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Eight Years of the Amsterdam International.

By A. Nin.

I. Eight Years in the Service of Capitalism.

In July 1919 a congress was held for the establishment of the Amsterdam International, whose foundations had been laid at the preliminary conference held in Berne in February of the same year. The International Federation of Trade Unions (I.F.T.U.) thus exists for eight years, although the ideological foundations upon which it rests were laid much earlier, in the pre-war reformist movement, and in the policy of class collaboration during the war.

This comparatively brief space of time has been eventful, and has brought with it much valuable experience for the international labour movement. The period may be divided into three main stages.

The first stage is characterised by the revolutionary wave which flooded and shook the bourgeois world from 1917 to 1920, as a result of the Russian revolution, and the crisis in the capitalist regime produced by the imperialist war. The characteristic facts of this period, apart from the Russian revolution, are the following: the overthrow of the monarchies in the defeated States, the German revolution, the Soviet republic in Hungary, the occupation of the factories by the

workers in Italy, the victorious advance of the Red Army to Warsaw, and the great social struggles and strike movements in the majority of countries.

During the second stage we find that the bourgeoisie, after having witnessed revolution quite close by, but now convinced that the danger is over, is taking up a fundamental offensive against the working class, attacking the eight hour day wages, and enchainning the White terror in a number of countries. This period is especially characterised by the victory of Fascism in Italy and by the defeat of the proletarian revolution in Bulgaria and Germany.

The third stage, which is still lasting at the present time, is characterised by a certain stabilisation. At the same time it is characterised by the revolt of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, and above all by the Chinese revolution; further by the general strike and the coal strike in England, and by the consolidation of the Soviet Union. The bourgeoisie, conscious of the fragility of the stabilisation, is preparing to parry the attacks expected from the working class by initiating a powerful attack, in the first place against the workers defence organisations (the English trade union law, labour magna charta in

Italy, militarisation of the trade unions in France, law on compulsory arbitration in Norway, etc.)

If we are to make a general survey of the fundamental activity of the Amsterdam International during this time, we must unveil the real countenance of this so-called labour international, whose action and lack of action appears before the proletariat invariably connected with international capitalism, which serves its interests, and betrays the interests of the class which it pretends to represent.

II. The years of the revolutionary wave.

Let us cast a glance at the first stage of the activity of the Amsterdam International.

The foundation congress met one month after the signing of the Versailles Treaty. We must remember that leaders of this International, **Jouhaux** for instance, had been among the most active workers in the drawing up of this robbery Treaty. Neither the Berne Conference nor the Amsterdam Congress showed the slightest wish to lead the working masses in their struggle against capitalism, this struggle forming the most burning of all questions in every country; they confined themselves to meetings which appeared to have no other object than to rescue the tottering capitalist order.

In Berne and Amsterdam the representatives of the trade unions of these countries which had participated in the war offered a despicable spectacle. They were divided into groups, and quarrelled among themselves like their own bourgeoisie. The group of the "Allies" hurled accusations at the group of the "Central Powers", and demanded that these should acknowledge that Germany was to blame for the war.

At that time the Amsterdam International was already a second edition of the League of Nations, which has never been what its founders assert, a society of "freed" peoples, created to secure "world peace", but merely an organisation in the service of the victorious states. Exactly the same can be said of the Amsterdam International, and the more important the rôle which it plays in the League of Nations, the truer it becomes.

At the foundation congress of the Amsterdam International (July 1919), confidence in the League of Nations was dominant. Therefore the main task of the congress was the ratification of the so-called "labour charter", which is contained in chapter 3 of the second part of the Versailles Peace Treaty, with the alterations made in it by the Berne conference, and the passing of resolutions on the labour conference at **Washington**, in which it was decided to participate. One single voice was raised against participation in this conference, but it was not the indignant voice of a real representative of the proletariat, raised against the policy of co-operation between the classes, but the voice of the old fox **Legien**, who asserted, rightly enough, that the League of Nations comprised only the countries of the Allies.

Thus the Amsterdam International found nothing better to do, at a moment when the revolutionary billow was rushing across the world, and the bourgeoisie trembled, than to play the part of fire brigade for the salvation of the bourgeoisie, to conduct negotiations with the bourgeoisie, to collaborate with bourgeois organs, and to confine themselves to elaborate a miserable programme of "minimum demands" of the workers. The policy of the leaders of the Amsterdam International has always been very consistent. During the war they co-operated with the bourgeoisie of their respective countries, and immediately after the war they co-operated with the bourgeoisie in working out the Peace Treaty and in hampering the revolutionary movement.

The following are a few of the actions characterising the line of the Amsterdam International:

Reformism, whilst welcoming with enthusiasm the Russian February revolution, whose government continued the policy of imperialism pursued by the Allies, opposed the Bolshevik revolution from the very first moment, and combined with the international bourgeoisie to stigmatize the Bolsheviks as agents of German imperialism and usurpers of power. In France reformist voices were even raised in favour of an armed intervention against Soviet Russia.

In Germany the responsible leaders of the Reformist trade union federations supported the Brest Litovsk treaty, which in their opinion prevented the restoration of pre-war Europe.

The Amsterdam International did not stir a finger to undertake anything against the blockade and the intervention in Soviet Russia.

The Bavarian Soviet republic was crushed with the aid of the reformists.

In Hungary the bourgeois order was restored with the active participation of such trade union leaders as **Peidl**.

It is true that the Amsterdam International, under the pressure of the masses, decided to boycott Hungary as protest against the horrors of the White terror. But the London Congress of 1920 was obliged to confess that neither Germany nor England, Italy or France, had really carried out the terms of the boycott, that is, the boycott was only on paper.

During the war between Soviet Russia and Poland, the prevention of the transport of weapons and ammunition was proclaimed, but in fact the Amsterdam International confined itself to proposing to the Entente "non-interference", tantamount to neutrality in a moment when the fate of the proletariat all over the world was at stake. The English reformists did their utmost to dam the mighty movement of the masses in favour of Soviet Russia. And in Poland the Amsterdamers pointed out the "necessity" of protecting the native country against the Bolshevik intruders.

The shameful epilogue of this period is furnished by the despicable treachery committed by the leaders of the Italian trade unions in September 1920, when the factories were occupied by the workers. This treacherous action on the part of the Italian Amsterdamers was decisive for the defeat of the revolution in Italy, and smoothed the path to Fascism, and to the seizure of power by Mussolini in 1922.

The London congress of 1920 reflected the policy of the Amsterdam International at this period.

Pressed forward by the organised workers, the trade union bureaucrats found themselves compelled to pass resolutions against reaction and militarism; resolutions, it may be observed, entirely lacking in purport, and containing no practical measures. In actual fact the London Congress was chiefly occupied with the restoration of capitalist economy. Hence the resolutions on the distribution of raw materials, and on the exchange of goods, which occupied first place. Only one single "courageous" decision was adopted, that of opposition against the trade unions of the Soviet Union, and against the Red International of Labour Unions, then taking its first steps. In this resolution these collaborators in bourgeois ministries and in capitalist undertakings have the cynicism to protest against the fact that

"Persons holding positions at the head of a communist government hold at the same time positions at the head of a labour international".

And this at a time when civil war was raging in Russia, and the proletariat was struggling against a world of enemies. In Hungary the white terror, the blood of **Liebkecht** and **Rosa Luxemburg**, of the Spartacists, of **Leviné**, of the shot Bavarians, still fresh, and Italy, where the proletariat had almost taken over power, Fascism preparing its offensive against the working class.

III. The capitalist offensive.

Had the Amsterdam International been what it pretends to be, it would have played an active part in the second stage. Their work would have been the defence of the most elementary achievements of the working class, directly threatened by the capitalist offensive. We have witnessed an entirely opposite action on their part. Instead of opposing labour to capital, and preparing it for battle, the Amsterdamers have practised the policy of class collaboration on every possible opportunity, and have made it their only aim to distract the fighting spirit of the proletariat on every occasion, and to induce the workers to place their confidence in the League of Nations and the International Labour Office. In view of the fact that great mass movements have been able to arise in spite of reformist policy, for instance the great strike of the English coalminers in 1921

and the rising in Central Germany in March of the same year, the attitude of the Amsterdammers can only be designated as blackest treachery.

When the first symptoms of capitalist offensive were felt, the Red International of Labour Unions proposed a united front with the reformists, in order to conduct a common fight against the common enemy. All their proposals, which always contained some definite aim, such as the boycott against Yugoslavia and Spain, as protest against the white terror, have been systematically rejected. But Amsterdam does not confine itself to declining our proposals of unity. It endeavours to widen the chasm. Ever since the end of 1920, all the national sections of the Amsterdam International have been working for the systematic expulsion of the revolutionary elements. The split in France at the end of 1921 resulting in two trade union federations, is an event characteristic of this splitting policy.

This second stage is further characterised by the aggravation of the inner antagonisms of capitalism. Explosions could be expected at any moment. The occupation of the Ruhr valley aroused unrest and indignation in the proletariat of all countries. In this situation Amsterdam again failed and remarkable coincidence in the heart of this noble Amsterdam International we find the same antagonisms as those prevailing in the capitalist camp. We only need mention one typical case. The English social traitor Thomas assumed an anti-French attitude, thus supporting Legien. This corresponds exactly to the position taken by the English government.

During this period, the attitude of the Amsterdam International is so shameful that Fimmen found himself obliged to write his article on the "Horrors of January", demonstrating a distinct turn to the Left on the part of the former secretary of the International, and with him of an important section of the International.

Meanwhile the Amsterdam International was organising "demonstrations" against war. The loudest of these demonstration was the Peace Conference at the Hague, where empty resolutions were passed the complete meaninglessness of which was demonstrated by the attitude of the reformists during the occupation of the Ruhr district.

Other "positive" actions of the Amsterdam International were the telegram sent by Jouhaux to the bourgeois disarmament conference at Washington in 1921, in which a hope for the "solidarity of action for peace in all countries" is expressed, further the co-operation with the diplomatic Geneva conference by means of the organising of a parallel international labour conference, and finally, the constant collaboration with the bourgeoisie for the purpose of restoring world economics shattered by the war and revolution.

The Congress of the I.F.T.U. held at Rome at the end of April 1922 was again chiefly occupied with the question of the reconstruction of Europe on the basis of capitalist economics. Here, as in London, the first place was taken by questions relating to the distribution of raw materials, to war debts, and to the necessity of building up peace on principles of "just distribution". At this congress Thomas was appointed president of the International Federation of Trade Unions. This was a very significant event. Amsterdam could not do anything better than to place this proved traitor to the working class at its head.

This stage was closed by the revolutionary events in Germany in October 1923, and by the defeat of the Polish and Bulgarian workers.

The rôle played by Amsterdam in all these events is sufficiently notorious. Both in Germany and in Poland the Amsterdammers took sides with the bourgeoisie in order to check the revolutionary advance of the masses. In Bulgaria the workers' insurrection was drowned in blood, and the bourgeoisie established its bloody dictatorship with the immediate co-operation of the social democrats participating in the Zankoff ministry.

IV. The period of the relative stabilisation of capitalism.

It is scarcely necessary to deal in detail with the characteristic features of this period. Much literature has been published on this subject. During this stage we see the Amsterdammers co-operating zealously in working out the Dawes plan, which has had such disastrous effects for the German working class. The MacDonald government in England, the formation of a Left bloc in France, arouse in the naive minds of the

reformists the illusion that a favourable period is beginning for the working class in Europe. Disappointment soon sets in. The bourgeoisie gets rid of the labour leaders as soon as it needs them no longer. The offensive against the proletariat becomes acuter.

During this stage we have seen the eight hour day disappear in almost every country; wages have been reduced everywhere; unemployment has greatly increased, and has become a permanent condition.

The Amsterdam International has done absolutely nothing to defend the most urgent interests of the working class. It has contented itself with demanding the ratification of the Washington agreement, although all governments regard this agreement merely as a scrap of paper. And the "rationalisation" of industry, whose consequences fall exclusively on the shoulders of the working class, is being carried out with the active co-operation of the reformist leaders.

This period has however been distinguished by one event of importance. This is the rise of a Left wing within the Amsterdam International. The chief cause of the coming into existence of the Left wing was the failure of the Amsterdam International during the occupation of the Ruhr basin, and the revolutionisation of the English working class following the acute economic crisis still shaking Great Britain. At the Congress at Vienna (June 1924) the Left became noticeable as such for the first time. The Right still rules in the I. F. T. U., however, and although certain concessions have been made to the Left with regard to increasing the importance of the international secretariats of the Industrial Internationals on the other hand the decision on unity is an actual declaration of war against the revolutionary trade union opposition.

But the opposition continues on its way. The Congress of the British trade union federations in Hull gave Comrade Tomsy an enthusiastic welcome. And since then the visit of the English delegation to Russia, the founding of the Anglo-Russian Committee, and the journeys of the workers' delegations, have combined to extend the movement for the international trade union unity.

Amsterdam continues to pursue a systematic policy of splitting. The proposal for a world unity congress, made by the Russian trade unions and the Red International of Labour Unions, has been rejected by Amsterdam. Every proposal towards a united front is sabotaged, and the bonds attaching Amsterdam to capitalism are strengthened. When the general strike broke out in England, the Amsterdam International acted as strike-breaker towards the British miners, leaving one of the mightiest struggles in the history of the labour movement isolated and deserted.

The rôle played by the Amsterdam International during this period can be characterised as follows: it has become an active element in that relative stabilisation of capital which has been achieved at the expense of the working class, by means of disarming the workers in the face of the capitalist offensive, by means of the systematic and constant sabotage of all attempts towards establishing national and international unity in the trade union movement.

V. The Present Rôle of the Amsterdam International.

The consolidation of the Soviet Union on the one hand, and the development of the struggle for emancipation in the colonial countries on the other, have resulted in a strengthening of the capitalist offensive, directed partially against the first workers republic, and partially against the working class in each individual country.

This offensive may be seen in the intervention in China, in the breaking off of diplomatic relations between England and Soviet Russia, and in the attacks being made on the workers' right of combination in the leading capitalist countries.

The Amsterdam International has not attempted to do anything against the military intervention in China. On the contrary, it is serving the interests of world imperialism. Oudegeest has even had the cynicism to declare to a delegation from the Chinese trade unions, which visited him in March this year,

"Amsterdam can send no delegation this year to study the situation of the labour movement in China, since the trade union movement can only develop under peaceful

conditions, and times of great political agitation are unsuitable for its development."

And Thomas, one of the most prominent members of the Amsterdam International, has had the brazenness to emphasise the "necessity" of sending troops to China.

It may be asserted without exaggeration that Chiang Kai Shek's coup d'etat, and the resultant massacre of the Chinese workers and destruction of the trade union organisations, have been witnessed with satisfaction by all the leaders of the Amsterdam International.

As regards the Soviet Union, the Amsterdam International continues to prepare its masses psychologically for co-operation with the bourgeoisie in a possible war against the workers' and peasants government.

In France the socialist Paul Boncour is the author of the trade union militarisation law. In Italy one section of the Amsterdam leaders has gone straight over to Fascism, whilst the other section, consisting of those who have remained "faithful" to the principles of class struggle, are working for the dissolution of the trade unions, and are taking refuge abroad. In Spain the Amsterdamites are working in copartnership with the military dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, and publicly praise his so-called social policy. In the Balkans the Amsterdamites are directly aiding in the suppression of the workers and poor peasantry.

We may safely maintain that at the present juncture, when the essential interests of the working class are at stake, the Amsterdam International forms a bloc with the bourgeoisie against revolutionary China, against the Soviet Union, and against the working class of all countries.

VI. What does the Amsterdam International Represent in the Labour Movement?

The brief survey which we have just made of the activity of the Amsterdam International during its eight years of existence has shown it invariably in the service of capitalism. We have declared that this International was a yellow organisation from the beginning. The facts have proved that our assertion was no mere demagoguery.

In point of numbers the Amsterdam International has lost considerably. The 24 million members which it boasted at the time of its founding have sunk, in accordance with the report of the Executive Committee to the Paris Congress, to 13,455,533.

We shall not challenge the accuracy of these figures, though they are obviously exaggerated. Nor shall we diminish the importance of the figures by emphasising the fact that a great part of the members of the reformist International are revolutionary minorities belonging to the platform of the R. I. L. U.

The numerical strength of the Red International of Labour Unions is not inferior to that of the Amsterdam International. The trade union organisations of Russia, France, China, and Czecho-Slovakia combine to form a total superior in numbers to that of the Amsterdam International.

But though the Amsterdam International may be no very imposing power with regard to numbers, still it would be a mistake to underestimate its influence.

It must not be forgotten that in the industrially most strongly developed countries, Germany, England, Belgium, etc., the Amsterdam International has a leading position. The political influence of Amsterdam, though shaken, is still very great in these countries. Its influence, like that of capitalism, is sta-

bilised to a certain extent. The Amsterdam International can still count among its forces an immense trade union apparatus, the co-operation of experienced trade union leaders, and above all the support of the governments. And we must not close our eyes to an important change which has taken place during the last few years: the greatly increased severity of discipline in the organisation.

The negative aspects of the Amsterdam International are: its internal disintegration, aggravated by the existence of a Left wing and a strong revolutionary minority; the financial crisis, which has placed it in an extremely difficult position; the inner struggles for positions, faithful reflections of the struggles of capitalist contradictions, struggles for the leading positions in the movement.

From the above we may draw the following conclusions:

The Amsterdam International, like capitalism, is falling into decay, and is passing through a period of relative stabilisation at the present time, like the bourgeoisie, though this stabilisation is of a very shaky character.

The tasks before the revolutionary trade union movement, when we take into account the actual situation, are the following:

1. The intensification of our work, in order that we may gain important positions in Europe.

2. The trade union organisation of the workers in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. This work to be pressed forward with all urgency, in order to prevent reformism and bourgeois influence from gaining the upper hand.

3. Every effort, with every available means, for the development of unity within the reformist trade unions.

4. The strengthening of the revolutionary trade union organisations, not only increasing their striking power and numerical strength, but at the same time by the formation of trade union fighting cadres, capable of both leading the great struggles and carrying on the detailed work of the trade union.

5. The enhancement of discipline and solidarity in the ranks of the Red International of Labour Unions; these to be consolidated into one body capable of rapid action when required.

6. Energetic fighting measures against Amsterdam, the unmasking of its real character to the working class of all countries.

7. Redoubled energy in the struggle for trade union unity in all countries, the establishment of a mighty trade union unity, strong and competent for the fight.

VII. Has the Proletariat anything to hope from the V. Trade Union Congress?

The V. Congress of the Amsterdam International held in Paris, meets under extremely difficult conditions.

It would be a dangerous illusion to expect anything definite from this Congress. It is, however, imperatively necessary for the workers of all countries to follow its activity with careful attention. This Congress will show them that they have no greater enemies than the reformist leaders. Whilst the bourgeoisie in all countries is striving for the destruction of the labour organisations, and is working out plans of attack against the Soviet Union, the bulwark and the stronghold of world revolution, the international reformists are preparing fresh treachery, blacker than even that of the 4th August 1914.

Amsterdam and War.

By J. Humbert Droz.

When the war was over, and the leaders of the international labour movement, after having served their various governments faithfully during the four years of war, assembled again in order to build up the Trade Union International, they were compelled to resort to every description of demagoguery in order not to be swept away by the revolutionary swing of the masses. The Russian revolution of 1917, the upheavals in the countries of the central powers, the great social movements developing all over the world after the war, all these were clear signs of revolutionary activity among the masses, of insurrection against war and its instigators, economic decay, and political insecurity.

In order to retain the leadership of the working class in their hands, and to be able to hold them in readiness for the service of imperialism on a later occasion, they were compelled to do in Rome as the Romans do, and to take refuge to the wildest demagoguery. This attitude has been especially conspicuous in the anti-war question.

I. The demagogic period of the first years.

In November 1920 the Amsterdam International, one year after its reconstruction, defined its standpoint towards war at the Extraordinary Congress held in London, and put forward the idea of general strike and international boycott as means to be applied by the proletariat against war.

"The Congress declares that this fight (against militarism and imperialism) against militarism must be carried on in every shape and form, and that the weapons of strike and international boycott are the best and most efficient means in the struggle of the trade unions against Reaction."

The first international proclamation issued by the Amsterdam International against war during this period was its decision to prevent transports of weapons and ammunition for the war between Poland and Russia in 1920. At that time the working masses took sides, enthusiastically, for revolutionary Russia. Spontaneous actions were taken everywhere, by the workers and their organisations, for the protection of the Russian revolution. Out of the masses themselves, on the initiative of the members of the organisations, action developed in defence of the Russian revolution against imperialist war. It was however not until 19. August 1920, after the spontaneous action of the masses had already brought about efficient effect, that the Bureau of the Amsterdam International decided to issue the slogan to prevent the transport of war material.

The Amsterdam leaders, pressed forward by the masses, had adopted a decision which they afterwards endeavoured to explain not as a measure in defence of the Russian revolution, but against war in general. Thus they declared at the Congress of the I. F. T. U. in Rome, and in the discussion at this Congress, that if it had been in their power they would have also prevented the transport of ammunition for the Red Army, since their object was neither to help nor hinder the warring states, but to throw obstacles in the way of war as such. With this despicable interpretation the Amsterdam International attempted, as early as 1922, to falsify the spontaneous action of the masses on behalf of the Red Army, by placing revolutionary Russia on the same level as the imperialist great powers. This interpretation has prepared their counter revolutionary attitude of today.

The Congress in Rome in 1922 adopted a skilfully demagogic attitude towards the question of war. The so-called "Left" of the Amsterdam International dominated the speakers' platform, Fimmen as chief speaker, Ilg, Dissmann. They tried to outdo each other in the coining of "revolutionary" phrases. The London decision was surpassed:

"The Congress declares that it is the duty of every organised worker to counteract every war which may threaten in the future, by every means available to the labour movement, and to prevent the actual outbreak of any such war by the proclamation and carrying through of an international general strike..."

The Congress supports the efforts of the Industrial Internationals in their demands for the control, in every country, of the manufacture of weapons and war material,

and for the restriction and reduction of such manufacture to the minimum required for civil requirements."

Here the Congress of the I. F. T. U. at Rome did not content itself with repeating the London formula, but added a demand for the control of the restriction and reduction of the manufacture of weapons and war material to a minimum, this demand to be realised by the direct action of the trade union organisations. It appointed a committee, selected from the international secretariats of the most important unions, to carry on the propaganda and action against war. Fimmen, in his report, spoke of the boycott of Hungary, the prevention of war material transport to Poland, and even asserted that the Amsterdam International had prevented the occupation of the Ruhr valley in 1920. All this with the intention of stimulating the Congress to vote for the most demagogic formulas. At this time conferences of the League of Nations received very unfavourable comment in the press of the Amsterdam International, although Jouhaux, Oudegeest, and Thorberg were already taking part in the Disarmament Commission of the League of Nations. They did not participate in the discussion at Rome. Fimmen declared:

"These wars will not be prevented by conferences between diplomats and government representatives. Capitalism and its representatives neither can nor will prevent war. There is only one power which has the will to do this, and which when it really has this will possesses at the same time the power to prevent war; this is the organised proletariat."

