

# The Communist Review

COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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## *Review of the Month*

**To Our Readers.**

This month's number of the REVIEW appears very late. The delay has been unavoidable. In apologising to our readers we beg them to remember the difficulties caused by the raid; the subsequent police proceedings; and the complications which ensued in connection with the printing of the REVIEW. Our next number will in consequence also be late, but not so late as the present one, and we shall return to the normal date of publication as soon as possible. Thanks

**E.P.A. At Work** If Trade Union officials, I.L.P. members, or any persons connected with the organised working-class movement in any way whatever, are not yet fully awakened to the danger of E.P.A. it is as well that they slept for ever. E.P.A. is the definite legal proof of the existence of the class war. It is the open and undisguised proclamation of the White Terror. Any person obnoxious to the governing class can be taken up at any moment on any pretext, without warrant, and even without cause. Under one clause he can be punished for opening his mouth; under another for keeping it shut. For E.P.A. is inclusive, all-embracing, and magnificently complete. That Communists should suffer under its provisions is not surprising; that miners on strike should be drawn into the net is to be expected (Major Watts Morgan, M.P., speaking apparently with inside knowledge anticipates 800 actions by the Government in the near future); but it is equally certain that the mildest trade union and Labour activity will not be immune from the attentions of Sir Basil and his department directly it becomes effective, and therefore dangerous. The 61 arrests of Communists are but the prelude to more desperate things. The advance guard of an army naturally suffers the greatest casualties at the commencement of an action. But the main body must not expect to remain unscathed when the battle commences in earnest. All the more reason for vigilance now.

**Toward The Abyss** There was a time when it could be truly said that it is good-bye for ever to British commercial supremacy. Britannia ruled the seas, as she certainly dominated the markets. Now like an old barque, rudderless and derelict, with broken spars and gaping sides she rolls lumbering along to Heaven alone knows what forlorn doom. Imports and exports are down to zero. The country is rent by class struggles more desperate and vindictive than any within human memory. The capitalists are savagely determined to hold their own; the workers sullenly resentful against the obvious attempts to drive them into semi-starvation and a worse slavery than even they have yet experienced. The very existence of millions is at stake. Sir L. Choizza Money who, at least knows something about figures, estimated before the coal lock-out, that the present industrial production of Great Britain is only sufficient to provide subsistence for 30 million people, whereas the population is round about 40 million. Inside capitalism, therefore, there is hope for none of our people, and certain starvation for perhaps a quarter of them. What a prospect! **And** what an incentive to rally to the call of those who seek to perpetuate this state of things for ever. Steadily and persistently the truth must

be forced home on British workers that there is not even the shadow of hope for them while capitalism still befouls the land. To hold even a minor place in the great game of competing for the markets of the world may be glory for British capitalists; it is death to British workers. There is a greater game to play and a more glorious prize to be won, and we Communists point the way.

**The Miners' Fight.** When, in the fulness of time, the history of the class struggle comes to be written this fight of theirs against embattled capitalism will mark an epoch. It is a soldiers' battle. All the vigour, the initiative, the determination is in the rank and file; the weakness and vacillation, where it exists, comes from above. Surely the possessing class must be filled with strange forebodings when such a fight can be put up by men (and women) who dare starvation day by day rather than yield an inch to the enemy. A victory for mineowners and government under these circumstances is no good thing for them in the long run. They relied upon hunger and famine to do their dirty work, and they have been disappointed. The iron will of the working miners has broken their efforts. The same iron will will yet be set upon greater objects than a national pool, and all the more so because of the resistance of the vested interests now. Clearly the miners have nothing to hope for in the continuance of capitalism; clearly the best of them will be won over to work for its destruction; and the same dogged fighting spirit that is so manifest in these days of small things will be no less evident in the greater days to come. Nor has the struggle been without its effect upon the rest of the workers. Shamefully betrayed in the hour of trial they held back from assisting the miners at the critical moment. They will pay—are paying—for their fatal weakness. But if capitalism is depending upon their momentary weakness for its own support it is relying upon a broken reed. Let Mr. Lloyd George and the mineowners rejoice as they will at their triumph. They have gained no victory yet; they have only earned a respite.

## Our Imperial Responsibilities

The Communist movement of this country has before it heavier responsibilities than the movement of any other country except, perhaps, the United States. It has got to fight, not only the industrial magnates at home, but a tremendous imperial system which holds within its direct rule one quarter of the human race (as well as a good portion of the remainder within its economic grip) and for which Great Britain is the central citadel and arsenal. This is what makes our position and our problem entirely different from any other movement. We have to fight in the citadel of capitalism, and the weakness of our movement is simply a measure of the greatness of our task.

It is not easy for a young movement, fighting desperately for its existence, to spend time looking afield. Yet unless we grasp the imperial character of our struggle, as something more than a subject for perorations, we shall meet with unexpected difficulties both at present and in the future, and we shall run the risk of tripping over the same obstacle that has stood in the way of socialist development in this country from the beginning.

That obstacle is the British Empire. The British Empire is the knot which socialism in this country will have to unravel if it is to succeed. To explain this it will be best to begin with a different question.

Why is it that this country, which has a longer capitalist history than any other country in Europe or the world, which is more completely industrialised, urbanised and proletarianised than any other country, which alone has an industrial proletariat that is a majority of the population and whose agricultural workers even are on a proletarian basis, why is it that this country, which by all seeming should be the first and most socialistic in character of the whole working class movement is actually weaker in its socialist movement than any other important country in Europe? Whoever can answer this question aright will have the key to real progress in the socialist development of this country.

The common answer is to ascribe the difference to national psychology, and to tell us that the temperament of the British worker is not revolutionary. But experience has taught us to distrust these facile generalisations about national psychology (we remember the tales about the pious Russian moujik, devoted to his "little Father" the Tsar). They have been proved wrong in the past, and will be proved wrong again. These over easy "explanations" explain the facts by telling them over again in terms of an adjective. They tell us that opium puts people to sleep because of its "soporific" qualities and that there has not been a working class revolution in Great Britain because the British working class is "not revolutionary."

As a matter of fact, the British working class has been revolutionary in the past, as it will be revolutionary again in the future now that the corresponding conditions have arisen. It was in the revolutionary vanguard at the time of Chartism. The change has, then, taken place since that time, and there must be some corresponding change in conditions to account for it. What has been the great change in conditions since that time? The great dominant change has been the change summed up under the term Imperialism.

It is not only that the greatest and most rapid development in extent of the British Empire has taken place during the last half

century; it is that the whole character of the British Empire has changed, and for the first time the British Empire has become the dominant fact about Great Britain. The old imperialism was a movement of colonists and traders; and barely half a century ago the British Parliament could cheerfully pass a resolution in favour of cutting the connection. The colonies were our annexe. The new imperialism is a movement for commissionaires for essential raw materials; and the sources of supply thus obtained is the life-line of the present economic condition of the country. A century ago Britain was establishing herself as the workshop of the world. But she was yet to make the world her storehouse.

Now the workers under capitalism are tied up with capitalism. At the present day the livelihood of the workers of this country is bound up in that economic system known as the British Empire. If you destroy the British Empire, and are not able to replace it by some equally effective international economic system, the livelihood of millions will be taken away from them. That is the basic fact behind the "non-revolutionary" character of the workers of this country.

How does the argument apply, since very few will put it to themselves in this form? The answer comes in the answer to our original question. The answer why the proletariat of this country has not yet shown in a full degree the desires and instincts natural to men placed in a proletarian condition is that it is not, strictly speaking, a proletariat in the full sense. It is not without a share, however small, in the capitalist world. It is an imperial proletariat. To put this in concrete terms, a badly off worker in Britain is better off than a comparatively well-paid worker in India. The droppings of the spoil are allowed to fall on the workers of this country.

"European imperialism will not hesitate to go to the extent of sacrificing the entire surplus value in the home country so long as it continues to gain its huge super profits in the colonies."

The reason of this may not be clear to the ordinary worker; but the fact is. Looking round, he may observe that, however much he may have to complain of, he is appreciably better off than the workers in other countries in Europe, and not least in revolutionary countries. He may ascribe this, under the suggestion of his superiors, to his instinct for steady progress, moderation and common sense, without knowing that all this "steady progress" and "moderation" is journalistic bunkum for imperial profiteering. But the fact at any rate is clear to him. He feels that he has something to lose. He regards revolution as a hazardous experiment. And so; while ready to push to the utmost to better his share against the master class, he is not willing as yet to endanger the whole system.

What is going to change this position? Not sentimental denunciations of the bloodstained Empire. Denunciations of other people's wrongs never carry very far (witness the case of Ireland and the apathy of British opinion) because people have too many troubles of their own to attend to. Nor will the advocacy of "Home Rule" and "Self-Government within the Empire" make any difference to the economic realities of capitalistic domination which is the real fabric of the Empire.

Propaganda can never precede experience: it can only elicit the lessons of experience. It is experience, and again experience that will shatter, as it is already shattering, the roseate myths of Imperialism. The war has torn aside the veil for millions to reveal the ghastly realities of the system under which they lived. If that lesson is not enough, war

will return, as it is already preparing, on a more terrific scale, until the lesson is learnt. For it is the nature of Imperialism that it is cumulative in its effects. It may begin in seeming prosperity. It ends in an Inferno. To drive home that lesson before the devastating consequences of the present policy reach such a point (as in Germany) that the forces of the proletariat become inadequate for the task before them, is the first necessity of Communist propaganda.

But it is only the first necessity. "Exposing" Imperialism is easy game. It is the fatal weakness of the old-fashioned socialist schools of this country that they are very eloquent in denouncing Imperialism, and there they stop. They have no actual policy. If they conjure up some ghost of a policy, it is sure to consist of shadowy schemes of "federal devolution" and "progressive self-government," just as if they had never left the Liberal Party. Alternatively, they leave out the whole question, and discuss schemes of industrial change in this country, as if this island were a self-contained entity. The Communists must break away from this fatal policy of barrenness, and point the way to tackling this problem of an imperial system in a positive manner.

