the three progressive movements he will have to face, Gompers need fear the amalgamation movement least. This is because it is in a sense the most fundamental of all three. It threatens more directly than the others the petty personal interests of the higher officials that make up the A. F. of L. convention. Hence Gompers, in his fight to hold back amalgamation, can depend upon the loyal support of these officials. Although many of them hail from unions that have endorsed industrial unionism—such as the miners, railway clerks, railway maintenance men, printers, etc.—they will conveniently let the issue slip by without a fight if they can, or, if need be, they will openly violate their mandates, as they did at Cincinnati to defeat it. It will take a couple of more years, when the amalgamation movement has had opportunity to register itself in the international conventions, before it will become really dangerous to the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

With the labor party movement, however, the situation is vastly more threatening for Gompers. Undoubtedly there will be a very great sentiment at the convention for the formation of a labor party. A powerful leader might very easily organize this into a movement that would crushingly defeat Gompers. But Gompers, nevertheless, will meet the labor party movement with a frontal attack (in addition to his "red" campaign) if it ventures to raise its head. He will blaze right into it with both barrels and take his chances with it in an open struggle. He knows well the intellectually weak-kneed Johnston who stands at the head of the movement for independent working class political action. He realizes that Johnston does not possess the requisite boldness, courage, and generalship to make a real fight for the labor party. He will calculate definitely upon Johnston's weakness if a battle develops over this issue.

Especially careful will Gompers have to be regarding the movement for the recognition of Soviet Russia; for, of the three movements mentioned in this article, that is the one most likely to be victorious at the Portland convention. If such turned out to be the case it would be a death blow to his pride and prestige. He is irretrievably committed against Russia, and he will fight to the last in opposition to its recognition. When this question comes before the convention we may look for him to indulge in his usual red baiting and democratic-patriotic slush, in a desperate effort to blind the delegates with their own prejudices. Already he is preparing to meet this issue. That is the meaning of Secretary of State Hughes' recent letter to him outlining the reasons why the United States' Government does not recognize the Soviet Republic. That letter, marshalling as it does every argument calculated to appeal to trade unionists, was written primarily to influence the action of the next convention of the A. F. of L. Let us charitably, if innocently, assume that Gompers had no hand in its formulation. We may depend upon it, however, that if the situation demands it, it will serve the purpose for which it was written by being solemnly read before the delegates as the final and overwhelming reason why they, as patriotic citizens, should not fly in the face of the Government and give aid and comfort to the enemy by adopting a resolution in favor of recognizing Soviet Russia.

A Problematical Situation.

Can Gompers, at the Portland convention, beat back all three of these great movements, fed and stimulated by the left wing, to bring about amalgamation, a labor party, and recognition of Soviet Russia? Can he dam up still higher the stream of progress and make the labor movement still more incapable of effective action? Although the unexpected may happen, the chances are very much in favor of Gompers accomplishing his work of reaction. A. F. of L. conventions have become so accustomed to let him do their thinking and to accept unquestioningly as their policies his most trivial whims that it will take little short of an earthquake to rouse the Portland convention from the customary intellectual lethargy and to make it take a stand of its own. But there is one hopeful feature. The revolt against the deadly policies of Gompers is at least under way. Whether it prevails or not at this convention, success must finally come to it. The movements for amalgamation, a labor party, and Soviet recognition must go on taking to themselves greater and greater volume. United with other progressive movements into one broad stream of revolt, they will eventually break through the obstructions built up by Gompers and his clique and sweep before them in a mighty flood the broken fragments of the A. F. of L. bureaucratic machine. When this time comes, and come it will soon, if not at the Portland convention, there will begin a new day for the American labor movement.

POLITICS

Hillquit's Tammany Hall Beaten by the Real Tammany Hall

By John Pepper (New York).

"The Albany Conference was a complete failure" — is the summary made, not by a Communist, but by Morris Hillquit. And we can add to it: The entire policy of the Socialist Party has shown itself in Albany a complete failure.

What was the Conference in Albany? Simply a continuation of the National Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political Action, on a state scale. The Cleveland Conference declared for participation in the primaries of the old capitalist parties on a national scale, but permitted the organization of labor parties on a state basis. The Albany Conference was a political convention of the labor movement of New York State. New York State has ten million population, and one and a quarter million organized workers. It ranks first in population and is the richest industrial state of the Union. The Socialist Party has its center of gravity in New York. New York is the only place where the Socialist Party has any influences in the trade unions. The tactic of the Socialist Party within the "Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political Action" ought to have succeeded in New York State, if anywhere. And for that reason, the debacle of the Socialist Party in Albany is not merely an ordinary defeat, but a decisive collapse of its entire policy.

What has been the entire policy of the Socialist Party during the last year? An alliance with the conservative and reactionary labor leaders against the rank and file, and against the revolutionary development of the labor movement. The Socialist Party has not once dared to attack Gompers in the last year. It fought against amalgamation, betrayed the Labor Party idea in Cleveland, slandered Soviet Russia, and barred the Communists from every labor conference whenever possible. All this has been done by the Socialist Party in order to win grace and favor with the reactionary labor leaders.

The Socialist Party has built its entire tactic upon the labor leaders. It has prostituted itself for Gompers, Johnston, Stone and Keating. It went to Albany as a prostitute. It put on its finest opportunist clothes, applied a thick coating of Gompers-rouge on its face, and perfumed itself with the strongest anti-Bolshevik patchouli. But all in vain. The reactionary leaders of the railroad brotherhoods were so much afraid of the labor party idea that they could not tolerate in their midst even the Socialist Party. The Socialist Party is weeping now, and is wailing that although it sought a compromise at any price, and although it offered everything it had, even its honor, it was thrown out of the Albany Conference nevertheless. We can't help it, but we have no compassion for the Socialist Party. Its tears and its wailing are but the tears and the wailing of a prostitute who has been thrown out without pay, by roughnecks, after a wild night. The Socialist Party demanded payment for her love, but the railroad leaders declared that it was merely love, and kicked her out.

The petty Tammany Hall of Hillquit dominates the Socialist Party completely, just as the real Tammany Hall dominates New York's Democratic Party. Hillquit went to Albany with the whole apparatus of his petty Tammany Hall; but to his great surprise he found there the real Tammany Hall of New York, in the persons of ex-mayor John Fitzgibbons and William E. Fitzsimmons, the Democratic attorney of several trade unions. Hillquit was surprised, but at first wanted to fraternize even with the Tammany Hall politicians; and the love between the real Tammany Hall and Hillquit's petty Tammany Hall was for a whole day really strong and stirring. But we all know that love can easily turn into hatred. Hillquit recounts in the New York Call: "The break came late Sunday night, after a day of seemingly cordial exchange of sentiment and harmonious cooperation. It was as definite as it was unexpected and inconsistent." And the New York Call reporter writes that the attacks of the real Tammany Hall against Hillquit "came dangerously near personal insults on the part of several Democratic Party leaders who secured the floor". Hillquit attempted all the cunning of an average lawyer; but Fitzsimmons, the Democratic attorney, understands the old game better than Hillquit. It was a spectacle for the Gods, as these two lawyers fought against each other. — Hillquit declared that Tammany Hall is "The most malodorous and corrupt political organization in America". Fitzsimmons declared that Hillquit's petty Tammany Hall, the Socialist Party, "has no good faith and is not honest". Hillquit declared that Fitzsimmons hasn't the right to speak in the name of the workers and that he represents the interests of the

Democratic Party. Fitzsimmons declared that Hillquit hasn't the right to speak in the name of the workers, and that he represents merely the interests of the Socialist Party. We believe that both lawyers were entirely right. *Of course, in the end, the real Tammany Hall remained victorious, and Hillquit's petty Tammany Hall was simply kicked out.* The scores of Socialist Party delegates voyaged proudly to Albany on a special ship. We are curious to know what special vehicle they used in their quick exit from the Albany Conference.

From Cleveland to Albany.

What are the causes of the debacle of the entire Socialist Party tactic?

We can say that, for us, this debacle of the Socialist Party tactic did not come unexpectedly as for the Socialist Party leaders. We predicted beforehand that it would happen that way. We wish to analyze now the chief reasons for the defeat of the Socialist Party.