Reina, who has just attempted the liquidation of the Italian Trade Union Federation, in order to enter the service of Mussolini, maintained that:

"So long as the capitalist class is in power, war cannot be prevented".

Ilg went even further by asserting that neither resolutions nor propaganda are sufficient. He demanded positive work, control and restriction of armaments by the metal workers union, whose international secretary he is. The Englishman Williams was the only one who was replying to this piece of demagogic exaggeration by reminding the Congress that in 1924, after long speeches had been held against war and great demonstrations made, a few days later: "many of us, if not all, forgot the International and sang the national anthems of our own countries". The speaker stated, in a moment of sincerity what the next treachery would be: "if we were to learn nothing from this experience, we should fail in loyalty to the cause which we represent."

The representative of Poland, Zulavsky, was the first to justify Williams' fears, for he protested against the prevention of the transport of ammunition and war material to Poland. Thomas, president at that time, washed his hands in innocence in advance with regard to future treachery, by thrusting all responsibility onto the shoulders of the working class:

"Let us not commit the error of assuming, two or three years after the war, that the responsibility of the question of peace and war lies in our hands. It lies rather in the hands of those whom we represent."

The appeal against war issued by the Congress at Rome demonstrates, as does Fimmen's speech, the utility of the conferences of the League of Nations: "government conferences, peace congress, disarmament conference, all futile demonstrations, powerless against the fresh wars now threatening."

The demagoguery of the Congress at Rome culminated in the Peace Congress at the Hague in December 1922. Fimmen, at that time secretary of the Amsterdam International, surpassed his declarations at Rome, and even went so far as to threaten with insurrection:

"The working class has resolved upon a determined and energetic defensive struggle, and rather than join the bourgeoisie again in a war, it will go into the streets and fight against the bourgeoisie, in order to maintain peace, if necessary, by open insurrection in the towns and country".

In order to warn the real revolutionists against this cheap demagoguery and revolutionary talk, Lenin had written his in-

structions for the communist delegation at the Hague, pointing out the entire emptiness of this reformist chatter about general strikes and insurrection at the moment of a declaration of war, and emphasising the necessity of an illegal organisation in the army effectually preparing for the conversion of imperialist war into civil war, in order to overthrow the regime responsible for the war.

A few days after the Hague conference, at which the resolutions of London and Rome were confirmed, the occupation of the Ruhr district put the Amsterdam International to the test, and their high sounding revolutionary phrases burst like soap bubbles.

II. The test — the Ruhr occupation.

Two days before the Franco Belgian armies advanced into the Ruhr valley, and as soon as the coup d'état of the Poincaré government on 8. January 1923 became known, the Amsterdam Bureau met, and passed the following resolution:

"After hearing the reports of comrades Thomas (England), Jouhaux (France), and Leipart (Germany), the Committee resolves unanimously to protest on behalf of the working class of all countries against a policy of force. The Amsterdam International demands from all its affiliated organisations that they expressly demand the resumption of arbitration in reparation questions by the court of arbitration of the League of Nations".

On 10. and 11. of January the occupation began.

At this moment the Centrals of the German trade unions applied to the Bureau of the International, and demanded the practical application of the resolutions passed at London, Rome, and Le Hague.

On 15. and 16. January the committee for combatting war and militarism, appointed by the Congress at Rome held a meeting, and ascertained "that effective action on the part of the workers against the occupation was frightfully difficult, on account of the dissenters on the one hand, and the nationalist propaganda on the other". The committee declared itself prepared, however, to obey the orders of the Bureau. The Bureau met on 17. January.

"It was unanimously resolved to enter into immediate communication with all affiliated national centres, in order to consider the possibility of decisive action and to take preliminary measures for the action to be undertaken.

The expectation was expressed that the workers of all countries would hold themselves in readiness to answer to any appeal issued by the International Federation of Trade Unions and its affiliated organisations, in order to convert the decisions of the Congresses of Rome and the Hague, if necessary, into deeds. The workers were, however, at the same time, warned against any attempts coming from another side, and likely to plunge them into ill-considered adventures."

On 28. January the Amsterdam Bureau met once more, this time with the Executive of the II. International and the Vienna International. Jointly they issued a new manifesto, protesting against the occupation, but finding "the reparation costs, owed to France and Belgium for the devastation in their countries, just and right". The reformist Internationals having thus declared the Versailles Treaty to be the basis of their activities, issued their slogans:

1. To increase the propaganda of these principles in all countries, through the press, meetings and demonstrations;

2. to organise a constant exchange of exact and reliable information on the situation in the different countries, in order to maintain and strengthen the ties of mutual confidence which bind together the proletarian masses of the different countries;

3. to exercise pressure through the parliaments, upon the governments in order to induce them to apply to the League of Nations, in which Germany should be accepted with equal rights to the other nations."

"In the interests of the guarantee of peace, and in order to solve the reparation question by peaceful negotiations and to counteract a further decay of European economics, the world proletariat is called upon, especially the French and Belgian proletariat, to strive for the immediate withdrawal of all occupation troops from the Ruhr district, whilst at the same time the German working class is

called upon to force the German government and the German capitalists to fulfil the reparation obligations incurred by Germany, to the extent to which Germany is able to do so."

General strike, international boycott, prevention of troops and ammunition transports, control of war production by the workers. Everything has vanished, just as on 4. August 1914. Nothing is left but an international labour organisation in the service of imperialism, regarding the reparation problem, like Poincaré, from the standpoint of the Versailles Treaty, and knowing no other action than that of deputies to their governments, in order that they may enjoy the protection of the League of Nations. "Futile demonstrations" of the League of Nations, "diplomatic conferences", scorned at by the Congress at Rome, now form the sole refuge of the reformist leaders. The international leaders resume their places side by side with the bourgeoisie, and nothing more is heard of "going into the streets to fight", or of "insurrection in town and country".

III. In the wake of the League of Nations!

The occupation of the Ruhr was a turning point in the policy of Amsterdam towards war. Traces of demagogy have still been retained in their actions. Contact with the masses must be maintained, in order to draw them in the wake of the imperialist policy of the League of Nations. But the suppression of the labour movement in the Western countries facilitated the task of the reformist leaders. They are able to desert quite openly the idea of direct action on the part of the working classes against war, and to lean more and more on the League of Nations. The new tendencies were observable at the Congress in Vienna in 1924. This time the report on the question of war against war was not given by the easily roused Fimmen, who was approaching the communists in his disappointment, but the incorrigible social patriot Jouhaux. His speech consisted of a few embarrassed phrases endeavouring to explain the weakness of the International Federation of Trade Unions and its affiliated Centrals:

"We cannot enter into discussion on this here, as little as we can examine into the manifold difficulties of a technical nature in the way of a successful carrying through of a general strike against the occupation of the Ruhr, or into the special political circumstances which have forced the French and Belgian workers to confine themselves to a protest action....

Besides this, what could we do in countries where the overwhelming majority of the public were convinced that the capital magnates and industrial lords in Germany are opposed to the policy of fulfilment, and that the German government has neither the power nor perhaps even the desire to enforce payments?

A general strike? A general strike presupposes a powerful labour organisation, and the support and goodwill of public opinion".

It must, however, not be assumed that Jouhaux, after having thus "proved" the impossibility of a general strike against war, proceeded to demand a revision of the previous resolutions. Not at all; he is no revisionist, and the revolutionary formulas can still serve to deceive the working masses as to the true character of the Amsterdam International. Pathetically he declares:

"All our decisions can stand any criticism and have proved their correctness — beginning with the resolution on the horrors of war, and going on to the resolutions on the necessity of a general strike in the case of the immediate danger of war, on the boycott of arms and ammunition, and the refusal to transport war material. All these resolutions must be kept fresh in our memories, and we must work for their carrying out. On this point the whole organised working class is unanimous. The resolutions passed by our Congresses, precisely for the reason that they keep themselves free from all noisy and purposeless radicalism, are an excellent means of winning over the workers still outside of our cadres."

But these resolutions are nothing but scraps of paper, as soon as it is proposed to convert them into action. Jouhaux attempted to steer the Vienna Congress into a fresh demagogic formula without abandoning the old. "A negative attitude is soon worn out", he observes, thinking of the collapse of the

Rome resolution on the general strike "The realisation of our work involves of necessity positive conceptions and constructive tasks". The positive and constructive conceptions, which he opposes to the too "negative" mass action of the proletariat, were submitted by him in detail to the Vienna Congress. It is the work of the League of Nations and its disarmament Commission. After deceiving the masses by revolutionary phrases, free from any actual action, he proceeds to persuade them that the League of Nations is an organisation which will abolish war.

"With this we undertake the obligation of striving towards a system of international regulation, which we can oppose to war, by which war can finally be made impossible".

In other words: what means must be applied, in view of the antagonisms between the nations, in order to substitute the regime of force by a regime of law?

The conflicts between the nations, like those between individuals, must be decided on the basis of law."

The League of Nations is undoubtedly not perfect. He finds some fault with it. It is limited in its possibilities of action, and can therefore not quite realise the new international law. But he adds:

"It is a beginning, and its brief existence has shown that we did right in not ignoring it, and in using, for our purposes the means at the disposal of this international organisation

In one point, at least its useful work is incontestable: it has created a central point for all who are anxious to take part in this work, and has given an impetus which permits us to hope for a further development in the direction of concrete and positive work in this direction

If the League of Nations is to fulfil its mission: to bring about a new organisation of the world, and to establish peace as instrument for a new order of international law, then there are still a number of important conditions to be fulfilled".

From now onwards the task of the Amsterdam International is to be the perfecting of this international body which is to be capable of "establishing permanent peace". The line thus laid down at the Vienna Congress is to be for the future the foundation of the standpoint held by the Amsterdam International with regard to war.

Since the Vienna Congress, the Amsterdam International has continued its general propaganda against war; on the tenth anniversary of the war it made a gesture of international demonstration. But the purport of this agitation has become increasingly "positive and constructive" in the sense meant by Jouhaux at Vienna. The International Trade Union Federation has preserved silence in the face of war and the danger of war, wherever the interests of a great capitalist State have been at stake, or it has applied to the League of Nations as sole refuge for the workers against war.

In face of the imperialist war carried on by Spain and France in Morocco, in face of the wars in Syria, in Nicaragua, and in China, it has remained silent, fearing to displease the imperialist great powers ruling the League of Nations. There has been no further word spoken on general strikes, boycott, control of war material manufacture, or prevention of the transport of troops and ammunition.

The report submitted to the Paris Congress by the International Trade Union Bureau does not contain a single word on the wars at which the International Federation of Trade Unions looks on, silent, inactive, and in sympathy. In April 1927, at a time when the intervention of the great imperialist powers in China has become a fact, when the reactionary British government is redoubling its provocations against the Soviet Union, and increasing its efforts to encircle the Soviet Union — at this moment the International Federation of Trade Unions discovers that there is danger of war in the Balkans, and issues an appeal whose sole object is to distract the attention of the working masses from the real war, the war in China, the war preparing against the Soviet Union.

But there is still better to come! The I.F.T.U. in its proclamation of 1. May 1927, determines in advance the responsibility for the wars of the future. And it is not the robber imperialist States, the great Powers dominating the League of Nations, who are responsible.

"Dictatorship signifies a constant danger of war, no matter what form it takes and what colour it bears. Fas-

cism with its black army, and Bolshevism with its red, are at one with the powers of capitalist imperialism in driving the peoples against each other again."

Should "democratic" England, allied with "pacifist and republican France", succeed in provoking a war against the Soviet Union, the responsibility for this war has been discovered in advance by the International Federation of Trade Unions. Responsible is solely the "Red militarism", which has allied itself again with some impersonal and indefinite "capitalist imperialism".

What course of action does the International Federation of Trade Unions recommend to the international proletariat against this war in the Balkans, the sole war danger which the Bureau has noticed since the Vienna Congress?

In its resolution, issued in agreement with the II. International it formulates its instructions for action as follows:

"They (the two Internationals) have commissioned the affiliated organisations, especially those directly interested, through the policy of their governments, in the Italian-Albanian-Yugoslavian conflict, to make the following demands:

The application of article 11 of the League of Nations pact, which provides for the convocation of the League of Nations Council in 'every case of war or danger of war'. 2. That the wording of the complaints made by Italy with respect to Yugoslavia be published. 3. That the debate be submitted to the League of Nations in this manner, for the purpose of giving it a public nature, and thus removing the dangers of secret diplomacy. 4. That the League of Nations after having either made the inquiry itself, as demanded by us, or having heard the results of the inquiry, examines into the resultant conclusions by means of a public discussion. 5. That the conclusions hereby drawn are actually applied, the right of self determination of Albania in particular being recognised, and no Italian or Yugoslavian protectorate, not even under the security offered by the League of Nations be permitted. 6. That the League of Nations remains on the watch to prevent any aggravation of friction."

The demands formulated by the two Internationals, with regard to the sole war danger which they observe, are directed exclusively to the League of Nations. There is no other hope for the working class. What action must the proletariat take, in order to ensure the fulfilment of these demands? We quote the conclusion of the resolution:

"In order to attain this result, the Executive of the II. International and of the I.F.T.U. urgently advise all labour parties to intervene in their parliaments, to the end that their governments may join in the movement for the convocation of the Council of the League of Nations for the purpose of dealing with the problem of Italy, Albania, and Yugoslavia. At the same time they should demand from all socialist parties and all labour organisations the carrying on of energetic propaganda and agitation, in order to demonstrate to the general public the absolute necessity of abolishing secret diplomacy and the policy of rival alliances, replacing these by developing the possibilities of the League of Nations."

And that is all!

The propaganda against war, against militarism, against the capitalist regime, has disappeared, just as mass action disappeared. Propaganda is now confined to combatting secret diplomacy and rival alliances in favour of the League of Nations.

The Bureau, despite the bankruptcy of the League of Nations and its Disarmament Conference, still endeavours in its report to represent the Geneva institution as an institution which is leading slowly but surely to peace. "Disarmament will become the practical policy of Holland, Denmark, and Sweden!" It is a fact that France is preparing for the mobilisation of women and children. But the I.F.T.U. does not concern itself with such trifles. "The term of service is being reduced!", and

"For the large countries it is of great importance that the labour movement is able to exercise so great an influence over the governments that all inclinations to war can be suppressed at once."

The League of Nations not only prepare for disarmament, it reorganises the world. The I.F.T.U., in its proclamation

of 1. May, combines the workers' demonstration with the League of Nations:

"The 1. May 1927 will at the same time strike the first note of the International Economic Conference, meeting four days later in Geneva, which is a fulfilment of one of the workers' demands. For the first time in the history of the world the material life of the nations will form the subject of an international inquiry."

The following again gives naive expression to the optimism of the reformist leaders, and their faith in the League of Nations:

"In spite of all resistance and attacks on the part of the privileged, the eight hour day holds its own, the disarmament idea makes progress from day to day, and the reconstruction of the world advances towards realisation. All these are results of the endeavours and interventions of the International Federation of Trade Unions."

The question of war against war and militarism is again the very last point on the agenda of the Paris Congress. Again it is **Jouhaux** who will give the report! Doubtless the resolutions of Rome and **The Hague** will be confirmed, but the I.F.T.U. will follow more determinedly in the wake of the League of Nations, that is, of the **Baldwin**, **Poincaré**, and **Hindenburg** governments, than even at the **Vienna Congress**. As the real danger of war increases, every reformist hastens to his post at the feet of his government. In spite of the utter decay of the League of Nations, the attempt will still be made to distract the working classes with this Geneva toy.

The draft of the resolution proposed by the **British** trade unions is characteristic, when we remember that the **British** movement represents a **Left** wing in the **Amsterdam International**. It is worth while quoting the whole:

"The Congress confirms anew its opposition to war and militarism, and continues to fight for the abolition of these two evils. It confirms the principle of arbitration, and the necessity of the settlement of all conflicts which

may arise among the peoples by the obligatory court of arbitration of the League of Nations.

The Congress welcomes all steps taken towards disarmament and reduction of the private manufacture and the direct or indirect trade in ammunition and war material. It draws attention to the work of the preparatory commission for disarmament, and demands that every affiliated central should induce its government to adopt such a humane and fraternal standpoint ensuring the creation of an institution which will actually solve this problem." And that is all!

We have quoted only the official verbatim texts of the I.F.T.U. We could add many even more striking passages to the same effect from the documents of the affiliated centres. "**Le Peuple**" the press organ of **Jouhaux**, wrote in July 1925 that: "Communism is war!"

How long is the path which the I.F.T.U. has travelled since the proclamations and resolutions of the Congress at Rome! The decay is only too plainly visible. At Rome the I.F.T.U. was as little prepared as today to take up action against war by an effective mobilisation of the masses; but it still wore that mask of demagogy which has since been torn from it by its lack of action in the Ruhr occupation. And once unmasked, the reformist leaders can find no other way than to combine the fate of the proletariat with the doubtful secrets of **Chamberlain**, **Briand**, **Stresemann**, **Mussolini**, and their **Geneva** partners.

Following in the wake of their governments, the **Amsterdam** leaders are as incapable of combatting war as the **League of Nations** itself is incapable. Confronted as we are by the growing danger of war at the present time, it is our task to prove this to the reformist masses, to show them that war can only be combated together with the regime which creates and fosters it, and that the emancipation of the workers can only be the work of the workers themselves, under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard.

Amsterdam and Fascism.

By Giovanni Germanetto.

After the formal protest against Fascism in the **International Labour Office**, **Albert Thomas**, in an interview with a collaborator of the newspaper "**Lavore d'Italia**", the organ of the confederation of Fascist trade union corporations, confirmed his... benevolently waiting attitude with respect to the work of Fascist syndicalism.

It is of equal interest to note what the leader of the **International Labour Office** has written and said about **Mussolini's** "labour charter".

We refer to this here because the worthy **Buozzi**, in company with **Reina** and the **maximalists**, have unanimously declared their full confidence in such action as **Amsterdam** can accomplish through its representatives in the **Labour Office** at **Geneva**.

In the opinion of these gentlemen, **Amsterdam** can have no other sphere of action than the **Labour Office**, within whose walls the protests against Fascism can be repeated endlessly from year to year.

This passive collaboration with the bourgeoisie within the organism created by the **League of Nations**, is only one part of the class collaboration of the leaders of **Amsterdam** with Fascism. A glance at the history of the latest fighting episodes of the **Italian** proletariat suffices to show this.

In April 1925 complaints were submitted to the I. F. T. U. in **Amsterdam**, and to the corresponding professional internationals, by two of the trade unions affiliated to the C. G. d. L. (**Confederazione General del Lavore**) and led by communists, the **woodworkers union** and the union of private employees (the latter had been dissolved by the C. G. d. L.), with regard to the dissolving of the trade union cartels not destroyed or prohibited by Fascism; with regard to the dissolving of various trade unions, including one led by the communists; further with regard to the suppression of all union statutes and with regard to the abolition of all right of decision for the trade union members, for the subordinate trade union organs; with regard to the abolition of every trade unionist and administrative autonomy, and finally with regard to the expulsion of communists — all this apart from the campaign

carried on all over the country in the press, in the trade union conferences, and in the workers' meetings.

These complaints contained ample documentary material in support of the accusations made against the reformists responsible for the decisions of the C. G. d. L. and were intended by the communists, and by all the workers still faithful to the class struggle, to stigmatise and prove once more, to the working class of Italy, the treacherous actions of the C. G. d. L. — actions worthy of the social democrats of the **Balkans**, **Germany**, and other countries — and to demand the intervention of the I. F. T. U. against the reformist leaders of the C. G. d. L. responsible for the dissolution.

Neither **Amsterdam** nor the professional internationals gave any reply. The secretaries of the trade unions mentioned applied once more to the **Amsterdam** and professional internationals for a reply, and requesting to put their case personally. They received no reply.

As soon as the new Fascist law on the trade union monopoly of the corporations was passed, the social democratic leaders of the C. G. d. L. adopted a decision in which it is confirmed that the attitude of the C. G. d. L. in relation to the Fascist trade union legislation remains unchanged, and declaring that it intended to defend its right to a free existence, and to exercise at the same time the activities allotted to the unions by the state law with regard to investigation, education, and relief work, which activities are to find the guarantee for their development in the leading organs of the unions.

With this action the reformists continued their tactics of retreat before the Fascist enemy. **Amsterdam** preserved silence.

The expelled communists, conscious of the increasing danger of the situation, demanded their readmittance into the C. G. d. L., whilst workers' commissions were delegated to the C. G. d. L., in order to induce the reformists to take action.

The pro-Fascist attitude of various trade union leaders in the C. G. d. L. was stigmatized again and again by the communists.

Maglione, the secretary of the C. G. d. L. and editor of the organ of the C. G. d. L., the "**Battaglie Sindacali**" ("The

trade union struggle"), who went over to Fascism with **Rigola**, **D'Aragona**, and the others, was able to open a campaign in the press with the object of raising within the C. G. d. L. the question of the enrolment of this chief trade union organ of the proletarian class of Italy in the ranks of Fascist legislation, and the question of its action side by side with the Fascist trade union corporations in accordance with the criteria of technical co-operation as developed by Colombino. This campaign of the reformists was supported by the most influential Fascist newspapers, such as the "**Popolo d'Italia**" and the "**Lavora d'Italia**", which have called upon the leaders of the C. G. d. L. either to imitate **D'Aragona** and **Azimonti**, or to join the communists, whose aim is the winning over of the trade unions for the class struggle.

Maglione, attacked by the communists, succeeded in bringing the leaders of the C. G. d. L. to a decision on this question. This resolution, drawn up by **Buozzi** and his followers, stated that the leaders of the C. G. d. L. expressly confirm that **Maglione**, whose ideas and work are known to them as being directed towards rendering the C. G. d. L. increasingly resistant against all attacks and persecution, deserves none of the accusations and suspicions which have been brought against him of late, the so-called facts raised against him being non-existent, so that he is entirely worthy of holding a confidential position in the class organisations.

A few days later **Maglione** went over to the Fascists.

Tomaso Bruno enjoyed the solidarity of the leaders of the C. G. d. L. until the day when he delivered the typographical workers union into the hands of the Fascists.

Lodovico D'Aragona, **Baldesi**, and **Colombino** have always been allowed free expression of their opinion, and to make pro-Fascist declarations. The leaders of the C. G. d. L. have either expressed their solidarity (in the case of **D'Aragona**), or they have simply ignored the anti-proletarian action of these people.

Galli, of the textile workers union, wrote a letter to the following effect to the workers who desired to remain organised, after the police had dissolved the textile workers union at **Monza**:

"With regard to your assertion that the trade union of **Monza** still exists, we forbid you to make such a statement, since this would compromise you and us for the simple reason that the dissolution decree for the **Monza** trade union cartel includes the dissolution of your trade union."

This was for him sufficient reason to demand the type-writer and the funds...