Now for this purpose our calculation must be based on existing facts. It is the first test of real Communism to be rid of the vulgar notion that Communism stands for a purist and doctrinaire sect. As the Communist manifesto long ago insisted, the Communists are not a special party set over against other parties; they are simply the unhesitating expression of the interests of the working class. From this follows at once their uncompromising opposition to any capitalist or semi-capitalist elements in working class leadership, and at the same time their ability in the practical field to adapt themselves to whatever policy will extract most gain for the working class from the existing play of forces.

This consideration applies strongly with regard to the problem of the British Empire. The initial fact that must never be lost sight of is that the proletariat proper, and still more the organised proletariat, constitute only a small minority of the total numbers of the Empire. It is true they hold the strategic position by their command of the industries of this country, provided always that there can be added thereto a command of the essential shipping services, ports, and coaling stations. But a strategic position is only strategic in relation to other factors, and it is these other factors that the industrial proletariat must bring into play in order to ensure its own victory.

The masses that are subject to the British Empire are not yet fully proletarian in character, or capable of large scale proletarian organisation and the Communist struggle. But, however primitive their internal economic structure, they are subjected to the fullest degree of exploitation by the financial forces of the Empire, and their consciousness of economic misery is supplemented by their consciousness of national or racial subjugation. These are the elements which, if they could be welded into a united combination under the leadership of the industrial proletariat, could in a moment overthrow the domination of the handful that sits upon their backs. It is doubtful whether either side can win without the co-operation of the other.

Since co-operation will mean long and patient labour in the removal of existing prejudices: prejudices on their side against all British movements, whether so-called socialist or other, as fundamentally insular and national in their outlook; prejudices here against non-Communist and nationalistic tendencies. It will mean co-operation, not only with semi-proletarian elements, but with definitely non-proletarian and non-

Communist elements, provided they are revolutionary in character and may thus form useful parts of a revolutionary combination. The original draft of the Thesis on National and Colonial Questions spoke of co-operation with "bourgeois democratic nationalist movements." This was amended at the Congress to "revolutionary nationalist movements." It is thus made clear that, for the purposes of the tactical struggle against imperialism, the point at issue is not between bourgeois and proletarian movements, but between revolutionary and non-revolutionary movements. This should be the determining factor in our attitude to Sinn Fein. The principle here laid down concerns solely the tactics of the struggle against world imperialism: it has nothing to do with the development of Communism in the country concerned, which should be treated as an entirely separate question.

The interests, the classes and the races, which are subjected and thwarted by the imperial system are myriad in number and form; the apex of the whole structure constitutes a tiny ruling minority of finance with its military and bureaucratic appendages. But the myriad interests of the subjected hundreds of millions are shattered and helpless unless they can be welded together by some cohesive force. There is a passage of Lenin in which he speaks of the function of the industrial proletariat—"the only class revolutionary to the finish"—in uniting all the oppressed and exploited strata against the capitalist class.. Only the proletariat—on account of its economic rôle in production on a large scale—is capable of leading *all* the toiling and exploited masses, who are exploited, oppressed, crushed by the capitalists often more, not less, than the town proletariat, but who are incapable of carrying on the struggle for freedom unaided." That is the rôle of the British working class in relation to the British Empire.

This does not apply to the present building up of forces. It applies still more strongly to the struggle in the immediate future. It was said above that some kind of international economic system in substitution of the present system of the empire would have to be built up, not merely in the ultimate ideal world, but immediately in the period of revolutionary transition, if the industrial existence of the population of this country was to continue. But this will not come about of itself, if we do not know beforehand our friends and the forces on which we can rely.

Imagine a revolutionary development in this country and its effects upon the empire. Imagine the effects of this dissolution of the central authority upon the furthest confines of this vast system. Of the colonies, Canada and South Africa perhaps falling under a more rigid White dictatorship than ever (South Africa, however, torn by racial, class and colour conflicts), Australia and New Zealand at such an equilibrium of the class struggle as to be neutral. India a battlefield, in which the stoppage of reinforcements and supplies would probably mean the victory of the Nationalists, itself a prelude to internal class struggle. The various colonial governors with their garrisons holding out like ancient Roman proconsuls after the fall of the Imperial city. In all this wreck what will be the cohesive force that can build up afresh rapidly among the desperate elements outside the White areas some hasty attempt at renewing the links of economic interchange and life? Only a full and vigorous proletarian dictatorship in this country acting in concert with known elements throughout the system.

If the contacts do not exist beforehand, the revolution will be endangered.

There are here a host of practical questions to be explored and prepared. It is quite true you cannot construct a "programme" for the revolution. But you can reconnoitre the ground and get a grasp of the main factors with which you will have to deal when the time comes. The *ultimate* success or failure of a revolution depends on factors largely beyond our control, the ripeness of the class-situation, the economic conditions of production, and the international situation. But the *immediate* success or failure depends on the technical efficiency and accuracy of the preparations.

JOHN LANGLAND.

## Russian Biographies in Little

On May 17th, 1920, a Committee to collect information on Russia was appointed by the Government. It was constituted as follows:—

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Emmott, G.C.M.G., G.B.E. (*chairman*).

Sir Ellis Hume Williams, K.B.E., K.C., M.P.; Sir Wm. Ryland Dent Adkins, K.C., M.P.; the Rt. Hon. Wm. Brace, M.P. (*Members*).

Mr. H. E. Garle, Barrister-at-Law (*Secretary*).

On the 23rd July, 1920, the Rt. Hon. Wm. Brace, M.P., resigned owing to the pressure of other public duties, and Major Watts Morgan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., was appointed in his place.

A report (Russia No. 1, 1921) is now issued by His Majesty's Stationery Office, price 2s. net.

It contains a mass of useful information concerning Soviet Russia as seen through British official eyes, from which we extract the following biographical notes.

We do not vouch for their accuracy, but they are interesting as showing what is probably the worst that can be said against those of our comrades who are at present building up the Workers' Socialist Republic in Soviet Russia.

### *The Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee*

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee elects from among its members a Presidium. The Presidium and other members of the 7th All-Russian Central Executive Committee, which was in office during 1920, were replaced by the Presidium and members of the 8th All-Russian Central Executive Committee who were elected at the meeting of the 8th Congress of Soviets which assembled at Moscow on the 20th December, 1920. The lists of the Presidium of the 7th and 8th All-Russian Central Executive Committee are given side by side below. In view of their importance some information regarding individual members of them follows. The lists have been divided into Right (R), Centre (C) and Left (L), according to their political orientation in the Communist Party.

#### *Seventh Presidium, 1920.*

1. Kalinin, M. I. (C).
2. Kamenev, L. B. (C).
3. Enukidze, A. S. (R).
4. Lutovinov, Y. (C).
5. Rykov, A. I. (R).
6. Muralov, A. I. (C).
7. Nevsky, V. I. (C).

#### *Eighth Presidium, 1921.*

1. Kalinin, M. I. (C).
2. Kamenev, L. B. (C).
3. Enukidze, A. S. (R).
4. Lutovinov, Y. (C).
5. Rykov, A. I. (R).
6. Stalin, I. V. (C).
7. Vladimirsky, M. F. (C).



- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8. Sapronov, B. P. (R).  | 8. Sapronov, B. P. (R).   |
| 9. Badaev, A. E. (C).    | 9. Kutuzov, I. I. (R).    |
| 10. Kisilev, A. S. (R).  | 10. Tomsky, M. P. (R).    |
| 11. Bukharin, N. I. (L). | 11. Petrovsky, G. I. (L). |
| 12. Rakovsky, K. G. (C). | 12. Zalutsky, P. (L).     |
|                          | 13. Smidovich, P. G. (L). |

In view of the importance of the Presidium the following biographical notes regarding its members are given:—

(1) *M. I. Kalinin*.—Kalinin was born in 1875 and is a peasant from the Tver Province. He was formerly employed upon the Municipal Railways in the city of Tver. He has been for many years associated with the Bolshevik group of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and was formerly engaged in reorganising branches of the party which had been destroyed as the result of the repressive measures undertaken by the Russian police against the Socialist parties. After the death of Sverdlov in 1919, he was elected president of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. He is said to be a man of colourless personality, and it is suggested that he was for this reason proposed as a candidate for the Presidency, it being thought likely that he would not exercise a disturbing influence on the political situation. He takes great interest in the activities of the department for propaganda among the peasantry which has been established under the auspices of the Central Committee, and is constantly making tours throughout Russia for the purpose of addressing meetings of peasants.

(2) *L. B. Kamenev*.—Kamenev was born at Tiflis on the 22nd July, 1883, and from 1904 onwards was actively engaged on political work in the Moscow group of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. In 1905 and 1907 he took part in the conferences of the party in London, and in 1908 attended the conference of the party held in Paris. From 1910 onwards he lectured at the propaganda school established by the Lenin group of the party at Lonjumeau, near Paris, taking as his subject "The History of the *Bourgeoisie* in Russia." During this period he was busy preparing a brochure in reply to a pamphlet which had been published by Martov, the Menshevik leader, against the Bolsheviks. Martov's pamphlet was entitled "Saviours or Destroyers," and Chapter IV., which devoted special attention to Bolshevik practices, was entitled "An Orgy of Trickery." In 1912, Kamenev attended the so-called "General Conference of the Party" convoked by Lenin at Prague in January of that year. With the exception of two Menshevik representatives the eighteen members of the conference were Bolsheviks (see Appendix). On the outbreak of war in 1914, Kamenev made an anti-war speech before a conference in Finland which was attended by four Bolshevik members of the Duma, Petrovsky, Badaev (who have been mentioned above) Samoilov and Muranov. In this speech he pointed out that the only true policy for Marxist was "War against War." He, together with others who attended the conference, were subsequently arrested on a charge of defeatist activities and condemned to exile. After the outbreak of the Russian revolution in the spring of 1917, Kamenev became a member of the Petrograd Soviet, and later, after the Bolshevik revolution in the autumn of that year he became a member of the Moscow Soviet, of which he was ultimately appointed President, and also member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. In July, 1920, he was appointed to

proceed to England as head of a Soviet Peace Delegation, and the circumstances of his departure from England in August in connection with revelations as to Bolshevik propaganda are well known. Kamenev in January, 1921, was appointed President of the Emergency Commission for the supply of the capitals, established by the Council of Labour and Defence to take special measures in regard to the serious fuel crisis which had become extremely acute during the last few months. He is said to have married Trotsky's sister.