First, the Socialist Party has allied itself with the reactionary labor leaders and has lost all faith in the rank and file. It hoped that the American development would ape the British development. It hoped that the conservative labor leaders of America would create a Labor Party in America, just as the conservative leaders of the British labor movement created the British Labor Party. The Socialist Party has once more shown that it does not understand the American labor movement, that it is an outsider. Gompers and Johnston are definitely allied with the capitalists or middle class politicians, and will never be leaders of the Labor Party movement. At Cleveland, the Socialist Party went so far in the service of the reactionary labor leaders, as to vote for participation in the primaries of the old capitalist parties, on condition that it would be allowed to vote for its own candidates. It wished to repeat the same game in Albany. In Cleveland it was tolerated, and in Albany it was thrown out. Why? What is the difference between the situations? The difference is that in Cleveland the Socialist Party was still necessary for Johnston, Stone, and Keating. The Socialist Party supplied them with ideology against the immediate creation of a Labor Party, and in throwing out the Communists. The Socialist Party was a tool in the hands of the reactionary labor leaders for deceiving the militant rank and file. But since Cleveland, there has taken place the July 3rd Convention in Chicago, and the Federated Farmer-Labor Party has been formed. Which means that the Socialist Party could not prevent the militant left wing of the worker and farmer movement from abandoning the Cleveland fake for progressive political action. As a result, the Socialist Party lost its value in the estimation of the reactionary labor leaders. In Albany it was no longer necessary. It was simply thrown out. It is truly a rare irony of fate that the reactionary leadership now brings up literally the same accusations against the Socialist Party, which the Socialist Party made against the Communists: that the Socialist Party wanted to capture the Convention, that the Socialist Party packed the Convention with delegates, and that they do not want to go with the Socialist Party because if they do, people will say they are Bolsheviks.

The Socialist Party will now parade as the hero of the Labor Party idea. It will say that it was thrown out because it fought for independent political action of the working class. It will tear open its shirt and show the wounds on its chest. But that's a fake. The Socialist Party has not defended for one minute the idea of the Labor Party—neither in Cleveland nor in Albany. If it has wounds, they are not on its chest, but on its buttock, from the kick of the reactionary labor leaders.

Capitalist Deed and Socialist Phrase.

The Socialist Party has been preaching for months that the situation is not ripe for a Labor Party—that the workers do not understand as yet the necessity for a Labor Party. Nor did they in Albany bring in a resolution for the creation of a Labor Party; and still less did they fight for the resolution of Campbell, the delegate of the Buffalo Trades and Labor Council, which was for the creation of a Labor Party. *Their only proposal was to postpone all action until 1924.* The reactionary railroad union leaders and Tammany Hall politicians had easy sailing. They had something positive and immediate to offer to the workers. They offered immediate participation in the elections of next fall, through the means of the old capitalist parties. Of course, it is a false and treacherous policy against the interests of the working class. But it is an immediate action. And dissatisfied workers demand immediate action. *The only tactic which would have made it possible to fight against the Tammany Hall politicians and the railroad union leaders would have been to urge the immediate creation of a Labor Party.* As against immediate action in alliance with capitalists, immediate independent action for the working class. The only possible tactic would have been action. But against action in the interest of the capitalists, the

Socialist Party had only the tactic of hesitation and passiveness. Hillquit declared at the Convention: *"Any definite policy would force a rupture"*. The Democratic Tammany Hall had easy sailing. Fitzsimmons declared against the postponement tactic of the Socialist Party: *"It's all right to have lovely dreams about what we can do away in the future in 1924, but we have got to do something now"*. The reporter of the New York Call writes: *"Many railwaymen declared they wanted something now, they couldn't wait a year. Next year, several said, was so far off that to plan for it was a dream"*. *The Socialist Party could not win over the rank and file representation of the railwaymen, because it had nothing to offer them.* Against the definite capitalist policy of the railway leaders it did not have just as definite a labor policy, but only Hillquit's phrase: *"No definite policy"*. Against the capitalist *"Here and now"* it did not have the revolutionary *"Here and now"*, but only a *"lovely dream"* for the future.

The greatest lesson of Albany is that, against the real Tammany Hall, the petty Tammany Hall is powerless and useless. *Albany has definitely shown that the Labor Party of the American working class can be created only through the struggle against the capitalist parties and through the struggle against the reactionary labor leaders.* It has shown that everyone who does not fight against Gompers and Johnston, simply delivers the working class to its worst Republican and Democratic enemies.

A Manifesto of Georgian Mensheviks

Moscow, August 4, 1923.

The all-municipal Tiflis conference of former Mensheviks, attended by delegates representing 1800 Tiflis workers, for the most part old party members, has issued the following manifesto:

To the International Proletariat!

Comrades! Workers!

The all-municipal Tiflis conference of former Mensheviks has resolved to dissolve the Menshevik organization and to place itself beneath the banner of the Third (Communist) International. The central committee of the Menshevik Party of Georgia throws in our face the accusation that we are leaving the Menshevik Party under the pressure of the Tscheka and out of fear of reprisals. Comrades! Before the proletariat of the whole world we reject this accusation with all possible contempt. It is not merely individual persons who are leaving the Menshevik Party of Georgia at the present time, but masses of proletarians and peasants, and a large number of workers who for many years carried on illegal work under the rule of Czarism. No one dare venture to indict these masses who have sacrificed so much in the revolutionary struggle, and who remained at their posts under threat of death and imprisonment in the days of the Czar, of changing their political views, out of cowardice. The workers and peasants do not learn in academies, but in the school of practical struggle, and it is precisely in this school that we have come to the conclusion that we must remain no longer in the Menshevik Party. This party, which deservedly won laurels at the time of the first Russian revolution, when we were fighting against Czarist despotism, already began to lower its flag before the imperialist bourgeoisie during the great war, and with it the whole Second International. After the October revolution, the Menshevik Party of Georgia definitely entered on the path of counter-revolution, under the pretext of fighting for the independence of Georgia. Comparing the attitude of the Menshevik government of Georgia with that of the Soviet government replacing it, we became convinced that the former was driving the proletariat under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, whilst the latter led the way to the broad paths of socialism. For this reason alone we resolved to leave the ranks of the Menshevik Party. Our former Menshevik leaders, exiles abroad, spread there a report that the Moscow Bolsheviks were endeavoring to hold Georgia for imperialist purposes, have forcibly occupied it with their troops, and destroyed its independence. The parties of the Second International are zealously engaged in spreading these legends further, in order thus to frighten the West European working people away from communism.

Comrades, workers!

Know that truth and falsehood are skillfully intermingled in this legend. In the first place, our former leaders conceal from you the fact that they differed from the Bolsheviks up to the October revolution in being great Russian patriots; that they stood for a united and undivided Greater Russia; they reproached Lenin for his "defeatism", his cooperation in the disintegration of great Russia, since he demanded the right of self-determination for the oppressed peoples, even to the point of separation. Our

leaders did not stand for the independence of Georgia until after the October revolution, and then only for the purpose of entrenching themselves in Georgia against the Soviet power, and without hiding the fact that they intended Georgia to be re-incorporated in Russia after the overthrow of the Soviet power. In the second place, they conceal from you that in point of fact Georgia only possessed the shadow of independence during the rule of the Mensheviks; the Georgian Menshevik government was at first obliged to act in accordance with the instructions of the German generals who extended their patronage to the Georgian landowners, later on it had to follow the directions of the English generals, who only recognized Georgia's independence in so far as the Menshevik government supported the Entente against the Soviet power, and the Denikin and Wrangel armies could be recruited by the enlistment of troops in Georgian territory.

In the third place, our former leaders lie when they maintain that the Bolsheviks occupied Georgia in pursuance of imperialist aims. We are in a position to know that precisely the Moscow Bolsheviks, Lenin and Trotzky, were against the advance of the Red Army into Georgia. The initiative in the advance of the Red Army into Georgia proceeded from the Georgian Bolsheviks, who laid an accomplished fact before their Moscow comrades. They did this, as we now see clearly, purely from love of their native land. The Georgian Bolsheviks could not tolerate that Georgia, with its honorable revolutionary past, should become a tool of counter-revolution, a tool of imperialist machinations against the Soviet power, and the scene of slaughter among the different nationalities.