The record has however been beaten by **Reina**, one of the leaders of the C. G. d. L. and the secretary of the national union of hatmakers and of the corresponding international secretariat, who issued a circular which truly deserves publication:

"Our union, which finds in the law on labour conflicts a considerable part of the regulations which the union has included in its labour contracts, as also the same desire to leave nothing untried to prevent the outbreak of strikes as will be found in the statutes of the union, intends to support the legal recognition in accordance with the regulations of the new law. Where this cannot be accomplished, it intends, as an actual organisation — but invariably within the law — to exert every endeavour to ensure the recognition of the rights of its members, as members of a purely trade union organisation, to belong at the same time to the recognised organisation — the Fascist — thereby ensuring neighbourly relations with this organisation, and, if possible, a loyal technical co-operation in labour questions."

Buozzi wrote that we have slandered **Reina**, one of the most faithful. **Amsterdam** took up the matter, but only to praise **Reina**!

And **Reina**, too, went over to Fascism!

After the wave of reaction in November 1926 — following the assassination at **Bologna** — the communists submitted to the leaders of the C. G. d. L. a motion containing definite proposals for the defence of the C. G. d. L. (Organisation according to branches of industry and factories, reduction of members' subscriptions, election of local and central organs, resumption of activity for the defence of wages, working hours, and trade union freedom, international action for trade union unity), all proposals which have always been rejected by the reformists.

Instead of convocating a conference, the leaders of the C. G. d. L. drew up the following resolution:

"The leaders of the C. G. d. L., after the report on the conditions obtaining in the trade union organisations, on the local committees and representative bodies, and on the opinions of the leaders and functionaries, and after ascertaining that the attempt towards an actual trade union affiliation as provided in article 12 of the law of 3. April 1926 has failed, and that it is impossible to proceed to the collection of the members' subscriptions for 1927, declare, at their session held on 4. January 1927 at the headquarters of the Central at **Milan**, that their function has come to an end, and they call upon the executive committee to proceed with the liquidation and the regulation of the remaining funds and of the interests of the C. G. d. L.

Confederazione Generale del Lavoro.
signed:
Maglione."

This disgraceful document coincided with the most tragic moment of the struggle of the Italian proletariat, and crowned the series of betrayals of the working class committed by the reformists.

Amsterdam found nothing more to say to the treachery of these elements than a recognition of the central of the C. G. d. L. after its transference abroad by **Buozzi & Co.**, i. e. to a recognition of the contents of **Maglione's** circular, the liquidation of the C. G. d. L. in Italy.

Whilst **Buozzi** and **Maglione** were doing their best to liquidate the C. G. d. L., the workers in Italy held a conference for the appointment of temporary leaders for the C. G. d. L. This proposal emanated from the **F. I. L. L. I. L.** (Italian woodworkers union), the **F. I. D. A. P.** (Italian private employees' union), and the **F. I. L. A. M.** (Italian hotel and restaurant employees union).

The following questions were dealt with at the trade union conference.

1. The non-validity of the decision to dissolve the C. G. d. L.
2. A complaint to be sent to the **I. F. T. U.** at **Amsterdam**. The situation in the unions.
3. Working programme and organisatory instructions.
4. Reorganisation of a temporary Executive Committee of the C. G. d. L.

On the suggestion of the leaders of the above mentioned three unions, several maximalist and reformist organisations were affiliated. The unions of the textile workers, metal workers, woodworkers, hotel and restaurant employees, private employees, transport workers, typographical workers, chemical workers, and building workers, were represented at the conference, as also the former trade councils of **Milan**, **Turin**, **Trieste**, **Bologna**, **Genoa**, **Naples**, **Rome**, **Bergamo**, **Vicenza**, and other smaller places. Declarations of approval were also received from two well known reformists, old organisers of the building workers and agricultural labourers.

The conference resolved unanimously that the **I. F. T. U.** in **Amsterdam** should be called upon:

1. To declare the decision accepted by the former leaders of the C. G. d. L. on 4. January, dissolving the C. G. d. L., to be invalid.
2. To regard that decision as a collective withdrawal on the part of the old leaders of the C. G. d. L.
3. To call upon the retired leaders properly to hand over their mandates and apparatus to the temporary leaders elected by the conference.
4. To convocate a national conference in agreement with the temporary leaders, one of the tasks of this conference being the election of the permanent leaders. To maintain from now onwards normal relations with the temporary leaders elected by the conference on 20. February, and who are alone entitled to speak on behalf of the C. G. d. L.

Besides this, the conference drew up a plan of work, and resolved on the illegal publication of the organ of the C. G. d. L., the "**Battaglie Sindacali**".

The working class defends the organisation, does not give up the fight against Fascism. **Amsterdam** — and this we must repeat — has recognised the central of the C. G. d. L. at present in **Paris**, just as it has always shown its approval of the policy of surrender and of co-operation between Italian social democracy and Fascism.

Amsterdam and China.

By T. Mandaljan.

"Everything that the Russians say about the awakening of the East is bluff. As yet there is no class war in China, but a race war!"

These words were spoken in May 1925 by Mr Oudegeest, secretary of the Amsterdam International, at a trade union meeting at the Hague.

Much blood has been shed in China since that time. The workers of Europe have followed events in China with excitement and greatest attention. They have felt instinctively that the struggle of the Chinese people against foreign pressure, against imperialism and feudalism, is the class struggle itself, the struggle of the Chinese proletariat, the peasantry, and the poor population of the towns, against the large landowners, militarists, compradores, and foreign capitalists.

The Amsterdam International and its organisations have been obliged from time to time, under the pressure of proletarian public opinion, to come forward with an official expression of "sympathy" with the Chinese people and the Chinese workers.

But whom and how has the Amsterdam International really helped in China?

Whom has Amsterdam not helped?

The Chinese workers, struggling for the most elementary of human rights, for the eight to twelve hour day in place of the twelve to twenty hour day, for a rise in wages of a few cents per day, for the right to organise, for the right to life and health.

At the session of the Executive Committee, held on 29/30 June 1925, the Amsterdam International rejected, for "various reasons", the proposal of the Comintern, the R. I. L. U. and the International Workers' Relief, for a joint relief action for China. During the heroic fight of the Shanghai proletariat, during the general strike, the Executive Committee decided "to send an inquiry to the trade unions known to it, asking the extent to which help was desired, or if help is required at all."

Was help necessary for 300,000 workers on the verge of death by starvation, after a month of general strike? Amsterdam "did not know".

The Shanghai workers fought on for further two months, and the Amsterdam Executive Committee decided, on 17/18 August, that: "The International will always be prepared to help the Chinese workers in their struggle. In consequence of the uncertain situation in China, in consequence of the lack of adequate direct information, and in consequence of the economic position of the affiliated organisations, the International Trade Union Federation is however not in a position to organise an international financial relief action."

The higher the revolutionary wave rises in China, and the nearer the danger of open intervention from abroad, the greater the energy with which the Amsterdam International abstains from any expression of international solidarity, even an apparent one.

"The workers of Europe cannot give China material aid, nor can they help by action, if a country with a population of over 300 millions cannot help itself. Anyone capable of logical thought knows that under present conditions, and given the present position of the organisations, such action is absolutely impossible".

In this manner the official organ of the I. F. T. U. replied on 26. April 1927 to the proposal made by Moscow to prevent the transport of war material and troops to China.

Yet the Amsterdam International promises to help the Chinese workers... "after order has been restored in China". This is what Oudegeest said to the representatives of the Chinese trade unions, when they proposed, on March of this year, to send a delegation to China. Oudegeest did not consider the sending of such a delegation to be desirable, for a trade union movement can only develop in a country in which political peace rules.

On 5. April the Amsterdam organ developed the following idea: "A great organisatory assistance and co-operation (with the European trade union movement) must set in as soon as the national struggle is ended". First, however, the Chinese

workers must fight alone against all the powers of darkness of Chinese and international reaction! The Chinese railway workers, working for 24 hours in succession in the front ranks of the civil war, starving and in constant danger of death, the Chinese textile workers, driven forward by the knout of the overseer and inhuman misery, the Chinese miners, of whom many know nothing more of daylight, but creep about for six months at a time in the damp and evil smelling mines, these will indeed know how to thank the Amsterdamers for their "help" after they have overcome all these difficulties and attained to victory.

Whom does Amsterdam help?

In the first place the Amsterdamers confine their "action" to a modest moral support of the imperialists in restoring the much wished for order in China, to be established over the bones of the workers of Shanghai and Hankow.

As early as July 1925 we find the Bulletin of the Amsterdam International elevating the minds of the reformist trade union functionaries by an essay from the "Vorwärts", in which we read that: "The question remains open — whether it is possible to place the protection of foreigners unconditionally in the hands of the Chinese authorities at the present juncture. After the experience of the past year, characterised by a confusion of civil war and predatory raids, it is scarcely possible to answer this question in the affirmative. And it is as little possible to recommend the foreign factory owners, merchants, etc., to simply abandon the field, etc." At the same time the "Vorwärts" recommends to improve the working conditions of the Chinese workers: "The longer London and Washington close their eyes to this fact, the greater will the attraction be which the confused, but dangerous, nationalist Bolshevist theories exercise among the people of Asia — and not only among the Chinese —".

Under the given conditions, whose interests are looked after by the "Vorwärts"? Without doubt, the interests of the imperialists.

Hence the first piece of advice given by the Amsterdamites to the imperialists is: **Do not leave China, stick to your privileges, we shall support you!**

The second piece of advice is given by the French section of the Amsterdam International, in the number of the "Peuple", the organ of the C. G. T., published on 26. March 1927. Mr. Harmelle advises the powers to recognise the Canton government, and thereby "to cease chaining the Chinese dragon together with the hydra of Bolshevism".

This worthy reformist writes as follows:

"In 1925 the Kuomintang in Canton rejected communism, and declared the expulsion of the followers of Moscow from their ranks. The victorious struggle, commenced after the bloody strikes in Shanghai led to the liquidation of this decision, and to the maintenance of the 'united front'... If the European powers want to grasp this, they must make it clear to themselves that it depends upon them today to provoke, by means of a necessary political gesture, this rupture between the Chinese nationalists and the agents of Moscow."

The second piece of advice from the Amsterdamites to the imperialists is: **Put your stake on the card of the Chinese bourgeoisie, on Chiang Kai Shek, induce him to break with the working class, to crush it bloodily, and you will receive your reward!**

This plan was carried out by the imperialists (without the advice of the Amsterdamites, by the way) within a fortnight.

The labour movement in Shanghai and Canton has suffered greatly. Thousands of active workers have been shot, thousands lie in the prisons. The Amsterdam "counsellors" are highly gratified: "Aha, we told you so, first wait till things have quietened down". The organ of the Amsterdam International writes on 26. April:

"The Chinese trade unions began to take an increasingly active part in the national emancipation movement

of their country, and to occupy a position, either on their own initiative or under foreign influence, which is dangerous from the standpoint of the free trade unions.... That which has already happened in other countries is repeated in China: The workers have to pay for the too tangible rule of the Russians in the trade unions."

It thus appears that it is not Chiang Kai Shek who has shattered the labour movement (with Mr. Harmelle's approval), but the "Russians"! The social democratic Kiel, "Volkszeitung" says the same: "The counter-revolution is not in Chiang Kai Shek's camp, but in Moscow"....

Amsterdam in the camp of Chiang Kai Shek! Well, where is it more likely to be than with the executioner of the wor-

kers, the lackey of the imperialists? Chiang Kai Shek may prove highly useful to the Amsterdamites. He has created Fascist trade unions, with whose assistance Amsterdam might well pretend to an ideal leadership of the Chinese trade unions movement.

But the Chinese workers think somewhat differently. With weapons in hands they are fighting against Chiang Kai Shek and the yellow trade unions. And the European workers themselves, perhaps without the aid of the Chinese, will some day make short work of the Amsterdam leaders, these supporters and protectors of European "civilisation", these most despicable and contemptible agents of colonial serfdom and imperialist robbery.

The British Trade Union Movement and Amsterdam*)

By D. Bennett.

The leaders of the Amsterdam International, in their report to the coming Congress, criticise Purcell, Hicks, etc. in a fatherly manner for their propaganda of trade union unity, and for their friendship with the trade unions of the Soviet Union. The fathers of Amsterdam try to convince their misled sons that they have committed a fatal error, and that the trade unions of the Soviet Union have "abused" their friendship in the most barbarous manner.

It is scarcely necessary to argue against the warnings and reproaches of citizen Oudegeest. The historical facts of the last few years prove plainly enough the real import of that "friendship" of which Oudegeest speaks, and who has "abused" it. The revolutionary trade unions of the first socialist State have neither sought nor found friendship with the bureaucracy of the British trade unions. They have striven, and are still striving, to establish a fraternal alliance with the English workers on behalf of class solidarity. They have been able to show, and to demonstrate by deeds, that class solidarity is not merely a sounding phrase to them, and that they are capable of heroic efforts to realise this solidarity.

Nor is it worth while to deal with Mr. Oudegeest's conclusion that what the trade unions of the Soviet Union are aiming at is not the unity of the trade union movement, but a "subordination to the Moscow dictators". The trade union movement of the whole world is not suffering from the Moscow dictatorship, but from the bourgeois reactionary dictatorship whose agents are the leaders of the Second International, and their assistants, the "leaders" of the Amsterdam.

For us the most interesting part of the report before us is its description of the development of British trade union bureaucracy during the complicated and tempestuous post-war period. We are of the opinion that this development can be best studied and understood by means of a survey of the three historical milestones in the history of the British labour movement since the war; the "Black Friday" at the beginning of 1921, the "Red Friday" in the middle of 1925, and finally, the day of the blackest treachery ever committed in the history of the labour movement — surpassed perhaps only by the 4th August 1914 — the 12th May 1926.

The trade union bureaucrats are in every respect excellent pupils of the ruling class; they are extremely clever at keeping their secrets, and at concealing their machinations from the eyes of the working masses. Up to the present day — July 1917 — we still do not know the details of what went on behind the scenes of the Black 15th April 1921. We only know that the railwaymen and the transport workers were to have gone on strike on that day, in order to help the miners who were being attacked by the united forces of the mine owners and Lloyd George's government. The strike did not break out; at the decisive moment the leaders of the railway and transport workers unions deserted the battlefield, and left the miners to their fate. The miners fought bravely until the end of June, and then had to admit defeat.

Robert Williams, at that time leader of the transport workers, and Thomas, the everlasting "leader" of the railwaymen, insinuated, and still insinuate, that this treacherous action was carried out with the knowledge and agreement of

the miners. Under "miners" they understand the traitor Frank Hodges, who made the proposal, on 14. April, that the miners should abandon the whole of their demands, and confine themselves to a slight alteration in their wages. It was in agreement with this "miner" that the treachery was accomplished.

"Black Friday" was followed by a period of increased reaction. The trade unions lost hundreds of thousands of members. Even the trade union bureaucrats themselves, especially those in immediate contact with the masses, began to seek anxiously for new ways and means. The last impetus in this direction was the trade union congress at Plymouth, which raised a perfect storm of indignation.

Under the pressure of the discontent of the broad masses, a small group of trade union leaders came forward, and endeavoured to adapt themselves to the new ideas and the new tendencies of the active elements of the British trade union movement. The programme of this group has been laid down in a series of articles published in the "Labour Monthly" in the course of 1924. The editor of this periodical, Dutt, subsequently summed the "new words" of these leaders, the pioneers of a new trade unionism. Dutt was able to demonstrate effectually that these leaders have neither a programme, nor the courage, to take up the fight against the old bureaucracy and its methods of action.

It is true that the masses have eagerly seized upon the half and half phrases of Messrs Purcell, Hicks, etc. But it was clear that here it was not a question of these leaders or their long winded programme, but a new quest on the part of the awakening masses.

The trade union congress at Hull was marked by the hegemony of these so-called Left leaders. Purcell was chairman. His opening speech — a parody of a speech from the throne — was sprinkled with sparkling phrases against imperialism, against capitalism, for class war, etc. But a certain amount of cowardice appeared to be concealed behind these phrases. Purcell did not muster up the courage to expose the most important question of the class struggle in their whole nakedness. The whole congress at Hull mirrored the mentality ruling the chairman's speech from the throne. The resolutions passed by this congress boasted a new phraseology, but did not shake the foundations of the old bureaucracy.

The new trends of feeling in the working masses found clear expression in the days preceding Friday July 1, 1925. The incompetent and corrupt mine owners renewed their attempts to force worse working conditions upon the miners. The miners appealed to the whole labour movement. The leaders were obliged, under the influence of the labour movement, to issue an assurance that they would support the miners. Up to the April 30, Baldwin and the coalowners were fully convinced that their plan would succeed. The government realised at the last moment, however, that a repetition of Black Friday had become impossible. The strike declaration signed by the miners' federation was confirmed by the General Council and by all transport unions, including the railwaymen's union, which proposed to stop the transport of coal. The reports coming in from the provinces showed that the declaration would be supported with unusual enthusiasm. The government became uncertain and gave way.

*) Re-translated from the German.

The government told the working class plainly that its retreat was merely temporary, and had as its object the gaining of time for preparation for the decisive struggle. The new agreement was made valid for only nine months.

During these nine months a gradual and steady concentration of the forces of the old bureaucracy was observable. Red Friday had simply paralysed these forces. MacDonal made no secret of his regret that this day had represented a triumph of the Left elements of the trade union movement. It was perfectly clear to the bureaucrats that if the movement were to proceed on the lines of Red Friday, they would have to abandon their positions to other fighters and other leaders, to leaders capable of fighting to the death against decaying British capitalism, against an imperialism fighting desperately against its inevitable downfall.

When the nine months' pause for breath was over, the whole trade union bureaucracy united in a mighty effort to prevent a conflict. The bureaucrats brought every artifice to bear, their whole authority, their whole influence, in the attempt to induce the miners to succumb without a struggle. But the miners refused to do this. At the same time Frank Hodges was replaced, as secretary of the Federation, by Arthur Cook, who had been chosen after the Black Friday as candidate of the Left revolutionary elements among the British miners.

A mechanical repetition of Black Friday was likewise impossible. Between the Black Friday of 1921 and April 1926 there was a period illuminated by the light of Red Friday. The leaders of the General Council were forced to declare their support of the miners by means of a general strike.

The history of those nine days is still fresh in our memories. We know that during these nine days the General Council fought against the extension and development of the general strike, and attempted to betray the miners behind the scenes. The General Council had but one desire, and that was to get the miners leaders' agreement to the blackest treachery. In other words they wished, in the situation of a general strike, to practise precisely the same treachery as they had in April 1921. Their plan only succeeded in part. The general strike was broken off, but the miners continued their fight.

This begins a new epoch in the history of the British labour movement. The class struggle assumes an acuter and clearer character. The heroes of the Left phraseology are forced to withdraw into the background, and to leave the reins in the hands of the heroes of the Black machinations. The consolidation commenced immediately after Red Friday is completed; the line

dividing Thomas and Purcell vanishes, and at the same moment a wide chasm yawns between the revolutionary minded working masses and the actively reactionary trade union leaders.

This period is distinguished by the growth and development of the Minority Movement, whose influence has spread not only to the broad masses of the workers, but to the best elements among the trade union leaders who have maintained their contact with the masses.

The process of differentiation in the British Labour Movement has of necessity found expression in the question of the unity of the trade union movement. Purcell, Hicks, etc., who have feared to attack the domestic affairs of trade union bureaucracy, have made much capital out of their "friendship" with the workers of the Soviet Union. They have exploited this friendship as an outward token to their Leftness, and have hidden their Right sins behind it.

The course of events presented a bill of exchange to this so-called Left, and called upon them to honour it. The trade unions of the Soviet Union, in accordance with the principles contained in the declaration of the Anglo-Russian Committee, solemnly signed by the General Council, made an attempt to send aid to the General Council. The betrayers of the general strike naturally rejected this offer. Upon this the trade unions of the Soviet Union endeavoured to prevent the defeat of the miners. The organisers of this defeat maliciously frustrated all the efforts made in this direction by the Central Council of the trade unions of the Soviet Union.

Finally, the existence of the Anglo-Russian Committee signifies a common struggle against the danger of war. At the present juncture it is the British Empire which threatens peace, but both Right and Left do homage to this Empire.

Hence the Anglo-Russian Committee has become a millstone round the neck of the General Council, which is anxiously seeking some pretext for the dissolution of an organisation created by the sincere endeavour of the working masses of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union towards unity. Here the one-time so-called Left unites with the Right, not only in combatting the miners, but in combatting the Anglo-Russian Committee. The circle is complete.

Meanwhile the British workers are calling more loudly than ever for international trade union unity in general, and for a rapprochement to the trade unions of the Soviet Union in particular. That which Purcell, Hicks, and Oudegeest regard as an abuse of friendship, is in the eyes of the British workers an expression of real proletarian solidarity.

The Shells of Amsterdam.

By D. P.

The "Report on the activity of the International Trade Union Federation for 1924/25/26" shows plainly that the Amsterdamites find themselves in an exceedingly difficult position. The Vienna Congress was held in the first spring of the "era" of MacDonald and Herriot. The reformists opposed the democratic Parliaments with their socialist ministers, and the League of Nations with the International Labour Office, to the proletarian Soviets and the "barbaric" methods of class war. But the first spring of this era was at the same time its last. Herriot has now long since been yoked to the chariot of Poincaré, and the onetime Prime Minister MacDonald sheds bitter tears on the banks of the Thames over the ruin of his dearest hopes. A wild reaction rages all over the world; the notorious Washington Convention has been long since forgotten. No word more is heard about the reforms announced by the "International Labour Office".

In this situation it is extremely difficult for the Amsterdam reformists to present any actual achievements to the organised labour movement. The financial report, ending with a deficit, seems to serve as a closing illustration of the helplessness and impotence of the Amsterdam International.

Oudegeest is obviously determined to find compensation for all this by a campaign against Moscow. At the Vienna Congress he did his best to obtain a mandate to break off all relations with Moscow. The Amsterdamites were not disinclined

to accede to his wish. Only the British delegation struck a certain dissonance in the work of the Vienna congress. At that time the British working class was passing through a period of great revolutionary advance, chiefly under the influence of a bias towards the Soviet Union and its revolutionary trade unions. The British delegation at the Vienna Congress was obliged to give expression to this trend of feeling among the active elements of the British trade unions. Oudegeest and his friends were forced to declare themselves in agreement with a compromise resolution demanding further negotiations with the Central Council of the trade unions of the Soviet Union, but commissioning at the same time the Executive Committee to preserve the dignity of Amsterdam. What sensibility!

Oudegeest's revenge on the Vienna Congress, and above all on the General Council of the British Trade Union Congress, is a campaign of agitation against the A. U. C. T. U. The whole report teems with polemical attacks on Moscow and the trade union movement of the Soviet Union. Oudegeest is not content with mere pinpricks against the revolutionary trade unions which are the object of his hate. In quiet Amsterdam, and in face of wild capitalist reaction, he prepares two shells to fire at Moscow.

The first shell, of comparatively small size, is shot out of the pages of the first chapter, dealing with the International Professional Secretariats. These secretariats can scarcely boast

of any great improvement in the economic situation of their members; they have, however, all passed resolutions, in one form or another, on the question of the trade unions of the Soviet Union. The tendency of these resolutions has rejoiced the heart of old Oudegeest, and he has collected them all together and fired them simultaneously at Moscow.

