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The Election Victory of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

By A. Neurath (Prague).

Of the 6,659,939 votes which were polled at the elections for the National Assembly in Czechoslovakia, 931,769 were in favour of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia. This means that every seventh voter supported the cause of the Communist Party or that 1 out of every 14 inhabitants of Czechoslovakia voted for the communists. The Communist Parliamentary Club will have 42 or 43 members. In May 1924 the C. P. of Germany recorded extraordinary success; 1 out of every 100 electors voted for the C. P. of Germany. In Czechoslovakia, 15 out of every 100 electors have declared themselves in favour of the policy of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia.

The most important political results of the Parliamentary elections are expressed in the shattering of the coalition system which has prevailed hitherto and in the accentuation of the necessity of a "national agreement", that is of an understanding between the German bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie of the national minorities in general and the ruling Czechoslovakian bourgeoisie. In the old Parliament, the coalition parties had a small majority of about 30 votes; this majority they have lost. Even now however they can secure a very small majority by including in the coalition Bloc the Czech Artisans' Party which has hitherto

not belonged to the coalition. In this case, 3,200,000 votes of the opposition would stand against 3,500,000 votes of the coalition parties. Up to now we have no exact survey of the final results of the second and third scrutinies, but it is already possible to calculate that the coalition fraternity, even if they include the Artisans' Party in their friendly alliance, will be obliged to govern with a majority of about 8—10. The result of the election would have been still more unpleasant for the coalition, were it not that at the eleventh hour an appropriate reform of the franchise law had extinguished the smaller parties in the interest of the large ones and especially of the coalition parties.

Nothing now remains for the Government to do but to come to an agreement with some part of the opposition groups. And, if the truth be told, the German parties have simply been longing for this understanding. All the Teutonic divisions (with the exception so far of the National Party led by Lodgman) have declared themselves in favour of "activism". "Activism" is the name for that policy the aim of which is to bring about the great coalition, the entry of the German bourgeois politicians into the Government. An understanding of this sort is to the interest of the economic policy, especially of the German banks and the

German manufacturers. The result of the elections for the Czechoslovakian National Assembly shows once more in the most telling way how extraordinarily closely the interests of the exploiting class are bound up with the policy both of the bourgeois and the social-democratic parties. Those parties which had opposed the idea of a national settlement, the German National Party on the one hand and the Czech National Democratic Party on the other hand, were defeated in the election campaign. The parties which propagated the "activist" policy on the contrary, were extraordinarily successful. This applies for instance, to the League of German Agriculturalists whose leader has for long been demonstrating his love to the Czech Coalition fraternity in the most servile way. It seems however very unlikely that the German bourgeois parties will be successful in their wooing. For once in a way the Czech Coalition Group will have to ignore the strategic principle of advancing along the line of least resistance. It is much more in keeping with the feelings and tastes of all Czech National circles for the Coalition to try to come to an understanding with the Slovak forces. The Slovak People's Party which polled 474,000 votes is the one which comes into question. There is no doubt that the Slovak People's Party and the German bourgeois champions will each betray their national programme in exactly the same way, but the Hlinka group will not surrender on the question of national autonomy without some concessions.

It will be a spectacle for the gods when the bourgeois parties of the national minorities, in fighting for a place at the Government manger, simply shed a considerable part of their "high national aims" and "interests". The working strata of the Czechoslovakian people will then recognise more clearly than ever that the C. P. of Czechoslovakia is the only party which defends and knows how to protect the rights of the national minorities. And it goes without saying that the "Liberal" and "Socialist" Czech parties will, more decidedly than ever, have to renounce any discussion with clericalism and will have, in the school question, to make considerable concessions to the reactionary demands of the clericals. The Czech coalition fraternity will talk in the spirit of Huss and the members of the People's party will act in the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church. This policy of the Coalition Parties will meet with direct support from the Czech and with indirect (often even direct) support from the German Social-Democrats. It remains for the C. P. of Czechoslovakia to defend the schools against the reactionary spirit of clericalism.

Both sections of the Hamburg International were defeated. The Czech Social-Democrats received 1,590,520 votes in 1920 and now received 631,113. The German Social-Democrats polled 689,589 votes in 1920 and 411,477 this time. The defeat of the German Social-Democrats would be still more severe, had they not benefited from the complete destruction of the so-called German united front. On the occasion of the last municipal elections, the German Democratic Party had about 40,000 votes. This time this party was not able to enter the election campaign independently; its adherents voted largely for the German Social-Democratic party. The relation of German capital to German Social-Democracy is best expressed by the attitude of the leading newspapers of the German bourgeoisie. The "Prager Tagblatt", the leading organ of the German banks and manufacturers, in a leading article, not only took up an attitude in favour of the German Social-Democrats, but actually wrote that it would be in the interests of the German manufacturer to give his vote to the German Social-Democrats. Both sections of the Hamburg International carried on the election campaign in the most vulgar way, almost exclusively against the C. P. of Czechoslovakia, the Communist International and Soviet Russia. Since the result of the election became known, the central organ of German Social-Democracy has not yet recovered its voice. For the present it describes the defeat of the German Social-Democratic party as an "honourably" fought battle. The "Pravo Lidu", the central organ of the Czech Social-Democrats has lost none of its impressive insolence. Among other things it writes: "We expected this result from the election and are not surprised by it. The characteristic of our policy is self-possession and cool calculation in estimating our opponents." The "Pravo Lidu" by the bye, writes that not the Czech Social-Democrats but — the Communists have lost the great battle. This organ of counter-revolution writes: "In reality the election result is an unexpected and fearful defeat for the Communists." And those inhabitants of Czechoslovakia who read this point of view in the "Pravo Lidu", hold their sides with laughter.

Let us take the bourgeois Press. The ruling classes are dismayed. Their Press has for months been prophesying the final fall, the collapse of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia. And now this

annihilated C. P. of Czechoslovakia appears as the strongest party in the Czechoslovakian Parliament! Even the coolest bourgeois politicians find this for the moment more than they can bear. Part of the Czech bourgeois Press is already making tentative efforts to inspire us with the necessary respect for the foundations of the Czechoslovakian State and urging us as a strong, or rather as the strongest party, to aim at last at a policy of "positive" achievements. The attitude of the German bourgeois Press is not without interest. The "Prager Tagblatt" writes: "This comparatively unusually strong representation of the communist element in the Chamber is a unique phenomenon in Central Europe." This paper then tries to calm the capitalists and to explain to them that the only reason why, for the time being, there are so many communists, is that all the discontented elements are running after this party which conducts an "energetic opposition".

It is no mere coincidence that the whole bourgeois Press has, with dignified silence, passed over the awful farce of the Bubnik renegades, the so-called "Independent Communist Party" which had 7866 votes altogether. We understand that the bourgeois and social democratic Press had no desire to draw the necessary conclusions from the defeat of the Independent Communists who were simply wiped out altogether. A group of malicious renegades had, in the interests of the bourgeoisie, undertaken to organise treachery in the ranks of the communist movement of Czechoslovakia. The party leaders, in common with the Executive of the C. I., discovered these treacherous goings-on, stigmatised the traitors and expelled them. The Czechoslovakian Government found no sacrifice too great in order to maintain this "Independent Communist Party" and to help it to fight the C. P. of Czechoslovakia. The workers have now pronounced their verdict, and this verdict is as emphatic as it is simple: anyone who dares seriously to fight against the Communist International loses all influence with the revolutionary workers and only earns their complete contempt. There is no need to fight the Bubnik party, it has perished under the curse of ridicule.

THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNIST CONFERENCE AT BRUSSELS

Declaration of the Communist Parliamentary Fractions with regard to Locarno, the League of Nations and the Bloc against the USSR.

The Interparliamentary Conference has resolved that the communist parliamentary fractions shall make the following declaration in the Parliaments with regard to the Locarno Pact.

The so-called Peace Pact of Locarno is in reality a new stage in the re-grouping of the imperialistic Powers, which is constantly becoming more obvious.

The imperialistic group which holds sway in the United States of America, is working towards a certain consolidation of the capitalistic States of Western Europe in order to secure politically the "Dawesation" and the exploitation of the working masses in the various European countries, and especially to the London agreement. The United States want at the same time to guarantee themselves against the Communist danger and against Soviet Russia.

The British bourgeoisie sees in Locarno a means for further repressing the predominant position of France in Europe and of preparing for its own hegemony. By making the best use of the internal and external difficulties of the French bourgeoisie, British imperialism succeeded, at Locarno, in completing the political consequences of the Dawes plan, in forcing France to abandon the independent policy against Germany which she has hitherto pursued and in incorporating Germany in the bloc against Soviet Russia which it has long been preparing. British imperialism is unmistakably working towards forcing down the Soviet Power by means of an economic and political fight. It is determined, come what may, to exterminate Soviet Russia, the centre of power in the fight of the colonial peoples against the oppression of imperialism.

The French bourgeoisie has agreed to the Locarno pact under pressure from its American and English creditors, regard-

less of its wish to continue its old policy of military alliance with Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. The financial crisis, the insurrection of the Moroccan and Syrian peoples and the social crisis, through which France is passing at the present moment, are shaking the foundations of French imperialism and endangering its policy of predominance in Europe. Without renouncing its imperialistic plans, though unable to realise them at the moment, the French bourgeoisie must look on while the bonds of its military alliance become looser and looser.

The German bourgeoisie which was defeated in the imperialistic world war, continues its policy of submission to the ruling capitalist countries, which was laid down for it by the Dawes Pact. For the German bourgeoisie, the Locarno Pact represents a certain laxation in the interpretation of the Versailles Treaty by British-American imperialism. Its effect is that the working masses in Germany, whose vital interests rest in an alliance with Soviet Russia, are being, at the command of British-American capital, more firmly bound and gagged.

By accepting the Pact of Locarno, by increasing the ties between the German bourgeoisie and British and American capitalism, by recognising the Treaty of Versailles, the bourgeois elements, including the German Nationalists and the social-democratic leaders, are betraying more than ever before, the national and economic interests of the working masses in Germany.

By entering the League of Nations, the German bourgeoisie predestines Germany to be the ground on which to assemble troops and the battlefield for a war against Soviet Russia. Worse than this, it binds itself to the misuse of the working masses of Germany as cannon-fodder against Soviet Russia.

Although on the one hand, the Pact of Locarno implies a certain relaxation of tension between the capitalist States in Europe, it on the other hand by no means signifies a weakening of the deep-seated contradictions which exist between the capitalist countries in general.

Although American and British imperialism have worked together to bring about the Pact of Locarno, this fact by no means excludes the further development of the differences of opinion between these two imperialistic groups.

In contrast to this re-grouping of the capitalist Powers in the West, the strength of Workers' and Peasants' Government of Soviet Russia is consolidating itself more and more. The tremendous economic boom which Russia has experienced in spite of the continued sabotage of the European bourgeoisie, shows that the Workers' and Peasants' Republic is on the right path. But the more firmly the proletarian power of Soviet Russia consolidates itself, the more pronounced becomes the will of the West European bourgeoisie, and especially of England, to overthrow the rule of the proletariat in Soviet Russia.

In Africa and in Asia, the masses of workers and peasants who are subjugated by European imperialism, are rebelling and joining in national revolutionary movements. (China India, Syria, Morocco, Egypt etc.). The more however the colonial peoples, oppressed for centuries by imperialism, rouse themselves and take up the fight for liberation from the imperialistic yoke, the more imperialism trembles for the possession of its colonial conquests. This is why England, the Power most interested in this policy of subjugation, succeeds in winning over the bourgeoisies of the West to its policy of encircling and attacking Soviet Russia.

Since on the other hand, the imperialistic dissensions between the individual capitalist States are constantly becoming more and more acute, and all the military Great Powers continue to increase their armaments for carrying on a new great war, Locarno is by no means a preparation for peace but, on the contrary, for war.

It is evident that as soon as the next great imperialistic conflict breaks out, the Treaty of Locarno will be torn up. This Pact is not even in its formal wording a guarantee against the conflagration of a new war. In a case such as, for instance, that in 1914, it would have been no obstacle to a declaration of war.