(3). *A. S. Ehlukidze*, is a Georgian and is one of the most attractive personalities in the Bolshevik party according to information we have received from more than one source. He has long been associated with the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, is regarded as an honest and upright man and as belonging to the Right wing of the Bolshevik Party. He is a friend of Chertkov, who was the secretary of Tolstoy. He is said to have been instrumental in saving the lives of a number of innocent persons who were condemned to death by the Extraordinary Commission during the revolution. In February, 1921, Chicherin offered the mediation of the Soviet Government in the hostilities which had arisen between Georgia and Armenia, and proposed that Ehlukidze should proceed to Georgia as mediator.

(4). *Lutovinov, Y. K.*—Lutovinov is a member of the Collegium of the All-Russian Central Soviet of Trade Unions and one of the secretaries of Kalinin, the president of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

(5). *Rykov, A. I.*—Rykov is said to have been born in Saratov of peasant parents in 1881 and to have become a clerk and a translator into foreign languages. He was for many years one of the right-hand men of Lenin in organising the Bolshevik group of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. He has always been a moderate Communist and was anxious to compose the differences between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in former days. He is President of the Supreme Council of People's Economy in Moscow at the present time.

(6). *Muralov, A. I.*—Muralov is a young and energetic Communist who was the first Commandant of the Moscow Military District after the Bolshevik revolution of October, 1917. He is an agricultural expert and rumours were circulating in Moscow during the summer of 1920, that there were possibilities that he would replace Sereda as People's Commissary for Labour. These suggestions have, however, so far received no justification in fact. A manifesto by Muralov prescribing certain means of fighting against the failure of the harvest this year will be found in the "Derevenskaya Bednota," (The Village Poor) for the 14th August, 1920. Muralov was a member of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee (1920).

(7). *Nevsky, V. I.*—He is a member of the Editorial Collegium of the Publishing Department of the Soviet Government, and is also associated with the work of the Agitation-Propagandist Section and of the Distributing Section of the Department. Nevsky is also Director of the Section for propaganda work in rural districts and of the peasants' section under the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party.

(8). *Sapronov, B. P.*—Sapronov has been for many years a well known Trade Union worker and a member of the Bolshevik Section of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. It will be seen that he is mentioned in paragraph 189 as one of those moderate Communists

who have begun to protest against the autocratic action of the Council of People's Commissaries.

(9). *Badaev, N. E.*—Badaev is an old party worker of the Bolshevik Section of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. He was a member of the Fourth Duma, 1912-1917, and in 1914 was arrested for participating in a conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in Finland (September 30th to October 1st) where Kamenev delivered an important speech against the European war. Badaev was subsequently exiled. Soon after the revolution of February, 1917, Badaev became a member of the Petrograd Soviet, and, after the Bolshevik *coup d'Etat* of October, 1917, he became a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and later of its Presidium. He used to take a prominent part in the administration of Petrograd and was until recently president of the Petro-Kommuna, or Petrograd Food Administration. It is said that he then fell under a temporary cloud owing to charges of speculation, which were preferred against him, and even that he was summoned to Moscow and imprisoned in the Butirky gaol. The latest information shows that, if he was in prison, he was speedily released, and is now said to be a prominent official in the People's Commissariat for Food, at Moscow.

(10). *Kisilev, A. S.*—Was a member of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee and a member of the Presidium of that Committee. He was president of the Soviet of the industrial area of Ivanovo-Voznesensk in the Government of Vladimir, not far from Moscow, and is president of the All-Russian Miners' Union.

(11). *Bukharin, N. I.*—Bukharin was the son of a Councillor of the Russian Court, and born in 1879. He belonged to the Orthodox Church and was a student of Moscow University. He early became associated with the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and was arrested in 1902 as a member and organiser of a committee of the party in the Zamoskvorietsky District of Moscow, and was exiled to the Archangel Province. Shortly after the outbreak of the Russian revolution in February, 1917, Bukharin became a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and a member of the Presidium of that Committee. He is a member of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. On the 27th January, 1918, he was appointed by a Decree of the Commissaries of the People, a member of the Governing Body of the People's State Bank. He is also a member of the Editorial Collegium of the Publishing Department of the Soviet Government. Bukharin is one of the most prominent Communist theorists and may be regarded as the leader of the Communists of the Left. He was immediately elected a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International on its foundation, in March, 1919, at a time when the more moderate Communist leaders, including Lenin himself, were elected not as members, but only as candidates to the Executive Committee. Bukharin's literary activities are varied, and he frequently contributes to the various Soviet newspapers, especially in Petrograd, where he lives. As far as Western Europe is concerned, the most interesting of his works is his "Communist Programme," which was first published in 1918, again in 1919, and a third edition which is understood to have been published in 1920. The following is an extract from Chapter XIX of the "Communist Programme":—

"The International Republic of Soviets will liberate from oppression hundreds of millions of those who live in the Colonies. The 'Civilised Robber Powers' have tortured and torn the population of the Colonial countries by a bloody régime. European civilisation has been supported on the blood of ruthlessly exploited peoples in distant countries overseas. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat—and only it—will free them."

The best known, however, of his latest works in Russia are "Economics of the Transitory Period," and "Political Economy," both published during 1919-1920. With regard to policy, he has always been opposed to the suggested granting of concessions in Russia to foreign capitalists and has recently been actively engaged with some success in influencing the rank and file of the Communist Party, who have shown signs of opposing the Concessions Policy as a departure from Communist principles.

(12). *Rakovsky, K. G.*—Was intimately associated before the war in the Socialist politics of Roumania, but also maintained relations with the Bolshevik Group of the Russian Socialist Democratic Labour Party. After the outbreak of the war he took part with Lenin in various meetings of Socialists. In February, 1916, he made a speech before Socialists at Berne in which he declared that the Third International was already founded and that its aim should be to take vengeance for the war in the struggle for the social revolution. In the Soviet Government Rakovsky occupies a prominent position. He is a member of the Committee of the Russian Communist Party and president of the Council of People's Commissaries for the Ukraine. After the conclusion of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk between Soviet Russia and Germany in 1918 Rakovsky was appointed a member of the delegation of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to proceed to Berlin for the purpose of attending meetings of German Trade Unionists and Socialists. The delegation was, however, prevented from entering Germany by the authorities.

(13). *Stalin, I. V.* (Dzhughashvili).—Is undoubtedly the ablest of the many Georgians who are working under the Soviet Government, and there is reason to believe that, as an organiser and a man of action Stalin is second only to Trotsky. He was formerly one of the principal organisers of the Bolshevik Section of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and a close collaborator with Lenin. He was twice exiled to the Vologda Province and once to Siberia. After the outbreak of the Russian revolution of February, 1917, he became a member of the Petrograd Soviet and after the Bolshevik *coup d'Etat* of October, 1917, he became People's Commissary for State Control and People's Commissary for Nationalities, *i.e.*, dealing with the affairs of the non-Russian nationalities of Russia of which he is a representative himself. In this latter capacity he was associated with the endeavours of the Soviet Government to set on foot a subversive propaganda in the East. He was also for some time Military Commissar of the South-Western Russian Front during 1918-1919. In August, 1920, he attended the Muhammadan Communist Congress at Baku, and thence proceeded to Erivan, in Armenia and Angora, the headquarters of Mustapha Kemal Pasha in connection with the negotiations proceeding between the latter and the Soviet Government. He has a reputation for remarkable force of character and considerable ability.

(14). *Vladimírsky, M. F.*—Assistant People's Commissar for Internal Affairs. Was a candidate for the Presidium of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee, that is to say he was one of those elected to take the place of the actual members in case of their inability to be present at a meeting owing to illness, death or other reasons.

(15). *Petrovsky, G. I.*—Born in the Province of Kharkov, and represents the workers of the Ekaterinoslav Province in the Second and Fourth Dumas. Petrovsky was a prominent member of the Russian Social Democratic Party before the war. In December, 1912, he was one of those who took part in the sessions of the Central Committee of the party at Cracow in Poland, where Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin and Malinovsky, the spy, were present. He was one of the so-called Bolshevik "Shestiorka" or "Six" in the Fourth Duma. He declined to attend a propaganda school which Lenin proposed to set up abroad in 1913. He attended the Conference of the Members of the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party held in Galicia in September, 1913, where Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Badaev were also present, and was appointed by the conference to proceed to Kiev to collect funds for the party. When the war broke out, Petrovsky attended a meeting of the members of the Bolshevik section of the party in Finland, on which occasion Kamenev was present and made a speech condemning the war. As a result of this meeting, Petrovsky and others who took part in it were arrested and exiled. After the outbreak of the revolution of February, 1917, Petrovsky returned from exile and became a member of the Petrograd Soviet. After the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 he occupied the post of People's Commissary for Agriculture and later People's Commissary for Finance. He was a member of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee during 1920. In January, 1921, he was elected president of the Central Executive Committee of the Ukraine Soviet Government.

(16). *Kutuzov, I. I.*—A candidate of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Textile Workers' Union.