Chapter 5, however, is a shell of much greater calibre, and bears the sounding impressive title of "Amsterdam-Moscow".

This chapter begins by repeating the correspondence between the A. U. C. T. U. and the Amsterdam International in the course of the first period following the Vienna Congress. No objection can be raised to a recapitulation of this correspondence, indeed, it is to be welcomed from every point of view. We can even fully agree with the writers of the report that "it may be seen from the correspondence with the Russian trade unions which has been published that the standpoint held by the International Trade Union Federation leaves nothing to be desired in respect of clearness and precision". Golden words! Every reader into whose hands this correspondence falls will understand clearly and distinctly the direction of Amsterdam's aims, and will recognise the measure in which Amsterdam has sought to realise the unity of the trade union movement of the world. It would indeed suffice were the reader to confine himself to the first letter dealing directly with this question, dated 11. September 1924 and reprinted on page 47 of the report. In this brief letter of not more than one page Oudegeest not only contrives to throw a number of obstacles in the way of unity with the Soviet Union, but at the same time to avoid a preliminary conference with them.

The following is a resumé of the most important arguments brought forward by Mr. Oudegeest:

1. Oral negotiations cannot be held until a common platform has been formulated in writing. This argument is especially convincing in the mouths of reformists, whose constant endeavour it is to carry on negotiations with employers and government agents without imposing any conditions. Amsterdam has always deemed such negotiations to be the most important instruments of the "class struggle". But of course we must not confuse negotiations behind the scenes of ministers' antechambers with conferences participated in by representatives of the Red trade unions.

2. The differences of opinion existing between Amsterdam and Moscow are so great that it is not so easy to bridge them. O sacred truth! Truly we have never denied this. But Oudegeest maintains that Amsterdam has no general principles, and that its own principle is that the national organisations must enjoy unlimited freedom. It is obvious that Amsterdam can speedily arrive at agreement with trade unions openly playing the rôle of strike breakers. But as soon as revolutionary trade unions come in question, Oudegeest unexpectedly recollects the necessity of strict adherence to principles.

3. Oudegeest takes care to point out that the Executive Committee of the Amsterdam International cannot undertake any serious steps without the previous sanction of the next congress. It must be observed that the letter was written on 11. September 1924, and the next congress was fixed for August 1927.

It is perfectly clear that the conditions formulated by Mr. Oudegeest form a threefold security against effective steps towards the unification of the split and scattered trade union movement. It may however be observed that Oudegeest himself is somewhat alarmed at the "precision and clearness" evidenced by the correspondence. He therefore decided to make the "precision" even more precise, and to clear up the "clearness" even further. We must deal somewhat more in detail with these nearer definitions of precision and clearness.

These preciser explanations begin with a fatherly criticism of Purcell, Hicks, and others, whose agitation in favour of trade union unity is alleged to have brought confusion into the treatment of the unity questions. Oudegeest declares that whilst Tomsky, in his speeches at the British trade union congress in 1924/25, spoke of the unity of the whole trade union movement, the Vienna congress had issued directions that negotiations should only be carried on with the trade unions of the Soviet Union. Purcell and Hicks, however, had spoken of a general unity. It is scarcely worth while to deal at length with this "explanation". Oudegeest will probably find some way of arriving at an understanding with the present

leaders of the British trade unions, and of bringing about a joint standpoint. We have long been aware that Oudegeest is opposed not only to the international trade union movement, but to a contact with the trade unions of the Soviet Union.

The arguments of the greatest interest to us are those brought forward by Oudegeest in his report in the form of an accusation against Moscow. What crimes were committed by the A. U. C. T. U. during the period covered by the report?

The first crime of the A. U. C. T. U. consists of the fact that this central organ of the trade unions of the Soviet Union dared, on 7. June 1926, to issue a proclamation to the international proletariat, severely condemning the actions of the General Council. We cannot but thank Oudegeest for quoting some extracts from this document, every word of which has been confirmed by subsequent events.

The second crime of the A. U. C. T. U. was the telegram sent by Tomsky to the British trade union congress at Bournemouth. Oudegeest states that this telegram greatly aroused the ire of Mr. Pugh, the chairman of the congress. We have long been aware of these facts. Tomsky's telegram was published by the whole press. What effect it had upon Pugh causes us little anxiety. The sole question of importance in connection with this telegram is to what extent Tomsky's accusations were justified or not. Tomsky declared subsequently that it is entirely wrong to assume that the trade unions of the Soviet Union, having made friendship with the British trade unions, thereby abandon all right to call things by their proper name, especially the right to designate the betrayers of the working class as such.

The third and most cynical accusation brought against the A. U. C. T. U. by Mr. Oudegeest refers to the help given by the trade unions of the Soviet Union to the British miners during their heroic struggle. Oudegeest ventures to throw a doubt on the motives by which the workers of the Soviet Union were guided in their desire to prevent the defeat of the British miners. He maintains that the pamphlet: "The strike in England and the working class of the Soviet Union", containing an exact report on the organisation of the aid for the Miners, appeared only in the German language. This is a direct lie. It appeared in every language, including the English, with a preface by Arthur Cook, the secretary of the Miners' Federation.

Oudegeest attempts, maliciously and unscrupulously, to assert that the millions of roubles were sent to the miners solely for purposes of propaganda. Oudegeest himself has relations of his own to propaganda. He knows very well that his propaganda against the Soviet Union is highly valued by the ruling classes of the whole world. And of course he understands that the millions given in support of the miners could have been used for flooding not only Great Britain, but the whole of Europe, with a generous supply of propagandist literature. The workers of the Soviet Union helped their British brothers in the conviction that the offensive against the miners is of international significance, and that a victory of the miners would be a magnificent victory for the workers of the whole world.

The course of subsequent events has proved that the workers judged rightly. Let Mr. Oudegeest and his like slander as they will. The British miners know who helped them with money and propaganda, and who helped their enemies by sabotage and anti-proletarian propaganda.

Having closed his series of accusations, Mr. Oudegeest dishes up the following lyrical phrase to his readers: We can only regret that the standpoint of the Russian trade union movement has prevented a rapprochement. The International Trade Union Federation is of the opinion that the admittance of the relatively young Russian movement, whose membership has already attained an impressive number, into the ranks of the International Trade Union Federation, would be of extremely great importance for the international working class."

All Oudegeests have obviously, for precisely this reason been working obstinately against the affiliation. Oudegeest's report makes short work of anyone who would dream of drawing practical conclusions from his above lyrical phrases.

He points out that it would only injure the International, were the affiliation to the International used by the Russians, not for purposes of sincere and honest co-operation, but for the purpose of forcing the Russian policy upon the organisations belonging to the International.

What is this specifically Russian policy so dreaded by Mr. Oudegeest? In his report he evades a complete and straightforward definition. He endeavours, in the interests of the friendship with the General Council, to put the question of interference as an accusation against Russian policy. It appears that the support lent to the workers in their class struggle is interference. Criticism of traitors to the workers' cause is likewise interference. He defends the "right of every separate trade union centre to conduct its own economic struggles according to its own judgment", and adds that Amsterdam's endeavours are directed "solely towards the formation of a real organic unity". Truly that would be organic unity of a high degree of perfection, were the whole trade union movement to give

the various cartels the possibility of defeating the workers' organisations individually one by one.

We may safely maintain that Oudegeest's shells will not drop in the trade unions of the Soviet Union, but are much more likely to explode over the heads of those reformist leaders who are using the flag of an "International Trade Union Federation" for the formation of an efficient agency which enables international capital to attack unhindered the minimum standard of living of the proletariat of all countries. The whole report is a proof of the utter bankruptcy of Amsterdam, whose hopes in 'the International Labour Office, and similar instruments of a peaceful and gradual transformation of capitalist hell into socialist paradise, have vanished in smoke.

The above article is taken from the newspaper "Trud", the official organ of the A. U. C. T. U. It contains a clear and authoritative reply to the accusations of Amsterdam. Ed.

The International Labour Office and the Amsterdam International.

By Lewin.

The Treaty of Versailles provided simultaneously for the founding of the League of Nations and the formation of an International Labour Office. During the war, the reformist leaders of the labour movement made a great number of promises, on behalf of the imperialist bourgeoisie, to the workers whom they were misleading. They asserted that a new and better world would be opened out to the workers after the war, compensating them a hundredfold for the sacrifices made on the altar of their native country during the war. When the time came for the reformist leaders to redeem the bills issued in this manner during the war, they were obliged to exert pressure upon the bourgeoisie, and the result was the formation of the International Labour Office.

All bourgeois writers are unanimously agreed that the principles contained in the XIII. section the Versailles Treaty with respect to the right to work, as well as the formation of the International Labour Office, were concessions given out of fear of revolution. Dr. Tänzler, for instance, writes in his book "International Social Policy", published by the German Employers' Union:

"that the Conference was entirely under the influence of the war just ended, and of the power of the working class evidenced at this time in every country. The Allies regarded the satisfaction of the most radical demands of the workers not only as their duty as victors, but as a wise measure for the prevention of revolution and unrest!").

Dr. Shotwell, in a compilation of writings issued under the title of "Labour as an International Problem", makes the same statement:

"We do not know whether the governments of Europe were in a nervous state or not in the winter of 1918/19; certainly there was reason enough for uneasiness. At the present time we have become so accustomed to the Bolshevik regime that we can no longer imagine the excitement caused by this regime among all classes in Europe at one time, filling the bourgeoisie with alarm, the radicals and revolutionists with expectant hope. At that time the wild flames of revolution seemed to proclaim general anarchy in Germany, and at least one or two of the governments represented at the Paris Conference were threatened by the danger of being overthrown. The long shadow thrown by Russia could not be banished from Europe").

We find the same again in Beddington Behren's book: "The International Labour Office".

1) Dr. Fritz Tändler: "Internationale Sozialpolitik", Berlin 1926. p. 51.

2) "Labour as an International Problem", edited by John, London 1920. p. 43.

3) E. Beddington Behrens: The International Labour Office. London 1919. p. 21.

The famous section XIII of the Versailles treaty, containing the statutes of the Labour Office to be established through the League of Nations, begins with a bombastic declaration to the following effect:

"Whereas the League of Nations purposes the establishment of general peace, and that such a peace can only be founded on the principle of social justice;

and whereas working conditions exist which involve injustice, poverty, and deprivation for a large number of persons, giving rise to a degree of discontent creating emergencies dangerous to general peace and harmony... and whereas these working conditions are urgently in need of correction, for instance with respect to the regulation of working hours, the fixing of a maximum working day and working week, the regulation of the labour market, the prevention of unemployment, the guarantee of a working wage ensuring decent human conditions, of the protection of workers against ordinary diseases and diseases incidental to their trades, against accidents at work, the protection of children, juveniles, and women, old age and invalid insurance, the protection of the interests of workers employed abroad, the confirmation of the principle of the freedom of the unions, the organisation of crafts and technical education, and other analogous measures;

and whereas the non-acceptance of a really humane labour regime by any single nation hinders the endeavours of other nations desirous of improving the situation of workers in their own countries,

the high contracting Powers, guided by feelings of justice and humanity, and by the wish to secure permanent and general peace, hereby agree as follows:

Here follows the Statute of the International Labour Office itself; the final clause of this section consists of nine principles in which are laid down the rights of Labour. These are as follows:

1. The fundamental principle is: Labour is not to be regarded simply as a commodity or object of commerce.
2. Both employers and workers have the right of combination, unless aims are pursued running counter to the law.
3. Wages are to ensure for the workers a standard of life worthy of human beings, the standard being adapted in each case to the epoch and country.
4. The eight hour day or forty eight hour week is to be striven for everywhere where it has not yet been attained.
5. A pause for recuperation of at least 24 hours weekly, to be observed on Sunday when possible.
6. The abolition of child labour, and the restriction of work among young workers of both sexes to an extent permitting them to continue their education and ensure their physical development.

7. Men and women to receive equal wages for equal work.

8. The working conditions decreed in any country must ensure just economic conditions to all the workers legally resident in the country.

9. Every state must organise a factory and workshop inspection organisation, to include women, for the superintendence of the application of the laws and enactments relating to the protection of the workers."

Here we have, in words, full rights granted to labour, freedom for the trade unions, an improved standard of living for the workers of the whole world, etc. etc. But what is the actual state of affairs.

The authoritative leader of the League of Nations and of the International Labour Office, the British bourgeoisie, has beaten down the miners, lengthened their working day, put them on starvation wages, is carrying on a ruthless campaign against the rights of the trade unions, and is preparing to deal a blow at the political rights of the working class by means of jerrymandering with the Upper House, ensuring permanence for the reactionary regime of the Conservative Party. Another partner in the League of Nations, Fascist Italy, has trodden the trade unions underfoot, forced the labour movement into illegality, and placed the country under the regime of the white terror. Reaction rages in Bulgaria, Poland, Roumania, Hungary, and other countries. Workers are being hanged, shot, and thrown into prison. This is the balance drawn by this full recognition of the „rights of labour!“

The controllers of the destinies of the imperialist world thought to kill two birds with one stone in creating the International Labour Office. In the first place they created the semblance of an international centre supported by the authority of the League of Nations, and supposed to watch over the interests of labour. This centre was intended to attract the proletariat of the whole world, like a will of the wisp, and to lure it into the bog of peaceful co-operation with the bourgeoisie. For the sake of greater effect, the socialist Albert Thomas was placed at the head of the I.L.O. The bourgeoisie of the Entente countries, on the other hand, suffering from the competition of countries with excessively cheap labour at their disposal (low wages, long working hours, predominance of female and child labour, unhealthy working conditions, etc.) is anxious to raise the working conditions in these countries to the highest level with the aid of the I.L.O., in order to weaken or destroy their competitive powers.

The Entente bourgeoisie has taken every measure for making the I.L.O. its obedient tool. It has secured itself against all unlooked for accidents. The statutes provide that the work of the General Conferences of the I.L.O. be participated in by 4 representatives from each of the states affiliated to the League of Nations: 2 representatives of the government, one representative of the employers and one representative of the workers. The administrative council of the I.L.O. consists of 24 persons. Of these 8 are nominated by 8 governments of the countries considered "to be of the greatest industrial importance", 4 by the governments of other countries, 6 by the representatives of the employers, and 6 by the representatives of the workers.

This places the overwhelming majority in the hands of the bourgeoisie, both in the general conferences and in the administrative council. But the most decisive factor is the fact that the decisions of the I.L.O. do not attain legal validity until they have been ratified by the states affiliated to the League of Nations, and are only binding on those states which ratify them; the bourgeoisie binds itself to nothing whatever; it only ratifies what it finds advantageous or convenient, and that provided it wants to. The most important questions make no progress at all.

⁴) The countries acknowledged to hold this position are: Great Britain, France, Japan, Italy, Belgium, Canada, Germany, and the United States. This last country not having joined the League of Nations, it has been replaced by Italy.

The question of the eight hour day may serve as a remarkable example. As early as 1919 the I.L.O. accepted a decision, at the Washington Conference, on the introduction of the eight hour day and the 48 hour week in all the countries belonging to the League of Nations. Eight years have now passed since this, but the question has never got beyond this dead point. Up to the present Great Britain has not ratified this agreement, and does not show any sign of doing so. France, Italy and other countries make their ratification conditional on the ratification by other countries. This question of the eight hour day is especially hopeless for the seamen. A special conference in Genoa dealt with this question, but achieved no results. The last few years have shown but little progress in this direction.

At the Amsterdam Congress it was resolved, on Jouhaux's motion, to take part in the I. Conference of the I.L.O. convened in Washington in 1919. The Congress imposed only one condition regarding participation in it: that the representatives of the vanquished countries should also be invited to the Conference. In order to characterise the "International Spirit" prevailing in the Amsterdam International, it must be observed that the American delegation voted against that part of the resolution which speaks of the invitation to the vanquished states as indispensable, and that, according to the statement of this delegation, the British representatives, who were absent at the moment, would also have voted against it. The trade union representatives of the vanquished countries were finally invited to the Washington conference, but could not attend it, as passport visas were refused them.

The League of Nations and the I.L.O. are mere play-things in the hands of the great Powers. The alleged organ of peace, the League of Nations, is useful as a screen behind which they can prepare for fresh wars. New coalitions are being created, every description of new entente, great and small, besides a united front against the sole workers' and peasants' state, the Soviet Union. The oppression of the colonial peoples is sanctioned by the League of Nations. It has issued mandates dividing the colonies among the great powers, in order that "civilisation may be spread in these countries". These worthy bearers of "civilisation" are introducing it by means of the gallows, the knout, and the bayonet.

The League of Nations and the International Labour Office are a deception and a mockery of the working class. The leaders of the Amsterdam International maintain the closest relations with both of these worthy institutions. This is not to be wondered at. They, too, are among the initiators of the famous section XIII of the Versailles Treaty. Immediately after the armistice with Germany, the Entente governments appointed a special commission, which they entrusted with the working out of a plan for an International Labour Office. Gompers, the chairman of the American Federation of Labour, was appointed chairman of this commission; other members were Jouhaux of the French Confederation of Labour, and Vandervelde, the leader of the Second International.

The close co-operation of the leaders of the Amsterdam International with these institutions has continued up to the present time. They have helped, and continue to help, the League of Nations in its "disarmament" farce. The mixed provisional disarmament commission appointed by the League of Nations in 1924 included Jouhaux, Oudegeest and Thorberg, leaders of the Amsterdam International. These three worked out a long draft of a control to be exercised over the trade in war munitions, and submitted this to the Commission. The content of this draft is the suggestion that the League of Nations, that is, a group of predatory great Powers, should control the trade in weapons all over the world.

The Amsterdam International is a faithful agent of the world bourgeoisie. Occasionally, when it is of advantage to the master, the servant is permitted to raise some slight protest against his master. The resolutions passed by the Amsterdam International on the questions of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office sometimes contain some feeble criticism, but invariably end with a hymn of praise for these despicable institutions.

The Amsterdam International and the International Secretariats.

By W. Vaksov.

If we deprive the sun of its lighting power and its other useful properties, then we may draw a comparison between it and the Amsterdam International. And this we must do, in order to compare the 27 International Industrial Secretariats with the solar system revolving around Amsterdam. Some of the industrial secretariats are old (those of the metal workers, miners). Others are younger. It can, however, be said that, taken on the whole, the organisations formed internationally on the basis of the separate crafts and industries are older than the International Trade Union Federation.

During the war the industrial secretariats shared the same fate as the whole reformist movement. They were split up into groups according to the imperialist combatants. After the war the work of restoration began. Here it must be observed that the changes taking place in the working class after the war, the radicalisation process, had as little effect upon the policy and work of the international Secretariats as upon the policy of the Amsterdam Trade Union International founded in 1920. Nevertheless, the feeling among the masses of the workers attained an international level in some branches of industry, though in a very subdued manner. This applies especially to the metal workers and the transport workers, who with the miners have always formed the most active troops of the international proletariat.

In May 1923 two original conferences were held, and have not been repeated since. On May 18, a conference took place at Friedrichshafen on the Lake of Constance, between the representatives of the Metal Workers' International and the representatives of the Metal Workers' Union of the Soviet Union; and on May 23, a conference was held in Berlin between the Transport Workers' International and three Transport Workers' Unions of the Soviet Union. At Friedrichshafen an agreement was signed admitting the Metal Workers Union of the Soviet Union into the Metal Workers International, and promoting the common struggle for the restoration of unity in the international metal workers' movement. At Berlin a common declaration was adopted, calling upon the transport workers of the whole world to unite and to fight against capitalist reaction.

Somewhat later, in the autumn of 1923, the International Congress of the Food and Provisions Workers resolved to admit the Food Workers of the Soviet Union into their international.

These are the brightest facts in the life and activity of the Industrial Internationals; their most progressive actions. The Executive Committee of the Amsterdam International managed, however, to bring this progress to a speedy standstill. As early as November 1923 the Executive Committee of the Amsterdam International held a special conference with the leaders of the International Secretariats at which the following decision was passed:

"As a rule, organisations can belong to an Industrial International when:

a) they belong to the trade union centre of their own country, this again being affiliated to the Amsterdam International;

b) they do not belong in any way to another International (for instance the Norwegian trade union centre, which does not belong to any international);

c) they belong to trade union centres which are not members of the Amsterdam International, on the condition that these trade union centres are not conducting any fight against Amsterdam (the unions affiliated to the American Federation of Labour for instance);

d) they do not belong to the trade union centre of their country, when the latter belongs to an international in conflict with Amsterdam.

Thus Amsterdam decrees that the revolutionary unions are not to be admitted into the Industrial Internationals, that the Americans, who officially defend capitalism against socialism, are to be admitted, and that in the countries where revolutionary trade unions exist, some individual organisations are to be

induced to split away from them. Some of the leaders of the Industrial Internationals (including Edo Fimmen) endeavoured to protest, but Amsterdam succeeded, with the aid of the overwhelming majority of the secretaries of the Industrial Internationals, in legalising its decision, and in inducing the delegation of the Industrial Internationals to the Vienna Congress in 1924 to accept a declaration to the following effect. There is no International but the Amsterdam International, and Jimmy Thomas, Leipart, and Jouhaux are its prophets.

Since that time the opposition has revolved round Amsterdam like the other planets.

It is true there are elements in the Amsterdam International who are sincerely dissatisfied with the ultra-reactionary course pursued by the leading group, and there is an opposition in the Industrial Internationals as well, but no determined and active opposition. Those who maintain that the International Industrial Secretariats as such embody the opposition, are the most mistaken of all.

A few instances from the actual practice of the Industrial Internationals suffice to make this question perfectly clear. What did these Internationals do during the British general strike and the lockout of the miners? The Miners' International actually supported the strike-breakers, whilst the other Internationals were at best passive. Some, again, endeavoured to throw discredit on the idea of the general strike, among them being Amsterdam.

What is the attitude of the Industrial Internationals towards the struggle of the Chinese workers, towards the attack being made on the Chinese revolution by the imperialists? They remain completely passive towards the imperialists, and do not approve of the radicalism of the Chinese workers. They adopt a waiting attitude. This is the standpoint of Amsterdam.

What line is taken by the International Secretariats with regard to the revolutionary trade unions? They one and all oppose the admittance of the unions of the Soviet Union. They carry on a continual campaign of hostility and slander against the unions of the Soviet Union. They oppose the sending of workers' delegations to the Soviet Union. They demand the dissolution of the revolutionary organisations in France, in Czecho-Slovakia, and in other countries (Metal Workers' International); they are anxious to shatter the revolutionary movement; they oppose unity. The International of the Food and Provision Workers, which has admitted the food workers of the Soviet Union, forms numerically the 27th part of all industrial associations; politically a still smaller proportion.

What position is adopted by the Industrial Internationals with regard to the so-called "Americanisation" of the European trade union movement?