In the fourth place, and lastly, they represent the Soviet system in an entirely false light. When the Georgian Menshevik government separated Georgia from Soviet Russia, it deprived the land of bread. It is only now that the Georgian workers and peasants have ceased to starve. The Georgian Menshevik government, whose members were transformed so suddenly from mighty Russian patriots to mighty Georgian patriots and chauvinists, awakened nationalist passions in Georgia, and brought about the constant strife between Georgia, Armenia, Abkhazia, and Adjara. The Soviet government settled these conflicts, and restored peace among the peoples of Trans-Caucasia. The Georgian Menshevik government, forming a united front with the feudal bourgeois nationalists against the so-called Russian barbarians, did not even venture to stand resolutely for the carrying out of their own modest agrarian program. The Soviet power on the other hand, only required one year after the Red Army had marched into Georgia, to confiscate the land belonging to the landlords, and divide it among the peasantry. During the rule of the Mensheviks the eight hour day existed on paper only. Under the Soviet government the workers really work for 8 hours only, and where the working conditions are particularly hard, for six hours. Our former leaders tried to frighten us by describing how the invasion of the country by the Russian Bolsheviks would be attended by the ravages of fire and sword, by devastation and destruction of Georgian culture. But in point of fact it was the Menshevik guard, rechristened a Red People's Guard at the behest of the English, which was rapidly dominated by the bourgeois element, and ruthlessly burned down villages in its struggle against the national minorities—deeds openly admitted by the hero of these atrocities in his book "A Heavy Cross". These acts of violence on the part of the People's Guard were carried out in direct opposition to the protests of the workers belonging to the guard itself. The conduct of the Red Army in Georgia has been generally admitted to have been perfectly exemplary, thus differing entirely from that of the Menshevik People's Guard. The Menshevik government destroyed the roads and bridges in retreating, and carried abroad the finest treasures and valuables of the country. The Moscow Soviet government has not only not taken anything from Georgia, but is giving from its scanty means the assistance required by the Georgian republic for its economic reconstruction. No one can deny that, during the two years of the supremacy of the Soviet power, much has been accomplished in this direction: the highroads have been repaired; the bridges restored; a new railway is being built, as well as 5 electric stations; the Czatski cast iron works have been set going again; the watering places have been restored to activity (for instance Borshom); a silk weaving mill is being built at Abastuman, the material being brought from Russia; people's houses, convalescent homes and children's homes are being erected; workers' universities established; Marxian literature printed and distributed in large quantities in the Georgian language—and all this is not accompanied by the Russianization held up to us as a spectre, but serves on the contrary for the promotion and development of Georgian culture. The only elements to suffer under the Soviet government have been the landlords, the priests, and the bourgeoisie. The workers and

peasants of Georgia are now able to breathe freely for the first time. It is therefore not to be wondered at that, after an insight into the Soviet economy, they leave the Menshevik ranks *en masse*, despite the fact that the Menshevik Party has struck deep root in Georgia, and despite its excellent revolutionary work in the past—unfortunately in the remote past.

Workers! Comrades!

In conclusion we permit ourselves to express a wish: May the experience gained by Georgia, which, small as she is, has gone through many struggles, be of help to you in settling the question as to which road you are to take for the emancipation of the working class: the Menshevik road of the Second International, the road of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, or the Bolshevik revolutionary road of the Third International. We have settled this question once and for all. The Menshevik government hauled down the red flag from the Tiflis palace against the protests of the majority of our party organizations, and substituted the national tricolor. The Soviet government has raised the red flag again. We greet the flag, and shall defend it against the open enemies and the pretended friends of the working class.

Long live the Communist Third International!

Members of the Presidium:

Dvat Farniev, Lukashevitz, Ruhadze, Varasovszvili, Czliadze, Bezaszvili, Aganeszov, Gnoevo, Sikarulidze, Varamodze.

ECONOMICS

The Depreciation of the Belgian Franc

By A. Habaru (Brussels).

During the first days of August the rate of exchange of the pound sterling rose in Brussels to 100 francs, that of the dollar to 22 francs. In the course of the past year the Belgian franc has sunk to half its value. It is now only worth one quarter of its value in 1914. Since the armistice it has continued to fall continually in comparison with the strong currencies. And whilst it was quoted in Paris at 105 at the beginning of 1921, it fell by August 1923 to 80.

The Ruhr occupation has accelerated the fall of the franc, as may be seen from the following comparative survey of the development of the rate of exchange of the dollar and pound sterling. The amounts paid in Brussels have been as follows:

	1 dollar	1 pound sterling
1914	5.18	25.22
December, 1919	10.67	40.60
December, 1920	16.36	57.00
December, 1921	12.97	54.35
December, 1922	15.105	70.35
January, 1923	16.60	77.25
February, 1923	18.58	87.15
August, 1923	22.00	100.00

Is this downward slide of the Belgian franc the result of temporary or speculative causes, as the government would like us to believe? We may see at once from the following data that this is not the case at all, and that the underlying cause of the depreciation of the Belgian franc must be sought solely in the disastrous financial situation of the state, in the aggravation of the reparations problem, in the growing deficit in the balance of payments.

At a cursory glance Belgium's economic position does not appear to be so particularly bad. Especially when it is taken into consideration that at the end of the war Belgian industry was completely destroyed. Its reconstruction made immediate progress, despite the severe crisis of the year 1921, which gave the country over 260,000 unemployed. At the end of 1922 the proportion of production as compared with the year 1913 was, in percentages, as follows:

Coal 95.1%, coke 97.9%, cast iron 77.5%, zinc 69.5%, window glass 81%, cotton 88%, wool 121%, and paper 83%.

This position is not bad; but when we examine the financial situation, we find entirely contrary facts.

It is not that the paper currency inflation is excessive. For three years the amount of notes of the National Bank in circulation has remained constant. It amounts to six times the pre-war circulation.

It is the state finances which are unsound. The regular budget of 2,945,494,760 francs for the year 1923 showed a balance of round about 5 millions. Thanks to better receipts from existing taxes, and to the raising of 200 millions of new taxes at

the expense of the workers, this budget shows an increase of regular expenditure. But, on the other hand, many of the sources of revenue are exceedingly questionable, and receipts from them are anything but certain; for instance, 120 millions in reimbursement of occupation costs, and 457 millions to the reparations account. The regular budget is thus in a precarious position, for its balance depends on payments from bankrupt Germany, and on the still more uncertain settlement of the reparations question.

In the extraordinary budget there is a deficit of 619 millions. The state administration alone shows a deficit of 147 million francs. And with regard to the expenditure supposed to be covered by corresponding revenues, estimated at 3069 millions, no less than 1639 millions of absolutely uncertain German payments come under this head.

A total of 5942 millions of revenue is opposed to 8337 millions for expenditure. Thus, even if we assume the uncertain German payments to be made, there is still a deficit of no less than 2394 million francs.

One fact dominates the present and the future alike: the Belgian state finances are closely bound up with the reparations question. The more difficult and problematical the settlement of the reparations question is made by the economic war which is rendering Germany's collapse inevitable, the more insoluble do the financial difficulties of the Belgian state appear.

The war damages are estimated at about 30 milliard francs. 15 milliard francs are still needed to make these good. This amount assumes a yearly payment of 600 million francs, and, when the 450 millions of permanent liabilities arising from the loans which have been taken up are added to this, then the future liabilities in connection with the restoration loans exceed the amount of a milliard francs annually.

In October the annual interest to be paid on the national debt of 37 milliard francs, was 633 millions.

Besides this the Belgian government lost 7 milliard francs when it took over all the mark amounts circulating in the country at the time of the armistice at their nominal value.

The balance of payments of the country must be accorded a few words. The export of industrial products, upon which Belgium's wellbeing has always depended, is now hindered by the international system of high protective duties and other disorganization of foreign values. The exports have been reduced by half as compared with the year 1913.

During the first four months of the year 1923 the excess of imports over exports was 1202 million francs. Should this proportion remain constant during the whole of the year 1923, the annual deficit would amount to the enormous sum of 3600 million francs. The remaining items in the balance of payments do not suffice to equalize this deficit, which is much greater than before the war. The export of Belgian capital increases steadily, while the import of foreign capital has remained stationary since 1921.