The League of Nations is an organ with which the capitalist Powers carry on their old imperialistic policy of oppression under the cover of a pacifist phraseology. The attitude of the League of Nations in the disputes about the Saar district, Upper Silesia, Memel, Danzig, Austria and Syria as well as on the occasion of the Italo-Greek and the Anglo-Egyptian conflicts, and finally in connection with the events in Morocco and China, proves that it represents in the first place a tool of the ruling

capitalist Great Powers.

Thus Locarno signifies not only a serious danger for Soviet Russia, but a new and serious threat to all the working masses who are suffering under capitalistic exploitation and oppression. The leaders of the Socialist International, by taking their stand for the Pact of Locarno, are only continuing their old policy of supporting the capitalist governments. They are deliberately arousing and fostering the pacifist illusions of certain strata of workers and petty bourgeois, in order to promote the imperialistic and anti-Russian policy of their bourgeoisies.

In view of the anti-Soviet bloc of the capitalistic powers and in order to oppose the preparations for war against proletarian Russia, it is no longer sufficient to cry ever louder: "Hands off Soviet Russia!" but we must act rapidly and effectively and create a broad united front of defence consisting of the whole class-conscious proletariat. What is now necessary, is to form a strong alliance with the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia and, with all means in our power, to support all movements and risings of the oppressed masses of workers and peasants in the colonies.

The fight against the war policy of the bourgeoisie must find an ever-increasing echo among the working masses. The battle-front of the proletariat against the war plans of the capitalist States must continue to grow broader, deeper and more powerful and must lead to the victory of the working class.

Down with the Pact of Locarno!

Down with the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Neuilly and Trianon!

Down with the capitalist League of Nations!

Down with the policy of sanctions, reparations and the Dawes plan!

Cancellation of all debts and reparations both for the defeated peoples and for the victorious States!

Long live the united front of the working and peasant masses of all countries!

Long live the independence of the colonial peoples!

Long live the alliance of the European proletariat with the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia and of all colonial territories!

Long live the Communist International!

Resolution on the Eight Hour Day and the Washington Agreement.

The capitalists of all countries are making use of the present economic crisis which is constantly becoming worse, to intensify their offensive against the working class. Their assaults are particularly directed against the eight hour day. This attack of capital is helped by the extensive unemployment in almost all countries and by the fact that in various countries, especially in Germany, the eight hour day has been abolished by law and to a certain extent in practice -- a fact for which the reformists are partly responsible.

In this situation, which is becoming more and more acute, the International Federation of Trade Unions announces its intention of taking steps to procure the ratification of the so-called Washington Agreement, in the period between November 15th and December 15th. After the proletariat had, by direct action, secured the eight hour day in almost all countries, this agreement was resolved on at an international conference of representatives of governments and trade unions at Washington in 1919, as the first international measure for stifling the revolutionary movement. Consequently it offers, even though it were guaranteed by all participants, no certain guarantee that the eight hour day will be carried out. This is evident from the fact that

1) the following categories of workers are entirely excluded from the agreement:

- a) all agricultural workers;
- b) all State and municipal workers;
- c) all workers, employees and officials in commerce (among these are included seamen, dock-workers, almost all transport workers and others);
- d) all employees and officials of the State, the provinces and the municipalities;
- e) all commercial and technical employees and officials (including qualified workers and foremen etc.) in private industry

as well as all individuals who are personally related to their employer.

These make altogether 40% of all workers for whom, at the outset, the eight hour day does not come into consideration, according to the Agreement.

2. article 2 of the agreement does indeed provide a maximum working day of eight hours for the other categories of workers, but articles 3—14 contain a number of **exceptional regulations** of such a nature that even for them the eight hour day may at any time be invalidated.

The exceptional regulations allow **non-observance of the eight hour working day** in the following cases:

1) Accidents, urgent work on the factory equipment, unavoidable necessity (Art. 3).

2) In work which, by its nature, demands uninterrupted work in shifts (Art. 4).

3) When it proves impossible to carry out the regulations of article 2 (Art. 5).

4) In preparatory or auxiliary work, as well as in exceptional accumulation of work (Art. 6).

5) In articles 9—13, further exceptional regulations are issued for **Japan, India, China, Persia, Siam Greece and Roumania**, which make unlimited exploitation of the workers in these countries possible.

6) The whole of the regulations can be invalidated in the case of war or of events which endanger the safety of the country (Art. 14).

The best illustration of the effects of article 14 alone is offered by the statements of the German Government, in the event of Germany ratifying the Washington agreement. The Government says:

"The Government must of course take for granted that art. 14 of the Washington Agreement is applied when it is necessary to prevent extraordinary dangers to the necessary conditions of life of the German people."

Thus, the German capitalists, like the capitalists of other countries claim, even before ratification, the right to invalidate the whole agreement. But even if the ratification of article 14 did not come into question, articles 4 & 6 suffice for any kind of infringement of the eight hour working day at any time, as is proved by the practice in **Poland, Czechoslovakia** and other countries in which the agreement has already been ratified.

In spite of the exceptional regulations, in spite of all the facilitations which make it possible for the capitalists, even after ratification, to make the Agreement entirely illusory, they are trying to avoid ratification. The capitalists do not wish to have the hours of work fixed by any law, but wish to determine the length of working hours exactly as pleases them. They are particularly opposed to any binding international agreement, because they regard it as a handicap to competition.

In order to break this resistance of the employers, the **English trade unions, under Purcell, Bramley and Cook**, have repeatedly appealed to the I.F.T.U. and to the trade unions of all countries, for the formation of a **united trade union international** which is determined to fight. They have clearly shown that this is the only way to secure the preliminary conditions for and the guarantee of a successful fight for the real eight hour day. This proposal has been rejected by **Amsterdam**.

The fact that the **Amsterdam Trade Union International and the 2nd International** want, as the only measure against the offensive of the employers, to carry on a campaign purely for the ratification of the entirely inadequate Washington Agreement, shows that they do not wish to carry on a serious and determined fight for the really unlimited eight hour day, nay, that they want to divert the masses of workers from the real fight.

A successful fight for the conquest and security of the eight hour day for all proletarians without exception, can only be carried on if the trade unions and parties apply all the means of power at their disposal in mobilising the proletarian masses in all countries. This means, no limitation of the Washington agreement, no limitation to Parliamentary action, but the **carrying on of broad mass fights for ensuring the eight hour day**.

The campaign announced by Amsterdam for the ratification of the Washington Agreement can therefore only be the signal for the fight for the real eight hour day, the signal for mass mobilisation. From this point of view the communists in all countries will take part in the campaign for the ratification

of the Washington Agreement, in order to incite a real fight for the eight hour day.

In order to support the fight for the eight hour day, the communist **Parliamentary fractions** will, in the debate on the ratification in every country

1) exercise sharp criticism of the agreement,

2) demand regulations as to the introduction of the eight hour day or the seven hours' shift for miners, and the application of the regulations to all workers, employees and officials **without exception**;

3) in those countries where the application of the Washington Agreement would represent a real improvement for the working class, the Communist Party, in the course of organising a campaign for the realisation of the eight hour day, should make immediate demands for the ratification of the Washington Agreement by Parliament.

The first prerequisite for the complete success of the international fight for the eight hour day is the **establishment of international trade union unity** according to the example of the **English and Russian trade unions**. The international Conference of Communist Members Parliament appeals therefore to the proletariat of all countries to work in this spirit and to devote themselves to the cause of international trade union unity and thus of the unrestricted eight hour day in all countries.

Resolution on the Question of Alsace-Lorraine.

The Conference of the Communist Members of Parliament of France, Belgium, Germany, England, Poland, Holland and Switzerland, which was held from the 10th to 12th November in Brussels, declares that French imperialism, in spite of its assertions to the contrary, regarding the liberation of Alsace-Lorraine, has in these border provinces set up merely its own dictatorship in place of the former German dictatorship and even intensified this dictatorship by strongly reinforcing the inner French administrative, gendarme and police officials, by disregarding the language of the population; by the dispatching of Alsace-Lorraine soldiers to the colonial fronts, by the lowering of the wages and simultaneous maintenance of the heavy Alsace-Lorraine special taxes and special levies and finally by the gradual abolition of all the social achievements of the Alsace-Lorraine proletariat.

In view of the fact that the struggle between German and French imperialism for the possession of Alsace-Lorraine is solely for the purpose of securing to the one time victorious imperialism the exploitation of the natural treasures and of the working population of the country, the Conference declares that it most emphatically repudiates the **alleged right of the French**, as well as of German imperialism to the territory and the population of Alsace-Lorraine and that it is only the concern of the population of Alsace-Lorraine, who have never been consulted in this question, to **decide upon their own destiny** even up to complete separation from every imperialist power which desires to subjugate it.

The Conference approves of the appeal of the **Communist Party of France** to the Workers and Peasants' Congress in Strasbourg, as well as of the open letter which this Congress addressed to the Conference of Ministers at Locarno and in which was demanded the **right of self-determination** of the people of Alsace-Lorraine.

In view of the continual suppression of the working people of Alsace-Lorraine the Conference supports their demand for the **immediate carrying out of a plebiscite** which must give the population of Alsace-Lorraine the possibility of deciding their own destiny.

The Conference supports the present demands of the broad working masses of Alsace-Lorraine for the **immediate setting up of complete administrative autonomy** within the French State, which must go hand in hand with the withdrawal of the French administration, the recognition of the right of the people to use their mother tongue and the setting up of a provincial representation.

The Conference declares however that a real national emancipation of the Alsace-Lorraine population from every imperialist yoke can only be achieved and secured by the revolutionary struggle and victory the working and peasant masses.

Resolution on Syria.

The interparliamentarian communist conference, meeting in Brussels on November 10th, 11th and 12th 1925, sends a message of sympathy to the Syrian people in their fight for freedom.

It stigmatizes the part played by the League of Nations which, by giving France and England the mandates over Syria and Mesopotamia, consolidated and supported the imperialist policy of these two countries, that policy which was begun during the war with the complicity of Tsarist Russia, and which led to the disintegration of the old Ottoman Empire.

Imperialistic France hoped, by accepting this mandate, to create for herself a military and naval base which would enable her to control and oppose the expansionist policy in Asia Minor and to occupy an important position on the route to India. For this reason and because of the economic interests nearest to their hearts, the two rival imperialisms have fought so obstinately for the actual possession of the territories of the Arabian peninsula.

The policy of military occupation, of the exploitation and provocation of the population of Syria, which characterises the methods of French imperialism in the colonies, aims at actually annexing Syria to France and maintaining a firm hold on the positions held by French imperialism in the East of the Mediterranean.

This policy of enslavement has driven the masses in Syria who had already pronounced themselves in favour of independence, to resort to arms in order to free themselves from French oppression.

The revolt, which in the beginning was confined to the mountain population of the Djebel Drus, has now spread to all strata of the Syrian people, from the desert tribes of Syria to the workers of Damascus. The conflagration extends from North to South of Syria.

The national movement in Syria, by its character as a fight for freedom, by its spread and by the efforts to form a national government, shows that the Syrian people is determined to conquer its independence.

In view of the unanimous insurrection of the Syrians against French imperialism, the other imperialistic powers are preparing to take over the reversion of the French mandate or to organise things in such a way that it is transferred to another power.

The Conference approves of the fight of the Communist Party of France for the liberation of the Syrian people and, in view of the attempts of English imperialism to take possession, in a direct or indirect form, of the territories which threaten to slip out of the hands of French imperialism, it calls upon the Communist Party of Great Britain to oppose the proceedings of imperialism in their country.

The Conference not only opposes energetically the fresh attempts to transfer this territory to another imperialism, but stigmatizes emphatically all mandates of the League of Nations as a new form of colonial exploitation and demands that they be immediately annulled.

Down with the colonial mandates!

Down with the League of Nations!

Down with French and English imperialism!

Long live Syria's independence!

Long live the alliance of the international proletariat with the victims of oppression in the colonies!