The Metalworkers International is known to be working for the inclusion of the American Federation of Labour in the Amsterdam International. It is not the admittance of the American organisations which is the evil, but the non-critical acceptance of all the conditions imposed by the thoroughly corrupt and pro-bourgeois leaders of the American trade unions. It was precisely the delegation of the Metal Workers who capitulated so shamefully to the American trade unions in the autumn of 1926. It is nothing new when the members of the executives of the reformist internationals fall into the arms of the agents of the American bourgeoisie, but it is something new when an official delegation of an International officially abandons the official programme of that International, the programme and statutes of which, however faulty, are at least a reflection of the old class traditions of the European labour movement.

Such are the Industrial Internationals in their present phase of development.

And just at this moment the proposal arises of a reorganisation of the Amsterdam International (this idea is not new to some of the leaders of the Amsterdam trade union movement) on the basis of the industrial associations.

The Amsterdam International is built up of national unions. The national centres send delegations to the international congresses; they elect from their midst an executive committee, whilst the Industrial Internationals send together three representatives to the Plenum of the Executive.

The present proposal reverses all this. The Industrial Internationals are to send delegations to the congress; they become the fundamental organisations, elect the Executive from their midst, whilst the national trade union centres are accorded a few places for the purpose of connection and representation. This programme proceeds officially from the trade union commission of Austria (Vienna "Arbeiter Zeitung", June 5, 1927), supported by the chairman of the Dutch trade union federation, Stenhuis.

What is the idea behind this proposal?

It is not by accident that the official proposal emanates from the Austro-Marxist capital. In Vienna nothing is done without an *arriere pensee*. From Vienna there always come slogans and propositions of a "radical" appearance, but which do not alter matters in any way.

They are perfectly aware in Vienna that nobody is satisfied with the policy of the Amsterdam International except its leaders and the bourgeoisie. The broad masses of the members of the reformist trade unions are not initiated into international affairs, and it is only in proportion to the growing participation of the Communist Parties in the trade unions that the masses are beginning to gain an insight into the affairs of the Internationals. This insight is promoted by such big events as the British strike, for instance, when the workers experience for themselves the mendacity of the Amsterdam phrases regarding international solidarity. In Vienna there are "far-seeing" politicians. These have thought out a remarkable proposition which:

firstly, will show that the Austrian social democrats are not satisfied with the policy of Amsterdam;

secondly, will demonstrate that measures are being taken towards livening up Amsterdam;

thirdly, will yield no practical results whatever, since the Industrial Internationals adopt an attitude, as we have seen above, neither better nor worse than that of their Amsterdam colleagues.

The Austrians are supported by the Dutch, who adduce a few complementary viewpoints to be added to the reorganisation project.

"Het Volk", the organ of Dutch social democracy, writes as follows on 20. July:

"The question (of organisation) is entering a new phase. So far it has been a Russian question (! W. W.). Hueber (chairman of the Austrian trade union commission. W. W.) has deprived it of this character, and a correct solution of this question will be attained if the congress follows him in this direction (that is, in the direction of reorganisation. W. W.). This does not mean that the Russian question is entirely set aside. The Russian question will remain on our agenda so long as the Russians attempt to subordinate the European trade union movement to the R. I. L. U."...

We see that the Dutch are somewhat more simple minded, and allow the actual reason for the reorganisation to escape them. For them the Russian question is an "organisation" question. If this be the case, then the absence of the Russian trade unions from Amsterdam will obviously be regarded as "lack of organisation".

But if Amsterdam is reorganised on the basis of industrial associations, this defect will be corrected, and it will be pos-

sible to prove to the European workers that the European trade union movement feels no inclination towards unity with the trade union movement of the Soviet Union. And if the workers do not believe this, then they will be told that the industrial internationals maintain close community with the Russians, that Kroll has a position in the International of the Food and Provisions workers, and that in this manner it is possible to attain unity more rapidly by means of the Industrial Internationals. But even for this subterfuge the reformists have said more than they need for the present. The same "Het Volk" emphasises that the Paris Congress must accompany its acceptance of the plan of reorganisation with a "precise" definition of its relations to the Russian trade unions. The Amsterdam conception of a "precise" definition requires no further comment.

At the last congress at Vienna (1924) there was considerable opposition regarding the "Russian question". The Amsterdam opposition of the type existing in 1924 has, however, since disappeared. It is possible that the British representatives in Paris will come into conflict with Jouhaux and Leipart. But Purcell, Hicks and Citrine are not the men for really serious opposition. In actual practice they have shown lack of principle and cowardice. They are superseded. Their place is taken by Hueber and Stenhuis.

At the Vienna Congress Purcell and the others, although politically confused, none the less expressed very plainly the profound changes which have taken place in the broad masses of the British proletariat. Since 1924 the sympathy felt by the European workers for the Soviet Union has broadened and deepened. Many dozens of workers' delegations have visited the Soviet Union since Purcell was there. The masses have remained, and their trend of sympathy has remained; but Purcell is no longer there, he has disappeared. Hueber and Stenhuis appear on the scene. They seek a point of contact with the sympathies of the working masses which offers no danger to international reformism.

Here lie the roots of the Austro-Marxist plan of reorganisation; this is the reason why this plan is nothing but a deception, this is the reason why it must be unmasked from the beginning. To be sure, twenty reformist bureaucrats are worse than ten, and two reformist authorities are worse than one. The individual trade unions will be represented directly in the Industrial Internationals. When Hueber wants to prove that the Amsterdam International can be more easily activated by means of Industrial Internationals than by means of bodies in which Hueber, Leipart, and Jouhaux are authorities, then we can only be glad to hear such a confession.

It will not be difficult to show the workers, by means of such concrete instances as the lockout of the British miners, that the Industrial Internationals as organised at present are as little capable of revivifying Amsterdam as Messrs. Hueber, Leipart, and Jouhaux or our worthy opposition of 1924, A. A. Purcell and George Hicks.

This is the reason why the revolutionary workers neither can nor should take sides in the quarrel over the structure of the Amsterdam International. The whole discussion is an effort to divert attention from the real point at issue what policy must be pursued by the trade unions affiliated to the Amsterdam International. This is the point which must be insisted upon. The Amsterdam International will not be activated by shifting and changing the positions of the reformist bureaucrats. There must be an activation of the unions all over the world, a pressing forward of the unions to the class front of the international proletariat, an emphatic rejection of all collaboration between the classes, and a uniting of the class unions of the whole world, and then it will be possible to establish a real fighting trade union international, capable of accomplishing the tasks confronting the Industrial Internationals.

The Amsterdam International and the Stabilisation of Capitalism.

By Ch. Wurm.

The well-known Social Democrat Dr. August Müller, in the course of a eulogy of the Amsterdam International in an article published some time ago in the "Vossischen Zeitung", wrote as follows:

"During the war the trade unions became more and more indispensable auxiliary organs of economic and social policy."

This vague phrase characterises a political development of the reformist trade unions which, it need scarcely be said, has nothing whatever in common with the tasks of the trade unions as outlined by Marx in the Inaugural Address. Here he wrote:

"Hence the trade unions, apart from their original objects, must become the conscious focus of the organisation of the working class, acting in the interests of its complete emancipation... they must... be far removed from all narrow mindedness and egotism, and their aim must be the emancipation of the down-trodden masses."

Proceeding from this characterisation of Dr. August Müller, the question arises whether his words are to be applied equally to the import of trade union work since the war, and especially to the period of stabilisation of capitalism in Europe. Was the tactic of civil peace merely a national error during the war, or is it the conscious result of a political attitude originating before the war, and still throwing its shadow over the present time? There can be no doubt as to the reply to this question, when we remember the attitude maintained by the Amsterdam International to this day. Its general line of policy may be summed up in three catchwords: **economic democracy, international regulation of production, and the United States of Europe.** The problems here involved take their origin in bourgeois ideology, and represent a last attempt to set the leaky ship of European capitalism afloat again. The semblance of pacifism and democracy underlying these catchwords serves to conceal their consequences to the working class. Their realisation, that is, the pursuance on the part of the trade unions of the policy implied, means that the unions have to turn their backs on their original and immediate task of leading the struggle for better wages and working conditions within the confines of capitalist society. The result has been a gradual but systematic change of tactics on the part of the reformist leaders in their relations to capital. An instance of this is the tactics followed with respect to tariff agreements, of such great importance during the present epoch. The change of front, though not obvious at the first glance and easily concealed in this case, becomes evident on closer examination. To be sure, the idea of tariff agreements is not new. This weapon counts among the oldest methods of trade union struggle. Still it has been found possible to change its nature. At one time the tariff agreement marked the conclusion of a campaign of trade union fighting action. The purport of agreements was a sort of standard showing the comparative forces of capital and labour and the working class itself regarded the agreement solely as a fulcrum and starting point for the coming struggle. The agreement was not a means towards banishing every struggle, for struggle is necessary if the working class is to hold its own; on the contrary, it was the result of the struggle. And at the same time it was perfectly clear to both parties that the agreement was not a contract between two equal and unchanging partners, absolutely binding on both for the term of the contract; both sides were fully conscious that it was simply a question of power.

The present-day tactics of the reformist leaders are fundamentally different, although at a casual glance this may not be apparent. What more do you want? cry the reformists, we are keeping to the tried and proved methods of the tariff agreement. But it is just this that is characteristic of the reformists. The old form is retained, but its purport is changed. Here we have no longer a weapon urging the workers forward to fresh efforts, but a weapon calculated to stifle the fighting spirit of the workers. And yet in many countries the reformists are proud of the legal regulation of disputes between capital and labour. They praise arbitration and legally binding tariff agreements as weapons placing restrictions on the arbitrary decisions of the

employers. But here, through the outer husk, the essence of the changed tactics appears. For the moment we do not speak of the practical experience acquired of these new legal regulations with respect to the relations between capital and labour. But it suffices, at least for those who do not approach the problem from a purely theoretical standpoint, to cast a glance at the decisions of the boards of arbitration, in Germany for instance during the last few years, or to note the attitude taken by Braun, the Minister of Labour, in various labour disputes, and it will be seen plainly enough that the awards are made against the interests of the workers in almost 100 per cent of the cases. The sops thrown to keep the disappointed workers quiet, are not worth speaking about.

The legal regulation of working conditions is, however, in itself a distinct expression of the relation of forces within society; a legal regulation is invariably the expression of a previous measurement of class forces. But there is nothing more variable than the relation of forces within society. It is obvious that these changes and variations in the relation of class forces are not without effect on the legal regulation. On the contrary, every interpretation of the law is a barometer of the comparative forces. Regarded in this light, the legal regulation does not exclude all organised action against capital on the part of the masses; on the contrary, it assumes such action. But if the reformist practice is followed, and the existing laws and enactments are regarded as affording adequate freedom of movement for the trade union struggle, then the measuring of social forces is replaced by an agreement between two apparently equal, but in reality unequal partners, that is, in this case the working class, has, when it accepts the decisions made by the force of legislation, to content itself with the crumbs from the table of capital. Here lies the unfairness of the game played by the reformists with the interests of the workers. Instead of furthering the development of the conscious will of the workers, they hamper it; instead of furthering the development of class energy, they paralyse it. The energy and determination of the working class sink into insignificance, for the reformist theory shows success to be no longer dependent on the objective position, including the organisation and will of the classes, but on imaginary powers. All those factors which should be taken into account in carrying on the fight, no longer count in the present reformist practice, which assumes as the sole decisive factor the activity and capability of the tariff officials of the trade unions, whom they imagine as occupying an "equal" place at the negotiations as their capitalist partners. The mass of organised workers, far from being thrown into the balance of the struggle, retires into the background, disappears, and all that remains is the indispensable leaders.

Yet this is where we find ourselves in practice, in the epoch of the so-called rationalisation, which is closely bound up with the stabilisation of capital. There has already been sufficiently written on the import of rationalisation. But the aspect of rationalisation affecting the workers, their increased exploitation and the reduction of real wages, the real meaning of the economic offensive undertaken by capital against labour, is being met by the reformist leaders with tactics which have nothing to do with a defence of the rights of the workers. And yet is it characteristic of this rationalisation that its end result is to throw all its consequences upon the shoulders of the working class. This fact is closely bound up with the epoch in which this rationalisation is taking place. The only possibility open at the present time is for one capitalist to oust the other, the competitor, from the world market, by means of lower prices. And the general method of achieving low prices is the reduction of the real wages of the workers.

It is characteristic of the period of decay of capitalism that capital is forced to deprive the working class of more and more of its share of the values produced. And it is just this tendency which again throws fresh difficulties in the way of trade union struggle, and forces this struggle into new forms, which are not acknowledged, but sharply combatted by the reformist leaders. It has even happened that the reformist leaders have taken active part against wage movements on the

part of the workers. We have then a state of affairs similar to that, in Germany in 1918, during the revolution, when the winged words issued from reformist mouths: "The revolution must not degenerate into a wages movement". And again we were told, at the beginning of rationalisation, that the working class must make sacrifices in the interests of the community. In order to sugar this pill somewhat, the workers were persuaded that the rationalisation was bound to bring with it reductions in prices (the contrary is the case) compensating for the lowered wages. Or play was made with the arguments of the bourgeois economists, that higher wages would endanger the stabilisation, or must necessarily be followed by increased prices. When these arguments began to fail of effect, it was stated that the trade unions were too weak to conduct great struggles; and when the workers tried to fight for themselves in spite of this, the reformists denounced their efforts as wild, and refused to recognise them. Instead of an effective defence of the working class against the offensive of capitalism, instead of a suitable adaptation of tactics and organisation to the altered circumstances, enabling the fight to be conducted with the prospect of success, these great ones took a journey to America to study the "economic miracle" there. On their return they praised Ford and his disciples, and went into raptures at having at last discovered a capitalist with a heart for the working class. And the notorious Lothar Erdmann issued the corresponding slogan: "Education of the Employers", with the promise of victory under this slogan.

It would be entirely wrong to speak here of the reformist leaders, having "strayed from the track". On the contrary, their policy of class collaboration and their tactics in the interests of capitalism (quite apart from class collaboration), are only to be understood when seen as links in the chain of the comprehensive slogan of "economic democracy". The said degeneration of the Amsterdam trade union leaders becomes only too clearly apparent when the above slogan is compared with a decision come to by the international Trade Union Congress at Amsterdam in 1919. The following is a passage from the resolution:

"In recognition of the great work which has been accomplished by the trade unions for the workers in general, and for the organised workers in particular, and in consideration of the fact that the trade unions form the prerequisites and the foundations for the realisation of socialism, the Congress declares it to be imperatively necessary for the efforts of the proletariat of all countries to be directed towards the **socialisation of the means of production.**" (The emphasis is ours. Ch. W.)

What is regarded as the practical execution of this decision is shown by the following from the May appeal in 1926:

"The workers must demonstrate for the right to have a voice in the conduct of industry, and for a permanent world peace."

This is what the reformist leaders call fighting for the socialisation of the means of production. Here, as everywhere else, the socialism of the reformist leaders begins and ends in resolutions. We have also had some practical experience of the illusion of co-operation in industrial undertakings. We have, for instance, some experience in factory councils legislation. We know the works council as an auxiliary instrument of exploitation, working in the service of capitalist interests. Truly an ideal right of co-operation. This has nothing more to do with the defence of the interests of the working class; a fact which is already openly admitted. Jäckel, the leader of the German textile workers, observed for instance, at the last trade union congress at Breslau:

"The working class is an element of economy striving for equal rights. In my opinion it is therefore incumbent on the workers to find out, **conjointly with the employer, those forms of rationalisation, standardisation, Taylorisation, etc., which are advantageous for economics.**" (The emphasis is ours Ch. W.)

It would not be difficult to point out what mighty changes the conception of the reformists have undergone here. We only need glance through the German trade union newspapers, for instance, of 1913 and 1914, at the time when the employers were endeavouring to introduce the Taylor system into Germany. At that time these leaders had not yet lost all contact

with the workers, and therefore they wrote in terms of severest condemnation of this most brutal of all forms of exploitation ever imagined by capitalist economics. But if the security of capitalist economics is the decisive axiom of reformist action, then why not try and persuade the workers of the advantages of the Taylor system? It must be emphasised that Jäckel is not the only leader who is of this opinion. There are others who go even farther. The leader of the woodworkers, the reformist Tarnow, was obliged to say at the same congress, that in the camp of the reformist leaders there were those who were of the opinion that "wage struggles endanger economics", a view which not even a representative of the yellow unions would have expressed before the war. In view of such a standpoint as this, worthy only of the serfs of the employers, and which before the war were to be sought in the writings of the Reichs Union, it is easily to be understood that many workers come to the conclusion, though wrongly, that it is impossible to fight side by side with such elements, and have torn up their membership books. Every worker should realise what it means to suffer the consequences of these tactics on the part of the reformist trade union leaders.

Instead of socialism we have the salvation of capitalist methods of production with the aid of the workers; instead of a fight against the murderous methods of exploitation arising out of rationalisation we have a joint search for methods of work to be applied against the workers. And the whole is designated:

"new forms of mutual understanding, aiming at the education of the employers."

And the fruits of a policy thus bordering on the betrayal of the workers? Even the "Vorwärts" was obliged to admit at the beginning of the year, in its issue of February 6, 1927, that an absolutely criminal policy towards the working class is being carried on:

"No honest man in the camp of the employers can deny that the workers have put their own interests in the background in countless cases during the last few years, and have made one sacrifice after another in the interests of the community."

If we substitute interests of the ruling class for interest of the community, then we can agree with this characterisation of the objective results of eight years of reformist trade union policy. If the writers of such lines possessed a spark of proletarian morality, if they were accessible in the least to the spirit of Marxism, then surely they must furl their sails in the face of these miserable results.

But this quotation shows something more. The starving workers, the army of unemployed, reduced to misery by the rationalisation, and attempting to defend themselves against a campaign for their destruction, are designated by the "Vorwärts" as defending only egotist interests. That such people know nothing more of class interests is not to be wondered at in consideration of the results of their policy.

The principles applied here on a national scale under the form of economic democracy promoting stabilisation, are expanded further in the slogan of the "international regulation of production". Under the international regulation of production we understand either socialist planned economics, involving the abolition of the present system with its denial of the bare necessities of existence to the workers, or we understand that this abolition is not desired, in which case the slogan is merely a manoeuvre in order to get the workers to abandon all serious fighting against this system. The digging up of the ancient Naumann idea of the United States of Europe is a fitting completion to the policy of leaders whose business it is to mislead the workers. This capacity for blunting the fighting energy of the workers combined with a trifle of treachery à la English coal strike and their policy towards rationalisation, the whole well shaken, yields the medicine with which the reformist trade union leaders hope to infuse new life into the decaying organism of capitalism.

It is, however, impossible to change the whole aims of trade union work, or to go objectively over into the camp of the enemy, without abandoning the theoretical standpoint at one time forming the basis of the practical policy of the trade unions. Away from Marxism, that is the thesis to be read today in almost every trade union journal. Marx is only re-

membered nowadays on occasions of "birthday celebrations"; and everyone is proud that nobody asks whether a policy violates the principles of the class struggle or not. It is no wonder that from this basis everything is sharply opposed which contends against this new development, reared on practical experience, within the trade unions.

And seen from the other side, is it not clear that this change of front must stimulate those of us for whom Marx' teachings have not become a mere lifeless scheme, and especially the workers who are made to feel the bitterest effects of the class struggle, to take up the fight with redoubled energy. The fight is the more imperatively necessary, as this policy is not exhausted with the support lent to the stabilisation of capitalism. There are worse dangers impending. These elements, having

built up a new theory out of their ceaseless betrayals of the workers, are extremely dangerous in these days of renewed war-mongering. The policy which they have pursued during the last few years, their hesitation at nothing which can be utilised against the revolutionary struggle of the working class, indicate what their attitude will be towards the coming war. If it is not our task to turn these leaders from their path, still it is a vital question for us to develop the worker's organisations in such a manner that they can never again be drawn into the service of the bourgeoisie. If we succeed in this, then we shall have succeeded in establishing one of the first prerequisites towards the defence of the "egotist" interests of the working class and the abolition of the capitalist system of exploitation.

World Unemployment and Amsterdam.

By Isa Strasser.

"An absolute development of the productive forces, reducing the absolute number of workers, that is, in fact enabling the whole nation to carry out the entire work of production in a shorter time, would bring about revolution, for it would put out of course the majority of the population.

(Marx, Capital III, p. 246.)

The steadily increasing disproportion between the development of productive forces and the possibility of finding a market for goods has already led to a situation in which a very considerable and most important part of the population, if not yet the greater part, has been put "out of course". And if Marx' assertion is still today contradicted by facts, and the millions of unemployed counted by the statistics of every country, the millions who will share their fate to-day or tomorrow, have not revolted, but plod along more or less "resigned to fate", then the main fault of this lies at the door of the deliberate and systematic hindrance on the part of the reformist leaders to the process of revolutionary ripening of the masses; and the chief blame is borne by the leaders of the greatest and most comprehensive class organisation of the proletariat, the Amsterdam International. It is true that even the reformists admit that unemployment to-day is in many essential points fundamentally different from mass unemployment before the war. In the same manner they pay an occasional acknowledgment to the principle that the "roots" of unemployment will never quite disappear under the present conditions of production. But all the same there is the most perfect unanimity and clarity in the camp of the Amsterdam leaders as to the possibility of effectively combatting, ameliorating, and alleviating mass unemployment by peaceful means, or at least there is unanimity among them as to the advisability of persuading other people of this possibility.

And how is this combatting and alleviation of unemployment to be carried out? The July/September number of the periodical issued by the I.F.T.U. contains a fairly detailed reply to this question, by Professor Edgar Milhaud. After establishing the melancholy fact that the recognition of the principle of the right to work, contained in the Versailles Treaty, still "leaves something to be desired", the professor recommends the following methods for the solution of the problem: Firstly, statistical investigations; secondly, a policy of public works; thirdly, control of industrial agreements; fourthly, the international organisation of exchange. Milhaud has some slight misgivings as to the execution of these measures, and as to where they may lead, but on the whole he is "of good courage". For have not the first steps already been taken, if but timidly, in the directions indicated? With respect to the policy of public works for instance:

"Did not the International Association for combatting unemployment pass a resolution, as early as 1913, recommending the policy of public works?"

And

"does this not indicate a path which may be trodden with full confidence? For it can no longer be said that we are

taking a leap in the dark. When the local or central authorities accept this question, they can already refer to previous experience and good results".

(Milhaud does not go into the question of whether, or under what conditions, the authorities "accept" the principle.) He is, moreover, of the opinion that by means of public works unemployment can not only be "alleviated", but a regulative influence can be brought to bear upon economics, enabling

"an undisturbed and steady organic development to be secured".

He is of the opinion that:

"in view of the present national and international conditions, we may perhaps hope for a fairly rapid accomplishment of the developments here indicated... Were such a programme accepted (by the League of Nations), the central administrative bodies controlling public works, and through their intermediation the provincial and municipal administrations, could speedily be given the appropriate instructions".

Milhaud's expectations are not less confident with respect to the control of industrial agreements (steel trusts, etc.), and to the international organisation of labour by employers and workers.