These are the actual facts of the present situation, which scarcely offers much hope of a rise in the rate of exchange of the franc. The disturbances in the equilibrium of the world economy, the ruin of Germany's economy and the Ruhr war, are slowly leading Belgium to the edge of the precipice of state bankruptcy.

To the Peasant Organizations of the Whole World

Brothers and Comrades! Peasants!

The All-Russian Agricultural and Home Work Exhibition was opened in Moscow on August 19. All the Soviet Republics are taking part in it, from the Far East, from the shores of the Pacific Ocean, to the western frontier of the White Russian Soviet Republic, from the Far South, from the Dagestan and Turkestan Republics, to the remotest North of Siberia. The Exhibition has also a foreign section, in which almost all foreign states are taking part. The Exhibition graphically represents the mighty productive powers of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the successes won by agriculture in the period of peaceful agricultural work under the Soviet power, and the great economic advance now beginning.

Besides this, the Exhibition will play an educative agromical rôle of great importance, for it shows the peasants the advantages of modern technique and the new methods of agriculture, as compared with the old systems. To this end, the Soviet government is granting a number of far reaching privileges, and the Exhibition will doubtless be visited by hundreds of thousands of peasants.

The imperialist world war, the long years of civil war, the armed intervention and the blockade, as well as the desperate campaign of slander conducted against the workers' and

peasants' Soviet power by its enemies, have caused our foreign brothers and comrades, the workers and peasants, to remain in complete ignorance of the events happening in our country, and have had the further effect that even today there is an entirely wrong impression prevailing about the economic position of Soviet Russia and the resultant position of the Russian workers and peasants. That this position is not as it has been described by the various slanderers and deadly enemies of the class represented, by this first proletarian state in the history of humanity, this first state in which the workers and peasants hold the means of power in their hands, is sufficiently demonstrated by the single fact that the greatest foreign capitalist firms are participating in the Exhibition, and that many representatives of capitalist circles, from almost every country in the world, have decided to visit this magnificent and unprecedented Exhibition; their participation shows plainly that a more correct estimate is now being made abroad of the conditions and prospects of Soviet Russia's economic reconstruction.

In order to put an end to the campaign of slander against Soviet Russia, to controvert finally the libellously false reports disseminated about its economic conditions, and to establish international economic relations between the Union of S.S.R.'s and the rest of the world, the Exhibition Management has made arrangements enabling the peasants of all countries to convince themselves on the spot, directly, personally and thoroughly, of the enormous productive powers and possibilities of development possessed by agriculture in the Union of S.S.R.'s. To this end the Exhibition Management has resolved not only to make it possible for foreign comrades and peasant brothers to visit the Exhibition between the dates of September 25 and October 15, but also to arrange for a number of excursions to the central agricultural institutions and the various districts of the Republic, by which the foreign peasants and their representatives will best be able to obtain a true idea of agriculture under the sway of the Union of S.S.R.'s. The Exhibition Management, moved by the desire that even the poorest peasants' organizations and representatives be able to visit the Exhibition, declares its readiness to undertake to pay all organizational expenses of the journey, as well as all costs of maintenance on the territory of the Union of S.S.R.'s during the above mentioned period.

The delegates sent by foreign peasants will be the guests of the Exhibition, and as such they have a claim upon the assistance of the authorities, as well as on the representatives of the Union of S.S.R.'s abroad. For this purpose they should apply to the commercial representatives of the Union of S.S.R.'s in their respective countries, or else directly to the Chief Management of the Agricultural and Home Work Exhibition, Foreign Section, Moscow.

Brothers and Comrades! Peasants!

Quite apart from the political or economic peasant organization to which you may belong, we emphasize that you will be our most welcome guests, and we have no doubt whatever that your sojourn in Soviet Russia will contribute to cement more strongly the ties of fraternal cordiality binding the broad toiling masses of your country and ours, and thus to establishing the world cooperation of the peoples of all countries—in the name of the welfare of the whole of humanity!

The Exhibition Management.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE

The Railwaymen's Strike in Hungary

By Georg (Vienna).

On the fourth anniversary of the establishment of the White Horthy dictatorship the engine drivers in Hungary went on strike. The strike wave rapidly extended over the whole country, and 24 hours after its proclamation almost all railway traffic had ceased. The government immediately took the most brutal steps against the strikers. Martial law was proclaimed for the whole country. The Minister for Home Affairs threatened the ruthless employment of arms. Technical emergency aid was requisitioned, armed and given legal permission to make use of the weapons. The stations were occupied by soldiery, the strike leaders arrested and held as hostages, all the most responsible of the strikers likewise imprisoned, their funds confiscated, every strike meeting brutally dispersed. The railway management threatened to discharge all the strikers without notice. The governmental authorities declared that the railwaymen, as civil servants, had no right to strike. The strikers were sentenced like criminals (as in the Ebert republic). Details of the brutalities committed have not yet leaked out abroad. We learn, however,

that a railwayman of the name of Laslo was shot under martial law, and that others were taken away in chains. How many more such bloody sentences have been passed is not yet known. In Buda Pest there were bloody collisions, but no details are known as yet.

Despite this bloody terror the Horthy government could not prevent traffic being stopped for 3 to 4 days. The only trains run were the emergency trains kept going by the engineers, and even these had to be stopped in part, as they were attacked at open stretches of line by the strikers. The reports received of acts of sabotage go further to prove the violence of the struggle. It is alleged that direct telephone connection between the railway offices was cut off.

But after 3 to 4 days the strike collapsed entirely. The strikers suffered complete defeat, and returned to work without imposing any conditions whatever. They did not even receive any security against punishment, let alone any grant of better wages.

The strike was led by a so-called yellow "non-political" organization. Under the pressure of the frightful rise in prices, the railwaymen demanded an increase in wages, and combined their demands in the slogan: "Fifty per cent of peace wages!"

In order to isolate the strikers, the government declared the movement to be "political". In order to be able to deal a blow to the petty-bourgeois Fascist wing which had just separated from the government party, the government press spread the rumour that the strike movement had been organized by these Fascists for putsch purposes.

The social democrats at once formed a united front together with the Horthy government, and declared in Parliament that they had nothing to do either with the strike or with the "yellow" organization. Bourgeois newspapers even published declarations made by social democratic leaders, in which the movement was condemned "in this strained situation". These social democratic declarations dealt the strike movement the final blow. Betrayed in a cowardly manner by their own "national" leaders, raged at by the social democrats, and crushed beneath the frightful terror exercised by the government, the movement, led by a yellow organization incompetent to fight and owing its origin to the government itself, collapsed.

The balance of this movement is, however, at the same time the most instructive balance of the four years of Horthy rule. This dissolved the free trade union organization of the railwaymen and created the "yellow" union, forcing the railwaymen to enter this. But the iron hand of starvation compelled the railwaymen of even a yellow union to rebel. They have lost all their collaboration illusions. The social democrats once more fulfilled their historical mission; they stabbed the fighting railwaymen in the back on the mean and contemptible pretext that they were "not social-democratically organized", although these same social democrats are very well aware that the Horthy government has not tolerated any legal organization of the railwaymen beyond this "yellow" union. Yes, the Horthy socialists even went so far as publicly to denounce the workers after the end of the strike, asserting that they "had gone on strike for secret aims and for others".

This attitude of the social democrats is no accident; in the same manner as in Italy, the "great coalition" is being prepared in Horthy Hungary. During the railwaymen's strike itself the Horthy government was carrying on secret negotiations with the social democrats, and arrived at an understanding with them. Today this understanding still refers "only" to certain taxation proposals which are being combated by the Fascist group with anti-capitalist demagogic phrases. Tomorrow these same social democrats will certainly enter the government "in the interests of foreign policy". The bloody defeat of the railwaymen's strike, brought about by the combined efforts of the Horthy government and the social democracy, is a further step towards the realization of this coalition, already tacitly agreed to by the Horthy socialists.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Second Congress of the C.P. of Spain

By Cr. González (Madrid).