HANDS OFF CHINA

The Recent Events in China.

By Semenov.

The latest events in China indicate a certain change in affairs.

Chang Tso Lin's troops which, after their first defeats, had retreated towards Suchou and had prepared for a decisive resistance, have suffered a fresh and still more serious defeat. A situation of this sort compels the people's armies to make corresponding decisions. As a matter of fact, acts of war have already taken place between the people's armies and Chang Tso Lin. In other words, events in China have already entered

into their chief phase, the phase of the fight of the national revolutionary forces against reaction in the person of Chang Tso Lin. The first serious conflict has taken place between the national forces and those forces which are the true servants of imperialism in China.

This fact that the people's armies have taken immediate military action against Chang Tso Lin is of extraordinary significance. The national liberation forces have entered into a real fight, and that at a moment which offers them the best prospects of success.

From the point of view of the choice of moment the situation of the people's armies is certainly favourable.

The northern troops of Chang Tso Lin are at present demoralised, a considerable part of them has deserted and gone over to the side of Chang Tso Lin's opponents. The forces collected round Shanghai by Chang Tso Lin have had to relax their pressure whilst Feng Yu Hsiang has been able to draw his troops into the Peking-Tientsin district, the arena of the chief encounter.

Further events will naturally develop on the lines of an embittered fight of the people's armies against Chang Tso Lin in the first place, and possibly a stop will be put to the further extension of the activities of the Chili group in North China. The people's armies being thus forced to act in two directions or at least to keep a watch in two directions, will probably cause a slackening in the pace of the battle to a certain extent.

The situation which has arisen is, for the imperialists, so serious that they will be compelled to state precisely their sympathies and antipathies for the various Chinese groups, and it is possible that they may take common action on this front which, from their point of view, is so important.

Japan which, with the defeat of Chang Tso Lin, is losing a considerable part of the positions she gained in consequence of the events of last year, will be compelled to reflect seriously on her situation in China, for it is no longer merely a case of driving Chang Tso Lin out of North China. As regards the prospects, the question is much more extensive. It is a case of a fight of the national forces for liberty against reaction in the whole of China, and naturally the extent of the fight of these forces will correspond to the extent of the whole Chinese Republic. Should Chang Tso Lin be defeated in the North, the last battlefield of these fighting forces will be Manchuria, which is at present Chang Tso Lin's base.

The loss of her influence in Manchuria would however be a serious disaster for Japan. In view of such prospects, Japan will consequently resort to the most desperate measures to prevent a final defeat of Chang Tso Lin. We shall certainly in a very short time hear desperate cries from the Japanese military staffs that it is necessary to "save the life and property of Japanese subjects in China".

Should the people's armies be victorious, England's interests will also receive a severe blow, though in a less degree than the interests of Japan, for, at first, through the Chili group which is predominant in the plains of the Yang Tse Kiang, England will retain her influence in that, for her, most important district. Nevertheless a victory of the people's armies in the North combined with victories of the Kuomintang troops in the South will doubtless release the revolutionary forces in Central China also, and in this way very seriously threaten English influence there.

Thus, in the event of the victory of the people's armies, the most energetic imperialist powers in China would be in an extremely difficult situation. It is therefore quite natural that they are seeking ways and means with the help of which they can at least relieve the situation.

It is obvious that measures of a diplomatic nature will be taken in order to influence the people's armies, but apart from this it is possible that they will give direct support to Chang Tso Lin, of course in a disguised form. Danger will then of course threaten "the property and the lives of foreigners" and in connection with this there will arise the "necessity" of armed protection for these foreigners. The imperialists have numerous means of exercising influence in China, but, to their regret, in recent times, the results have been quite contrary to what was intended.

The international proletariat must follow events in China with unrelaxing attention, as the further course of the revolutionary fight in China will largely depend on this or that turn in events just in this stage of the fight.

The situation is extremely complicated and serious. One thing however is clear: a victory of the national revolutionary forces in North China will release the revolutionary possibilities in the whole of China which are still held in check and, vice versa, their defeat threatens to cause a very serious delay in the pace of the Chinese revolution.

POLITICS

After Damascus.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

On the morning of November 8th, General Sarrail left Beirut for France. Only the high officials and the consuls of foreign States were assembled near the harbour. A sigh of relief went up throughout the whole country and from all strata of the population.

The Liberal-Democratic free-thinking representative of the "Left Bloc" had estranged himself from all sections of the Syrian people. After the slaughters of Beirut (July 1925), Hama, Djebel Drus and Damascus, he had become "bloody Sarrail", and even his best friends could not stand up for him. After the bombardment of Damascus which roused public opinion in the whole world against him, Sarrail had become the scapegoat of the French Ministry also. His recall was to be a proof that the Government of the French democracy did not identify itself with the atrocities of the French General in Syria. Now, to save the situation, a civil Supreme Commissioner for Syria has been appointed. A change of system, wide concessions etc., are promised. In Paris, they want to create the impression that they are ready to give in...

But in Damascus? Here, the unmitigated fury of the generals continues to hold sway as it has done for weeks. After a pause of a few days during which the population was paralysed by consternation and grief, the destruction of Damascus roused an unprecedented storm of indignation. Hundreds of telegrams of protest were sent to foreign countries by the religious authorities, and from the towns and villages of Palestine. The Mohammedans, of Persia protested, Shaukat Ali, the leader of the Indian Moslems sent an energetic telegram of solidarity, Zaglul Pasha in Egypt came out of his retirement which had lasted for a year and called on the Egyptians to "help their Syrian brothers". What endless negotiations and endeavours on the part of Mohammedan politicians had not been able to accomplish, was accomplished at one stroke by French imperialism: the whole of Islam from the Nile to the Ganges was, as one man, on the side of the Syrian insurgents!

For the latter the bombardment of Damascus was only a fresh spur to action. The insurgent movement had become extraordinarily popular. Whereas formerly the settled elements had often been inclined to doubt the necessity of "forcible means" and had disapproved of the spread of the guerilla war, shelter, food and material support was now readily granted to those who were fighting for freedom. A few days after the bombardment of Damascus, the French found themselves surrounded on all sides. As a matter of fact, only the fortified towns are in their hands, the smaller places and the open country are in the hands of the insurgents.

This difficult situation is now an excuse for more and more refined cruelties. The French Generals are no longer satisfied with wholesale shootings, wholesale hangings, wholesale arrests, bombardment of villages; they have now got to destroying whole towns. When the contribution of guns and money had not been deposited in Damascus by the date fixed, the French posted proclamations: "The town will be destroyed to-morrow". It was, it is true, possible to get the "destruction" postponed. But when, a few days later, the insurgents, after driving back the French troops, again approached to within 4 km of the town, the French artillery began to fire, without any consideration, on the few houses that remained after the terrible days of October 20th and 21st. In the last days before Sarrail's departure, more blood was shed than ever. While Paris was "changing its direction", the terror continued in Syria.

In spite of all this, the situation of the insurgents is at present particularly good. In Eastern Syria, the Winter has begun, a Winter which, in view of the mountainous character of these districts, is no less severe than in Europe. The Senegalese

and Indo-Chinese cannot easily be employed for mountain fighting, so that only the Circassians and the white soldiers are left who could only fight the bands effectively if their number were trebled. The French have therefore begun to recruit Kurds for the army who, however, are not very reliable.

The groups of insurgents are meanwhile uniting among themselves and measures are being taken to make a clear distinction between the insurgents and those bands of Bedouins who are using this good opportunity to carry out predatory raids. The groups of insurgents on their part even undertake to protect the towns and villages against the bands of robbers. In common with the divisions of Druses who are in front of Damascus, a kind of "front" is crystallising out of the insurgent groups which reaches from about Aleppo in the North through Hama, Homs, Damascus, to the borders of Lebanon where, at the present moment, a fresh insurrection has broken out on the slopes of Mount Hermon.

The London Exchange is this time justified in its mistrust when, regardless of the reassuring reports of M.M. Painlevé Briand, it has thrust the franc down to 123 to the pound as a result of authentic reports from Syria. The situation in Syria is a very serious one for France. The London Stock Exchange is however deceived if it imagines that Syria can be united with Palestine under the British mandate, as the "Near East", the semi-official organ of the Colonial Office has suggested. The Syrian insurgents have emphasised time and again that they are fighting for complete independence and against any kind of mandate.

It is interesting to observe how, in the vortex of the anti-imperialistic struggle, which externally offers the spectacle of a national united front, the factor of class yet makes itself felt. The whole Arabian Press does not tire of emphasising how completely the rich classes and the large property owners have betrayed the popular cause. During the worst hours in Damascus, when the town was enveloped in flames, the "dignitaries" of the town were negotiating with the French Generals. Each of them offered his services for "bringing the people to reason", if he and his family were suitably rewarded with titles and dignities. Even the Emir Abdullah, in whom many Arabians had placed their hopes, sold his "neutral attitude" for a few thousand pounds of "hush money".

None but workers, poor artisans and peasants are fighting on the barricades of Damascus and in the ravines of the Syrian mountains. This fact is constantly emphasised by the Arabians themselves. And the circumstance that in view of this fact, confidence in the "upper classes" the "aristocracy", "the rich", which has been deeply rooted in the people for centuries, is disappearing, is a no less important result of the Syrian insurrection than the danger which arises out of it for French imperialism.

The Chinese Peasants Support the Peasants of Syria.

(Telegram from General Hu-Han-Min to the President of the French Republic.)

The representative of the Kuomintang Party and of the Canton Government has sent a telegram to the French President, to the President of the Senate, the President of the Chamber of Deputies and also to the "Temp", protesting against the atrocities in Damascus. It is a matter of course that the French Government has withheld this telegram from the French public. The telegram is as follows:

"As we share in the indignation of the whole world regarding the brutal ill-treatment of thousands of innocent women and children by the French occupation troops in Damascus, in the name of the Kuomintang Party and of the Canton Government I send a protest to you against such monstrous cruelties. The atrocious actions of the French Generals in Syria are nothing else than a continuation of that which is taking place in China, i. e. attempts to drown in blood the awakening self-consciousness of the peoples of the East. Every honest-minded man must stigmatize this conduct before History and Humanity as the greatest crime.

Hu-Han-Min."

The Guarantee Pact.

By Karl Radek.

IV.

The Bankruptcy of the Left Bloc in France.

On May 11th 1924, the **Left Bloc** took the reins of the Government of France into its hands. Its inheritance was a difficult one after the war and after the rule of the **National Bloc**. To the expenses of the war were added the expenses of the post-war period which were in no way less than those that the war had demanded. In the same way as, during the war, the oligarchy which ruled in France, did not even trouble to cover its losses by a re-distribution of taxation, so it reconstructed the devastated areas in the North of France and maintained an army, all with the help of loans. It never thought at all about its foreign debts. Germany will pay France's internal debts, and her external debts will be written off in any case! This was the calculation of the **National Bloc** which exactly resembles the slogans of all decaying classes: "After us the deluge!"

The balance of the **National Bloc** was equally hopeless in the domain of foreign relations. The **National Bloc** carried on a war against Germany, after the war, without even adopting any new methods. The occupation of the Ruhr and all the other excursions which were even carried beyond the borders of the occupied areas determined by the Treaty of Versailles, were tantamount to an immediate continuation of the war. The **National Bloc** carried on a war against England in order to gain supremacy in Europe and in the Near East. It made it possible for England, both in Washington and in Genoa, to represent France as the only country guilty as regards armaments. The allies in Eastern Europe, who were to have been the pillars of the peace of Versailles, were only the source of new expenses and political friction. The **National Bloc**, which fought under the banner of opposition to the revolution, did not succeed in forcing even preliminary relations on the **Soviet Union**, although the Anglo-phobe attitude of Poincaré drove it towards an approach to Russia.

The **Left Bloc** came into power with the following programme: to put an end to the financial policy of the **National Bloc** as well as to its foreign policy, which had rendered impossible the mere thought of the reduction of armaments. But how has the **Left Bloc** kept its promise?