(17). *Tomsky, M. P.*—President of the All-Russian Central Soviet of Trade Unions. Also a candidate of the Presidium of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

(18). *Zalutsky, Peter.*—A Left member of the Petrograd Soviet.

(19). *Smidovich, P. G.*—A Left member of the Moscow Soviet, and a member of the Seventh All-Russian Central Executive Committee which has just gone out of office. He is a member of the Collegium of the Moscow Soviet of People's Economy.

# What are the Soviets?

By W. E. HARDING.

(AN OUTLINE SKETCH).

## II.

*"The Soviets are the organisation of the proletarian revolution, and serve both as an organ of the struggle for power and as the apparatus of power of the working class."*—Trotsky

The proletariat can conquer power only through some central fighting organisation that will take over one by one all the public functions hitherto exercised by some capitalist State. The regular and adequate supply of food and clothing, the preservation of public order, the education of children and the enlightenment of adults, the preservation of the revolution against its enemies—these functions involve a development of the fighting organisation (the Council of Action or the Strike Committee) into a Workers' Government. If we approach the subject practically and realistically, and not as formalists, it will not be difficult to grasp that the question of elections at such a moment is not an important one. The best illustration of this so far has been given us in John Reed's "Ten Days that Shook the World."

Logically, therefore, the question of the Soviet Constitution should come after the complete victory of the revolution. But this is only partially true in reality. The working class is not a blind unorganised mass; it has passed through a long period of organisation and education. That period has not been as long as the Communists would like, probably (though they are more easily satisfied than the I.L.P. school): but at any rate the workers have had bitter experience of the danger of allowing leaders to act uncontrolled. To check this danger, they have evolved a rank and file movement, of which the type has been the Workers' Committee or the Workers' Council, composed of delegates drawn from all shops, factories, and other places where the workers are gathered together for the purpose of production.

Hence, although the very act of revolution—the seizure of power (which might cover a period of several days or weeks)—might very well conceivably be the work of a Council of Action or Strike Committee chosen arbitrarily and haphazard, we must expect that the progress of the revolution will drive the workers first to supplement, and finally to replace, the original body by an assembly of delegates elected on the "job," and revocable at any time. This is inevitable in order to introduce the necessary element of working class control over the local or central executive authority. Such control is desirable from the point of view both of the masses and of the Communist Party which must wield that authority. It has also a deeper significance. It is important because it is a step towards the disappearance of a special authority, as such, altogether; by drawing more and more rank-and-file workers into the public work, it brings about the disappearance of the State. We shall return to this later.

In the case of Russia, fortunately, we have a practical example of how infinitely more democratic and all-embracing the Soviets are than the system of government which they replace. Despite the blockade and the civil war, which, as has been pointed out, leave little time for

discussion of elections and constitutions, the very requirements of the proletarian revolution have brought in their train the germs of complete self-government by the workers. In a proletarian revolution—as distinct from all others—the masses of the workers themselves are brought face to face with the problem of active participation in public administration if they wish life and civilisation to remain on the earth. Not all their backwardness, lack of education, absence of trade union and parliamentary experience have been able to prevent the Russian workers from realising this problem, grappling with it, and (more and more successfully) solving it. And it is characteristic that the three brief intervals, during the past three years, during which the Russian proletariat has been able to put aside its arms and devote itself to reconstruction, have been marked by a series of constitutional enactments, by which the practice of real life was systematised, regulated, and extended to all the Soviets in Russia, village and town. April-August, 1918: the Soviet Constitution; November, 1919—March, 1920: the regulation of the functions of the Central Executive Committee, the village Soviets and the local congresses; November, 1920, onwards: the provision of regulations for the presidium of the Central Executive Committee, the provincial Congresses, and the town Soviets.

The present position is as follows. In every inhabited area in Russia there is a Workers' Council (Soviet), elected by all the workers in the place, whether it be town or country, and meeting weekly or fortnightly. For day to day purposes it elects an executive; it also breaks up its members into a number of sub-committees for special work on one or another branch of public administration. Village Councils send delegates, approximately once every three months, to a Rural District (Volost) Congress, which, having concluded its work, appoints an interim executive. The Village Council send delegates, approximately once every six months, to a County (Uyezd) Congress, which again, having transacted its business, appoints an interim executive. In the County Congresses there participate representatives of the smaller towns. In the Provincial (Gubernia) Congresses, delegates are sent from the Rural District Congresses and the town Soviets; while the County Congresses and the Soviets of the larger towns send delegates to the annual All-Russian Congress, at which the Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissaries (or Cabinet) are appointed.

Historically, the foundations of the Soviet system are the town Soviets, which were constituted out of factory delegates at the very beginning of the revolution, with the overthrow of Tsardom (February, 1917). For at least a year their principal work was to extend the revolution into the countryside, helping the peasants to form Soviets of their own, and binding together the shapeless and incoherent masses of the countryside around the county and provincial towns—the proletarian core. This period culminated in the drawing up of the Soviet Constitution (July, 1918). It is owing to the historical process outlined above that the Constitution shows the towns occupying a more prominent position in the Soviet Congresses than the villages, which as we have seen, are grouped together for election to the higher congresses.

For the same reason we find the towns electing delegates to congresses on the basis of 1 per 25,000 or 1 per 2,000 of the *electorate*, while in the country the basis is 1 per 125,000 or 1 per 10,000 of the

*population.* There is no Machiavellian cunning in this; it is simply the natural expression of the fact that the town Soviets, which sprang up first, are composed mainly of delegates direct from the factories, etc., i.e., direct from the *electors*; while in the country the electors (the working men and women) are not so conveniently grouped together, owing to the agricultural conditions, and from the very first (months before the Bolshevik revolution) it was considered more convenient for the peasants to elect their delegates on the basis of population. Allowing for an average family of 5, 1 per 125,000 inhabitants in the country is a ratio roughly approximating to 1 per 25,000 electors in the towns.

It has been alleged that the local Congresses have not been allowed to meet; and that when they have, the Communists have imposed their own candidates upon the electors. This leaves out of consideration one important fact, which the historical outline above reveals: that throughout the length and breadth of Russia there is scarcely a county or even a rural district, where an industrial workman or a sailor did not penetrate during the first year of the revolution, bringing its message with him and acting as the chief organiser of the local Soviets. In nine cases out of ten he was and is a Communist; and this is the explanation of the predominance of the Communists in the rural Congresses, despite the small size of the Party numerically. Still more so, of course, does this apply to the County Executive Committees, in which administrative ability is an essential.

Nevertheless, this Communist predominance is far from being a ruthless dictatorship. During 1920, up to October 1, details had been received of 151 county congresses, at which 22,442 workers and peasants were delegates with decisive votes. Of these, 8,907 were Communists or sympathisers, 247 belonged to other parties, and 12,263 were independents, i.e., just ordinary peasants interested in the efficient carrying on of public affairs. 1,460 gave no information. The same lesson is conveyed by the figures showing the profession of the delegates: 11,996 peasants, 2,838 workers, 1,779 clerical workers, shop assistants, etc., 744 doctors, teachers, etc., and 4,979 not indicated. Where the overwhelming majority of the delegates were peasants, it is idle to talk of a dictatorship. Again, a study of the constituencies represented once more reveals that, out of the 22,000 delegates, over 15,000 were elected by village Soviets and rural district congresses, and only 3,600 by town Soviets, factory settlements, trade unions, etc. (other electing bodies being the Red Army, various parties, and miscellaneous public bodies).

The lesson of these figures is (1) the peasants have been as a rule allowed freely to elect non-Communist delegates (2) despite the alleged inequalities in the franchise, the village delegates have been in an overwhelming majority, and (3) the large proportion of Communists is due to the scattering of the town workers amongst the villages (3,300 of whose delegates were not peasants).

The proportion of independents (i.e., non-party) candidates and delegates amongst the peasantry has undoubtedly been steadily growing, thanks to the deliberate policy of the Communist Party. This, perhaps, is best shown by figures covering 103,201 delegates to 1,145 county



congresses between 1917 and 1920, compiled by the Russian Local Government Board:—

	Communists	Independents.	Other Parties
January—June, 1918 ...	42%	38%	20%
July—Dec., 1918 ...	67%	19%	14%
January—June, 1919 ...	61%	33%	6%
July—Dec., 1919 ...	49%	45%	6%

The non-party delegates during the first nine months of 1920, as we have already seen, markedly outnumbered the Communists.

If this process of democratisation of the local government institutions has been going on despite the war, which is not an influence favourable to development of public control, still more must we expect to find it advanced in the towns, where the proletariat has been class-conscious from the first, insisting upon direct control of and interference in all public affairs. It is in the towns, and in the large cities in particular, that the extraordinarily elastic and living character of the Soviet has been exemplified. Based on the principle that, wherever 200 or more workers acquire sufficient class-consciousness to gather together in the name of proletarian control, they can elect a deputy to the Soviet, that organ has of necessity grown stronger, expanded, and developed; as the working class itself has grown stronger, expanded and developed. At first the workers and soldiers who effected the revolution alone sent their delegates; then, as the new régime was consolidated, clerical workers and shop assistants began to assemble in ward meetings to elect representatives; later it was the turn of the educated classes—the doctors, teachers, engineers, professors—as they grew more and more reconciled to the idea of political and social equality with the industrial proletariat; most recently attention has been turned to the domestic workers—the working-class housewives—who have been kept throughout all the ages in ignorance and apathy, and whom only the Soviet system awakens to life, by asking them to take control of the affairs that interest them. At Petrograd, for example, there were in:—

July, 1919 ...	...	...	...	330,000 electors
Jan., 1920 ...	...	...	...	501,000 „
June, 1920 ...	...	...	...	562,000 „

The latter figure, taking into account the children, covered practically the entire population; and at least 400,000 of the electors actually went to the poll. It must be noted, too, that all this time the population was decreasing.