"The spirit of competition hitherto dominating the economic relations of the peoples must vanish, and must be replaced by the spirit of co-operation. Exchange, carried on in a chaotic manner at the present time, must be regulated by methods of reason. The attainment of these objects presupposes the existence of a permanent organism entrusted with the study, investigation, and settlement of all questions. This necessity gives rise to the idea of an international economic council, in which all organised economic forces would be represented, and which would be authorised to undertake such a mission. Under the aegis of this organisation the exchange relations among the nations could develop with ever-increasing freedom, and the international division of labour thus made possible would permit of the highest attainable degree of productivity, enabling a general raising of the level of the masses to be brought about. At the same time organisation or free initiative would be enabled to accomplish the most harmonious possible adaptation of production to requirements."

According to the Amsterdamites, the World Economic Conference was to promote to an enormous extent the attainment of the above aims. But the World Economic Conference did not even deal with the question of unemployment. The motion proposed by Jouhaux and comrades, to put this question and the question of emigration on the agenda, fell through. Unemployment was only mentioned as a secondary issue, in the course of discussion on other points of the agenda. It came to the fore in the resolution on rationalisation. And in a very characteristic manner. The resolution is to the effect that rationalisation must be carried out with all needful precaution, lest the rightful interests of the workers suffer. Further, suitable steps should be taken if rationalisation involves unemployment

and intensified labour. The World Economic Conference has thus not made the slightest advance towards the fulfilment of the hopes of the Amsterdamites in the question of combatting unemployment. Are we to assume from this that these plans are idle Utopias? Has not an immense amount of practical constructive work been accomplished in various countries during the last few years, tending towards the realisation of the measures proposed by the I. F. T. U.? Let us be objective, let us not set aside this question with "communist" catchwords, but let us examine the reply given by the Amsterdam Trade Unions themselves. The no less important question, indissolubly bound up with this first question: What have the trade unions done to combat the effects of unemployment, is characteristically not included in the inquiry.

"Has your trade union federation proposed practical measures for combatting unemployment in your country during the last few years? If so, what are these?"

This is the question which was put a short time ago by the I. F. T. U. to the whole of the national organisations affiliated to it. The replies received, stated in a few words, were as follows: In **Belgium** the Trade Union Commission, the General Council of the Labour Party and of the Co-operative Office, submitted to the government, at the beginning of 1926, a programme for the combatting of unemployment, in which they demanded that work should be commenced immediately on clearance work, canal and street construction, and the building of cheap houses. In **Denmark** the social democratic government proposed, in the Winter of 1925, to carry out public works with the aid of state subsidies and loans for state institutions, to grant subsidies to industrial undertakings for the purpose of combatting unemployment among skilled workers, and to grant export credits, etc.

In **Germany**, after "years of pushing" on the part of the trade unions, the Reichstag accepted, in 1926, a programme providing for the productive relief of unemployment. The main points of this programme are the carrying out of emergency works with the aid of public means, and the granting of credits providing opportunities of employment. In **England** the Trades Union Conference has been advocating for years a comprehensive programme for combatting unemployment, and the Labour Party cooperates with the trade unions in submitting to Parliament every year a bill whose main demands are: The formation of a national labour office with an advisory department for trades and professions, and the provision of means, controlled by this office, for promoting opportunities of work (better exploitation of the soil, of capital undertakings, of the means of transport, of the mines, electric undertakings, etc.) In **Austria** a conference of the head organisations of the trade unions, held on January 6, 1926, resolved to address a memorial to the government, containing the following demands: The concluding of commercial agreements facilitating the export of the products of Austrian industry, the granting of credits for agriculture and improvement of the soil, enabling productivity to be increased, agrarian political measures, the improvement of the position of the Austrian mining undertakings, the absorption of the unemployed in agriculture.

The Chamber for Workers and Employees added the following demands on 27. November 1926: Improvement of the situation in the Austrian mines (utilisation of coal products, coal drying, erection of steam power plant in immediate neighbourhood of the coal shafts), the absorption of the unemployed in agriculture.

In **Poland** the Trade Union Federation made the following demands: 1. Carrying out of the agrarian reform; 2. Alteration of the wages policy; 3. Combatting of high prices by reduction of duties and measures against the policy of the cartels; 4. Public works.

The chief demands made by the **Czecho-Slovakian** national central trade union office were as follows:

Opportunities of work to be made by public works and the erection of buildings, financial aid for the municipalities and for building societies, enabling these to build dwelling houses on their own account.

The public works to be carried out through the productive co-operatives.

The factory committees and factory councils to be expressly authorised to participate in the fixing of the selling prices, or to control the working conditions.

At the trade union congress in 1924 the demands made by the central trade union commission included the following: All public works and supplies, especially in respect of railway building, public premises, street and dam construction, are to be confiscated; means for the construction of railway engines and carriages, and for other works in the interest of the public, are to be granted at once. Work is to begin at once for the cultivation of fallow land.

"Has the government or any other authority considered the proposals, and carried them out wholly or partially? If so, what has been the effect in combatting unemployment?"

These are two next questions put by the enquiry. The reply to these questions is classical in its brevity:

"In reply to question 2, **Belgium**, **Bulgaria**, **Germany**, **Holland**, **Latvia**, **Switzerland**, **Czecho-Slovakia**, and **Hungary** answered that some of their proposals had been accepted and carried out by the government. **England** reported that the Conservative government had failed to accord any consideration to the leading proposals of the British Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party. In **Yugoslavia**, **Memel**, **Austria**, **Poland**, and **Roumania**, the governments have undertaken little or nothing towards combatting unemployment... Since the majority of the governments have no sympathy with the demands of the working class, little has been done towards an effective alleviation of unemployment. It is only in a very few countries, for instance in **Germany**, that measures have been taken securing employment for some tens of thousands of workers for a certain time." International Trade Union Movement, No. 5/1927.

We believe that questions 2 and 3 were hardly needful at all in order to enable us to ascertain that the "comprehensive" plans of the trade unions, the touching appeal to public opinion, and the whole of this so-called campaign against unemployment, which is in reality nothing more or less than a skilful avoidance of any definite fighting action, have been entirely or almost entirely, without effect. It is only necessary to cast a glance at the actual statistics, even the carefully cooked and optimistic official statistics, to form a judgment on the effectiveness of this positive constructive work accomplished by the reformist trade unions. In **England**, in **Germany**, in **Austria**, in short, everywhere where great and powerful trade unions have worked "untiringly" at drawing up programmes and have fought for their demands, with but few exceptions without recourse to the objectionable methods of class warfare, we find that the army of unemployed has increased steadily during the last few years.

In **Germany** the number of those in search of employment averaged one million per month in 1924; in 1926 the number was more than two millions. In **England** 1,227,000 unemployed were counted at the end of 1923, in 1924 1,260,000, in 1925 1,243,000, in 1926 1,403,000. That even the economic recovery following the end of the coal dispute has not reduced unemployment may be seen from the following figures; The number of insured unemployed amounted to 1,093,829 on 21. April 1926, and 1,133,090 on 21. April 1927. In **Austria** the number of unemployed is again greater today than a year ago (1926: 253,803, 1927: 269,633). As the "Arbeiter-Zeitung" observes (10. June), the advance of rationalisation, the constant replacement of the machine of nerves and muscles by the machine of iron and steel, enables the industries to increase their production and their sales, whilst employing fewer workers and employees than before. In **Poland** we find the same picture: The number of unemployed, that is, of those unemployed whose existence is established by registration, amounted to 138,000 in 1924 and 171,000 in 1925, and rose to 288,000 by 1926. The same again in **Czecho-Slovakia**. Even the official statistics, which give the number of unemployed at almost 50% lower than the actual figures, report 71,000 unemployed at the end of the year. This is approximately the same number as at the end of 1925.

And in an article published by the same newspaper on "Technics — Unemployment — Social Policy" the writer,

Nörpel, observes that birth control will have to play a part in overcoming unemployment.

How have the trade unions led the campaign against unemployment? Or, to put it more concretely: What have they done to gather the unemployed together, to organise them, to render them capable of fighting? What attitude have they adopted towards the unemployed committees which have been formed in Germany, Austria, etc.? What have they done towards shortening working hours, with a view to employing more workers, or preventing dismissals? What have they accomplished towards the raising of wages, and against the reduction of wages? What have they done to fight for higher unemployment benefit, and for the prolongation of the term of receipt of benefit?

It is certainly not an accident that these questions, these most important and fundamental questions, are **not** contained in the enquiry. For a reply in accordance with the facts could only have been as follows: Whilst the leaders of the trade unions have been sending in petitions to the ministries, in order that a few hundred or thousand workers might enjoy the benefit of being exploited in the construction of canals and the like; they have at the same time been doing their utmost to hinder any self-help on the part of the unemployed, any organisation of unemployed committees, or any revolutionary action. We only need remember the struggle of the bureaucracy against the unemployed committees in Germany and Austria, the refusal to admit unemployed into the trade unions. And further: Whilst the theoreticians of Amsterdam are thinking out wonderful schemes for preventing the trusts from "abusing" their power, the more practical members are exerting their best endeavours to prevent the workers from defending themselves against the dictates of precisely these trust magnates, whether by fighting for shorter working hours, or by protesting against reductions in wages. And finally, although the demand is put forward year after year for the provision of public funds for the alleviation of unemployment, in actual practice we find nothing but anxiety for the finances of the State, as evidenced by all employers, and as evidenced in the attitude adopted to

the question of the maintenance of the unemployed (Ghent system in Czecho-Slovakia, unemployed law in Germany).

But that even the Amsterdamites are somewhat dubious as to the possibility of effectually combatting unemployment by Milhaud's methods, may be gathered from the following: Of late they have been seeking frantically for means enabling them at least to promise — since they cannot find any which will actually accomplish it — relief from the evil of unemployment. Now that the settlement idea, emigration, etc., are beginning to fail of effect, their search has landed them back again to the old way, already pretty well worn out by reformism: neomalthusianism.

A writer, whose name is not given, writes on this subject as follows in the October number of the "Gewerkschaftsarchiv", the theoretical periodical of the General German Trade Union Federation; "It is now plain that there is a great discrepancy between the capacity of our economics and the present population... The trade unions, in their capacity of administrators of human labour power have to adopt measures in accordance with this status. For despite all organisation, appropriate influence brought to bear on the state, tariff agreements and preventive state measures against unemployment, there still remain about two million unemployed, whose existence forms a constant drag on the standard of living and working conditions of the whole working class. Under such circumstances, that is, when the national economic capacity is no longer able to cope with an abnormal increase of population, called into existence and absorbed into the economic system under the more favourable conditions of the last decades, then the negative aspect of the population question is forced inexorably into the sphere of the tasks and interests of the trade unions." **The weapon in the fight against unemployment — the preventive means does not arise out of the imagination of some literary light; it is simply the logical consequence of a policy the sole endeavour of which is to prevent the proletariat from drawing revolutionary conclusions from the present situation, and from converting the fight against unemployment and its consequences into a fight against the capitalist system.**

The Economic Struggle of the European Proletariat in the Stabilisation Years, and Amsterdam.

By J. Lerner.

If however some of the stones in our fortress began to loosen, and a breach to appear in the walls, what does it matter? The fortress is still strong enough to withstand fresh attacks.

Thus we were assured by Oudegeest in an article devoted to the Vienna Congress in 1924, in an effort to assure himself and the worker's that the Amsterdam bulwarks of compromise are secure and firm. At this time the offensive of capital was just beginning, and the attack on the proletarian achievements (chiefly the eight hour day in Great Britain, Germany, and France) was in its initial stage. Oudegeest enumerated the wounds just received by the working class at the social economic front.

Three years have passed since then.

Events of great economic and political importance have taken place since then. Stabilisation has been accompanied, in the most important countries of Europe, by an era of economic reaction, culminating in a shameless offensive on the part of the employers against all the social rights of the workers.

Not only the workers themselves, but many sincere leaders devoted to the cause of the proletariat, have not been aware how the offensive of capital would be rushing in within two or three years.

During this time the majority of the reformist stones have loosened, and the small breach in the Amsterdam fortress has become a wide gap...

Although the present situation in Europe is an entanglement of the most complicated and profound antagonisms, which are mostly indissoluble, it is the capitalists who have taken the initiative to the attack. In this they have been aided not only by

factors of a generally economic nature, not only by the existence of the huge army of unemployed (obviously permanent in Great Britain and Germany), but by the anti-labour and treacherous policy of the reformists.

At the present time, after the general strike and the miners' struggle in England, even the blindest recognise that the victory of the capitalists was promoted by the trade union leaders. It was only thanks to these leaders that the employers were enabled to break through the weakest spots in the workers' front, and to use this as a starting point for disorganising and shaking the labour ranks.

If we make a brief survey of the class struggle in the different countries during the three years which divide the present International Congress of the Amsterdamers from the last, we will see that the economic struggle of the European proletariat has greatly declined. Not only has the extent of the struggles with regard to territories and professions greatly declined, but the energy and intensity of the movement cannot stand any comparison with the years immediately following the war (1919/1923).

With the exception of France, where labour statistics are extremely scanty and unreliable, we find the curve of the movement taking a sharp decline in every country. Even the lock out, a form of struggle which generally assumes much greater dimensions than the strike, has been reduced during these last few years.

It must be emphasised that only 50 per cent and less of the conflicts have ended in open fights. The greater part got no further than the various boards of arbitration, where they were settled by compromises, more often than not in favour

of the employers. The number of settlements by compromise in the most important countries of Europe has been extraordinarily great. Even in France, where a strike fever has been raging for many decades, the method of negotiations and machinations by the leaders behind the scenes, instead of the open struggle, is now coming into practice. We observe the same phenomenon in other countries: the premature breaking off of the struggle, the nipping of the conflict in the bud. For instance in Austria, Poland, Italy, and Czecho-Slovakia.

The class struggle of the European proletariat during these last three years has been altogether ruled by the spirit of compromise. This spirit has emerged from that source of wisdom, the reformist general staff.

The appended tables give a general survey of the character of the economic struggle in the most important capitalist countries of Europe during the last three years. (Compiled from official German, French, and British data.)

Number of conflicts, strikes and lockouts.

	1924	1925	1926
Great Britain	710	604	313
Germany	2012	1740	339
France	1269	919 (1. half year)	1139
Poland	929	538 (1. half year)	250
Czecho-Slovakia	—	244 (9. months)	193

No. of striking and locked out workers

	1924	1925	1926
Great Britain	613,000	442,000	2,747,500
Germany	1,634,317	776,506	94,123
France	242,792	117,740	77,613
Poland	565,181	166,078	66,864
Czecho-Slovakia	—	163,864	35,601

No. of working days lost

	1924	1925	1926
Great Britain	8,420,000	7,970,000	162,784,000
Germany	36,023,143	17,104,862	1,369,530
France	No exact data		
Poland	6,582,355	1,877,023	384,100
Czecho-Slovakia	—	1,145,157	—

Judging from these data, it is obvious that in the majority of the countries — with the exception of France, where the number of strikes increased in 1926, although the energy with which they were conducted diminished, and Great Britain, where the general strike and the coal struggle swallow up almost the whole of the rest of the movement, the number of workers participating in these struggles amounting to 92 per cent of the total number involved in strikes and lockouts in this year, and the number of lost working days amounting to 92 per cent of the total of lost working days — the economic struggle has ebbed.

An exact gauge of the intensity of the struggle is given by the duration of the conflicts, the number of workers participating in each, and the number of working days lost.

The following shows the number of working days lost per worker in the most important capitalist countries:

	Great Britain	Germany	Poland
1924	13.7	21.9	12.2
1925	18	22	13.3
1926	59	14.5	5.6

It will be seen from this that the intensity of the struggle has declined, except in Great Britain. The intensity of the struggle can, however, be judged by other factors, for instance by the number of workers taking part in each conflict. During the years here dealt with the average number of workers taking part in each conflict has been as follows:

	1924	1925	1926
France	292	128	68
Great Britain	864	729	8778
Germany	828	446	278

We see that the speed and energy of the struggle have greatly diminished. Great Britain alone forms an exception.

In the second half of 1926, and especially in the last quarter of the year, the movement began to show distinct signs of progress again. This applies to such countries as Germany, where the great lockout of 150,000 leather workers, the strikes among the textile and metal workers, etc. are to be recorded at the end of the year, Norway, where there were strikes in the mines, and in the iron, textile, furniture, building, and other trades during this time, Czecho-Slovakia, where there were great strikes in the textile industry at the end of 1926, Poland, where the great July struggle took place among the metal workers at Piotrkow, and among the textile workers in Bjalostok, etc.

It is extremely interesting to note that the severe defeats of the general strike and the coal struggle in Great Britain have not, as was fully expected by the capitalists and by the betrayers of the labour movement in all countries, especially in Great Britain, brought about a decline of the economic struggles. During the last six months we have been able to observe small eruptions of the strike struggle, like delayed earthquakes.

It must indeed be emphasised that since the beginning of 1927 the serious economic and political changes and alterations have been accompanied by a considerable revival of the economic struggles of the workers. But the initiative is still in the hands of the employers. In Germany, for instance, the workers were ruthlessly locked out in many places during the first months of 1927, about 400,000 workers being affected (metal workers in Saxony, textile workers in Silesia, chemical workers, tobacco workers, wood workers, etc.).

We lack space here to examine into the causes and effects of the strike movements in the different countries. But all figures and descriptions of episodes go to show that the main causes have been questions of wages and working hours. In some cases the high prices, unaccompanied by any corresponding rise in wages, have spurred the workers on to action; in other cases it has been the endeavour on the part of the employers to exploit to the utmost an economic situation so favourable for them. In Great Britain the results of the conflicts have been as follows: in 1925 the workers were victorious in 33 per cent of all cases, were defeated in 14 cases, and 33 per cent ended with a compromise. In 1924 the results were considerably worse: only 10 per cent success, and 72 per cent compromise. The available data show practically the same situation in Germany during the same time.

Wherever the strike leaders have been "to blame" for the success or defeat of the working masses — under the present complicated conditions of the class struggle the leaders play the most important part — Amsterdam has not a single important victory to record. On the contrary. The overwhelming majority of their results are compromises, understandings, and defeats. And what is even worse is the circumstance that Amsterdam's actions have invariably shown an utter lack of any sincere desire to bring any conflict to a victorious conclusion.

We only need remember the great coal strike in Great Britain, the great strike movement and lockouts in Germany, in Poland, in Czecho-Slovakia, in France, and in other countries, where the workers have been literally bled, and the Amsterdammers have given little or no help. In the great majority of cases, in which the issue of the struggle depended entirely on the attitude of the leaders, the Amsterdammers have hidden themselves in the bushes like cowards, have been invisible or have led the struggle into paths inevitably bound to end to the advantage of the employers. Amsterdam in its capacity as leading world organ of the labour movement, is completely bankrupt. And it does not even strive for a centralised leadership, for it fears to violate the sacred principles of autonomy and democracy. Amsterdam has carefully avoided any open interference in the class struggle of the working masses. Amsterdam has preferred the neutrality of the Pharisee.

When Thomas was chairman of the I. F. T. U., he made the following declaration of his principles on the class war:

"The best way out of all difficulties is collaboration between capital and labour. The improvement of the relations between capital and labour, the laying of the foundation for closer cooperation between these two parties, is at the same time the best means of restoring full confidence between employers and workers. Many difficulties arise only because we do not sufficiently understand the standpoint of the employers."

How Amsterdam and the Amsterdamites Conduct the Fight for the Eight Hour Day.

By Olga Falk.

What is said at the International Congresses.

The grey monotony of the daily life of the Amsterdam International is broken once in three years by a special event. Once every three years the International convokes an International Congress, at which fine-sounding speeches are made and "decisive" resolutions passed.

Among the speeches and resolutions the question of the fight for the eight hour day appears with unflinching regularity. In 1919 the foundation congress laid special emphasis on the importance of the struggle for the eight hour day, pointing out that the eight hour day was insufficient, that the 44 hour week should be set through, the working hours further reduced in trades injurious to health, and so forth. The Extraordinary Congress in London in 1920 was held under the influence of the Labour Conference which had just been held at Washington and Genoa. The realisation of the eight hour day began with this Congress, and awaited the ratification of the convention accepted by the Conference at Washington in 1919. The London resolution still maintains a "decisive" tone, for at this time the post-war threats had not quite died out in Europe. In this resolution we read:

"The International calls upon the affiliated organisations to support by every available means the endeavours towards the carrying out of the Washington convention, and to aid those groups which are obliged to fight for the attainment of the eight-hour day. The International declares that if the ratification of the Washington convention is not accomplished within the term agreed upon, it will withdraw its support from the International Labour Office."

This tone has, of course, not been maintained, but has weakened in proportion to the advance of the stabilisation. It need not be said that the Amsterdamites have never had the intention of really fighting for the eight hour day.

The Washington Convention.

What has this famous convention, "the greatest achievement of the working class", "the test of the work of the International Labour Office", to use the words of Albert Thomas, really given the working class?

Almost 8 years have passed since the Washington Conference, and truly we can designate the results as "brilliant". After all the consultations, arguments, and endeavours of the Amsterdamites and their social democratic co-partners all over the world, seven countries have ratified the eight hour day convention. The names of these countries are interesting, and somewhat unexpected. The countries evincing the highest degree of liberalism are: India, Chile, Roumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Belgium, and Czecho-Slovakia. Of these the two first lie entirely outside of Amsterdam's sphere of influence, the three next are states in which the White terror is raging, and the last two play but a secondary role in the International.

The Working Day in Great Britain, France, and Germany.

In all these countries ratification is still far from realisation, although a conference of the Ministers of Labour for these countries was held in the spring of 1926 (participated in by

Since this principle was laid down, it has become a dogma to the Amsterdamers, and they have been fully successful in identifying themselves with the standpoint of the employers. Their whole policy is directed towards bringing about class collaboration between capital and labour, and so to strengthen and deepen this policy that the underlying class antagonisms are no longer distinguishable.

But the working masses, too, have learnt something. They are paying the high price of many sacrifices, but the day is approaching when they will recognise that the interests of Amsterdam lie on a plane entirely different from theirs.

the Ministers of Belgium and Italy), at which an agreement was accepted considerably worsening the original terms of the Washington convention.

Great Britain does not wish to bind itself definitely, and would rather hear nothing more of the convention. In Great Britain there is no law whatever limiting the working hours of the adult male worker. The sole exception is formed by the miners, whose seven hour day was raised again to eight during the coal struggle in 1926. It is characteristic that the "Labour" government of MacDonald, during all its eight months of office, never thought of breaking away from the British tradition of the "free agreement", and ratifying the Washington convention. And what can be expected from the Conservatives? To them it appears, as the representative of the British government declared at the 35th session of the administrative council of the International Labour Office, that the question has not yet been "sufficiently studied". The British bourgeoisie has no intention of allowing itself be bound by any international agreements.