To begin with the financial question. Three hundred and five milliards of internal debt, of which 240 milliards were for long periods and 65 milliards for short periods of various kinds. Of the latter, 25 milliards must be paid in the next three years! Thirty five milliard gold francs of external debt (the internal debt is reckoned in paper francs). Out of 36 milliards annual expenditure, 23 milliards are devoted to the payment of interest on the internal debt, 7 milliards to the maintenance of the army. Only 6 milliard paper francs remain for all the other expenses of the State.

It goes without saying that this situation cannot continue. No State can use three quarters of its expenditure for the liquidation of past wars and for making preparations for new ones. The short period debt keeps the Government constantly threatened by an unexpected blow. Any panic on the Exchange may force the owners of Defence Loan and of Treasury Bonds to demand payment or to throw them on the market. The 35 milliard gold franc debt to England and America, with the addition of one or more dozen milliard francs in the hands of private persons abroad, may, in case of any international conflict, lead to the complete collapse of the franc.

How can an escape be found from this situation? France must repudiate a considerable part of her internal debt and, as far as possible, reduce her foreign indebtedness. The **Left Bloc** had promised to accomplish this first task by a levy on capital. M. Herriot, having succeeded to power, shrunk from this task and, without renouncing his programme, began for the time being, to carry things on by means of measures of inflation. He increased the issue of paper francs by 4 milliards. At the same time he increased the advances which he demanded of the State Bank. When this became known in April 1925, the Herriot Government fell. Then came the Painlevé Government with Caillaux as Minister of Finance. Caillaux brought with him the reputation of being the greatest expert in financial affairs and of a man with an iron fist.

M. Caillaux opposed the taxation of capital and declared that a situation of that kind would be a threat to the finances of

France and that the means for meeting expenses must be found by a gradual increase of the income tax and by internal and external loans. The internal loans were to make it possible to pay off the most dangerous debt, the short period one. The owners of short term bonds were to have the right to exchange them for a 4% loan with the guarantee that the interest on this loan would be paid independently of the exchange value of the franc, according to the gold standard. Thus, this loan, although it is lower by 1% than the rate of interest of the short period loan, was to provide France with 30—40 milliard francs, that is to procure her a breathing space for the next three years, by protecting the holders from loss owing to a decline in the currency. During this period it would be possible to raise the income tax without alarming the petty bourgeoisie by confiscations, and come to terms with England and America with regard to the foreign debts.

Caillaux's policy was thus characterised by the Government organ: "Ere Nouvelle":

"The present Cabinet is carrying out its work methodically and with restraint on the basis of the ideal which was shared by its predecessor, but, instead of the path which leads over steep mountains and precipices, it has chosen a way which ascends slowly, without offering any risks."

The **Left wing of the Left Bloc**, led by the Socialists, has accused Caillaux of turning his back on the programme of the **Left Bloc**, on the capital levy. M. Herriot and Leon Blum, personally or through their Press, took up an attitude of opposition to Caillaux, exactly like the Jacobins accusing the Girondists. But all this was only playing to the gallery. A mere glance at the Socialists' proposal for the levy on capital suffices. It provides for the owners of available capital to pay to the State, not one tenth, but a percentage of one tenth of their capital. The owners of unavailable property should be debited with a hypothecary debt, the owners of art collections, objects of art and similar unproductive values, were to pay a hundredth part of the value of this property in the course of ten years.

No one who is not an adherent of taxation fetishism can, even with a magnifying glass, see any difference between the programmes of Caillaux and Blum. Both the Right wing of the **Left Bloc** and the **Left wing** were afraid that any energetic pressure of taxation on capitalist circles would rouse violent opposition on the part of the banks, the Stock Exchange and the **Comité des Forges (Committee of Foundry Owners)**, and for this reason none of them could make up its mind to face the truth.

The truth however is that, with a falling franc, it is altogether out of the question to impose the ordinary means of taxation on large capital. The decline of the franc ensures the decline of the public revenue. The only way out of this dilemma is for the State to share in the income of the big capitalist undertakings with the help of what was called in Germany during the time of inflation "Seizure of real values." By receiving part of the value and a control over the industry, the State secured not only a source of income but also a means of controlling the whole of industry.

The **Left Bloc** did not dare to put forward this idea, because, although it represents the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, it is closely bound up with bank capital and secondly, because the French bourgeoisie will not consent to be taxed without a fight in which it mobilises the masses of large peasants who are no less free from taxation than they are themselves.

As M. Caillaux did not make up his mind to such an attack on capital and on the masses of the large peasants, he was compelled to resort to the usual means of inflation and to increase the issue of money by 6 milliard francs. The result of this Policy is an uninterrupted increase in the cost of living and a further fall in the franc. Under Poincaré the franc had suddenly fallen to 120 to the pound sterling; thereupon, with the help of a loan from the English bank Lazar Bros. and the Morgan Bank, the pound was temporarily reduced, and even fell to 67, but has now again risen to 120.

But Caillaux's endeavours to come to an agreement with England and America with regard to France's foreign debts, had no positive results. England reduced her demands from 20 million to 12 million pounds per year, but under the condition that the United States would also consent to a reduction of their interest which is equivalent to writing off part of the French debt.

America however was in no way deceived as to the significance of this British generosity. England's contract with America contains a point according to which America pledges herself to revise the agreement made with Baldwin should more favourable conditions be granted to other countries than were granted to England by that agreement. This is why the United States, faced with France's inability to accept conditions which would not have obliged the United States to revise their treaty with England, agreed that France should only pay 40 million dollars, i. e. 1% of her debt in the next five years, though no definite contract was concluded between them. France can settle this question finally in five years.

Neither the American Congress nor the French Parliament has yet ratified this amount. The first consequence of this proposal is, that instead of confidence in French finance being strengthened, the franc has received a serious blow. In anticipation of an agreement between France and America which would raise the exchange value of the franc, many American business men had bought francs which, after the failure of the negotiations, they threw on the market. French business men on the other hand, also anticipating an agreement, had failed to provide themselves with the necessary amount of foreign currencies and were now obliged to buy them at the highest price, which had a similar effect, that of reducing the rate of exchange of the franc.

The financial balance of the Government of the Left Bloc has thus to record a deepening and intensification of the financial crisis. The only authority on finance at the disposal of the Left Bloc, the saviour Caillaux, has proved a complete failure. The fact that Painlevé, in forming a new Cabinet without Caillaux, is trying to give the impression that the taxation policy of this Cabinet indicates a shift towards the Left, means that he is merely throwing sand in the eyes of the electors. The capital organised in banks and trusts will draw its own conclusions from the history of the eighteen months period of financial embarrassment through which the Left Bloc has passed. The lessons learnt are that the petty-bourgeois democracy of France is afraid of large capital and does not dare to touch it. The conclusions will be the following — our opponent is afraid and that means that we must exert pressure on him. Whereas the financial capital of France has until now defended its positions by sabotaging the Left Bloc, it will now take up the offensive.

The external position of France is determined by her financial position. Herriot agreed to the compromise of London which, while taking out of the hands of France the question of reparations as a means of exerting pressure on Germany — a means which might be used for a new appearance of Foch's programme — nevertheless promised certain payments on the part of Germany. The first year in which the Dawes plan functioned gave France what was due to her according to the compromise of London, but, and this is a very delicate matter, France only received part of the loan granted to Germany by America.

The attitude of the fathers of the London compromise to the viability of their child is demonstrated by their refusal, in the negotiations with regard to the French loan, to accept German payment instead of French, by demanding that France should pledge herself to make certain payments independently of whether Germany were able to pay her tribute or not. Herriot made efforts to obtain, in the London compromise, a whole number of juridical guarantees which would have helped him, if the Experts' Report had collapsed, to renew military pressure.

The fact however that the financial position of France grew worse, compelled the Left Bloc to reflect seriously not only whether it would be able in the future to recommence its military pressure, but also how France could guarantee herself against the regeneration of Germany. France's most important ally — Poland — is passing through a serious economic crisis which reduces her significance as a guarantor of the Peace of Versailles. France herself will not be able to maintain her military strength at the present level. This is why the desire is growing stronger and stronger in France that the Peace of Versailles should be guaranteed by outsiders.

This can only be guaranteed by England. She requires peace in the West, she requires to have her hands free from European conflicts, but she demands compensations for acting as guarantor to France. The first compensation is that France should renounce competition in the whole world and the fight for the hegemony in Europe. And France has no alternative

but to agree to this. And so we see France endeavouring to reduce little by little her dissensions with England.

Regarded from this point of view, France's attitude to the seizure of the Soudan was very characteristic. In the first moment, all the ghosts of Fashoda were conjured up, memories of the events when France, by penetrating into the Soudan, was on the verge of a war with England. But the malicious joy over Britain's difficulties in Egypt immediately gave place to fear of rousing England's anger. France pursued a similar policy in China in connection with the events in Shanghai. After a number of demonstrations against England, intended to show the British Government the value of France's friendship, France veered round and followed in the wake of British policy.

The insurrections in Morocco and in Syria will afford the ideological basis for these tactics of giving way to England.

If the Press of the Left Bloc endeavoured, during the rule of the Labour Government in England, to represent the concessions of the previous year in London as an act of solidarity on the part of the pacifist governments, as an act of solidarity of international democracy, the Painlevé Government, which sends out the radical Malvy to ask the help of the Spanish Primo de Rivera in the common fight against the rebellious Riffs, must now, with regard to the British Conservative Government, again proclaim the idea of the solidarity of the imperialistic Powers who are protecting their plunder from the rebellious peoples of Asia and Africa.

The anonymous author who writes under the pseudonym "African" in the programme book "Manuel de la Politique Musulmane" (Text-Book of Moslem Policy), in advocating the idea of the solidarity of the colonial Powers against the rebellious peoples, energetically attacks French publicists who come forward with exposures of British imperialism. Behind this pseudonym is concealed no less a person than Lyautey, the old colonial wolf of France, who has just broken his teeth on the rock of the Riffs and on the guns of the insurgents under Abd el Krim.

Anxiety about the security of the French frontiers in Europe and the colonial power of France in Africa are inducing France to bargain with England, to subordinate herself to British policy. Financial worries compel her to gaze longingly across the Atlantic Ocean in the direction of the United States. The French Press is now speaking of the United States in a language which is very reminiscent of its accusations against England.

However much the French petty bourgeoisie may be justified in the feeling of discontent which has arisen from the necessity of paying its debts, it will be of no avail, for without American loans France will not be able to extricate herself from the financial crisis into which she has fallen. France expects guarantees for her frontiers from England but, as we all know, man cannot live from frontiers alone, and therefore the Left Bloc and the whole French bourgeoisie must take into account the political demands of the United States.

The United States demand in the first place that the interest on debts should be paid. This is impossible unless the policy of the imperialistic plans which do not permit of the limitation of armaments, be abandoned. France is already preparing for this reduction of armaments in spite of the vigorous protests made by the French imperialistic Press in connection with the negotiations regarding the Guarantee Pact. Thus France is subjected to pressure from two sides: from the side of England and of the United States. As regards the question of Germany, this pressure works in one direction. As regards the colonial questions and especially the Far East, France may find herself subjected to the pressure of two opposing forces, when the position of the United States is revised.

In any case this brief survey of the situation of France shows how little is left to France of the motor force she possessed at the time of Versailles. France is no longer a victorious State, but a State which is in need of economic and political help. The dependence of France has considerably increased since the time of the London negotiations over the Experts Report. Between London and Locarno there lies the bankruptcy of the Left Bloc. This proves that the rule of the Left Bloc is in itself nothing more nor less than a form of the defeat of French imperialism, a form of its recoil along the whole line of international policy. If tomorrow reaction, appearing openly and undisguised, takes the place of the Left Bloc, this will not restore to it the strength which Poincaré's policy possessed.

France's claims to hegemony in Europe are no longer based on the strength of France. The German Press emphasised with great triumph the fact that Germany was on an equal footing with the other Powers in Locarno, and there is a good deal of truth in these assertions. Germany is now face to face with a weakened France.

THE BALKANS

The Situation in Roumania.

By C. Olteanu (Bucharest).