The Petrograd elections of June, 1920, also exemplified another striking feature of the Soviet, which it cannot share with any other body based upon a system of class oppression: the percentage of new deputies elected—about 50 per cent. In three years about 20,000 working men and women passed through the ranks of the Petrograd Soviet alone; workers to whom, before the revolution, public affairs had been a sealed book. The system of revocability of delegates—practicable only in a body elected upon a workshop basis—plays not an inconsiderable part in achieving this. In Moscow, for example, out of a total Soviet membership of 1,500—1,800, 423 deputies were directly recalled and replaced by their electors in 1918, and 411 in 1919—about 20 to 25 per cent.

What has been the result? The result has been to introduce into the high places of authority tens of thousands of workers up and down the country. Beginning as individual deputies with powers of voting and control in a huge town council (frequently of several hundred, often over a thousand), they pass on into more specialised work in the "sections" or committees of the Soviet, familiarising themselves with the conduct and principles of one or more of the branches of public administration. Later they have been more and more taking part in the actual work of local government itself—as housing, food, factory, health, and other inspectors and officials. All this time they have been constantly moving in and out of the factory, the mine, the premises, in which they work, making periodical reports to their electors, and every now and then yielding place to and refreshing their ranks with other comrades from their place of work.

In the words of Zinoviev, "the Petrograd Soviet has become a gigantic political laboratory, in which the best organisers of the Soviet power are created, in which the best working class leaders are brought forward. Through the Petrograd Soviet we attract thousands and tens of thousands of working men and women into mass participation in the daily work of the Soviet. . . . In Petrograd now for the fourth time, at the exact time fixed by the constitution, day for day and hour for hour, we are re-electing our Soviet—and organising the elections in such a way that every worker can see that he elects the man he wants."

This, therefore, is the function of the Soviets as organs of government even in a country in which the workers are the most uneducated and unaccustomed to organisation in Europe. They have for the first time been introducing the principle of true democracy into government.

*The Soviets, the organ of the class dictatorship of the workers, are by that very fact the most democratic bodies in history.*

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## *Art and The Worker*

True Proletarian Culture cannot develop freely in capitalist society. While the capitalists are in possession of the printing presses, and the Colleges, and have the power to hand out degrees (honorary for Labour Leaders and others, and real for students who study according to instructions) it will be impossible for the working class point of view to have adequate expression. We have our Labour Colleges, our classes, and our Plebs League, but all these bodies have so far only been able to give their attention to the teaching of Marxian Economics and the Working Class Interpretation of History. Probably, since first things must come first, it is necessary that primary attention shall be given to these subjects, but man does not live by bread alone, and though his economic position determines all else, he usually prefers to think about anything but that position. We will not be able to have our Proletarian Culture until we have the Proletarian State, but we can experiment therewith and prepare the ground.

Every age has a culture peculiar to itself. The Greeks had their profound philosophies—and their slavery. The Middle Ages had their Latin, their Knights of the Round Table chivalry, their superfine code of honour towards *some* damsels in distress—and their contempt for the serf and the churl. Capitalism has given us a culture that includes Popular Science, Free Libraries, Art Galleries, Technical Schools—and the "Daily Mail (million and a quarter circulation), "Thy Servant Alfred," "John Bull," Revues, crowded Divorce Courts, and a Royal Commission on Venereal Disease. The Proletarian State will give us learning and culture from the working class point of view.

It has been argued that there is no such thing as a working class view of things apart from the economic. "Art," it is said, "is art-pure and undefiled." "Science," it is said, "is honest and works regardless of classes or private interest." "Truth," it is said, "is truth eternal and unchanging." But this is not so. Everything is relative, everything must be judged by the uses to which it is put, by the ends it serves, or in relation to some other thing.

When we enter into an argumentative combat with a defender of capitalist society we find at once that the subject under discussion is being approached from view-points that are poles apart. The discussion cannot proceed upon the ordinary logical lines, because we are not agreed as to the truth of the premises laid down. It is as if one side appears to be distorting logical reasoning as much as would be the case if he said:—

All round things are cheeses,  
The moon is round,  
Therefore the moon is a cheese.

There is nothing wrong with this statement if we accept the first premise, but of course we cannot do that. Similarly with the opposing proletarian and capitalist point of view. The Capitalist lays it down:—

Capital is the result of saving,  
I am a Capitalist,  
Therefore I am a thrifty man.

The proletarian declares:—

Capital is the unpaid labour of the working class,  
You are a Capitalist,  
Therefore you are a thief.

So, we have our proletarian logic applied to economic analyses.

Similarly when we look into historical data we find it essential to get behind the romantic glamour of the historical text book and find out how the people fared down the ages. The fact that Raleigh placed his coat in the mud to protect the dainty feet of the Virgin Queen has no interest for us, but the fact that the same Queen had a little investment in Drake's spectacular wanderings round the globe—and received a respectable return on her capital—is of some importance.

So we approach history with a partiality for those things that may help us to destroy the view that all the Cæsars and all their wives were or are above suspicion.

But there is a working class view of other things in addition to the economic and historical. There *is* such a thing as proletarian art,

expressing itself in song, music, play, painting, literature, and so on. The workers have no use for the songs that have been written to glorify generals and kings or to commemorate battles in which thousands of our people were slain; no use for plays that instead of "holding up the mirror to nature" do nothing but portray middle class life in all its feeble inanity; no use for the works of artists who can paint a soap boiler's portrait or a scene of bestial brutality such as a cavalry charge. The workers of the future will scrap all these things because they are not artistic from the working class standpoint.

In Russia, the Central Committee for Proletarian Culture (President Lunarcharsky, secretary W. Paliansky) is endeavouring to sort out from the works of past artists and writers, that which is likely to be of value to the workers in their struggle towards the new society. The guiding principle is, that only those things are useful that will inspire hopefulness for the future, and will fill the hearts and minds of our class with courage and determination to press on in the struggle. All else will, and should be neglected.

There is no room in the proletarian library for the introspective heart searchings of despairing neurotics, obsessed with the idea that what they feel and think is vital to the community. There is no room for the works of the playwright who panders to nationalist sentiment, or seeks to place the individual before the mass. There is no room for the music that stirs the martial feelings and makes the peace-loving individual long to march to battle—unless it be to battle against the right enemy..

Our new Proletarian Culture movement can find its feet if we set to work to bring out the talent in our own ranks and see that proletarian writers, artists, and composers are given the fullest possible scope. The writers must provide us with the materials to inspire our class on to great deeds; they must write of our aspirations, our hopes, our future society. Our artists must paint the world as seen by the worker and not describe scenes that can only be appreciated by the Lotus-eating idlers. They must paint Labour at its task in the field, the forge, the factory. They must use their imaginative genius to glorify the beauty of honest toil. Our poets and our songsters must provide songs for the common people to sing—songs, not so much for the individual as for the massed voices of choirs, for the co-operative effort needed to learn and render such works is no small lesson in communal discipline. Our playwrights must prepare proletarian dramas that illustrate the class struggle, and end, not in virtue rewarded but in international concord and working class triumph.

It is a great work that the Proletarian Culture movement has before it. It is nothing less than a working class purge of the snobbish sycophancy of the art, the literature, the music, the drama of the ages, and the preparation of a culture that will represent the needs of the toiling masses. The work can only be done by our class because the middle class thinkers and writers know just as much about what we desire as we know of the home lives of the Royal and Imperial peacocks that strut about the world trying to look important.

Only those who have *lived* the working class life can understand it.

W. MCLAINE.

# One Step Back, Two Steps Forward

THE ECONOMIC POSITION IN RUSSIA—L. PETROVSKY.

"What is happening in Russia? Are they giving up Communism?"

If such questions are asked by readers of the COMMUNIST REVIEW, who have had an opportunity of seeing Lenin's speeches on the subject of the new food tax, one may be a little surprised. But it is not always easy to work up for oneself, out of the scattered material in the press, a reasoned explanation to give the workers when they ask questions like these. This article is an attempt to reduce the facts of the case to some order.

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I. Russia is an enormous agricultural country, with little centres of industry dotted here and there, particularly round the two capitals—Petrograd and Moscow. The agriculture is so backward, however, and is so little advanced from the primitive form, that the peasants, though in numbers the enormous majority, are in politics quite unable to think and act together as a class. No political party produced by the peasantry has ever yet emerged out of the Revolution; the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who for a few months voiced the peasants aims, drifted away from them as soon as their land hunger had been appeased. The town workers, on the other hand, have been concentrated for years in the most up-to-date large-scale factories, at the same time under the most appalling physical and spiritual conditions. They have developed a clear-sighted, disciplined, and resolute class-consciousness that is far and away superior to anything else of its kind in the world.

Under these conditions in October, 1917, the town workers seized power, handing over all authority to the Soviets and proclaiming a Soviet Republic. The Communist Party, which from the very first advocated this step, was entrusted at the Second Soviet Congress, which consisted overwhelmingly of town representatives, with the work of forming and carrying on a Government. Thanks to this, the revolution was carried into the villages in an organised fashion, and the peasants were helped to divide up the land amongst themselves on a basis of equality. Throughout, the Communist Party, and through them the town workers, have retained unshaken control of the revolution.

Consequently, it is ridiculous to suggest, as some journalists do, that the Revolution is a peasant rising of which the Communists made use for their own ends. Such a suggestion is an absolute travesty of historical facts. *So long as the workers' Soviets control the towns and large scale factories, the backbone of the Revolution is unbroken.* Relations with the peasants can change and be modified, as circumstances require; but this does not affect the main purport of the Revolution.

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II. During the three years' existence of the Soviet Republic, relations between the active towns and the passive peasantry underwent a series of alterations. From the first (see Lenin's "Chief task of our Times") the problem before the government was twofold:

- (a) Immediate—to feed the towns.
- (b) Ultimate—to introduce Socialist large-scale agriculture into the country (which was becoming a mass of small-scale farms).