The Spanish Communist Party is still weak, and the smallness of its membership is the more to be regretted in view of the political tasks by which it is faced. We are up against a socialist party which has won no small influence over the masses by 40 years of work, and which is at present engaged in winning over those working masses which have hitherto been

adherents of that old and historical republicanism now in a state of complete dissolution. We have further to fight for the extermination of the very strong influence of anarcho-syndicalist ideology in the labor movement. Any attempt to form an estimate of the work done by the CP of Spain must accord these facts the fullest consideration—must give due weight to the necessity incumbent on the Party of carrying on the struggle simultaneously against an alarmed and cruel bourgeoisie, against a socialist party whose political weakness has not yet reached such a point as to bring it into the discredit into which the other parties affiliated to the Hamburg International have fallen, and finally against a deeply rooted anarchist tradition—or the most reckless and incorrect conclusions will be reached. For our whole activity must adapt itself to the present situation and the given circumstances. It is therefore not difficult to grasp that the policy to be pursued in an environment so complicated, and so hostile to communism, must be neither unintelligent nor rigid.

Have we invariably shown sufficient intelligence and flexibility in our past struggles? We regret to have to admit that this has not been the case. In our Party there has been no lack of heroism, self-sacrifice, and revolutionary impatience. But it has been lacking in political grasp of events, and in the capacity to view given situations from the Marxian standpoint. And as errors have always to be paid for in politics, we have had to pay for our political instruction by the loss of positions.

The II. Congress of the Party, held in Madrid in the middle of July, constitutes a decisive landmark in our movement. Now we are beginning to see clearly at last. We seem to have passed through the period of infantile complaints. We also seem to have got over our superficial and ultra-revolutionary conceptions of party action. The congress passed a number of resolutions bearing an entirely concrete character, and dealing adequately with our present situation. Besides this, the unity of the Party has been established, and its ideological homogeneity and organizational unitedness are a sure pledge that future work will be capable of accomplishing much more than past. To this it must be added that at the present time many circumstances are extraordinarily favorable for a rapid forward development of the Party. The political situation of the country, the ever more disastrous effects of the war in Morocco, the growing antagonisms in the army, and the increasing internal disintegration of the state, all these factors supply the objective premises for the rapid growth of our Party. A few days ago, in Madrid, a mass of workers, numbering about 10,000, expressed themselves in full agreement with the standpoint expressed by a representative of our Party on the responsibilities created by the defeat of the Spanish army in Morocco. And this may be considered a significant symptom.

With respect to the labor movement, the increasing loss of prestige of the socialist party, and the obvious decay of anarcho-syndicalist influence, are now enabling us to approach the working masses with every prospect of success.

The fact that the two uprisings among the miners, in Viscaya and in Seron, could be officially led by the CP. of Spain, is a proof that our prestige is increasing in the sphere of trade unionism, and that the Party, despite its undeniable errors and strays from the right path, is none the less possessed by the aspiration to place itself at the head of all proletarian struggles.

The CP of Spain has held its Conference in a manner worthy of Communists. Everything justifies us in assuming that the first groping steps unavoidable for every young party are now left behind, and that we are on the right track. The representative of the Communist International has greatly contributed to this successful issue of the Conference.

Let us rejoice in the success so far attained, and go forward with fresh courage to the work, to the struggle.

IN SOVIET RUSSIA

The Liquidation of Illiteracy in Soviet Russia

Report on the Activity and Plan of Work of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for the Liquidation of Illiteracy.

By K. Kurskaja (Moscow).

On December 26, 1919, the Council of People's Commissaries issued a decree imposing the duty of learning to read and write on all inhabitants of the Republic, between the ages of 8 and 50 years, who did not already know how to read and write. The execution of this decree encountered great difficulties, not only on account of the lack of material means, but on account of the fact that it was an extremely difficult task to bring

enormous masses of the adult population, especially the older people, into the schools. Besides that, there was no previous mass experience in teaching adults, so that new methods had to be worked out for this, adapted to the psychological peculiarities of these new learners; new categories of teachers had to be trained for this work.

For the purpose of performing all these tasks, the Commissariat for Public Education appointed in June, 1920, an All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for the Liquidation of Illiteracy (A.E.C.L.I.); like commissions were formed in the provincial towns, municipalities and rural districts.

It was the task of the A.E.C.L.I. to work out, jointly with a large number of Soviet, Party and trade union organizations, a detailed plan for the liquidation campaign. The Commission succeeded through the agency of the executive committees of the Soviets, and through the agency of the trade unions, in devising a number of stimulative and compulsory measures for inducing the illiterate to learn reading and writing; for instance, by the exemption from work for two hours of those who cannot read and write, etc. Instruction was declared to be obligatory. The People's Commissariat for Public Education and its organ were given the right to call upon such of the population as can read and write to take part in the instruction of the illiterate, this compulsion being exercised on the basis of the law respecting the obligation to work. The economic organs were placed under the obligation of supplying suitable rooms for instruction, and of equipping these with means of instruction and other furnishings; the means for the administrative apparatus of the A.C., and for the payment of the teachers, were supplied by the state. In this way the local organizations of the A.C. received, up to the end of 1921, over 24 milliard roubles in cash, about 44,000 pud of paper, 1200 dozen pens and pencils, over 6 million reading books, and about 200,000 other school appliances.

All this has permitted the liquidation campaign to be conducted on the grand scale. Special "Days" and "Weeks" have been organized for the struggle against illiteracy, and meetings, concerts, theatrical performances, etc., have been arranged for totally and partially illiterate persons. Some places (as, for instance, Petrograd and Saratov) have also supplemented the mass agitation by individual agitation, which has yielded excellent results.

Groups of A.C. instructors were formed in all public educational departments. Every town, every district, was divided into several parts, each of which received a special instructor for the purpose of ascertaining the number of illiterate persons, and for organizing a series of liquidation centres.

By the year 1921 Russia was completely covered with a network of schools for the liquidation of illiteracy; a rough calculation proves 5 millions of totally illiterate persons to have learnt reading and writing in these schools in the course of a year. Besides the public school teachers themselves, those workers and peasants already able to read and write were frequently induced to help in the work of instruction, and received a short course of instruction in teaching for this purpose. The teachers thus available for the liquidation campaign formed an army of 140,000.

The work thus done on so extensive a scale brought us comprehensive experience in organization and method. With respect to the liquidation of illiteracy we have been able, during the course of one and a half years, to discover the best methods of teaching, and so to arrive at the most rapid and certain results.

After the autumn of 1921, however, when the unfavorable economic situation of the state compelled us to base the activity of the A.C. on local means, there was a resultant rapid diminution of the liquidation centres (schools), their numbers falling from 48,000 to 12,000. The delay thus caused in the continuation of the liquidation campaign was employed by the A.C. to further work out the methods of teaching, and for the utilization of the experience gained during the first years of the liquidation campaign. At the first All-Russian Congress of Functionaries of the A.C. held in February, 1922, programs and syllabi were submitted and adopted in relation to the organization of liquidation centres and schools for the semi-illiterate. At the All-Russian Methodological Conference (in September, 1922) problems of method which had arisen were solved by the conclusion that, in the first place, adult instruction requires different reading books and different methods to the instruction of children, and that, in the second place, the attainment of reading and writing must be accompanied by the liquidation of political and mathematical ignorance, best accomplished by the arrangement of lectures and discussions dealing with questions of current political life, etc.

All these methodological questions were declared to be extremely important, experience having shown that, when incorrect methods are used, the scholars are not able to pass rapidly from

the reader to a book or newspaper, a factor which naturally much increases the danger of a relapse into illiteracy.

While the experts of the A.C. were occupied with questions of method, and the teachers themselves were also busy finding solutions to the same questions, the activity of the A.C. gradually increased in many districts, especially in the industrial ones. The educational departments of the trade unions commenced an energetic struggle against illiteracy among their members, at their own expense. Many executive committees and Soviets began to put means out of the local revenues at the disposal of the struggle against illiteracy.

At the same time the A.C. entered into close connection with the military organizations, which had received orders from Trotzky to carry out the liquidation of illiteracy in the Red Army with the utmost speed. It has thus been possible to teach 50,000 Red Army soldiers to read and write in the course of a year, and to liquidate illiteracy in the Red Army. During this same period illiteracy has also almost completely vanished from the militia.