Even all the bourgeois national economists at last admit that Roumanian agriculture has collapsed, and in vain they look for help.

Not a single one of them however consents to see the real cause of this collapse.

It is the regime of neo-serfdom and the attempts of the Roumanian oligarchy to extend this regime to the occupied territories. It is only with the support of this regime that the oligarchy can continue to glean rich profits without working and to maintain their predominance, while the Roumanian peasants live and work like miserable cattle.

The more the oligarchy sees reaction gaining in strength in Western Europe, the more energetic are the measures it adopts to reinforce and extend the neo-serfdom.

The carrying out of the administration reforms will entirely remove the peasantry from the management of the districts and parishes, whilst the election reform which is planned, will limit more than ever the share of the workers in the control of the State.

The Dobrudja is to be colonised with thousands of Macedonian families, the Banat with refugees from Jugoslavia and Hungary. Voices in favour of the sabotage and revision of agrarian reform, nay even for annulling it, and for consolidating and restoring the old landed property are making themselves more and more heard.

Argetvianu, the former Minister of the Interior, has already declared that it was a mistake to give land to the widows, orphans and peasants with only small holdings, as they do not understand how to cultivate it and have not the necessary equipment. He therefore demands the restoration of the former conditions of property.

The collapse of agriculture is evident also from official figure. The area under cultivation in 1924-25 (up to May 1925) was less than in the previous year by 2,000,000 hectare (i. e. by almost a fifth). Hardly 8,000,000 hectares were cultivated, i. e. 50% of the area under cultivation before the war.

Now however all the official dreams of a brilliant harvest and rich exports are vanished. At first they hesitatingly admitted that at the most 59,000 waggons of wheat could be exported, but now exports are throttled altogether "in the interests of home consumption". Drought and storms in Bessarabia, Northern Moldavia and some parts of Transylvania have caused a complete failure of the harvests. If a few hundred waggons were to be exported, it would have to be regarded as a very favourable sign. Hunger is driving the peasants from village to village, and even in the districts where the harvest is good the position of the peasantry is a desperate one, as the oligarchy does everything in its power to deprive them of the fruits of their work.

With devilish calculation, the National Bank and the other banks suspended the credits for agriculture, even before the harvests, in order to raise the rate of interest up to 30 or even 40%. When the peasants were obliged to sell their harvests, the National Bank forced the Lei up to 2.75 centimes, so that the liberal banks and associations could buy corn for a small amount in Lei. In August the credits granted to the agriculturalists by the Agricultural Credit Bank, were reduced from 130 million to 125 million lei. The National Bank immediately issued new notes to the value of a milliard lei, so as to make it possible for the liberal banks and associations to buy up the peasants' harvests.

Ridiculous sums were given by the Government for allowance in the districts in Bessarabia and Transylvania (Bihar) which were suffering from famine, and that on the condition that the starving peasants should make and repair roads. These allowances do not in any way help in the development of agriculture.

For the coming year, prospects are still worse. In all probability, the area under cultivation will be still further reduced and the number of cattle will diminish. Even last year the number of young cattle fell by 200,000 head, that of young pigs by 300,000 head.

There is no doubt that the products of the neo-serf peasantry can never compete with those of the capitalistic countries and of the Soviet Union.

The oligarchy is aware of this danger, as is proved by the outcry in the whole Press, according to which the Soviet Union is driving Roumania out of all markets for corn. Instead of thinking of loosing the peasant from all his fetters and making it possible for him to buy equipment and to use modern appliances, the representatives of the oligarchy, the Liberals, are tightening the fetters of the peasant and absolutely refusing any credits for agriculture.

The petroleum and wood industries can regard an intensification of their production in 1925. The high prices of petroleum have furthered this process. Foreign competition, it is true, and the substitution of coal for petroleum on the Roumanian railways has to a certain extent limited the production of petroleum.

As regards the intensive production and export of wood, the position is that the Roumanian forests are being carelessly exploited in a way that may become fatal to forestry. There is already talk of the deforestation of Roumania and the formation of a wood trust.

Up to the present, in spite of all protectionism, the metal industry has hardly been able to meet 40% of the home demand, now, in view of the decay of agriculture, it is in a still worse position. In the largest iron works in Roumania, in Reschitza, only 50% of the number of pre-war workers are employed.

The mines are working more intensively than last year. In the gold mines in Brad a strike is going on which involves more than 1800 workers.

More sugar beet is available this year for the sugar factories, but the Government has guaranteed them the maintenance of the old prices.

In the meantime traffic continues to be completely disorganised. In consequence of the weak permanent way, accidents and catastrophes do not cease. The so-called "autonomy" has not even brought about the demilitarization of the railways.

The financial crisis has led to a general demand for a fresh issue of notes. Bank notes for a milliard of lei have already been issued, further issues are to follow. The spectre of inflation can also be seen in Roumania.

The large banks which have monopolized the credit of the National Bank, maintain a rate of interest of 30-50%.

According to official reports, the financial position of the State is excellent. The budget will close with a surplus of 2 milliard of lei, in reality however, with a gigantic deficit, although not all the regular expenses are included in it; even the fact of the enormous deficit in exports is a convincing proof of this.

According to statistics of the railway management, up to Oct. 12th., hardly 383 waggons of corn had been loaded for export and 1159 for internal consumption in all the stations in the country. And that in the height of the season!

The trade balance is also adverse. The deficit in the export of corn will further increase the deficit in the trade balance.

In this state of affairs, negotiations are now being carried on with regard to the consolidation of the pre-war debts to America and the West European States. All the bourgeois parties have now sanctioned the payment of these debts, whereas, only a short time ago, Vintila Bratianu, the Minister for Finance, declared that it would mean the eternal enslavement of the Roumanian people. This platonic readiness is actually supposed to strengthen the trustworthiness of Roumania in applying for new loans for armaments, but it is in reality driving the country towards a fresh catastrophe.

In these circumstances the misery and distress of the workers is growing from day to day, and with them their indignation.

Whereas wages have hardly reached 15-35 times the pre-war wages, the index of the increase in the cost of living already amounts to 56% times. The eight hours' day in individual branches are from 9-14. The same applies to the Sunday rest; it also only exists on paper. Although the workers are

compelled to contribute to sick-insurance, they perish miserably without receiving medical help.

On the other hand, the Liberal Government is depriving the workers of all democratic civil rights and liberties.

The control of the trade unions by Siguranza and the police, the prohibition of public meetings, the system of informers in the factories and the "black lists" etc. are increasing the discontent of the masses.

In the great strikes in the wood industry and in the factories in Arad and Temesvar etc., the workers have given proof of an astonishing fighting spirit. The arrest of the unitarian trade union council led to the first political strike since 1921.

This increased general fighting spirit showed itself also in the numerous peasant revolts and in the election campaign for the Agricultural Chambers. It was thanks to this spirit that the Liberal party could not even gain a third of the votes.

The discontent of the broad masses of State and public officials is also continuously growing, and even the bourgeois Press urges that their demands should be satisfied as, apart from the apparatus of force, they are the only bulwark against revolution.

As a result of being more and more deprived of their rights in every respect, the national minorities are being literally driven to open and final insurrection.

These daily fights, but especially the coming election campaigns, are strengthening the idea of a united front, are allowing it to take the form of flesh and blood (the united front with the National Party in Transylvania) and are creating the preliminary conditions for the peoples of Roumania to shake off the yoke of the oligarchy.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Convention of the American Federation of Labour.

By J. Louis Engdahl (Chicago).

Two delegations of working class representatives from foreign lands — Great Britain and Germany — helped to emphasize the conflicting positions of the 45th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour just held at the seaside pleasure resort, Atlantic City.

Arthur A. Purcell and Ben Smith, of the British Trade Union Congress, brought a militant message of labour unity from the British workers who are assailed by unemployment and facing new onslaughts by the employers, while the German delegation of fifteen, headed by Fritz Tarnow, came as apostles of the capitalist "peace" in Western Europe, espousing the Dawes plan, hailing the Locarno Conference, and attacking the rule of the workers and peasants in the Union of Soviet Republics.

There were no discussions in the convention of the effects of the Dawes plan in Europe, or of its repercussions on industrial conditions in the United States. No discussion of the Locarno Conference gathering simultaneously in the Swiss city. A. F. of L. meetings do not discuss such questions.

This was, in fact, not a meeting of "labour leaders", but a gathering of labour bankers, happy over their achievements in the financial world, with their little "windows on Wall Street" and now planning to launch insurance companies: favouring "company unions" on the theory that "if the representatives of the union control any employees representation plan offered by the employers, it ceases to be a menace".

Green Loves Coolidge Rule.

No desire for class struggle here. Only the highest expression yet reached of President Green's declaration that "It is not our purpose to attack the institutions of our government. We love our government, we love America, we love its history and traditions."

It was into this arena that seven progressive resolutions were hurled, bringing forth roars of disapproval from these rabid defenders of things as they are.

The Labour Party resolutions drew the most intensive fire. It came as a challenge to the adoption by the convention of the moth-eaten non-partisan policy of the Federation, for working within the capitalist parties.

The Labour Party resolution was stigmatized as containing "a revolutionary philosophy branded and repudiated. It demands that organised labour in its political activities associate itself with 'all other political organisations of a working class nature', undoubtedly intending thereby to advocate political co-operation with the socialist and Communist Parties; it refers to the government as a thing apart from the American people and as having been hitherto entirely out of their control."

President Green declared — "There may be a time when we in America can organise an independent political party, when our nation becomes an industrial nation, as Great Britain now is, when the centres of population have grown and increased and the distances between our villages and our cities are greatly reduced... There is no need here of a class war or a class struggle. The power of government is inherently vested with the voters of America."

Thus these "labour" chiefs accept the Labour Party in principle but conjure up utopian dreams in which the labour party is to leap fullgrown from ideal economic conditions. There is no conception of the Labour Party developing out of the daily struggles and needs of the masses, a weapon forged in the heat of conflict.

A Resolution Favouring Amalgamation is Rejected.

"Amalgamation of the various trade unions, so that there will remain only one union for each industry" was rejected. On this resolution no official of importance cared to speak.

The plea to "Organise the Unorganised!" went to the executive council, the burial ground for organisation resolutions. The convention decided to launch an organisation campaign, and has prepared a movie for that purpose. But the drive as outlined is purely a propaganda affair with no ambitious attempt being made, to carry on an organisation struggle.

The resolution attacking class collaboration was killed by the convention with no comment by the committee nor contrary argument by any of the delegates. The demand for a militant policy of struggle against the employers was rejected.

Reject Trade Union Unity.

The resolution on world trade union unity was declared "an impudent proposal". The A. F. of L. proclaims its suzerainty over the organised workers of this western world, just as the United States government, in the early days of the nation, proclaimed its premier position through the Monroe Doctrine. It may, therefore, be well to quote at some length as follows:

"We convey to the world the most solemn warning of which we are capable that we will not willingly tolerate in the Western Hemisphere any old-world movement which seeks to impose itself upon American peoples over the will of those peoples. What the United States government, through President Monroe, expressed to Europe as a warning against armed territorial aggression, we convey in equally emphatic terms regarding aggression by propaganda. The Americas stand for democracy. The Pan-American Federation of Labour is the recognised international labour movement of the Americas. Through it the American republics give expression to the aspirations and ideals of their wage-earning masses and the American peoples are determined that it shall so continue. Neither the Red International of autocratic Moscow nor any other international may in complacency ignore this definition of American labour policy."

But in the very hour that this bit of cheap demagogy was being inflicted upon the delegates, American marines were shooting this much-vaunted "democracy" into native workers of Panama City, in the Republic of Panama, who had dared strike against the high rents and bad housing conditions, while at the same time reports came drifting into the convention of the shooting down of fourteen defenseless agricultural workers, at the town of La Cruz, District of Rio Grande, Republic of Nicaragua. The victims of this wholesale murder were employed by the Cuyamel Fruit Company and their only crime was striking for higher wages. The A. F. of L. voted to investigate. It didn't do even that much in response to the plea of Porto-Rican labour, enslaved to Wall Street's dollar chariots. The plight of these workers was merely referred to the executive council for such considerations as it may care to give. The A. F. of L. extends its hand to the blood-dripping grip of American imperialism, cementing its compact with the anguish and misery of the op-

pressed peoples of this western world. No wonder that that hand refuses to function as Russian labour extends toward it the hand of the world fraternity of all labour.