In the case of the second, the adverse factors very soon grew to such dimensions—in the shape of Allied intervention and the three years' revolutionary war—that all thought of the solution had to be—postponed until peace was finally re-established. The question did not come up again until the Eighth Soviet Congress, in December, 1920; when it was made quite clear that the way out lay through a widespread system of electrification, the completion of which would probably take some ten years.

The first problem, however, required some immediate solution. The ideal solution was the exchange of town manufactures for country food products, through Government channels, by voluntary methods; but the exigencies of the situation rapidly imposed recourse to purely military methods. In 1918—the year of terror—when the Soviet Republic was reduced by Allied intervention and subsidised counter-revolutionary risings to an area of one-quarter its normal size, completely surrounded by enemies, there could be no talk of industrial production on a large scale. Consequently there could be no normal exchange with the villages. When the peasants refused to give up their surplus corn, or attempted to smuggle it into the towns to sell at speculative prices, the only thing left was to take it.

In 1918, the first year, this took the form of sending special factory detachments out into the country, and organising "committees of poverty" amongst the poorest, landless peasants, with the object of giving them control over their wealthier fellow-villagers.

These haphazard methods could not continue, however, when the war brought the creation of an organised Red Army, which required to be well fed, and that war industries should be well fed; particularly when approximately 80 per cent. of the army consisted of peasants. 1919 and 1920, therefore, witnessed the reduction of the corn requisitions into a system of corn "levies" or "programmes," in which the amounts of corn to be collected out of the peasants' surplus stock were apportioned amongst the different provinces with fair justice; while all surplus manufactured goods were turned over into a State fund for exchange with the peasants through the local Food Committees. At the same time, a gigantic propaganda was carried on. Thanks to these measures, the amounts collected steadily grew as the organisation became perfected: 1918, 30 million poods; 1919, 110 millions; 1920, 260 millions.

The levies remained requisitions, however, from the point of view of the peasant; and by 1920 he began to grow tired of giving up his corn in exchange for a small quantity of manufactured articles and a very large quantity of paper. In 1920, a perceptible decrease in the area cultivated—amounting in many districts to 40 or 50 per cent.—was observed. It so happened that this year was one of unprecedented drought in the central, most fertile provinces. By the end of the year it became clear that, despite better organisation than ever, probably not more than 300 million poods would be collected by August, 1921. At the same time the cultivated area was falling. Something had to be done; always remembering that the backbone of the revolution was the

maintenance of the towns as centres of Communism, i.e., the development of large-scale industry, under working-class control.

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III. At the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921, the following factors faced the Soviet Government in the economic sphere:—

(a) The town workers needed a regular supply of food (this was sharply emphasised by a temporary dislocation of the provisioning arrangements in 1921, owing to extravagance in fuel consumption and a consequent standstill on the railways).

(b) On the other hand, the town workers had already shown that they could greatly increase production now that peace had at last been attained.

(c) The supply of fuel, and in certain respects, of raw materials, however, was not adequate, nor did the prospect of the re-establishment of normal relations with the peasantry hold out satisfactory hope that these requirements of industry would be forthcoming in sufficient volume for several months; corn would have to be brought into the towns first.

(d) On the other hand, the opening up of trade relations with a number of western capitalist countries provided the possibility of tiding over this difficulty for the few months in question.

(e) The peasants were tired of requisitioning without adequate return, and their weariness had expressed itself in an alarming decrease of the area cultivated (corn, flax, cotton, and other raw materials). Their outspoken ideal was the restoration of unrestricted private trading. A "sowing campaign," with the object of increasing the acreage cultivated, initiated after the Eighth Soviet Congress in December, was so far only moderately successful.

(f) While the peasants could see that it was absolutely essential to feed the Red Army at the fronts, even at the cost of privation to themselves, during wartime, they felt that peace completely altered circumstances—particularly when their own sons and brothers began returning to the villages in larger and larger numbers as demobilisation progressed. There was thus a psychological factor to be reckoned with; and it made itself felt in not merely the economic but also the political sphere, taking flesh-and-blood shape in sporadic peasant revolts—true, isolated and not dangerous, but still a perpetual stumbling block to the reconstruction of peaceful economic life.

(g) The universal co-operative societies, into which by a decree early in 1920 all the population was bound to enter for purposes of consumption, had not reached the dimensions or the level of activity intended because of the reasons already set forth. They were strongest in the large towns, particularly Moscow and Petrograd; but were greatly hampered by the most primitive of reasons—the lack of food to distribute. In the country, it was the still more lamentable lack of articles of primary necessity—textiles, kerosine, salt—that had withered the co-operative movement at its root; the improvement of transport facilities during 1920 had not had time radically to alter their condition.

Summing up all these conditions, the problem before the Soviet Government (i.e., the Russian Communist Party) was to find a way out which would (a) feed the town workers, preferably through their own associations to such an extent that mass production could go forward

steadily, instead of in jerks as hitherto; and which (b) while taking an inevitable minimum of agricultural products from the peasantry, would once and for all abandon the requisitioning policy, and would thereby induce them to increase production.

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IV. The Soviet Government has embodied its attempt to solve its economic problem in the following measures:—

A tax in kind has been substituted for the requisition policy, and, to make the difference apparent in concrete terms to the peasants, the amounts demanded of them have been considerably reduced. Thus:

Product		Requisition 1920-1921		Tax 1921-1922
Corn	... ..	423 million poods	...	240 million poods
Eggs	... ..	682 millions	...	400 millions
Flax	... ..	5,100,000 poods	...	340,000 poods
Hemp	... ..	3,500,000 „	...	400,000 „
Wool	... ..	1,275,000 „	...	650,000 „
Milk products	... ..	3,441,000 „	...	2,200,000 „
Oil Seeds	... ..	24 million „	...	12 million poods
Potatoes	... ..	120 „ „	..	60 „ „

The decrees introducing the new policy make it clear to the peasants that no further demands will be made at any time upon their surplus stocks.

This means—assuming that the tax is collected in full—that the minimum demands of the town workers, the Red Army, and the population of the non-producing provinces will be satisfied; but to go beyond this minimum—and the workers, after seven years of warfare, *must* be given more than the bare minimum—it will be necessary to depend upon free exchange with the peasantry, i.e., upon the productivity of industry. As the problem is a pressing one, and the workers cannot wait until the new policy begins to bear its solid fruits some three or four months' hence, steps have been taken to supply the workers' needs from abroad for the time being.

Ten millions of gold roubles have been handed to a special non-party commission of trade unionists, to buy food abroad for the workers in the capitals. Five milliard roubles have been voted by the Central Executive Committee to purchase food, abroad and from the peasantry, for communal kitchens, in those necessitous districts where such have not been already established. Ten milliard roubles have been granted to the Central Union of Co-operative Societies (Centrosoyuz) with the object of enabling it to accumulate an initial "fund" of manufactured goods for direct exchange with the peasantry, thus increasing the quantity of food at the disposal of its members.

Its members, as a matter of fact, are composed of the whole population of the country. The Centrosoyuz is to be *the* distributive organisation of the future. All persons, in town or country, must be members of a consumers' co-operative society; this, of course, does not prevent them from forming producers' co-operatives in the country, or, in the case of the smaller and non-nationalised domestic industries, in the town either. In the towns, in addition, a special form of society is introduced, based on the factory or workshop; wherever 300 or more



workers are employed they may voluntarily organise themselves into a co-operative society for the purchase of food from the peasants—either directly at one of the markets established in the neighbourhood for the purpose, or indirectly through the provincial or All-Russian Unions of Co-operative Societies (Centrosoyuz).

These factory co-operatives, apart from the grants-in-aid mentioned above, and direct subsidies from the All-Russian Co-operative Union, are also encouraged in the following way. A certain proportion, say 10 per cent. of the goods (or the value thereof) which they turn out, instead of going to the "Chief Committee" of their industry for disposal by other economic bodies, is handed over directly to the All-Russian Union of Co-operative Societies, and the value is credited to their account in its books. When the article manufactured is of such a kind that it cannot usefully be given direct to the Union (e.g., spare parts for locomotives), the Supreme Economic Council, to whom the article belongs, hands over its value, or an equivalent quantity of other goods, to the Co-operative Union.

On the peasants' side, the new policy is also calculated to win the support of the population. The taxes on food and raw materials are assessed by the local authorities according to the area under cultivation, farms smaller than a certain minimum being entirely exempt. All surplus stocks are fully at the disposal of the peasants for sale and barter purposes. The principal customers of the peasantry—apart from the speculating class which has at first taken advantage of the new facilities for private trading—may be divided into three classes. First, the Food Committees of the local Soviets, which under the "corn levy" system acted as the organs of the central government in this connection, and still continue to act as distributive agents for manufactured goods in the countryside.

During the year 1921-1922, the State hopes to secure through these channels, in addition to the quantities collected by taxation:

Corn	...	...	...	150 million poods
Potatoes	...	...	...	37½ " "
Oilseeds	...	...	...	10 " "

Secondly, the local co-operative societies, which have already opened shops in a large number of places at which the peasants give up their surplus corn either for goods (procured by the societies in one of the ways already outlined) or for credit. It is worth noting that to aid the development of this branch of co-operative work, Krassin has even proposed that special paper tokens, exchangeable by the peasants at co-operative stores for one pood of salt, one arshin of cotton prints, etc., should be issued by the government, as a more real measure of value, in exchange for the peasants agricultural produce.

Thirdly, the peasants exchange their produce, in special open markets established for the purpose by the local authorities, with individual purchasers. As the supply of food to the workers through the co-operative societies increases, the amount provided by the government from the food tax will diminish, until finally it disappears. At present, however, neither source is sufficient, and private trading, in the strict sense of the word, must be permitted. The ordinary workers' wages are certainly insufficient for this purpose; but the same decree which allows them a percentage of their manufactured goods for exchange through co-operatives also permits them to spend a certain portion of

their working time—providing production is not interfered with thereby—on manufacturing small articles for exchange on the markets.