From the beginning of 1923 onwards there has been greatly increased activity against illiteracy in the great trade unions—the miners', railwaymen's, textile workers' unions, etc. An agreement was reached by the All-Russian Trade Union Central and the A.C., according to which the trade unions undertake an energetic campaign against illiteracy, to be concluded by May 1, 1923. Similar agreements were made with different central executives of the trade union executives.

This increased activity for the liquidation of illiteracy has made it possible to decide that, if pressure is exercised by the party and trade union organs, and if the Soviet power lends material support, we shall be able to arrange a systematic development of the activity of the A.C. during the next few years, in view of which it is necessary to decide upon which classes of the population are to be successively instructed. In consideration of the total number of illiterate persons in the republic, and of the difficulty experienced in getting them into the schools—the majority of them being women—and, further, in consideration of the fact that the state is not in a position to set aside large sums for the purpose of the campaign against illiteracy, the A.E.C.L.I. has worked out a general plan by which the whole of the population ignorant of reading and writing in the Union of Soviet Republics between the ages of 18 and 35 years, will have learnt to read and write by the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution, that is, by November, 1927. According to this plan the whole attention of the A.E.C.L.I. will be devoted to the organized proletariat during the first two years, and to the masses of the peasant population during the two years following. The plan provides for having 17 million persons taught reading and writing in the R.S.F.S.R., 4 million men and 13 million women. During the first school year (1923-24) 2 millions are to be taught, including 500,000 trade union members (about one half of the illiterate among the trade union members) and 600,000 members of the military organization of the youth.

This plan was adopted by the II. All-Russian Congress held in May, 1923. The resolutions passed by this congress indicate in detail the lines to be followed in further carrying out the plan of campaign.

The A.E.C.L.I. and its local organs are now confronted by the difficult and responsible task of raising adequate means for the contemplated instruction of 17 million illiterate persons. While the cost of maintaining the teachers, and of covering the economic outlay, are provided by the local executive committees, the means required for publishing readers must be given by the centre. The calculation made by a special budget commission working at the Congress shows that about 3.75 gold roubles are required for the instruction of one person in reading and writing. Thus over 70 million gold roubles will be necessary in the first year. These costs will be apportioned among the local executive committees, trade union organizations, cooperative organizations, and, finally, the centre. But not only the financial side of the campaign is to be apportioned among the organizations desirous of the liquidation of illiteracy among their members, but also the organization and control work of this campaign. The organizations participating most immediately in the campaign are the trade unions and the women's sections. The participation of the latter in this work is of especial value in the country, where the trade unions are weak. They help the organs commissioned with the liquidation of illiteracy to conduct an agitation to induce the working and peasant women ignorant of reading and writing to enter the schools; they take part in the liquidation commissions; have instructive talks with those who have passed through the course of study provided by the liquidation centre; distribute literature among them, etc. Without the closest connections between the women's sections and the

organs commissioned with the liquidation of illiteracy, it is impossible to liquidate the illiteracy of so many millions of women.

The C.Y.U. is also interested in the liquidation of illiteracy among its members, although here the number of those who cannot read or write is comparatively small (about 10%). At the present time the C.Y.U., conjointly with the "Vsevoitch" (General Military Training), and the military organizations, is energetically engaged in the liquidation of illiteracy in the military organizations of the youth, whose members are to learn reading and writing before entering the Red Army.

During the current year over 500,000 members of the youth military organizations, hitherto ignorant of reading and writing, are to be instructed. In many districts illiterate members of these organizations have already been induced to visit the meeting place and receive instruction. The A.E.C.L.I. is preparing to publish one and a half million reading books for the instruction of 2 million illiterates. The contents of these reading books are to be closely bound up with the problems of economic and political reconstruction of the Soviet state. Besides this, the people not yet very familiar with reading and writing are to be supplied with small libraries, almanacs, agitation placards with revolutionary contents, etc., to the number of 100,000 copies.

The campaign for the liquidation of illiteracy in our backward country will demand great efforts and huge expense. But the revolutionary energy of the working class now ruling, its iron will and perseverance, will overcome even this most difficult of tasks, and will lead the population of Russia, out of the centuries of darkness in which it has been held by its former rulers, into the light.

FASCISM

Fascist Chains and Prisons

By Edmondo Peluso.

When Fascism came into power, it at once introduced a large number of perfectly ridiculous innovations, such as, for instance, the Roman greeting, the Greek "eia, eia, alala", etc. In the sphere of political persecution it not only introduced the compulsory administration of castor oil, and kept up a system of beating prisoners with the famous "manganello" (rubber truncheon) and of murdering them by means of knives, daggers, and guns, but has also given a place of honor once more to banishment, that is, to the expulsion of undesirable elements. As the complement of the banishment system it has also introduced the compulsory "return home". Fascist terror has thus forged for itself a two-edged sword, which can be used, according to the political exigencies of the moment, either for banishing communists from the place where they are living, or, should they become dangerous in a town which is not their home, for expelling them from here and forcing them to return home.

At the present moment Italy is being traversed in every direction by caravans of prisoners thus compelled to return to their homes. The cell-waggons which travel regularly from the north to the south of the peninsula are overfilled with men in heavy chains, who have been arbitrarily arrested by the patriarchal government of the renegade Mussolini in every part of the country, and are being forced to go back to their birth-places.

The country which gave us J. B. Vico and Caesar Beccaria has only preserved in legend the humanitarian thoughts of these great men. It is exceedingly difficult to form an actual conception of an Italian cell-wagon. There is nothing more frightful on earth. Menagerie cages are incomparably more comfortable, and permit the wild beasts much more air and freedom of movement than the sheet iron box, 1 square metre in floor area, in which the Italian communists are imprisoned while they are being transported, with the additional torment of heavy fetters, on long journeys of as much as 14 hours — the transit from Ancona to Toggia, for example, takes, in such a wagon, as long as this. Those who have never experienced the crushing effect of handcuffs on the wrists cannot possibly realize how frightful are the tortures which "re-born Italy" has drawn from the middle ages to martyr the communists. The cruelty of the Italian gendarmes, who are themselves frequently under the influence of their own fear of punishment, is such that when they handcuff the communists, the wrists of the prisoners are rendered bloody and useless for a long time. The prisoners receive nothing but a piece of bread during transit, and a jug of water to quench their thirst if the gendarmes escorting them are in a good humor.

During the course of this month I had occasion to be transported from Milan, where I was arrested, to my native town of Naples. And this solely because I am a member of the Communist Party of Italy. I have been imprisoned in a dozen Italian gaols, and have been able to obtain exact knowledge of the degree of culture obtaining in the cells of the prisons of Italy. For it is an established fact that the level of culture of a country is closely bound up with the level of its forces of suppression. In Milan, from which I commenced my journey in chains to Naples, a journey which was to last 25 days though it can be easily covered in 24 hours, the prison was completely dominated by Fascist terror. The director, a member of Mussolini's "rebirth of Italy" party, sets the example to his subordinates. Tricolor patriotism is paraded on all sides, and goes so far that the common criminals have to wear the ribbons of the innumerable medals distributed by the belligerent governments with such extravagance during the war. Those who can or will decorate themselves with the ribbons receive the soft jobs of the prison, from clerical work down to emptying the latrines. The communists, on the other hand, are the victims of the most degrading treatment which despotism can impose.

In the prison of San Giovanni at Monte, in the province of Bologna, the director of the prison is exceedingly obliging towards the Fascist criminals, allotting them the best cells to live in, and permitting them to play cards, while the communists have to endure a frightful white terrorist regime; one of our comrades, for instance, whose tin food basin was not perfectly clean, was punished by a tremendous number of days of confinement in darkness. Among the communists incarcerated in this prison was Comrade Gnudi, former mayor and deputy of Bologna, who was accused of conspiracy together with a number of party comrades. The inquiries had been finished for weeks, and the attorney for the crown had applied for the release of the whole of the prisoners. Our comrades had no idea of this, and it was not until I informed them of it through the bars of my cell that they knew that they were being retained in prison solely because the Bolognese Fascist leaders, fearing that the influence exercised by the communist leaders on the masses might seriously shake their dictatorship, were opposing their release.