Similarly, in reporting on the demand for the recognition of the Union of the Soviet Republics, the resolutions committee again rushed to the side of the American imperialist regime, and vented its wrath on the Russian Workers' Republic. Here are strange words coming from a labour organisation:

The American Federation of Labour urges the government of the United States to maintain the position it has taken in favour of the non-recognition of the Soviet regime.

Yet the chairman of the foreign relations committee of the United States senate, Senator William E. Borah, of Idaho, is an ardent advocate of Soviet recognition. In the recognition struggle, between the "Strikebreaker" Coolidge and the western liberal, Borah, the heads of organised labour take their stand with the New England "open shopper". It looks as if Wall Street's government will recognise the Soviet Union before the A. F. of L. demands this step under pressure from the American working masses.

Sidestep Organisation of Negro Workers.

On the resolution for the organisation of Negro workers, the Green regime dodged again. It refused to vote "yes" or "no" on the demand that "the most effective and sincerest means by which the American Federation of Labour can ensure a response to its efforts to organise the Negro workers is to take up in an aggressive and whole hearted manner the cause and defense of the Negro against legal and social discrimination and abuses, such as lynching, segregation, disfranchisement, etc.; so that organised labour becomes the champion of the most abused and exploited section of the working class."

To be sure it was claimed that the "American Federation of Labour from its birth favoured and advocated the organisation of all wage workers irrespective of race, colour or creed." But the proof of the failure of the A. F. of L. in this respect is that the door of race prejudice in nearly all union halls slammed in the face of the Negro workers, resulting in very few Negro workers being organised in the recognised unions.

Left Wing Is Small.

It is an uphill, desperate fight, battling for these progressive measures in the A. F. of L. conventions. This was more true of the Atlantic City gathering than any preceding it. The left wing was very small and almost inarticulate.

So-called "socialist" and militant elements of yesterday lined up solidly with the official machine in this convention.

Only once did the tinder of an idea strike fire in the convention that was not of Left wing origin. That was when John P. Frey, editor of the Moulder's Journal, and president of the Ohio State Federation of Labour, wanted to get a statement on wages adopted by the gathering. "A fair day's pay for a fair day's work" has always been the A. F. of L. slogan, and when the executive council made its report on "wages" it certainly did not intend to change it. The report dealt exclusively with wage reductions in the textile industry, where organised labour had failed utterly to put up a successful struggle against repeated slashes in the pay envelope. Now it pleaded with the employers that "wage reductions diminish purchasing power of the group of workers in the textile industry, which is reflected in the business of the whole community and extends out into the industrial fabric of the whole nation". Instead of wage reductions the labour officials offered as their solution of the problem, the elimination of waste through more efficient management, to be achieved through "intelligent co-operation" between the capitalist and the wage worker.

It was here that Delegate Frey injected himself into the proceedings by offering an amendment declaring that, "Social inequality, industrial instability and injustice must increase unless the workers' real wages, the purchasing power of their wages, is increased in proportion to man's increasing power of production."

Delegate Lynch of the printers, who tipped the right wing of this reactionary gathering, rallied to the defence of Frey in part as follows:

"The productive power in this super-age in which we live, this abundance which we are enjoying, is due to a very great

extent to labour saving machinery and the effect of labour saving machinery will not be only increases in wages, but also be accompanied by further reductions in the hours that the wage earners work."

Since the Duncan-Woll group at the head of the resolutions committee felt itself tied up in a knot, it pleaded that the question of "wages" be referred back to it. This wish was complied with and the committee came back accepting the Frey-Lynch suggestions.

See Far-Reaching Implications.

There are far-reaching implications indeed in this declaration that the worker's real wages must keep pace with his increasing power of production. The contrary is everywhere the actual case. Wages are being reduced in the textile industry in spite of increased production. The convention knew this; heard the bitter story from the lips of Thomas F. McMahon, head of the United Textile Workers of America. Efforts to cut wages in the face of increased production, was the burden of the story brought to the convention by John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, in reviewing the bitter industrial war in the anthracite coal fields in the neighboring state of Pennsylvania. The delegates of the Bakers' Union brought the news of the new \$ 600,000,000 merger of mergers in the bread industry, with its increased prices for bread and the "open shop" war against its workers resulting in lower wages. Everywhere labour-saving machinery is reducing skilled labour to the role of unskilled workers, with higher productive capacity, but at reduced compensation.

But no effective steps were taken by the convention to combat this situation. Words of sympathy for the anthracite miners, promises to beg the government at Washington to make an investigation of the bread industry for the mill slaves of New England. Nowhere was there even the faintest symptom of class action that might carry even this theory of wages into practice. On the other hand there are everywhere signs of militant aggressions on the part of the great exploiters to tear down all wage and living standards.

Bourgeois Labour Leaders of the United States.

By Earl R. Browder (Chicago).

It is a favourite form of attack upon the Communists, that we are guilty of "slander" against the trade union officials. But no "slander" can be such complete proof of the unfitness of these officials to direct the labour movement as is the information which these officials furnish about themselves. For out of the financial reports of the labour bureaucrats comes the irrefutable proof that these men have been completely divorced from the working class. They live like capitalists, they eat like capitalists, they act like capitalists, they draw incomes that compare very favourably with the capitalists. In fact they have become capitalists, of a lower and servile order, and they become more so each day.

Let us examine the comparative financial incomes of the labour leaders and cabinet members, governors, army officers etc.:

There is, for example, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. The president of this organisations, Wm. B. Prenter, receives a salary of \$ 25,000 per year.

This is more than the combined salaries of two members of President Coolidge's cabinet. The annual pay-cheques of Andrew Mellon, Secretary of the Treasury, and Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, combined would still fall short by \$ 1000 of that of Mr. Prenter. Prenter's salary is two-and-one-half times that of the Governors of Massachusetts, of New York, of Pennsylvania, and of Ohio, and more than twice as much as that of the Governor of Illinois. These are the greatest and richest States in America.

And how about the other big-bugs of the labour movement?

There is William Green. He inherited from Samuel Gompers not only the title of President of the American Federation of Labour. He also took over an annual salary of \$ 12,000.

This is the same amount that is paid by the U. S. Government to the members of the President's cabinet. It is the same as that of the Governor of Illinois. It is greater than the salary of any of the other Governors of the 48 States in the United

States. It is four times the salary of the Governor of South Dakota. It is 20% more than the salaries of Admirals in the U. S. Navy and of Generals in the U. S. Army.

Then there is **Wm. G. Lee**, head of the **Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen**. Not content with his private position as president of a great railroad equipment manufacturing concern, he draws a salary from the Union of \$ 14,000 per annum. This puts him in a salary-class above the Presidential Cabinet members of the U. S. Government, higher than all the State Governors, and 40% more than the highest officers of the U. S. Army and Navy.

Many of the national labour leaders are in the \$ 10,000 per year category. Among the most prominent are the **presidents of the Railways Clerks, the Railroad Conductors, the Bricklayers, the Street Railway Employees,** and the **Secretaries of the A. F. of L., the Locomotive Engineers, and the Trainmen**. Only a small handful of the most elect capitalist government officials are in a salary-class above these prosperous labour leaders.

Wages of workers in industry are being steadily reduced. Not so the salaries of our labour union officials. There is the case, for example, of **Daniel Tobin**, president of the **Teamster's Union**. Up to September this year Tobin received a niggardly \$ 9,000 per year. But at the Seattle Convention, this salary was raised, in appreciation that Tobin was "just as good" as his colleagues, to \$ 15,000.

It may be imagined by some that this, repeated for a number of other examples, would exhaust the story. But no. Salary is only the beginning. In addition, each of these aristocrats receives a nice sum for "expense account". This account ranges in size from a few thousands per year, to tens and even hundreds of thousands.

An example, taken at random from one of the smaller unions: In the report of the Sheet Metal Workers Union to the 1924 convention, it is shown that President **Hynes** received during the year, in addition to salary of \$ 17,875, expense money to the amount of \$ 24,070.74, or a total of more than fifty thousand dollars.

Behind these "millionaire incomes", paid to these "labour leaders" out of the dues of the membership, there is quite a definite theory. Briefly stated, it is that the unions must pay the officials enough money to keep them "loyal", so that the generous offers of the capitalists may not tempt them. This theory found classic expression in the words of **John L. Lewis** of the **Miner's Union**, when he pleaded for an increase in salary before the Indianapolis Convention of 1921. Lewis said:

"Mine superintendents are paid throughout the central competitive field and other substantial mining districts amounts nearly equal that paid your International Vice-President and your Secretary. Your officers have to deal with these men... they are expected to compete with them in the industrial field, and surely if you are going to regard efficiency and loyalty, diligence and energy, you will at least accord them the treatment they would receive if they worked for a mining company."

In short, the labour unions are told that they must bid against the capitalists for the services of their "leaders". And inasmuch as the American capitalists are so rich, and have such a keen appetite for "labour leaders", it has followed that the salaries of the officials have reached phenomenal heights.

These are the conditions and the ideology which have created of the labour officialdom of America a very definite bourgeois sub-class, divorced from the working class in almost every respect, and functioning by its very nature as the ideal "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class".

Against the Destruction of the Italian Trade Unions by Fascism.

A Letter from the R. I. L. U. to the Amsterdam Trade Union International.

The Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions has sent the following communication to the Amsterdam International:

"The Italian Trade Unions, which were established as the result of long years of struggle, have been destroyed by the Fascist government. The Fascist bodies have taken possession of the Trade Union premises. The Police and the Fascist bands are creating a monopoly for the Fascist Trade Unions.

The Italian industrialists are taking advantage of the destruction of the Trade Unions in order to draw the sling round the neck of the Italian proletariat still tighter. The Italian working class is in an extremely difficult situation, and the immediate and whole-hearted assistance of the entire international proletariat is necessary in order to call a halt to the Fascist brigands.

The International Federation of Trade Unions and the Red International of Labour Unions are equally interested in coming to the aid of the Italian Trade Union Movement.

We propose that common action be organised in all countries against the monstrous Fascist brigandage. There exists not the least doubt as to the pressing need for such action, and we therefore propose commencing with united forces the fight against the destruction of the Italian Trade Unions.

We should be much obliged if you would inform us in what way you consider this common action should be organised on behalf of our Italian brothers. We declare beforehand our readiness to use every effort in order to remove every obstacle which might stand in the way of a common fight against Fascism.

(signed) Lozovsky."

THE WHITE TERROR

Béla Kun on the Trial of Rákosi and his Comrades.

Moscow, November 18. 1925.

Regarding the transference of the trial of Rákosi and his comrades to the ordinary Court, comrade **Béla Kun** has written an article appearing in to-day's "Pravda" which states:

Thanks to the determined intervention of the Hungarian workers and of the international proletariat, as well as of all honest intellectuals of the Old and New World, the first period of the struggle for the life of comrade Rákosi and his four comrades has ended in a victory.

Comrade Béla Kun pays tribute to the calm and heroic behaviour of the accused before the Special Court and gives the following reasons for the transference of the trial to an ordinary Court:

Firstly: The pressure of the Hungarian working class and peasantry on the Hungarian government, which has been so strong that the Social-Democracy which is allied with the Hungarian government was compelled not only to protest against the Special Court, but also to raise the question of the legalising of the Communist Party.

Secondly: The unexampled solidarity of the international working class, their large-scale protest action, which was only sabotaged by the most brazen-faced elements of the II. International as **MacDonald**, but which, on the other hand, was supported by eminent and world-famous scholars and artists of all countries.

Thirdly: The split in the ranks of the Hungarian governing class. While the Horthy system stands for the Special Court, Bethlen only resorts to the latter in exceptional cases. Under the pressure of the Fascists the government delivered Rákosi over to the Special Court. The transference of the case to the ordinary Court is intended to signify the restoration of so-called "legal order".