The net result of all these measures is that the worker secures a minimum of sustenance from the State, and more as his productivity grows; the peasant has security for his produce, and therefore has the certainty of receiving more manufactured goods as the output of his own tilled area increases. The worker becomes interested in making Socialist industry a going concern (we are leaving out the effect of propaganda, which is an enormous factor that must always be kept in mind); the peasant becoming more and more interested in making agriculture pay, will, in due course of time, with the aid of the mighty propaganda weapon of the Communist Party and the electrification which, Lenin has said, is the intermediate stage between proletarian dictatorship and Communism, arrive at the conclusion that only the socialisation of agriculture can satisfactorily meet the demands of the moment.

\* \* \*

V. The economic measures taken by the Soviet Government during the last two months have already had clear and definite results, which can be characterised as follows.

From all quarters of the Soviet Federation—Georgia, Turkestan, the Tartar Republic, Petrograd, White Russia, Volhynia—reports have poured into the Moscow press to the effect that, after a little hesitation, the peasants have hailed the new policy with enthusiasm. The “sowing campaign,” which was decidedly flagging in the first months of the year, received a vigorous and surprising impetus after the decreeing of the food tax. Ossinsky, the People's Commissary for Agriculture, after a tour of inspection through the Tula, Orel, Kursk, Voronezh provinces, reports that the areas sown are above the average. Manuilsky, People's Commissary for Agriculture in the Ukraine, has announced that the “sowing programme” allotted them—1,917,000 dessiatines (the 1916 area)—has been completely carried out. In the Moscow province, 210,000 dessiatines have been sown with various cereals this year—a larger area than in pre-war days.

Altogether, up to April 17, 83 per cent. of the “sowing programme” had been carried out. Exact data are not yet available for the state of affairs at the very end of the spring sowings; but it is known that they amounted to over 90 per cent. of the programme allotted.

Communists cannot blind themselves to the fact, however, that this increase in material prosperity cannot but temporarily, under existing circumstances, be achieved at the expense of what elements of collectivist outlook had been drilled into the peasants by combined propaganda and hard facts. The peasant has been once more thrown back upon the instincts of individualism. In the words of Rykov (at the recent Congress of Economic Councils) “The tax is the re-establishment of the institution of private property in the bourgeois sense of the word, and absolutely inevitably leads to the development—the perfectly legal development—of a bourgeois class, on the economic basis created in the village after the collection of the food tax. This line of policy definitely and absolutely means the legalisation of the development of the bourgeoisie, founded on the free disposal by the peasant—the small producer—of what he has left after part of his produce has been collected

by the State." Rykov proceeded to point out that this development of a bourgeois *psychology* in the country could not but have its effect upon the towns, where the workers are so closely bound up with the country that many of them spend the harvest time there. This might particularly be observed in the cry for denationalisation of certain factories in favour of co-operative societies, and even private individuals; and indeed, said Rykov, "if a factory might be set going by a private owner, and is at a standstill under us, it would be a crime not to hand it over to the private owner."

This undesirable side of the new policy is further strengthened by its first results in the towns. The workers, as we have seen, have not yet, either personally or through their co-operatives, been able to accumulate a sufficient quantity of manufactured goods for exchange; the only class that has been able to do this has been the speculators—those members of former well-to-do classes who by various methods have managed to hide or acquire such goods as the peasants desire. "So far," say letters from good Communists, "we workers have not seen any benefit coming from the free trading; it is the speculator who's as pleased as Punch." The Russian press prints every few days a sketch or other illustration of market scenes, in which oranges at 15,000 roubles each play a significant part.

All this Communists have to reckon with, and consequently cannot be afraid of facing, or of stating quite openly. But those who are deluded or terrified by these undoubted facts into believing that Communism is being abandoned by the Russian Communist leaders, or that it is unattainable in Russia, simply betray their own ignorance. Summed up, what they have failed to grasp is:—

1. The Russian Communist Party never considered Communism to be a rigid formula, but an end—to approach which many detours and bypaths have to be used.

2. Communism has never yet existed in Russia; what has existed has been the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., of the best organised and most class-conscious of the town industrial workers, supported actively in the Soviets by the remainder of the working class, and passively by the peasantry, so long as its elementary demands were satisfied.

3. That the peasantry should demand security and free trading is nothing new; it is simply the demand of the small producer for a market. If a "democratic," Menshevik, i.e., lower-middle-class government had been in power, he would have found a market in the large speculator and the foreign merchant, who would have been left entirely unchecked, while the worker starved. As it is, a government of revolutionary Communists, trusted by the overwhelming majority of the town organised workers and the peasants of Russia, is in power; and, while for a month or two the workers' position undoubtedly is not improved by the new policy, there is a guarantee that, at the end of this period, when the new policy produces the big harvest already foreshadowed, the supply of food from millions upon millions of small capitalist sources will be directed into large, State-capitalist, channels, and the establishment of the proletarian State as a capitalist in relation to the petty producers of the countryside, is a step forward towards Communism.

This is the difference, incidentally, between a Menshevik Government that makes concessions and a Communist Government in the same

position. The first makes concessions the business of life; the second makes them only where they are essential for the attainment of the final object.

The real concrete fact upon which the non-Communist critic seizes is the unquestionably unfavourable position of the workers in the first days of the new policy. The "shock" measures that have been taken to remedy this position have already been outlined; the press has also printed details of large purchases made with the same object in England. But in any case, this criticism overlooks the fact that what shortage of food exists is due to well-known reasons quite independent of the present policy of the Soviet Government; and by the time the new harvest comes in, the workers' principal obstacle—the absence of a fund of manufactured goods—will have disappeared.

4. Communism can only be attained by economic reconstruction. In towns, the process is simple; large-scale industry passes directly from capitalist to working-class control. In the country, the process is more complicated; small-scale industry has to be revived first, for the essential requirements of the towns. All that can be done is to ensure that small-scale industry becomes accustomed to dealing with the State, so that, when the time comes to introduce large-scale production in the country (by means of electrification, which can only be carried out by the State) the transition may be as rapid and painless as possible. Socialisation of large-scale industry is better than capitalism. Co-operation amongst small agricultural producers is better than unlicensed trading between individuals. And small-scale agricultural production is better than no production at all. These are the watchwords of economic reconstruction in Soviet Russia.

Let us quote Lenin's summary: "Trading and commerce must be developed at all costs, and without any fear of capitalism; for its limits have been fixed by definite Soviet measures, which direct it into the form of State capitalism or co-operation. Such is the underlying thought of the food tax, and the economic measures connected therewith; such is its economic significance. By this means we shall overcome the hesitation of the petty producer in the economic sphere, while against political waverers, after the pattern of monarchism and Miluikov, we shall wage a pitiless struggle. The waverers are disunited, we are united. The waverers are not economically independent. The proletariat is independent. The waverers do not know what they want, we do. And therefore we shall conquer."

\* \* \*

VI. How can the western workers help their Russian comrades to conquer? The principal way is what it was before: to hasten the time of their own emancipation from the yoke of capital, so that they can with unfettered hands assist impoverished Soviet Russia as friends and comrades. The secondary way of importance at the present moment, is to do everything in their power to aid in bridging over the gap of two or three months between now and the next harvest. The less privation the already tired workers have to undergo in that transitional period, the more easy will it be for them to set about Communist reconstruction when the new period begins. And in this the western workers, even out of their need, can still, by a determined effort, substantially assist Soviet Russia.

## Book Review

"The Evolution of Revolution," by H. M. Hyndman: Grant, Richards, Ltd. 21/- nett.

More than three-quarters of the way through this book a revolution more sudden and complete than any of those he chronicles, appears to take place in the mentality of its venerable author. From a prophet of class war and the sacred right of insurrection he degenerates, without a word of warning, into the flabbiest of social pacifists—a transformation so apparently inexplicable that the uninitiated reader must be quite at a loss to understand how the five concluding chapters could possibly emanate from the same brain as conceived the preceding twenty-nine.

To those familiar with the antecedents of "the oldest Social Democrat in this country," the explanation is of course simple enough. It lies in the fact that the concluding chapters relate to events in which Hyndman has himself figured more or less conspicuously. Hence he is confronted with the necessity of interpreting the present world situation in terms that will justify his own line of conduct. Needless to say he would be the last to admit this; but on no other hypothesis, save senile decay, can we explain the amazing metamorphosis referred to.

In his opening 300 pages Hyndman tells the story of man's slow and painful "progress" from primitive savagery to wage slavery and on the whole tells it very well. Exception may indeed be taken to his attempts to tone down the doctrine of historical materialism, but this is largely compensated for by his repeated insistence on the economic as the dominant factor in human affairs. Most effective of all, however, is the way he exposes the false glamour surrounding the institutions of classical antiquity, chivalry, etc., bringing into the limelight the perpetual helotry of the millions and the ruthless barbarities that have invariably succeeded abortive efforts to destroy it. In fact Hyndman displays throughout an unbounded enthusiasm for the rebels of all ages—except his own.

As already indicated from the moment he touches upon the events of his political lifetime the one-time pioneer becomes the tamest of converts to the gospel of peaceful persuasion, seeming to retain nothing of his former vigour but his unique command of invective.

What for instance is to be thought of the state of mind of a "revolutionist" who can bleat like this: "A great successful revolution need not necessarily be a forcible and bloody revolution. Thus in Sweden the well-known international revolutionary Social Democrat, Branting (!!) has quite peaceably become Prime Minister. In Czechoslovakia President Masaryk is favourable to Social Democracy. . . . In Belgium the Social Democrats in the Coalition Cabinet are the most powerful Ministers of the whole administration." The only inference to be gathered from this gem is that, in the opinion of Comrade Hyndman, the elevation of Branting, Vandervelde & Co. to their respective cabinets constitutes "a successful revolution." Further comment is superfluous.