Up to now the main attack in Great Britain has not been so much directed against the working hours as against the working wages. It is only the miners who suffer from the longer working hours, and the workers in the sweated industries, in which 10 to 11 hours are worked daily. In the chief branches of industry, in which there is an enormous degree of unemployment, the eight hour day, fixed by the collective agreements, is more or less adhered to. But this is only a question of time. The trade union leaders are doing nothing towards securing the eight hour day by law, and their capability of betraying the class struggle, clearly revealed during the general strike of 1926, demonstrates that they will be equally ready to betray the eight hour day at the first sign of an attack on the part of the bourgeoisie.

In France the policy pursued is extremely skilful. The leader of the French reformists, Jouhaux, forms in combination with Albert Thomas the main driving power of the International Labour Office. At the same time Jouhaux & Co. are the faithful allies of the bourgeoisie, and are more highly valued than the reformist friends of the bourgeoisie in other countries, for in France there are powerful revolutionary unitarian trade unions, and the reformists lend invaluable aid to the government in combatting these. And the granting of concessions to Jouhaux & Co. is by no means tantamount to the actual introduction of the eight hour day. In France we find exceptions frequently made, setting aside the law on the eight hour day passed in 1919. Nine and ten hours are often enough worked by the textile workers, the tramway workers, the tailors, and the building workers. Three hundred hours of overtime are frequently permitted by the law. The growth of unemployment has no effect towards shortening the working day.

What are the reformists doing to carry on the fight? Nothing at all. The C. G. T. recently made an inquiry into the eight hour day question, and inquiries were made of a number of politicians, trade union leaders and employers. The results of the inquiry were published in the organ of the reformist C. G. T., "Le Peuple". The results of the inquiry showed that the French workers are very well off, that the eight hour day is but seldom exceeded, and that the French factory and mine

owners are the kindest employers in the world. They all assure the readers of the reformist press that it is not necessary to work more than eight hours, that the eight hour day has proved excellent, and so forth. Of course this does not prevent them from imposing exceedingly long working hours in their own factories (long lists of such factories have been published repeatedly in "L'Humanité"). The yellow leaders of the C. G. T. wisely preserve silence on this point.

And they have received the reward of their good conduct: the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies have "ratified" the Washington convention. To be sure the "ratification" is accompanied by a slight "reservation". It does not come into force until Great Britain and Germany have taken corresponding measures. Interpreted into ordinary language, this is an indefinite postponement. But the French Amsterdamites are easily satisfied. They are delighted at the graciousness of the bourgeoisie; and Jouhaux followed up this farce of a "ratification" in the Senate by an article in the "Peuple" in which he expressed his satisfaction at this democratic law.

It need not be said that the French and British reformists yield the palm of highest attainment, as regards this peculiar manner of "protecting" the eight day day, to Germany.

Eight years after the November revolution, the eight hour day "decreed" in Germany under the pressure of the masses serves solely as an anchor for the security of the ten hour day.

There is no sadder story in the world than the story of how the German worker lost his eight hour day. It begins at the moment when the German reformists, at the time of the German revolution, introduced the eight hour day in collaboration with the pillars of the International headed by Legien, but did not introduce it as a revolutionary achievement of the working class, but as a regulation contained in the agreement on the so-called "working unity". The commands of the mobilisation commissary with respect to working hours secured this state of affairs the more firmly. In this way the employers were furnished with a formal pretext for assuming the regulations on the eight hour day to be no longer in force as soon as the agreement on "working unity" was broken off. (Beginning of 1924.)

The attack on the eight hour day was speedily commenced by the employers, and on 21. December 1923, after the October defeat of the German proletariat, the government issued a decree permitting the ten and twelve hours day and unlimited overtime. There was given as a reason for this measure the difficult economic position of Germany; and the reformists not only failed to protest against it, but even defended it. The "Vorwärts" wrote in October 1923 that the trade unions were prepared to exert the whole of their influence to induce the German workers to work overtime, and that the social democrats had resolved to employ their whole moral authority for the purpose of increasing the output of labour where this was necessary for German economics (that is, for the interests of the German capitalists. O. F.).

The reformists have kept to this standpoint of heroic defence of the interests of the German capitalists ever since, and

have persuaded the workers to wait patiently until better times should permit the employers to offer them better conditions. And truly these better conditions have come. At the beginning of 1927 the bourgeoisie broke off their "tacit coalition" with the reformists, who, having done all that was expected of them, could go. The conditions brought about by the stabilisation, and by the rationalisation of labour in Germany, have enabled the bourgeoisie to convert into actual law the enactment of 21. December 1923, proclaimed at that time to be a temporary measure.

The law states that the normal working day is not to exceed ten hours. Overtime is of course permitted. The social democrats, alarmed at the new law, did their utmost to prevent at all costs its being passed, even at the expense of a bloc with the Centre Party. But they did not succeed. The German bourgeoisie no longer takes any notice of the social democrats. Stegerwald declared that it was possible to manage very well without the social democrats, and that the social democratic policy was invariably wrong, as could be seen from its failure to utilise the historical moment of the November revolution.

Under such circumstances the ratification of the Washington convention is quite out of the question. The A. D. G. B., which once proclaimed this slogan, and even demanded a plebiscite on it, now maintains a shameful silence.

This is the situation in the leading industrial countries, where the Amsterdam International is most powerful. And what is happening in the other countries? In Belgium, where the convention has been ratified, the law permits exceptions, "when the needs of export require". In a country where two thirds of the production is exported, this gives unlimited opportunities for exceptions. Even in "liberal" Czecho-Slovakia, where the law on the eight hour day was passed in 1918, and the convention has also been ratified, endless prolongations of the working day are permitted. In Roumania and Bulgaria more than eight hours are worked, in spite of the ratification (see the official declaration of the representatives of the countries at the IX. International Labour Conference). In Scandinavia the prolonged working day is again no exception.

In a word, the utter failure of Amsterdam's policy, which has confined its fight for the eight hour day solely to attempts at the ratification of the Washington convention, is obvious to everyone. The "light from Geneva" neither warms nor illuminates. Even the Amsterdamites themselves feel this. At the last labour conference Mertens complained bitterly of governmental sabotage, and threatened with "other measures". But Mertens' threats do not alarm the employers. They are well aware how little Amsterdam is capable of defending the interests of the workers. And nobody is either interested or excited because the eight hour question once more appears on the agenda of the Amsterdam congress. One resolution more, and that is all. The real struggle of the proletariat for their working day is being fought elsewhere, far from the offices of the Amsterdam International.

The Workers' Emigration Question and Amsterdam.

By J. Chavaroche.

1. The crisis of capitalism, unemployment, the relative excess of population.

Capitalism, despite its "relative and partial stabilisation", is still in the state of a fairly profound permanent crisis, tending to become greater and more acute. Seen in the light of the prospects of the present and of the near future, we may safely prophesy an inevitable increase and intensification of the contradictions and antagonisms both in every capitalist country in itself, and between the different capitalist States, as also between these States and the Soviet Union, and between the populations of the colonies and the imperialist States owning the colonies.

One of the present peculiarities of the crisis in the economic system of Europe is the acute difficulty in finding markets for industrial products, a difficulty arising to a wide extent out of the reduced consuming powers among the great masses of the peoples of Europe and Asia. The impoverishment of these masses is a fact of obstinate permanence, and it

grows and expands as the natural consequence of the proletarianising of fresh strata of the petty bourgeoisie in town and country, and in consequence of the smaller number of workers employed in the undertakings still working. Besides this, the workers employed in the works and factories of almost every country are receiving greatly reduced real wages. The chronic agrarian crisis in almost all capitalist countries prevents a part of the unemployed from being absorbed in agricultural work, and enhances the tendency to leave the country for the cities.

The one sided, artificially stimulated, and entirely unsystematic accelerated process of industrialisation, which is promoted without any regard to the general development of national economics — a characteristic phenomenon in capitalist countries — has been accompanied by a relatively rapid industrial development of the colonies and the colonial countries.

The limitation of markets open to the capitalist States of Europe is due above all to the position of economic hege-

mony which the United States have succeeded to gain in the world's economics. Europe's difficulty in finding markets is hereby increased, maintained, and made permanent. This is the actual situation, with a tendency to increasing acuteness, and not merely an objectively and theoretically possible situation.

And finally, the possible markets are further limited, so to speak indirectly by the fact that a system organically opposed to capitalism, the economic system of the Soviet Union, (the capitalists being unwilling to acknowledge its existence and its right to exist), places one sixth of the globe outside of the capitalist system.

This situation, causing permanent unemployment, impoverishing great masses of the people, and accompanied on the other hand by attempts on the part of the capitalist States to gain markets by means of high protective tariffs, by the artificial development of the "national industries indispensable for home defence", by the "rationalisation", the "centralisation", or the "trustification" of their industries, and by various other measures and similar lines of policy, is leading deeper and deeper into growing unemployment and impoverishment among the masses of the people in most of the capitalist countries of Europe, causing a relative excess of population. The lands of capitalist Europe appear to be too densely populated, appear to be incapable of supporting their present population.

Only a short time ago there were three countries in Europe requiring the immigration of foreign workers. These were France, Luxemburg, and Belgium. By the end of 1926 even these countries were experiencing the "evils of over population". This "over population" can only be very relative. It is an over population caused solely by the capitalist system of economics, solely by capitalist antagonisms, by imperialism with its claims, in every capitalist State, for the monopoly of the raw materials, of land, sea, and river, of the markets, etc.

At one time, before the war, the relative "surplus population" of Europe and Asia emigrated to America and Australia. Before the war the relative "surplus" population streamed from the backward (from the standpoint of industrial development) countries where the old methods of production and existence had vanished without being adequately replaced by the new, to those industrial countries where the development was more rapid. The flow of emigration had already assumed the regularity of a comparatively normal social phenomenon. When severe crises occurred, there was much suffering, and the flow of emigration stagnated. As soon as the crisis was over, the stream continued as before.

After the war everything was turned upside down, and the flow of emigration lost all regularity. It must be remembered that Europe and Asia are comparatively over populated, whilst America and Australia are but thinly populated. Australia, a continent in itself, has only 6½ million inhabitants, or as much as Austria.

The United States of America, whose skilful exploitation of emigrant labour has raised it to the position of the greatest economic and financial power, is able today to dispense with immigrants from Europe and Asia, for the loans forced upon other states, and the capitalists of other countries, enables it to enjoy the privilege of receiving their share on the spot of the exploitation of the workers in other countries. This position, and the possibility of mass production, enable the capitalists of the United States to maintain their workers for a time (perhaps not too long a time) at a standard of living slightly superior to that of the workers in other countries. This circumstance is exceedingly advantageous for the American capitalists, for it enables them to corrupt a stratum of workers, and to induce them to participate in class collaboration and to interest them in their imperialist campaigns against Europe and Asia.

It would however be incorrect to state that the United States are prepared to dispense entirely with the direct exploitation of fresh supplies of foreign workers. It would be interesting to learn, for instance, the significance of the influx of Negroes from the South of the United States to Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia, whilst their places in the cotton plantations are being taken by Mexicans and other workers from Central America.

Central and South America are at the present time practically the only countries to which emigration is possible. The

rate of industrial development in these countries, to say nothing of the climatic conditions, is however not advantageous for mass immigration.

The question of permanent unemployment, the question of the relative "over population" of capitalist Europe, Japan, China, India, etc., and the question of the impoverishment of the masses of the peoples in Europe and Asia, are therefore nothing more nor less than social phenomena resulting from the capitalist system of production, exchange, and distribution. The circumstance that unemployment, "over population", and the impoverishment of the masses, at the present juncture, are especially great, is to be attributed to the fact that capitalism, during its phase of imperialist decay, has not yet stabilised itself sufficiently after the great war, and is on the eve of another war.

The questions of unemployment, relative "over population", and impoverishment of the masses, are not three different questions, strictly speaking, but simply three different aspects of one and the same question. A special aspect of this question is represented by the present emigration movement among the workers. Only when these questions are defined and approached in this manner, it is possible to analyse and determine the attitude which must be adopted towards them by the class organisations of the proletariat. It is only by treating the question of the emigration of labour as a social economic question, as a question of class politics involved in capitalist conditions since the war, and by examining into its relations to imperialism and proletarian revolution, its relations to the policy of the capitalist States and the attitude of the proletarian organisations, that we can really learn the essential character of the question and the way to deal with it.

And now the reformists of every description, and the reformers of every shade, especially the socialists and the Amsterdam Trade Unions, fail to approach these questions from this viewpoint, or to examine them from it. Both in theory and practice the Amsterdammers hold to the class basis of the bourgeoisie, to the basis of the endeavour to bring about a reconciliation in capitalist antagonisms.

2. The International Trade Union Federation and the question of emigration.

The leaders of the I. F. T. U., who have come from the privileged stratum of labour aristocracy, sharing the material position of the middle class, and the social political ideology of the petty bourgeoisie, conduct themselves like truly bourgeois statesmen fully conscious of their responsibility as statesmen representing their own respective countries. These people regard all economic and social political national and international questions solely from the standpoint of the interests of the ruling economic and political system, that is, of the capitalist and bourgeois system, although they prefer to keep up a social and pro-labour phraseology. They designate the "just distribution of raw materials" as a remedy for imperialist contradictions. They believe in the League of Nations, in the Wilson creed of the 14 points, in the International Labour Office, in "Locarno", in "disarmament" in the World Economic Conference, etc.

But in actual practice every single one of them supports the foreign policy of his own bourgeois government. They are all in favour of "capitalist rationalisation" of production, using the argument of the: "perfection and development of the means of production". They naturally deal with the labour emigration question in the same manner, and since the antagonistic interests of the capitalist States, and their different political actions, are also coming into collision on the subject of emigration, the attitude of the Amsterdammers bears the same stamp of contradictions.

This could be observed better than anywhere else at the famous World Congress of Emigration Questions, organised by the I. F. T. U. and the II. International, and held in London in June 1926. The representative of the German Federation, Knoll, complained bitterly of Germany's uniquely wretched position, deprived of all her colonies, no longer able to send away the surplus population of Germany. He expressed the opinion that the Treaty of Versailles, and the other similar treaties, which brought confusion into the economic streams, have at the same time diverted the emigration streams. This thesis was immediately opposed by Dr. Winter, former Czecho-Slovakian minister, who declared that "the war, with its economic consequences, and the devastation caused by the war,

were to blame for conditions, and not the agreement which put an end to the war."

Another example. Representatives of the trade unions of the United States, and of the South American countries were not present at the Congress, although these are the chief emigration countries. On the other hand, the representatives from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand expressed themselves as decidedly opposed to "the principle of free emigration", and in favour of a prohibition of emigration for their countries. Dr. Evat (Australia) opposed this principle by the principle of protection for "White Australia". The Brussels "Peuple" of 27. June 1926, commenting on Evat's declaration, observed that the Australian delegates were anxious to maintain the monopoly of white labour in their country, and added:

"I had the impression that the Belgian trade unionists (as shown in Van Maldere's speech) showed more comprehension for the Australian standpoint than the other delegates. A certain amount of uneasiness is beginning to be felt in Belgium with respect to the uncontrolled influx of foreigners, Poles, Italians, Arabians, etc., especially in the mines. But are we not anxious, on the other hand, to make things somewhat easier for our little over populated country."

(Louis Piérard, in the Brussels "Peuple", 27. June 1926.)

This was in June 1926. By the end of 1926 the same bells were ringing in the leading circles of the French C. G. T. At the London congress the representatives of the C. G. T. had still been in favour of permitting freedom of movement to emigrants. Within a few months their opinions had changed. They joined the ranks of those demanding the prohibition of emigration to France, "controlled regulation" etc. Worse still, they are now agitating for the expulsion of foreign workers. One of the secretaries of the C. G. T., Marcel Laurent, wrote as follows at the beginning of 1927:

"It is not in our interest to 'deprive France of its substance', nor is it in our interest to permit 3 million foreign workers to live on our soil (20 per cent of our labour), especially as the greater part of these are not assimilated, and send their wages home in the form of savings."

(Marcell Laurent in the "Quotidien", 2. January 1927.)

On the other hand, at the London Congress the delegates from countries sending many emigrants abroad opposed the measures against freedom of emigration, and stigmatised the egotism of Canada, the United States, and Australia.

The representative of India demanded equal rights for the different races in the emigration question. It need not be said that he had encounters with the representatives of Australia and the United States, who feared the "yellow danger".

Although there was a majority in favour of the principle of free emigration, the resolution to that effect was withdrawn, in order to avoid arousing too much discontent among the Canadian and Australian delegates. Whenever a question has to be faced directly, in a sense requiring action to follow the decision, the Amsterdamers evade it. And they evade it for fear of coming into conflict with the corresponding policy of their governments.

They say this themselves in the preface to the accepted resolution as follows:

"The Congress desires at the same time to state its conviction that it is the duty of every government to take steps towards regulating the emigration question."

They expect the governments to solve the "questions". The report on the main question: "The economic factors of the emigration movement", given by J. W. Brown, developed the idea that the "surplus population" in various countries is not only the cause of emigration, but is to blame for the wars. According to J. W. Brown, the capitalist system appears to have nothing to do with it.

"Again and again, in the history of the world, the lack of an outlet channel for population or for commodities, but especially for population has led directly or indirectly to war. The wars of expansion in the 18. century were in reality wars of emigration. The long quarrel between the Germans and the Russians for the Russo-German frontiers was another form of this phenomenon. Rome was conquered on its most distant frontiers by wandering tribes.

There is a danger that history will repeat itself, and that less favoured nations will rise up against the more favoured ones which have assumed so great a place in the sun. It remains to be seen whether the workers of the world will permit the emigration question to become once again the cause of worldwide dissension and catastrophe, or whether they will succeed in regulating the problem so skilfully that at least one powerful germ of war may be exterminated in our present world." (J. W. Brown: "Immigration and emigration". "The International Trade Union Movement." 6./7. April/June 1926. No. 2. Page 95.)

According to Brown it was not the antagonisms between capitalists and imperialists which brought about the war of 1914/18, and it is not similar and greater antagonisms which are driving us into the coming world war, but the emigration question. The Viennese "Arbeiter-Zeitung", 2. July 1926, discussed the subject from almost the same standpoint. After dealing with the surplus population of Japan and Italy, and the prohibition of emigration in the United States, the paper continues:

"These are the causes of the hunger for colonies of the Fascists, of aggravation of class antagonisms in the Pacific Ocean. These are the most dangerous causes of the next war.

Unless there is an international regulation relieving the tension of these accumulated antagonisms, the next wars will be race wars, emigration wars!

Again it would seem that the capitalist system and its antagonisms of the imperialist phase neither exist, nor play any part whatever. The "Arbeiter-Zeitung" simply repeats the train of thought contained in the speech of J. W. Brown.

Emigration is a fact. Emigration is the result of the too rapid growth of the population in certain countries. Hence the wish to possess less densely populated countries, and hence war. In order to avoid this, we require a "sensible and suitable distribution of the population over the surface of the earth". And who is to undertake this sensible and suitable distribution? The governments. This is Brown's thesis, accepted by all Amsterdamers. We find a summary of this thesis once more in the "Arbeiter-Zeitung", the organ of the most "Left" social democrats as follows:

"The regulation of emigration must ensure a sensible and suitable distribution of the population over the surface of the earth: The resolutions of the Congress therefore demand the organisation of an emigration office in every single country, in which the labour organisations must be correspondingly represented."

And who undertakes the "suitable distribution"? The emigration offices in the various countries, reply the Amsterdamers. And that is all.

Alois Fischer calculated recently that there is a surplus population of 17% in Eastern Europe, and this "in spite of the massacres of 1914/19, or rather, as result of these massacres", as the Geneva periodical writes.

The wise bourgeois politicians have found three solutions for the question of the "surplus" population of Europe:

1. War.
2. The restoration of the "capacity for absorbing labour" in European economics.
3. Recourse to emigration, freed "from the present difficulties and restrictions".

But it is at least admitted, with brutal candour, that the "difficulties and restrictions" are almost impossible to overcome. A vicious circle! For the maintenance of capitalism and of the bourgeois regime are still firmly adhered to.

Our Amsterdamers hold fast to this same standpoint, but with a slight deviation. They spread among the working class the illusion that the bourgeois governments and the League of Nations are actually anxious to solve the problems of emigration, of unemployment, and of the impoverishment of the masses. Among the Amsterdamers here the leaders only are referred to, not the workers organised in the I. F. T. U. They assume that the original cause of all, the "original sin" is found to be the excessive fertility of the human race! A little further, and we shall land back at Malthus' theories. At the London Congress mention was already made of the alternative of: Birth control or... war and death will do away with the surplus population".

The Amsterdam International and the Working Women.

By H. Sturm.

An international working women's conference is to be held in connection with the Paris Congress of the Amsterdam International. The national trade union federations affiliated to Amsterdam, and their individual unions, will send women representatives. It need not be said that the delegates will not be actual working women from the fields and factories, not real representatives of the millions of members forming the rank and file.

The "leaders" prefer to keep to themselves in their own carefully sifted circle, for they despise or fear the voice of the masses. Amsterdam still owes to wage earning women everything that a real labour organisation can owe to workers, for it has failed to arouse the working women, to educate them, to lead them forward in defence of their interests, which are identical with the interests of the whole working class. And now that the leaders of the Amsterdam International have landed in the lap of the League of Nations, and the class struggle has become something to be suppressed at any cost, the attitude of these leaders to the working women's movement is plainly prescribed. The Amsterdam tactics have always consisted of holding the working women down in their backward and unorganised condition as far as this has been possible, in order to put an effective check on the broadening and deepening of the revolutionary labour movement. And when forces have arisen out of the mass of working women, Amsterdam has applied its utmost energy and ingenuity for the purpose of isolating, hindering, and side-tracking these forces.

This is sufficiently proved by the action, and the lack of action, of both the International Federation of Trade Unions and its affiliated national federations and trade unions.

The fundamental economic fact to be taken as starting point for every Marxist revolutionary policy in the working women question is the uninterrupted growth of female wage labour. The latter develops more rapidly than women's professional work as a whole, and more rapidly than male wage work. This phenomenon is in accordance with the laws of capitalist development, by which as a result of every technical progress the number of unskilled workers is relatively increased and along with every fresh offensive undertaken against the working class the elements which are economically weakest and least capable of resistance are preferred. During the great war the flood tide of women's wage work rose high. And now, after ebbing for a brief space after the war, the tide is rising again as a result of the so-called rationalisation.

Do the trade unions welcome this development in the sense meant by Lenin when he said: "The trust and women's wage work are progressive?" Are they making use of the influx of women into trade unionist production as a mighty lever for the political education of the women of the proletariat, for their enrolment in the class war front in the factories and trade unions? Quite the contrary! They try to kill the fact by silence, or they even attempt to turn back the iron wheel of history, after the manner of those petty bourgeois and Philistines who lament the alleged lost Paradise of the good housewife and mother in the comfortable home.

How can the tactics of the Amsterdamers be otherwise designated, when for instance the trade union bureaucracy of the German Textile Workers Union passed a resolution at the Gera Working Women's Conference, in autumn of 1926, to the effect that it is permissible in special cases and situations — this phrase is the universal fig leaf covering all opportunist treachery — to throw the working women out of the shops and factories? What does it mean when the I. F. T. U., among the superfluity of questions and tasks incident to the problem of the women wage earner, finds only the question of family wages to be worthy of an inquiry? Family wages, that is, the graduation of wages according to the position of the family and the number of children, is precisely one of those capitalist manoeuvres calculated to split the ranks of the workers, to lower the general standard of wages, to strengthen the illusions of the working class with regard to social justice, and to revive the reactionary ideal of the father of the household as the breadwinner!