Comrade Béla Kun emphasises that it is only the first round of the fight for the Rákosi that is ended, and that his life is still threatened by the ordinary Court, as the activity of Rákosi during the Soviet Republic will be treated as common crime (murder, robbery etc.).

The trial will have an enormous importance in so far as the question of the legalising of the Communist Party is raised. The CP. of Hungary is, of course, aware of the true value of the hypocritical bourgeois-social-democratic demands for the legalising of the Communist Party. The CP. of Hungary will expose this hypocrisy by fighting with increased energy for legalisation.

UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS.

The Vodka Question in the Soviet Union.

By B. (Moscow).

The reintroduction of the sale of 40% vodka in the Soviet Union is a measure on which the Soviet Union only decided after considerable heart-searching. The Soviet Government has for years tried, by all kinds of means, to combat the consumption of alcohol. But the most rigorous prohibitive measures which were carried out by the authorities to the utmost of their power, have not succeeded in exterminating the distilling of spirits in the country. On the contrary, the longer it lasted the more the secret distillers of spirit succeeded in adapting themselves to the conditions in such a way as to escape being caught by the authorities. The production and consumption of secretly distilled spirits increased from year to year. In the same way in America, in spite of prohibition and in spite of the fact that a special official apparatus has been created to enforce the prohibition laws, the smuggling of alcohol and the secret production of alcohol has increased to such an extent that some persons maintain that the consumption of alcohol is more widely spread now in America than before the introduction of prohibition legislation. (See the journal "Amerikanische Stimmen", New York & Berlin.)

The secret distilling of spirits has the greatest disadvantages and most injurious effects on the national economy and the health of the people. The secretly distilled alcohol ("Samogonka") contains fusel oil and other ingredients which are injurious to health. In Russia there have frequently been cases of wholesale poisonings and wholesale blindness as the result of the consumption of secretly distilled spirits.

According to careful estimates, about 2.5 million tons of cereals have been distilled into spirits every year in the country districts of Russia. The money value of these quantities of cereals amounts to 12—15 million pounds sterling.

But apart from this, the secret distillery was socially harmful. The distillers were recruited almost exclusively from the circles of the large peasants, the village usurers etc. The traffic in spirits was, in their hands, a means for gaining influence among the poor and middle peasants, a means by which they were able to make the poor and middle peasants economically and politically dependent on them.

In these circumstances, the Soviet Union has resolved to re-introduce the sale of 40% vodka. The advantages of this measure are obvious. In the first place, a great economy of cereals is effected in this way, as three times as much spirits can be produced out of the same quantity of corn in the large distilleries as by the methods of the secret stills. Further the large distilleries use mainly potatoes and not cereals for the production of alcohol.

The specifically injurious effects on health of the secretly distilled spirits are eliminated from the purified spirits which are produced in the large distilleries.

Further, the large peasants are deprived of the possibility of enriching themselves by means of the distilleries at the cost of the poorer strata of the population. The profits on the State sale of vodka flow into the public exchequer and are used for social purposes.

The bourgeois and social democratic newspapers which now, as usual, try to lay the blame for everything possible at the door of the Soviet Union, compare this measure with the spirit monopoly during the time of Tsarism. The comparison is not on all fours. Before the war, 95 million pails of vodka were sold, now, according to the plan of the State centre for the control of spirits, only 20 million pails will be put on the market every year. Before the war, the spirit monopoly was a means for promoting alcoholism, for the financial system of Tsarism was dependent on the income from this monopoly. The financial system of the Soviet Union is based on quite different foundations.

The present measure of the Soviet Union serves the purpose of exterminating the secret distilling of spirits, for that is the first pre-requisite for the extermination of alcoholism. Of course

the fight against alcoholism is not being neglected. A whole number of measures are provided for (prohibition of the sale of vodka on Sundays, to juveniles etc.). A decisive blow against alcoholism can however only be struck by raising the general level of culture of the population, and in this respect the Soviet Union does more than any other Government.

ORGANISATION

Factory Nuclei — Street Nuclei — Working Groups.

By W. Ulbricht.

The political tasks of the Communist Party demand that the factory nuclei should form the basis of the Party organisation. We must not, however, forget that it is necessary also to include those comrades who are not working in factories and who are not members of factory nuclei. It is necessary to gather these together in street nuclei with a view to systematic work among persons individually occupied, housewives, the unemployed and the middle classes in residential districts. This becomes particularly evident during election campaigns. In the last few months we have observed that in two important sections of the Comintern, in the CP. of France and the CP. of Germany the election campaigns were carried on unsatisfactorily. The CP. of France undertakes too little work in residential districts, as almost nothing but factory nuclei exist, and the working groups were found wanting and, by way of contrast, the CP. of Germany carried on the election movement almost exclusively in residential districts and neglected the factories. In spite of the importance of work in the residential districts, the Agitprop work should, for the following reasons, be concentrated, in the first place, on the factories even during the election campaign:

a) the vital connection between factory questions and the general political questions of the election makes it easiest to unmask the election frauds of the opposing parties.

b) It is to our interest in the first place to win over the industrial workers, as far as possible without exception, during the election campaign, because they are the decisive factor in the struggles of the workers.

c) With the help of the factory newspapers and by the distribution of the daily papers inside the factories and at the factory gates, it is most easily possible to influence systematically the most important strata of the working class.

d) It is only possible quickly and successfully to organise factory delegations and mass demonstrations when Parliament meets, if agitation and propaganda has been carried on in the works on a large scale during the election campaign.

The same applies to the fight against the social-democratic party. We shall not make any advance if we confine ourselves merely to general agitation against the social-democratic party in ordinary public meetings. On these occasions there is often a more or less serious row between the social-democratic organizers of the meeting and the communist speakers in the discussion, but this hardly contributes towards convincing the social-democratic workers. In the factories on the other hand, we can make use of all the questions of the day to open the eyes of the workers as to the true nature of social democratic policy. Social democracy has recognised the significance of this factory organisation. Thus for instance, the report of the district leaders of the district Berlin-Brandenburg of the SP. of Germany states:

"The factory secretariat has made it its business to see that the men's representatives are provided with the necessary material to ensure to our party the respect it deserves, in the trade unions and in the factories."

This quotation shows how much significance the SP. of Germany attaches to agitation in the factories. In spite of their betrayal of the interests of the workers, the social-democratic leaders have succeeded so far through agitation in the factories, in maintaining the social-democratic members in their party. Some of the social-democratic leaders deceived the workers by radical phrases in Parliament, while, at the same time, with the help of the influence of the social-democratic

trade union leaders, they prevented the workers in the factories from taking any action. The experience gained hitherto teaches us that we must first of all win over the factory hands in order to uproot the social-democratic party. If the communist factory nuclei understand, as an active vanguard, how to lead the fight of the workers in all the questions of the day, if they understand how to treat the social-democratic workers as misled class comrades and to influence them systematically, then we shall really succeed in weakening the social-democratic party. For this reason the Party leaders must always bear in mind that the work in the factories is the most important, and that work in residential districts should always be considered in the second place.

The factory nuclei should be the foundation of the Party organisation, i. e. the centre of gravity of Party work lies in the factories. The factory nuclei must be represented at the conferences in a measure which corresponds with their strength and significance. This way of putting it does not however mean that there should be no street nuclei. There are organisations where the comrades live near the factories and only a few comrades are not employed in the factory, where all Party comrades of both sexes can belong to the nuclei. In this case, the residential district is also worked from the factory nucleus.

In the majority of cases, the nuclei group will consist of factory and street nuclei. This makes it necessary clearly to define who belongs to the street nuclei. The French comrades are right when they say that all Party members who cannot be affiliated to factory nuclei, belong to the street nuclei. Does this mean a weakening of the work in the residential districts because in this way a smaller number of members belong to the street nuclei than have hitherto belonged to the groups of ten? No! For, up to the present, only a small number of functionaries carried on the work in residential districts. If the street nuclei now learn to set all their Party members to work, this would even mean an increase in the work in the residential districts. The street nuclei have instructions to do communist work among the inhabitants of the district allotted to them, especially among persons working on their own account, housewives and the middle classes. They keep registers of those in sympathy with us and carry on propaganda for obtaining subscriptions and members. They organise the sale of communist papers, journals and brochures in houses, shops and public places. They organise meetings and carry on agitation and propaganda work in meetings held by our opponents. For tenement houses they publish special posters and prepare special material for agitation for work among the middle classes, making use of topical events in the district. In those factories where no communists are employed, they work from without and try to gain sympathisers so that a factory nucleus can gradually be started. For factories of this kind, the street nucleus appointed by the leaders of the group of nuclei also issues the factory newspaper. The street nuclei concern themselves with all branches of Party work and also collect the Party subscriptions from those members who cannot belong to factory nuclei. As the comrades organised in factory nuclei who live far away from their work cannot, as a rule, be given work to do for the factory nucleus after work and on Sundays, it is necessary that these comrades should be registered by the leaders of the groups of nuclei in the districts where they live. The leaders of groups of nuclei can give definite orders from the Party directly to the comrades. (Reports, agitation in the country, preparation of factory nucleus papers for factories without nuclei, their allocation to the support of certain branches of work in the management of the groups of nuclei etc.). These comrades may in the same way be allocated to certain street nuclei for work in the evenings and on Sundays. As these comrades are fully fledged members only in the factory nucleus, they cannot of course take part in the passing of resolutions with regard to Party questions in the street nucleus. Where no street nuclei exist, the leaders of the groups of nuclei may assign comrades to factory nuclei. They may help in the preparation of the factory newspapers, support the educational work in the factory nuclei, be members of the commission for propaganda in the country etc.

Many comrades put the question: "What is the difference between the organisation of the old residential arrangement (groups of ten) and the street nucleus? The old residential organisation comprised all the comrades living in the district, they paid their Party subscriptions to it and exercised their Party rights. As a rule the work of the groups of ten was

limited to the collection of subscriptions and to technical functions such as the calling of meetings, posting of bills, distribution of leaflets etc. These fundamental organisations of the Party hardly concerned themselves at all with the discussion of political tasks and with the application of the political resolutions of the Party in their sphere of activity. It was very seldom that anything could be seen of the political activity of the groups of ten. In contrast to this, only those comrades belong to a street nucleus who are not organised in factory nuclei. Only these comrades have full rights and duties in the street nucleus. The street nuclei concern themselves with all the tasks of the Party. They have to learn to apply the general political resolutions of the Party to the concrete circumstances of their residential district. In order to reinforce the work in a residential district, the leaders of a group of nuclei can decide that certain comrades shall work in street nuclei who belong, as Party members, to a factory nucleus in another group of nuclei.

In various organisations, the chief stress in reorganisation was laid on the creation of groups of nuclei. The work of the nuclei was in itself neglected. As a matter of fact, the name of groups of ten was only altered into that of street nuclei and the existing so-called factory fractions were rechristened "nuclei". This is wrong. The main thing is the creation of factory nuclei and, side by side with them, of street nuclei. In consequence of this, we must make it our chief aim that Party members should regularly attend the meetings of the nuclei and do Party work. The meetings of the nuclei are more important than the meetings of the groups of nuclei. It is the duty of the members of the factory nuclei and of the members of the street nuclei to attend the meetings of the groups of nuclei. Those members of the Party who are assigned to a street nucleus for work and who belong to a factory nucleus in another group of nuclei, only take part in the meetings of the group of nuclei of their place of work.