The cell in which the transit prisoners are kept during their four days sojourn in Bologna is a damp and gloomy cellar, overrun with vermin. There is no water cock in it, and thus no opportunity of washing. A half cask stands in one corner, without a lid, serving as a privy, and having to be used without any privacy whatever, in the presence of 50 to 60 persons. The stench arising from this cellar may be well imagined, and an idea may be formed of the martyrdom suffered by the prisoners subjected without interruption to the attacks of vermin, from morning till evening, and from evening until morning again.

In other prisons the directors are the actual accomplices of the Fascisti. Thus in Ravenna Comrade Gambi was riddled by a number of revolver shots while lying on his bed of boards, unable to defend himself.

In the prison at Ancona the manager of the prison is a faithful follower of the "sacred rubber truncheon" of the Fascisti. The office in which the prisoners are received is ornamented by a portrait of the renegade Mussolini, framed in tricolor ribbons, and by a vulgar picture entitled "The sacred rubber truncheon", that is intended to throw a glamour around the murderous weapon with which the communists are struck down. Ancona, always an extraordinarily revolutionary town, naturally supplies a considerable number of political prisoners.

Never before have the Italian prisons been so overfilled as at the present time. The number of prisoners is estimated approximately at 800,000. The cells, built under an earlier system for the accommodation of one person, have now to find room for at least three! Two of the prisoners have to lie on the floor, summer or winter, while the third may take the plank bed. It must be emphasized that the present government, in order to further increase its cruelty towards the political prisoners, treats them very much worse than the common law-breakers. Almost all communists have been interned in prisons as far as possible from the places where their families are living. Often enough they cannot even correspond with their friends. The slightest sign of rebellion, even if merely spoken, is suppressed with ruthless violence.

And yet I may say that neither the physical tortures suffered by our comrades, nor the thought of the misery endured by their families, is in the least able to shake their powers of moral resistance.

In all the prisons our comrades enjoy the regard of all the other prisoners, and are treated with the utmost respect by these. They, one and all, confidently await the day which will

bring them their liberty, that they may be able to resume their fight against Fascism with redoubled zeal.

At the last stage of our journey, Naples, we had the opportunity of observing that the prison here is worthy of the designation applied by Gladstone in the year 1849 to the prisons of the Bourbon tyrants: "the denial of God". But the "safety chamber" of the prefecture of police in Naples is much more than the denial of God, it is a perfect pig-sty, and fitly mirrors the degraded cruelty and ignorance of the conception of those Italian rulers who imagine that the more frightful the prison, the more rapidly will criminality be done away with.

We may confidently assert that neither physical sufferings nor any other form of persecution will break the revolutionary will of the Italian communists, or extinguish the holy faith burning in their hearts. The fascist storm which has cast them in a prison will only serve to make our comrades the more determined and tenacious. They have earned high honors in the III. International. And as soon as they are free again, they will take up their posts without delay in the great army of communist revolution.

The Italian Amsterdamers as Allies of Mussolini

By Paolo (Rome).

Some weeks have passed since Mussolini, from his seat in Parliament, invited the leaders of the "Confederazione Generale del Lavoro", the Italian representatives of the spirit of Amsterdam, to cooperate with him. D'Aragona, the secretary of the CGL, sprang promptly to his feet and declared himself ready to accept the proposal. It had all the appearance of an improvised scene, but today we know that Mussolini had given orders to D'Aragona for this scene, through his secretary of state Finzi, and that D'Aragona was willing to enter into the arrangement at once.

A week later Mussolini held a consultation with the leaders of the CGL, which lasted over 1½ hours; although the results were kept secret, the whole Fascist press began to discuss the question of the union of all the trade union organizations. The idea of a "Labor Party" of an Italian pattern was brought up, which was to be just as patriotic and just as free "from every political party" as its English model. This means, in plain language, that we are at the beginning of the alliance of the Amsterdam trade unions with similar organizations belonging to the Fascist, that is, the beginning of the subordination of the Amsterdamers to the Fascisti.

Various reasons have induced Mussolini to take this step. His trade unions (which are, of course, completely subordinate to his party) exist on paper only; even those elements which were lured into joining them by promises, or frightened into it by threats, deserted again on being disappointed, or on the abatement of the terror. But these organizations have been a reserve ground for the Fascisti, from which they have been able to recruit their forces against the opponents of the De Vecchi type, who have not sufficiently considered the interests of the big industrialists. This source of reinforcements having failed, the pressure exercised by the large agrarians and the high officers of the army increased, so that Mussolini has now found himself compelled to proceed to the removal of the political features of the Fascist militia. As this militia has carried on an exclusively Fascist policy, this action is synonymous with the beginning of the annulment of its Fascist character. The union with the CGL is to induce fresh masses to join the Fascisti, and to show that Mussolini is not the murderer of workmen that the communists have represented him to be. The peaceful agreement with the workers, whom D'Aragona, Colombino and Co. are alleged to represent, is to serve, at the forthcoming international congresses, as a proof of the inner strength and consolidation of Fascism.

There is also another reason for Mussolini's action: that, despite all suppression, the labor movement is again gaining strength. While these negotiations were being carried on, the first great strike which has taken place since the victory of Fascism broke out in Rome, among the leaders, when from 14,000 to 16,000 men struck work. This strike which was under communist-socialist leadership, was throttled by Mussolini with the most brutal measures. Not a single meeting was allowed, the Labor Chamber was occupied by soldiery, over 300 strikers were arrested, and many expelled from Rome. Mussolini thus succeeded in suppressing the strike within a week. As there will be increasing numbers of such wages struggles in the future, it is much more agreeable for the Fascisti to work with such accommodating organizations as those led by D'Aragona, than with illegal strike committees.

Were it only a matter of obtaining the consent of these gentlemen of Amsterdam, the trade unions would be delivered into the hands of the Fascisti without further trouble. We communists are reproached with making too free use of the word traitor when speaking of our adversaries; but when we see how D'Aragona and Co. are deliberately delivering the trade unions wholesale into the hands of Fascism, then there is no expression strong enough with which to stigmatize this action. At a moment when a fresh wave of persecution is sweeping over the country (in Molinella 60 workers were cruelly beaten with cudgels recently; in Comè the Labor Chambers were occupied; in Naples the headquarters of the railwaymen set on fire), Colombino is prepared to deliver over the still unconquered forces of the Italian proletariat to the executioner Mussolini in exchange for a ministerial position.

It is still uncertain whether the plan will succeed. The trade union bureaucrats are in favor of it; no difficulties threaten from this side. But the workers who have still remained organized, and who have held out despite the terror exercised in the trade unions by the Fascisti—these will not permit themselves to fall into Mussolini's clutches in this manner. The Fascist trade union leaders are also opposed to this competition on the part of the former "reds".

The reformists, to whose party the majority of those belong who are now going over to the Fascisti, are in the greatest embarrassment. They have always been ready to join hands with the bourgeoisie, and if they now rail at D'Aragona, it is because, with the trade union leaders, the last working masses over which the reformists exercise influence are now becoming lost to them. They are, of course, not taking any steps against these new allies of Fascism; in all probability they will follow their usual custom of arriving at a compromise enabling them to save at least a part of their influence.

Meanwhile, the history of the Amsterdamers is enriched by one more sorry page

THE WHITE TERROR

For the Victims of the White Terror in Bulgaria

The government which seized power by the coup of June 9, and the irresponsible factors acting in its service, have flung themselves, with all the forces at the disposal of White Terror and reaction, upon the Communist Party, and especially upon those workers and poor peasants forced to defend themselves on the day of the coup d'état. It is an established fact that the government places outside the law the working masses of town and country who support the Communist Party, calculating that in this manner it will be able to keep power in its hands. For it is only too well aware that it has not come into power at the wish and with the confidence of the masses of the working people, but has seized power solely by means of a putsch.

Thus the first step taken by this new government of "law", "order" and "liberty", was to introduce the prohibitive press censorship in the face of the express terms of the constitution of the state, to abolish the right of holding meetings, to throw workers and poor peasants arbitrarily into prison, to torture them there with all the instruments of the inquisition, to murder them with the aid of all the unconstitutional exceptional laws created by Stambulisky's government for the destruction of the Communist Party. One of these laws is the so-called robbery law, which permits any man declared a robber to be outlawed, when anyone may kill him and go unpunished. The legal proceedings against anyone accused of "robbery" do not differ in any way from those of the most brutal military "justice".