A characteristic instance of the inconsistency, insincerity, and cowardice of the Amsterdamers with regard to the burning problems of female labour is the attitude adopted by Chevenard,

the French member of the International Working Women's Committee, in the press reports of the I. F. T. U. Her semi-official article for the Paris conference, entitled: "Women's New Tasks", commences with a few words on the "brutal fist" of capitalist development and the decaying tradition of "hearth and home", and ends with a bold somersault stating that the situation involves problems of the destiny of future humanity, that the education of the child by its mother is the fundamental question of social reformation, and that a way of escape must be found out of this dangerous dilemma by means of a programme.

Every word of this programme refers to the child. It contains no single syllable touching upon the core of the problem, the question of wages and working hours. And this is intention. This is in keeping with the practice of Amsterdam, and faithfully reflected in the agenda of the projected conference. Gertrud Hanna, the specialist for women's questions in the German General Trade Union Federation, is to speak on the economic significance of women's work; Helene Burniaux, Belgium, on the protection of working women; and Miss Varley, Great Britain, on home work. To judge by previous experience of Amsterdam working women's conferences, it may be prophesied with considerable certainty that all these speeches will be highly academic, and will soar so far above the "depths" of the daily struggle that they will afford no opportunity for curious and uncomfortable questions, either in the select circle of the Paris conference itself, or even in the press, or in the trade union meetings to which even real live working women are admitted.

It is so very easy for the Trade Union Working Women's Committee to discuss "neutral" and "scientific" questions, such as the growth of women's work in the different countries, and to debate on the wealth of official statistics, at their disposal on such subjects. It is so very harmless to appeal to the "moral duty" of the workers, and to point out that "they must work for the dissemination of the idea of organisation, in their own families as well as outside", as we have the pleasure of reading in an appeal which has now been issued after two years of slumber. It is so very pleasant to bask in the rays of the League of Nations sun, and to enjoy the praise and thanks showered by the President upon the working women's committee for the valuable services rendered by its representative in the Children's and Youths' Protection Commission of the Geneva Labour Office. But it would be extremely unpleasant for the Amsterdamers were they to be called upon to give an account of what the International Working Women's Committee has really accomplished in the three years since the last working women's conference at Vienna.

Where was the working women's committee during all the gigantic struggles which have raged around the vital questions of the international proletariat, struggles in which the mass millions of working women should have been roused to take part as active fighting troops? When the general strike and the coal strike in Great Britain shook the foundations of the British Empire, the strongest stronghold of international capitalism, the working women's committee maintained silence, and never stirred a finger. It maintains silence in face of the Chinese revolution, in which hundreds and thousands of working women are fighting in the streets against the militarists and imperialists, and in the textile factories against foreign and native exploiters. It maintains silence in face of the obvious preparations for war being made by the imperialist united front against the Soviet Union, a war which will militarize women and children all along the line, on the pattern of the French military law. The Committee does not appear to consider these matters to be its affair at all. Its members prefer to leave "high politics" to their experienced and competent leaders, and confine themselves to their "women's questions".

But let us confine ourselves for the moment to the limits of this narrow minded programme, and ask what the Committee has done towards accomplishing at least a part of the tasks which it has set itself. It undertakes 1. to draw attention to the special interests of the working women within the frames of the general trade union movement; 2. to bring forward suggestions for propaganda among working women, and to take

part in this propaganda; 3. to aid the I. F. T. U. by advice and suggestions in questions relating to social political legislation affecting women workers; 4. to help in the compilation of statistic and other material relating to working women.

It is extremely characteristic that this plan of work carefully avoids even speaking of a fight for the interests of the working women, that these interests are not expressly defined, and that strict silence is observed on the ways and means of carrying out the programme.

The working class is confronted with the wages question in its acutest form, the demand for equal pay for equal work for man and woman. During the war, and immediately after it, women's wages approximated more closely those of men — in Germany, for instance, they reached in the metal industry in 1917 95.5%. But this is no longer the case; the disparity between men's and women's wages is increasing in every country, and is already greater than before the war. But despite the unlimited increased exploitation of the whole working class, and of working women in particular, through the rationalisation, and despite the immense danger which low wages for women involves for the standard of the whole working class, Amsterdam preserves silence.

This question exists as little for the Paris Congress as it existed for the German Textile Working Women's Congress at Gera or for the British Trade Union Women's Conference at Bournemouth. And worse than this! Wherever the working women have taken their own initiative in the struggle for increased wages, without lead from Amsterdam, the trade union bureaucrats have attacked them from behind. During the great strike wave at the end of 1926 and the beginning of 1927, affecting the textile, shoe, and tobacco industries in various parts of Germany, the trade union leaders agreed in spite of the protests of the working women everywhere to the miserable arbitration awards, brutally selling the interests of the working women in exchange for a few wretched concessions for the workers.

The second fundamental question is the eight hour day, a double necessity for the working woman in her double capacity of worker and of housewife and mother; indeed a triple necessity, for the employers apply the murderous methods of rationalisation with the greatest ruthlessness against the unresisting women workers. The Amsterdamers are perfectly aware that it is the working women, despite their double burden, who still work the most overtime, now as before. Even the official figures compiled by the German Labour Administration show that in Germany, for instance, about one half of the workers employed in the metal and machine industry (which employs chiefly men) in October 1926 were working over 48 hours, whilst in the textile industry (employing chiefly women) two thirds of the workers were working overtime. The German Textile Workers' Union has even ascertained that 98.4 per cent of the textile workers, of whom about two thirds are women, are working over 48 hours, 80 per cent even 53 to 60 hours weekly.

And what does Amsterdam do in the face of this inexorable evidence of facts, disclosing conditions prevailing in all countries? Nothing! And worse than nothing. On one occasion only has Amsterdam stated its standpoint on this question, in an official article by Gertrud Hanna, the German member of the International Working Women's Committee, in the press bulletin of the I. F. T. U. Scanty as this article is, it still affords room enough for the thousandfold expression of the classical treachery of Amsterdam. Its quintessence is contained in the following verbatim passage:

"Therefore it is precisely the women who must strive for a regulation of working hours which can be designated as healthy."

How "strive", and with what means? And who is to decide the number of working hours which can be designated as "healthy", and "healthy" for whom? Probably the decision will be left to those same employers who recommended, in a memorandum published by the Employers Union in Germany, that the women textile workers should continue work up to the day of confinement, this being an excellent method of ensuring a safe confinement? The article does not exactly say this. But it gives sufficient plain reasons why the women workers require a certain amount of spare time. For instance, they cannot

"do without books, entertainment, and amusement, if their pleasure in their work is to be maintained!"...

"The double burden" is bound to "destroy the working energy"... (underlined in original.) Truly there is rather too much anxiety here for the interests of the employers!

Protection for working women, the third fundamental demand from the programme of the formerly class conscious trade union movement, is still in a measure the parade horse of the Amsterdamers. They like to talk a great deal about it. The German Textile Workers Union has even made an inquiry — it is the only union in the International Federation that has done such a thing, although all are bound by the decisions of the Federation to do so — with regard to the effects on the health and lives of working women and their children of the inadequate protection given to working women. The facts brought to light by this inquiry were so frightful that even representatives of the bourgeois parties in the Reichstag admitted conditions to be urgently in need of reform.

But what has been done besides this, practically, in any country, by Amsterdam, towards mobilising the masses for a real struggle for efficient protection for working women? The Amsterdamers lament over want and misery, they appeal to the "humanity" of an imaginary society hovering over the classes, they send in petitions to the parliaments of bourgeois governments, they pilgrimage as petitioners to the Labour Office of the League of Nations! They substantiate their demands, which even they themselves admit to be "modest" by claiming these to be "in the interests of a sound development of our whole national economy and of the German Fatherland" — a phrase actually heard at the women textile workers' congress at Gera. In other countries the corresponding "Fatherlands" of the capitalists concerned must play their part.

In the unemployment question, which concerns the women workers in certain specific forms, whether in the form of discharge from the factory as "double earner", or in the form of deprivation and restriction of rights as receiver of unemployment benefit, two instances will suffice to show the treachery of Amsterdam.

Nörpel, one of the lights of the General German Trade Union Federation, advises working women to bring fewer children into the world, so that after a few decades of this wise limitation of the number of workers, labour will be able to be sold at a more favourable price.

Margaret Bondfield, member of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress, is among the signatories of the so-called Blanesburgh report, a document of shame against the unemployed, reducing the already miserable relief paid to youths and women under 21 from 13 shillings to 8 shillings. How fully the working women of great Britain realise this treacherous action on the part of their leaders may be seen from the fact that at this year's annual conference of the women members of the British Labour Party, held at Huddersfield in May, the Blanesburgh report was rejected by 408 votes to 265, in opposition to the motion of the presidium.

Amsterdam has not only abandoned the revolutionary aims of the class struggle within the frame of the trade unions themselves but has at the same time rejected and sabotaged the struggle for the demands of the day, for small reforms within the capitalist order of society and economics. Amsterdam is responsible for a policy which has rendered millions of working women passive, distrustful, and hostile to the trade unions, and which keeps these millions outside the ranks of the organisation. Amsterdam is responsible for the fact that hundreds of thousands of working women, won for the trade unions by the unwearied detailed work and successfully conducted campaigns accomplished by the revolutionary minorities, have been lost to the organisations again through the indifference and treachery of the leaders. Amsterdam has preferred to look on, year after year, and see the large number of women members gained during the first few years after the war slowly dwindle down instead of keeping these members by education and activation, and of increasing their numbers by enrolling new broad masses of unorganised working women into the largest and most important class organisation of the proletariat.

Everything which the Amsterdamers have done for the organisation of the working women has been a farce, a mockery of the class struggle, from the decisions issued by the General Council and the Congresses of the British Trade Unions for a canvassing campaign among the women workers, decisions which would not have been worth the paper they were written on.

had the trade union minority movement not taken up the task seriously, and most successfully, in the textile centres, to the "working women's commissions" in the trade unions of Germany, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia — there are 146 such commissions in the German Textile Workers Union alone — whose "educational evenings" befog the brains of the working women with bourgeois-tinted "social policy", with addresses in the style of the youth journal, on such subjects as "Happiness on earth for the textile worker", and with non-political petty bourgeois entertainments and amusements.

The Amsterdamers have concluded their pact with the bourgeoisie. They have no use for a strong class war organisation, they do not want fresh forces to stream into their ranks from the masses of working women, they are afraid to allow the working women who are already organised to become class conscious and take up the class struggle. All this would strengthen the revolutionary opposition within the Amsterdam

Amsterdam and the Proletarian Youth.

By D.

The agenda of the Paris Congress of the International Trade Union Federation, although somewhat comprehensive, does not contain a single point devoted to the situation of juvenile workers. And yet the question of proletarian youth is important enough to be dealt with at one of the international conferences of the I. F. T. U., and the question of the tasks imposed on the trade unions resulting from the situation of the juvenile workers is one which should be discussed. And this the more that the whole world is talking of the youth question at the moment, and the bourgeoisie is exerting every effort to gain an influence over the minds of the young workers.

The youth question has never been a question of proletarian youth alone. The interests of the young and the adult workers have always been closely bound up with one another. This is truer than ever today. Rationalisation leads to the replacement of adult workers by juvenile workers, increases the proportion of young people working in the shops and factories, and enhances their importance in the class struggle. The consequences of rationalisation are felt first of all by the youth of the proletariat. The reduction of social welfare, the prolongation and intensification of work, the reductions of wages, and all the various measures which are just as much a part of European rationalisation as the technical improvements in the process of production, are felt most acutely by those strata of the proletariat which are socially the weakest, that is, by the young workers and the women. Every measure prejudicial to the interests of the young workers is harmful at the same time to the interests of the whole working class. Never before have the consequences of the competition of young workers weighed so heavily upon the adult workers.

Unemployment claims many victims among the young workers. In the most important countries the number of juvenile workers among the unemployed has reached an alarming figure. And almost everywhere the majority of these juvenile unemployed are cut off from the receipt of unemployment benefit. Unemployment among young people involves the acute danger of the demoralisation, the sinking down into vagrancy, of the rising generation. In view of the danger of war, we should indeed employ every effort to reach those young people of the proletariat who themselves have not yet experienced the horrors of war, and who are most likely to fall victims of the patriotic agitation of the bourgeoisie. At the present moment no international conference should be held by a proletarian organisation pretending to represent the interests of the proletariat, without devoting due attention to the youth question.

But when the Amsterdam International pays any attention to proletarian youth, it is only after considerable pressure from below, and then generally in the manner of bourgeois tutors. Their chief endeavour is always directed towards suppressing any symptom of independent revolutionary movement among the young workers, and towards inducing them to follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. In the eyes of the Amsterdamers

trade unions, it would throw difficulties in the way of co-operation between trade union leaders and bourgeoisie, and it would accelerate the end of the rule now enjoyed by the Amsterdam leaders at the expense of the proletariat.

The slogan to be proclaimed and defended by every oppositional trade unionist and by every class conscious worker, with redoubled emphasis and determination during the session of the Paris Congress, in every factory and trade union, in the press and at meetings, must therefore be: Into the trade unions with all working women, despite the treacherous action of the Amsterdamers! And not only in spite of it, but because of it!

The trade unions are the weapon of the working women, in the fight against capital. Let us work for the mobilisation of fresh fighting troops from the ranks of the working women, which would accelerate the capture of the trade unions by the revolutionary proletariat, their conversion into real class war organisations!

the young workers are still merely "youths", who have to put up with whatever position in which they may find themselves, without laying claim to the rights of equality of their class comrades.

Amsterdam is still completely under the influence of that guild idea which sees in the young worker first of all a competitor against the adult. Characteristic emanations of this idea are such reformist trade union measures as the interdiction of apprentices for various trades, or the demand in some countries for lengthened compulsory schooling in the bourgeois elementary schools. By these measures the reformists wish to prevent the participation of young workers in the apparatus of production, and throw the care of providing for these young people simply upon their proletarian parents.

Even at the best the young workers are regarded as an element requiring special tutelage, and not as class comrades with equal rights. This is once more plainly evidenced in the Youth Sections formed in the trade unions under the pressure of the campaign carried on by the communists for the organisation of young workers, with equal rights, in the trade unions. The work of the reformists in the youth sections is limited entirely to educational measures aiming solely at cutting off all contact between youths and adults, and at infecting them with reformist ideas. Where the youth sections succeed in escaping from the superintendence of the reformists, and turn to those tasks of the class struggle which are their actual work, the bureaucracy immediately steps forward with reprisals, and frequently does not even shrink from dissolving the "refractory" youth sections.

The number of young workers comprised in the organisations of the reformist trade unions does not by any means represent the importance of the rôle played by the youth in production. The data issued by the I. F. T. U. itself shows only 293,000 young workers in these organisations in Germany, 10,000 in Czechoslovakia, 10,000 each in Sweden and Austria. In Great Britain and France especially the number of young workers in the reformist trade unions is extremely small.

On the initiative of the Young Socialist International, the I. F. T. U. has formed a Committee for Youth and Educational questions. At a session of the Y. S. I. held in Berlin in January, at which the I. F. T. U. was officially represented by Brown, the following economic programme for young workers was submitted, and recommended to the trade unions for acceptance:

1. Prohibition of wage work for children until the age of 14.
2. Compulsory elementary schooling until the child is legally allowed to earn money by work.
3. Introduction of obligatory continuation of professional education (technical schools) until the age of 18.
4. Extension of regulations protecting apprentices, young workers and employees, up to the age of 18.

5. A working week of 48 hours at the most, including the continuation of professional education, and the time required for clearing away after work.

6. The Week-end holiday to begin at noon on Saturday, or another afternoon in the week to be free.

7. Prohibition of night work for young workers.

8. A minimum of at least three weeks of paid holidays for wage-earning young workers (including apprentices) under 16 years of age, and of at least two weeks of paid holidays for wage earning workers between 16 and 19 years of age.

9. Measures of relief, support, and training of unemployed young workers.

10. Regulation of technical education with the co-operation, with equal rights, of the workers.

These demands are intended to be realised by means of parliament. Many of these demands have already become law in various countries. The real task is not getting these demands accepted by Parliament, but their actual execution and observance on the part of the trade unions. The programme drawn up by Amsterdam and the Y. S. I. is extremely inadequate. Thus the six hour day is abandoned, there is no prohibition of work underground or in trades injurious to health, no prohibition of piece work. No definite demand whatever is made for the unemployed young workers. The demands made for the apprentices are equally vague. And the wages of the young workers are not even mentioned.

The agreements arrived at between the I. F. T. U. and the Y. S. I. show that what is really being aimed at is not so much the protection of youth as a pseudo-manoeuvre calculated to increase the influence of the Y. S. I. Very distinct endeavours

have been observable of late towards bringing the young workers under the influence of the Y. S. I. through the agency of the trade unions, and giving a monopolist position to the socialist youth organisations in the youth sections. The same is being attempted by means of close organisatory association, as for instance in **Austria**, where there is a collaboration between the free trade unions, the workers' sport organisations, and the socialist working youth. Similar endeavours can be observed in **Germany**. The Amsterdammers, who are constantly raising loud outcries about communist agitation among the youth of the trade unions, have themselves voluntarily undertaken the task of touts for the decaying Young Socialist International.

The line taken by the **Red International of Labour Unions** is the exact contrary of that adopted by the reformist trade unions. The aim of the R. I. L. U. is to enlist the young workers in the ranks of the proletarian class front, as elements with equal rights, and not to shut them off by themselves; the training of the young workers to become revolutionary trade unionists, and not Philistines of education. These aims are the special task of the **Youth Committee** lately formed in the R. I. L. U.

We demand publicly of the Amsterdam international that the **Young Communist Leagues** be admitted to trade union work in the same manner as the **social democratic** youth organisations. On behalf of all working youths and girls we demand perfectly equal rights for young workers in the trade unions, their participation in all the struggles of the adult workers, and their inclusion in the tariff agreements of the trade unions. We oppose the dissemination of reformist ideology among the young workers by means of petty bourgeois futilities, and demand the education of the young workers into upright, revolutionary trade unionists.

The Discussion Regarding the Seat of the Amsterdam International.

By Victor Vaksov.

When the capitalist governments organise their international institutions for the sake of deceiving public opinion, they establish their seats somewhere in the dreariest of provinces. The international Court of Arbitration has its seat at the **Hague**, an extremely quiet town, far from all politics. The **League of Nations** has chosen **Geneva** for its seat, a place abounding in pleasant landscapes, where there is a great deal of chocolate, and very little politics. Of course political congresses frequently take place in Geneva, and experienced journalists and many spies assemble there, but Geneva itself, or rather Switzerland, is politically a province. In a word, the capitalists set up their high international institutions as far as possible from the centres in which the history of the world is decided. This is an old rule. It is the more easily comprehensible when we remember that all these courts of justice and leagues of nations are not intended to be the scene of deeds, but merely of appearances.

We, however, are used to believe that the international institutions of the working class are not intended for outward appearances, but for action. And when this is so, then the seat of such an International must naturally be chosen in a place where world politics is determined, where the working class is especially active; not in the provinces, but in an international centre where the proletariat is strongly represented. But the leaders of the I. F. T. U. accepted the traditions of the capitalists from the first moment onwards. The newly founded I. F. T. U. was settled at **Amsterdam** at once, the **Metal Workers' International** at **Berne**, etc. It is true, that the **Second International** had its headquarters in **London** for a time, but was afterwards removed to **Zürich** (in order that its secretary, **Friedrich Adler**, might be enabled to join his family again, who could not stand the English climate), where it remains to this day.

In this manner the international institutions of the working class have, too, been banished to the provinces, far away from the real centres of the labour movement.

When the Trade Union International and the International Secretariats were "restored" in 1919 and 1920, a violent dispute arose among the reformist leaders belonging to the different great powers, as to the seat and the secretaries. **Amsterdam**, **Zürich**, and **Berne** were selected as seats, and fresh secretaries elected in place of the former German ones.

At the **Paris Congress of the Amsterdam International** a motion will be brought in by the **British** and the **Swiss** for removing the seat of the International to another country. This motion will be seconded by the **Austrians**, and the **Vienna "Arbeiter-Zeitung"** declares that the necessity of selecting a neutral (!) State as the seat of the International no longer exists, and that the stay in a small country with a language of its own renders the activities of the International more difficult. The **British** suggest **Brussels**; the **Swiss** make no definite suggestion, but propose that a land be chosen in which one of the world languages is spoken. It is possible that the **Swiss** are thinking of their own country, and that their idea is to settle the Amsterdam International not too far away from the League of Nations.

But nobody suggests removing the seat of the International to one of the large countries. Nobody brings forward political reasons. Linguistic difficulties are mentioned, the high prices in Amsterdam are mentioned (by the **Swiss**), but nobody says a word as to the necessity of establishing the International in one of the great centres of the labour movement.

A large number of Amsterdam bureaucrats raise objections to removing their headquarters to another country. The leader of the **Belgian** trade union central, **Mertens**, protests in the "**Press Bulletin of the I. F. T. U.**", 28, June 1927, against his colleagues of the Executive Committee and maintains that the name of Amsterdam is a symbol to those who lead the fight against the Amsterdam International from Left or Right, and it would therefore be a grave error to change the seat of the

International at a moment when it is exposed to a number of serious attacks.

To us it appears as if the British and the Austrians are anxious to be rid of just this symbol. The British workers, especially the miners, have been much shaken in their faith in Amsterdam by its treacherous attitude during the general strike, and during the lockout of the miners. Amsterdam is not popular in Great Britain. As to the Austrians, they are aware that Amsterdam has become the symbol of the international strike-breaker, the symbol of unconcealed class collaboration. Neither the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress nor the "Left" Austrians are capable to express any sharp criticism of the Amsterdam International. But they cannot but know that the broad masses of the trade union members are dissatisfied with the Amsterdam International in as far they have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with it. Something must be done, and therefore the question of the open political estimation of Amsterdam's position is replaced by the question of its reorganisation, and the question of a change of headquarters.

It is clear that the Trade Union International must not have its seat in the provinces, but in a centre. But when this proposal is made, it should be said: the Trade Union International has carried on a wrong policy, this policy must be changed from the bottom upwards, one of the measures for affecting this change being the removal of the seat of the International to the centre of the most active labour movement, so that this last may directly influence the international body of the trade union movement. This is the way in which the question must be put, instead of the discussion of the reformists that the International should be settled where it is cheap and the town more quiet.

The question of the seat of the International is first of all a political question. An International of action will find suitable headquarters everywhere. It will not hide itself from the workers. An International of inactivity and class collaboration will always withdraw further and further into the provinces, where the useless institutions of international capital, in which nobody believes but the leaders of Amsterdam, have their seats.