There are still some comrades who, in opposition to this plan of organisation, are in favour of more or less mysterious "working groups". In their opinion, all members of the Party, including those not working in factories, should belong to factory nuclei. We are opposed to this apparently consistent reorganisation because in that way the factory nuclei would often be swamped by an excessive number of comrades who are not employed in the factory, because all the old tradition of residence from the point of view of politics and organisation would necessarily be transferred to the factory nuclei and, consequently, the vital connection between general political questions and factory questions would be lacking. The reorganisation is not only a question of forms of organisation but also of the improvement of methods of organisation, of a strengthening of the activity of the inferior Party organisations. Apart from this organisation of all members of the Party in factory nuclei, the comrades wish to gather all the members who live in the domain of the group of nuclei, into working groups which are to have no right to pass resolutions, but only to be executive organs. It is evident that there is not an atom of difference between these so-called working groups and the old residential organisation. Any resolutions which may possibly be made on paper will not alter the fact that these working groups will have no right to pass resolutions. This is confirmed by the experience of the CP. of France. There also working groups were formed which were only to function temporarily during the election campaign, without any right to pass resolutions. Instead of carrying out work for the election, these working groups spent their time discussing. The Right elements of the Party especially tried to use the working groups as a basis for attack on the political line taken by the Party.

Other comrades are in favour of creating a third organisation, the working groups, in addition to the factory and street nuclei. These should comprise the comrades living in the domain of the group of nuclei so that such work as bill-posting, the distribution of leaflets, house to house propaganda, the distribution of papers, preparations for meetings etc. can be carried out. We fail to understand why the said duties cannot be undertaken by the street nuclei and why a third organisation is necessary for this purpose. In this connection, the comrades point to the fact that different duties are unsatisfactorily fulfilled in the residential districts. This is true, but the cause was not in the form of organisation of the Party but in its methods of work. The Party work was not assigned to

all the members of the Party. Up to the present only a few comrades have done Party work.

But even when the methods of work are improved, it will still be necessary to strengthen the street nuclei in that the leaders of groups of nuclei assign members of factory nuclei to the street nuclei for collaboration with them. The creation of working groups would in this case also lead to the perpetuation of the old tradition of residential districts. It is quite natural that, on the basis of the existing tradition of organisation and as a consequence of its more convenient possibilities of work, the working groups will develop into a second fundamental organisation of the Party, which will form a focus of political deviation from the line taken by the Party. It is therefore not a mere coincidence that in France the Right, and in Germany the ultra-Left elements have been so energetically in favour of the working groups.

The reorganisation of the Party can only be correctly carried out, if the Party leaders guide it systematically. The conditions in the separate districts and places are so different that mistakes can very easily be made, from which may ensue a temporary weakening of the work of the Party. For this reason the leaders of the Party should attach great value to the further development of the system of instructors. The superior leaders of the Party must commission comrades to instruct and control both the inferior Party leaders and the factory and street nuclei. This is the most reliable method of ensuring that Party resolutions are correctly carried out. At the same time the most important experiences in organisation and descriptions of the work of the individual Party nuclei should be reported in the Press so that an exchange of experiences may take place before the forum of the whole Party membership and for the purpose of giving a fresh impulse to the Party work of every individual member. If this is done, the factory nuclei will really form the basis of the Communist Parties and the work in residential districts also, which must take the second place, will not be neglected but be strengthened as compared with previous conditions, in which only a few functionaries did any actual work at all.

BOOK REVIEWS

Rosa Luxemburg: "Against Reformism".

By Paul Frölich.

At the beginning of 1923, Rosa Luxemburg's "Accumulation of Capital" appeared as vol. I. of her "Collected Works". Now vol. III. has appeared under the title "Against Reformism", and with it the actual moment has come when the treasures hidden in the life-work of our fallen leader, are being unearthed. There is reason to hope that the other volumes of the complete edition will soon follow.*)

Soon after Rosa's death, this publication was resolved upon, but a good long time elapsed before even the preparatory work could be begun. The man who, more than any other, would have been qualified for this task, Leo Jogiches, followed Rosa three months later into the grave. At that time we did not foresee the enormous difficulties which would tower against the victory of the revolution, and we believed that this complete edition might be one of the first scientific works after the conquest of power. Finally, the difficulties of life itself, the persisting illegality of the Spartacus League and the burden of the daily tasks formed too great obstacles for it to be possible to start on this work.

A fresh impulse was given by the publication of Rosa's posthumous manuscript "The Russian Revolution", with which Paul Levi tried to cover his betrayal of the revolution and to undo Rosa's greatest achievement, her leadership of the Spartacus

*) The whole works are to include:

Vol. I, The Revolutionary Movement in Poland. — Vol. II, The Russian Revolution in 1905. — Vol. III, Against Reformism. — Vol. IV, World Policy, the Mass Fight, Masses and Leaders. — Vol. V, World War and Revolution. — Vol. VI, The Accumulation of Capital. Vol. VII, Theoretical Writings on Marxism and Political Economy. — Vol. VIII, Political and Literary Portraits, Letters and Miscellaneous Writings.

League in the period of storm and stress of the German revolution. In her article "On Rosa Luxemburg's attitude towards the Russian Revolution", Klara Zetkin defended, with a sharp weapon, the revolutionary honour and the memory of her comrade in arms, and the tremendous historical achievements of the Bolsheviks. But at the same time it was felt to be urgently necessary that Rosa Luxemburg herself should enter the forum in order, through her life's work, to give evidence as to whether her path led into the camp of her own murderers and into that of the traitors to her political will and testament, or whether it was in reality the path leading the international proletariat to the conquest of power — a path which would lead to Lenin, not by accident but through innate consistency. On the initiative of the Executive of the Comintern, a Commission, consisting of Comrades Klara Zetkin, Adolf Varski and Julian Karski, who has since died, was appointed at the time of the 3rd World Congress, to carry out the publication of Rosa's works.

The difficulties of the task only became evident, when a start was actually made. Since Rosa's library and other material left by her is not accessible but is held back by unauthorised persons, the articles had to be laboriously collected from newspapers and journals.**)

The articles from Polish and Russian papers had to be translated. This took a few years, as this work had constantly to be interrupted on account of work which at the moment was more urgent. The first fruit of this work is now before us, and thus, to a certain extent, Lenin's stern reproach which weighed heavily on our conscience, that the German communists had unpardonably delayed the publication of Rosa's works, has to some extent been removed.

* * *

When Lenin, in his article "On the Climbing of High Mountains", pronounced this reproof, he said at the same time: "In spite of all her faults, Rosa Luxemburg is and remains an eagle; not only will her memory always be valuable to the communists of the whole world, but her biography and the complete edition of her works will be a valuable text-book in the education of many communists throughout the world." This is the reason which gives the publication of these collected works a justification far beyond that of mere historical interest. It will be particularly effective just now, when the attempt has been made in the German Party to pluck the eagle and to convert the true picture of Rosa Luxemburg into a pitiful caricature. This attempt was undertaken with the glittering armour of a few tags of quotations by people who never took the trouble to make themselves acquainted with Rosa's achievements and whose only object was to boost themselves and to conceal their own incapability. It is not a matter of indifference for the Party whether it recognises or fails to recognise the character and the value of its great leaders and martyrs, whether it becomes fully conscious of their mistakes so as to avoid them, and whether it assimilates their great and permanent teachings and reaps a thousandfold harvest from them.

I must admit that I was somewhat doubtful as to whether just the volume now before us would give an idea of the precious teachings for our daily fight which can be drawn from Rosa Luxemburg's legacy. It was in any case a bold move to begin with just those essays which date back more than a quarter of a century. As the collection and translation of the Polish and Russian writings entailed considerable difficulties, the alternative remained of either postponing the publication still further or of foregoing beginning the publication with volume I. It was thus very natural to begin with the publication of the volumes which would give us material of particular value for the present day, the volumes on war and revolution. Important reasons prompted the publishers and editors to issue the specifically German problems at least in their chronological sequence. And now, that this volume "Against Reformism" is before us, its actual significance is surprising.

The main point of revolutionary mobilisation was and remains that of becoming clear as to our attitude towards Reform-

**) It would seem as though all material of value has already been collected. As however important articles may still exist somewhere or other, the publishers would be grateful for any communications, which should be made to the "Vereinigung Internationaler Verlagsanstalten", Berlin SW., Planufer 17.

mism. The study of just this volume will show that it is always a question of the same problems, which in essentials are identical, and only vary in form. Bernstein, in his day, brought up all the fundamental questions which are nowadays on the agenda in the fight between Communism and Social Democracy. It would be frivolous to maintain that Rosa Luxemburg answered all these questions as far back as a quarter of a century ago. On the contrary, it became evident that at that time, for many questions, — for instance that of the decisive fight for power — a reformist, a wrong answer could be found, but no correct, no revolutionary answer, simply because the means and possibilities were not yet recognisable. In these questions we must turn to Lenin. In all other questions, in which we are faced by reformism, Rosa Luxemburg provides us with weapons with which to destroy it. Like all clear thinkers, she often drew conclusions in her fight against this enemy which, in her day, were rejected even by her comrades in the fight, as unjustified and exaggerated. The bitter experiences since 1914 have justified these conclusions and even surpassed them. She could go to extremes because her view on the fight of the proletariat was a thing complete in itself, because Marxism was a living thing to her.

It was one of her strong qualities that she always tried to pursue a problem into its finest ramifications. A standard example of this is her treatment of French ministerialism. She was not satisfied merely to refute it in general, theoretically. She pursues it in every form in which it expresses itself, she follows it into the last corner of the "cul de sac" in which it has taken refuge, and it is just in this way that she achieves more than a mere refutation, she tracks it down in order to annihilate it. This is why her teaching never gives the impression of abstract philosophy, it is drawn from life, living, creative protoplasm.

Even to-day — what is the core of all the great tactical problems round which the fight rages within the Communist International? In the end the question always is how we can follow our path without straying either into the desert of sectarianism or into the slough of opportunism. In this respect, Rosa Luxemburg is a conscientious leader. The whole book is an emphatic warning against deviations to the Right.

The danger is exposed to us in a perfectly concrete form. Light is thrown on the ephemeral nature of the reformist Utopias. We have not yet fully recognised what an alluring effect the newest Utopias of reformism may have (we need only recall the question of economic democracy which is at present occupying the attention of the trade union movement). We have as yet not taken up the fight against it with sufficient seriousness and thoroughness. Rosa Luxemburg shows us how to recognise and demonstrate the complete hollowness of these ideas.

Social democracy is to-day once more faced with the question of an open coalition policy in the republic. It is strange but true that many workers have not been convinced by their own bad experiences with this policy. They continue to fall into the snare of delusions and promises. Rosa Luxemburg carried the French example to its logical conclusion as proof of the criminality of this policy, and an example which can be observed in its whole historical course, is often more convincing than the experiences of the present day. Even our propagandists find the question of the coalition policy illuminated in such a way that it gives them some new information and many arguments. In the questions of Republic and Monarchy, in the tariff policy, the readers can derive great benefit from Rosa Luxemburg's in-

vestigations. Experience has taught me that a whole number of questions which suddenly crop up, have already, in their essentials, been illuminated by Rosa, without one's having suspected it, so that I am convinced that the present day interest of this book will still prove itself in many ways. It is a text-book of class-war.

Of course the book demands of the reader that he should think historically, and it trains him to do so. Rosa Luxemburg, the intellectual dialectician, would most certainly object to the clumsy application of any of her words to every possible situation. We must always bear in mind how different was the time of the rallying of the masses, in which pure propaganda had such a tremendous significance, from our own times, when the fight for power occupies the foreground. We must not forget that before 1914, the strategy and tactics of revolution in Western Europe were still quite undeveloped, that Rosa Luxemburg was the first to give it a foundation and that, at that time, many a necessity was not yet recognised and some questions were still answered wrongly.

There is no doubt that the volume will not only give instruction to our comrades but will, above all, do great service in winning over the social democratic workers. What they lack, what makes it so difficult for them, is that their leaders arm them with no principles, but that they lead them into opposition, and even at that an opportunist one, in each case as it arises, that is from one stumbling block to another. Rosa Luxemburg gives them the equipment for an opposition which is no longer erratic, but which is sound to the core and conscious of its aim. It is the vocation of our Press to be the channel through which it is conveyed to them.

NOTICE.

Along with this number we are sending out a Special Number containing the first and second parts of Comrade Varga's Economic Report for the Third Quarter of 1925. Part three of Comrade Varga's Report, comprising the Special Section, will be published shortly, also as a Special Number.

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