In Tirnovo over one hundred communists, workers and peasants were arrested, and are imprisoned on remand on indictments of insurrection and robbery. In order to extort statements desired by the authorities, the prisoners are bestially ill-treated and tortured. At the same time a large number of the leading active Party comrades were arrested without any reason, mercilessly beaten in the barracks by the enraged soldiery, and then released at night, so that nobody might see the frightful condition in which they left the barrack yard.

In the village of Kilifarevo about 150 communist workers and peasants were arrested, and shared the same fate.

In the industrial town of Gabrovo over one hundred communist workers were also arrested and ill-treated; 36 of these have been taken to the town of Sevlievo, in order to be sentenced there for alleged insurrection and robbery.

The communist Workers' Homes, as well as the stores owned by the workers' cooperative society of Osvojdenje in

that town and other places, have been closed by the police and then looted by the mob under police protection.

On the day of the putsch five communist leaders were murdered; among these were two local party leaders: Trifon Saral'eff, former parliamentary deputy, and Banaiot Zwickoff.

In the town of Garlovo 126 communist workers and peasants were arrested, and are also still imprisoned on remand for "robbery and insurrection". The imprisoned comrades are incarcerated in rooms absolutely murderous to the health, and they are not permitted to go out during the day for a breath of fresh air. They are cruelly ill-treated, and many of them, as for instance Comrade P. Dvorianoff, a former member of parliament, have been exposed to open insult, being harnessed like beasts of burden to carts and driven through the town.

62 communists were arrested in the town of Kazanlik, and have been taken to Stara Zagora. Over one hundred poor peasants were arrested in Orchanje, in the village of Moldava 23, and in many other small places all over the country comrades have been arrested, and all share the same unhappy fate.

But it is in Plevna that the White Terror holds most brutal sway.

There even the most criminal sadism is surpassed. In the town alone as many as 400 communist working men and women, many of them young comrades, were arrested. In order to extort from them admissions desired by the court of inquiry, they have been subjected for weeks to the most inhuman torture. One of them, Comrade Assen Halatscheff, was done to death by these means. In order to conceal this murder, a clumsy report was officially issued to the effect that the communists had abducted Halatscheff from the prison during the night, and that he had vanished without leaving a trace! Many of the comrades arrested at Plevna have been so frightfully ill-treated that they will be cripples for the rest of their lives, and will never recover their health.

Among the arrested was M. W. Schelpugin, a collaborator in the Red Cross mission in Bulgaria. One morning his dead body was found in a vineyard outside the town, covered with more than 20 wounds.

On July 23, the first trial of the accused took place. 95 communists had to answer the indictment of "robbery" and "insurrection". The accusation of robbery is entirely without foundation, and was obviously made for the sole purpose of enabling the accused to be condemned under Stambulisky's exceptional laws. The public prosecutor demanded capital punishment for five of the accused and many years imprisonment for the others. The comrade murdered in so dastardly a manner by the authorities, Assen Halatscheff, has also been included among the accused, and is to be sentenced for "escaping".

The depth of the class hate and class vengeance of the bourgeoisie may be judged from the fact that the barristers' council at Plevna—including the social democrats!—passed a resolution denying the accused legal defence during their trial, and not permitting such defence in any circumstances whatever. Supported by the authorities and the reaction, they demanded that this decision be carried out at all costs, and be made valid for the whole country. An organization was formed by which counsel defending the accused were to be prevented from fulfilling their duty; this organization was joined by the Prefect of the Plevna district, Colonel Narezoff, by the public prosecutor Popoff, who participated revolver in hand in the coup of June 9, by the social democratic lawyer G. Markoff, and by others.

On July 21, a part of the counsel for the defence of the accused, consisting of eight communist lawyers, succeeded in reaching Plevna. They were, however, at once confronted by a delegation of the Plevna barristers' council, headed by the social democrat G. Markoff, who declared that they must renounce all idea of defending the accused, and threatened to employ force in the event of their insisting. The defending counsel indignantly refused to listen to this impudent piece of presumption on the part of this revengeful band of lawyers. But the attempt to influence them enabled them to inform the president of the court, and the public prosecutor in Plevna, of this unheard of impudence, and to protest against it. They demanded the protection of their liberty, and of their right to fulfil their legal obligations at the trial. The public prosecutor took no steps in this direction, but the president of the court promised to permit them to plead "freely" at the trial.

But immediately after this, while counsel for the defense were consulting together upon the trial, a police captain forced his way into their room revolver in hand, and, with the aid of a troop of police, arrested them, and took them on foot to the station, whence they were sent under a powerful police escort to Mezdra. Here they were kept shut up in a shed for a day and a night, and then taken to Sofia by a strong police escort, to be delivered over to the security police. The arrested counsel

for the defence, carrying their own trunks and surrounded by armed policemen, were conducted on foot through the busiest streets of Sofia.

This unexampled scandal called forth great indignation, even among many of the adherents of the government. The government found itself obliged to release the lawyers; apologies were even offered for what had taken place, and they were promised that their return to Plevna would be facilitated, as well as the exercise of their right to participate in the trial as counsel for the defence.

The trial at Plevna began on July 23, the whole of the defending counsel being absent. For not only had the eight lawyers in Plevna been arrested, but several other communist barristers on their way to Plevna had been stopped, locked up and sent back. Under these circumstances the accused made an oral request, and their counsel a telegraphic one, on July 23, that the trial be postponed until it was possible for counsel for the defence to be present. The court declined to accede to this, and continued proceedings in the absence of the defence! It was not until two days later that counsel for the defence, after being released, were able to return to Plevna and undertake the defence of the accused.

About 400 witnesses have been called up for this trial, 150 of these being subpoenaed by the public prosecutor. The proceedings are likely to last several weeks. This is the first trial in connection with the putsch of June 9; several others will follow.

It is clear to the whole world that in Plevna the proceedings of the court are completely dominated by the class justice of an enraged bourgeoisie, which is preparing the brutal murder of a number of communists, and severe terms of imprisonment for many other brave men. The verdict of the Plevna court will serve as a precedent for the verdicts to follow in many other towns of Bulgaria against the victims of June 9.

The working class and the working peasants of the whole world must raise a mighty protest, and prevent raging Fascist justice from giving barbarous sentences of murder and imprisonment to the accused workers and peasants in Plevna and all over Bulgaria, and from executing such barbarous sentences. Powerful expressions of protest and indignation must be directed, from all civilized countries in the world, against the executioners of the accused workers and peasants, in order that these executioners and those inspiring them may be forced to desist from their premeditated crime, and restore their innocent victims to liberty.

For the Central Committee of the C.P. of Bulgaria.
Secretary: B. Lenkoff.

Sofia, July 30., 1923.

The White Terror in Portugal

The great reactionary daily newspaper, the *Diario de Noticias* published the most incredible lying reports, on several successive days in the middle of June, on the latest acts of violence in the capital city of Lisbon. Two anarchists had made a violent bomb attack on the judges of the Tribunal of Social Defence, who recently imposed a severe sentence, without any proof whatever, on a young communist indicted and found guilty of being in possession of bombs. The Portuguese government now held the moment to be favorable for dealing an annihilating blow at the communist youth movement. Warrants of arrest were issued against all the members of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth. The majority of these were arrested and incarcerated in a military fortress on the seashore a place subject to frequent floods.

We are assured by private information from Portugal that our young comrades are in a frightful position. They are cut off from any communication with the outer world. They are not even permitted to keep in touch with their defending counsel or their parents. The government is trying, by means of the most refined torture, to extort from them the confessions necessary to justify their condemnation. As, however, there is little prospect that this attempt will be successful, the government intends simply to decree the deportation of all those arrested to Africa. This measure would be synonymous with a death sentence for all our comrades.

Only an energetic protest from the proletariat of the whole world can save our young comrades from certain death. Therefore all Communist Parties, all youth organizations, and all trade union federations, must take immediate comprehensive action to save the lives of our friends.