The chapter on "Bolshevism and the Russian Revolution" is best described as a solution of Mrs. Snowden and the *Morning Post*. For suppressing "free speech" and "representative institutions" the Bolsheviks are denounced even more vigorously than their critic (a few

pages earlier in the book) deplores the misplaced veneration of the Communards for bourgeois prejudices. The Soviet regime is generally summed up as a nightmare of "tearful injustice and monstrous cruelty" while Lenin is "a Communist Ivan the Terrible of no great intellectual gifts" in some respects singularly like "the scoundrel Rasputin" (to whom, of course, our learned historian "does not for a moment compare him").

Perhaps the best answer to this scarcely intelligible tirade is supplied by Hyndman himself when he naively remarks: "It is extremely difficult to understand how a vast population came to be dominated by a small and truculent minority of middle-class men who utterly failed to carry out the programme of social reconstruction they meant to impose on their countrymen and who, to commence with, had no great reputation among the people." Such a thing is more than difficult to conceive; it is inconceivable. To grasp the significance of events that shake the world it is necessary to start off with a very different set of premises from "a small and truculent minority who utterly failed, etc."

FRANK TANNER.

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## Capitalist Mexico

### SOME DANGEROUS EXAGGERATIONS EXPOSED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS.

W. J. Lemon describes the Mexican situation in an interesting article in the Winnipeg O.B.U. Bulletin, of 16/4/21; from which the following extracts are taken:—

Since the return of King Gompers and his court to the United States, from their trip to Mexico, where they went as delegates and officials to the Pan-American Congress of Labour which was held in Mexico City, January 10th to 20th, of this year, he and some of his courtiers have been quite busy contributing articles to both the capitalist and labour press. These articles pay, in beautiful words, a glowing tribute to what they call the Labour Government of Mexico (King Sam says in one of his contributions: "The Mexican Government is the nearest to a Workers' Government of anything on earth"). I am not going to make any comment on their contributions; the mere fact that their writings are gladly solicited and accepted by such respectable business men's journals as *The Mexican Review* and others of a similar nature, should be sufficient evidence as to their worth and character. Before I came to Mexico I was somewhat deluded myself because of the glories of this so-called workers' government; not from reading the fairy stories that have been written by Messrs. Gompers, Kelley, Johnson and Co., but because I had come in touch with a few numbers of an English language magazine, published in Mexico City, called *Gale's International Journal for Revolutionary Communism*, its glowing accounts of Mexico's wonderful Socialist and union movement had somewhat impressed me with the idea that I was coming to a country where workers were practically at the point of peacefully and legally, through their political and economic power, taking possession of all lands, resources, and machinery of production and distribution—that the shackles of wage slavery were about to be broken from the limbs

of the workers and a new Russia established on the American continent. It told about the many Socialists and prominent labour leaders who occupied important positions in the various departments of government, such as governors of state, ministers in the Federal cabinet, etc., including the governor of the Federal district (who was not only a Socialist, but had once even written a Socialist book). Gale summed it all up in one number of "Gale's" with: "Soviet Mexico is near."

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I am not going to indulge in much philosophising, for I want the readers to draw their own conclusions. What I hope to do is to tell the facts as best I can in my crude way, both from personal knowledge and from information received direct from the workers themselves. I feel that this is what is needed above everything else—correct information about conditions down here to counteract the stream of exaggerated and misleading statements that are being sent out to the workers of other countries, deceiving them as to the true status of the Mexican workers and of the government of Mexico. No greater injury can be done the labour movement of any country than by using flamboyant and exaggerated reports and articles through the press, whether it be through wilful intention or gross ignorance.

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Merely to make a statement does not prove a fact. The principal fact that I shall bring forward to show that the Mexican Government is just as capitalistic as any other, and that it is in no sense a government of the workers, is the history of the recent strike of railway workers on the National system of the republic. Here we have a government that Gompers has referred to as a model and as the nearest thing to a real workers' government on earth fighting the workers as viciously as any other capitalist government or corporation. I arrived in Mexico City a few days before the strike was called (Feb. 25th); consequently I have been in a position to see and understand just how the governmental machinery was turned on the workers when the Holy Trinity (Rent, Profit and Interest) of the capitalists were attacked. For several days before the date set for the walk-out troops were being mobilised and despatched to all points. Soldiers were quartered at all stations, yards, shops, bridges, etc., from one end of the republic to the other. One could not approach any portion of the railway property without being confronted with the point of a bayonet. Even the General Administration building, in which the general offices are located, situated in the heart of Mexico City far away from the zone of conflict, was guarded day and night by Federal troops.

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A despatch was sent out from Mexico City, March 6th, stating that strikers were committing sabotage by blowing up bridges, tearing up tracks, etc., between San Luis Potoso and Monterrey and that 15 of the leaders had been captured and executed by the military. The strikers' committee branded this as a capitalist newspaper lie, whose purpose was to create antagonism against the workers. On March 7th, another report quoted Obregon as saying that the government's strike policy remained unchanged; which would seem to mean that there would be no recession from the policy of non-recognition of the unions, with the attendant stern application of military measures to protect life

and property (especially property). On Sunday, March 13th, a passenger train standing at Huchapan Station was telescoped from the rear by a freight train, killing four, seriously injuring twenty-six, and inflicting minor cuts and bruises on fifty others. The press reported that the engineer in charge of the freight was a thoroughly competent man of sixteen years' experience. This was proven to be false by those who knew him, who testified that he was not only incompetent, but also mentally unstable, having been discharged in 1913 on this account, and now rehired by a "labour government" to break a strike. An endless list of accidents, such as boiler explosions, derailments and collisions, caused in nearly every case by incompetents engaged by this (according to Gompers and others) "labour" government to beat down the workers, could be recited if space permitted. As I write this article there is a movement on foot to call a strike in Tampico to force the release of a worker who is under arrest there charged with speaking against the government at a railway strike meeting. At Torreón sixteen officers and members of the union are under arrest charged with committing sabotage. I am informed that there were a number shot by the military during fights.

I am reciting these things as evidence to show that Mexico has not a workers' government.

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The Mexican workers in other lines of industry were waiting, and anxious to come to the assistance of their fellow-workers. The leaders had been boasting that 200,000 of Mexico's organised workers would be called out unless the government made a favourable settlement with the strikers, but they never called them. But this is what did happen: about 8,000 textile workers at Orizaba walked out in sympathy without the sanction of the leaders and they were promptly ordered back (but they didn't go back, and at last reports they were still out). Orizaba workers are the most militant in the country.

The present status of the strikers summed up is that they have gone back to work practically defeated, except for the experience they have gained and the militancy that will later be developed—for we must remember that no strike was ever totally lost.

Enough has been told, I think, to convince the reader that there is nothing in common between the workers and the Mexican government, any more than between the two contending classes of all capitalist nations.

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The next question to discuss is that of the numerous Socialists and labour leaders said to be representing labour in the government. Granting that this is true, it does not mean anything to the workers to be represented in coalition governments. Many countries have passed through the same experience to the sorrow of the workers. It is true that there have been attempts made by well-meaning individuals to better the conditions of the Mexican workers. A few years ago it is said a semi-Socialist state was set up in Yucatan, only to be drowned out in blood later on by Carranza, who at one time claimed to be a Socialist of the Scheidemann, or Kerensky type, but whose favourite sport, nevertheless, was shooting down strikers. Zapata, who established his little colony in Morelos and Tabasco met with a similar fate



at the hands of the same gentleman, he being murdered about a year and a half ago. According to "Gale's" the Socialists are again in power in Yucatan, having regained their position at the last election—but this must not be taken too seriously.

The States of Michoacan and Hidalgo both have "Socialist" governors, of what type I do not know, but I understand they are trying to confiscate the lands of the Church and the large haciendas and distribute it among the peons. Some land has already been given to the peons, but only a small portion of them have been supplied with capital. And what can the peon do with land when he has no funds to buy tools with which to work it? Only Communism can solve the land problem, and Communism is not here yet, even though "Gale's" may say "Soviet Mexico is near."

Luis N. Morones, formerly head of the "Confederation Regional Obrera Mexicana," known as the Gompers of Mexico, is also the leading spirit of the "Partido Laborista" (Labour Party), in addition to being director of the government munitions plants, a very lucrative post. The Labour Party was formed last year for the purpose of boosting the presidential candidacy of Alvaro Obregon among the workers and has been the steady recipient of government patronage ever since. With revolutionary catchwords it attracts votes that could not be got in any other way. Its concrete programme is opportunistic to the core and its entire achievements for the last year are participation in the Obregon revolution against Carranza, exertion of influence with provisional president De la Huerta for the establishment of a government department of social work (which department has settled strikes, given charity to workers, etc.), exertion of influence for the improvement of conditions in the penal colony of the Maria Islands, and participation in various electoral campaigns. Its method is intriguing with the government officials, not steady revolutionary work along class lines. "Gale's" claims that the Labour Party has a membership of 200,000. I should like to know where the 200,000 hide between election campaigns. The truth of the matter is, the party is nothing but an ordinary political club, with no real active membership beyond the small group of officials and press agents.

Just as President Ebert of Germany was once a harness-maker, so Gasca, governor of Mexico City and the Federal district, was once a shoemaker, if that means anything. But I cannot see anything to indicate that he is giving a working class administration. The boot-blacks are taxed three pesos a month for the privilege of walking the streets and shining shoes. Every peanut vendor is also taxed all that the traffic will bear, and if you saw most of them you would say that it wouldn't bear much. Gasca occasionally acts as mediator between the robbers and the robbed, just as the mediators do in the United States, and the workers get about the same results.

As for the chief of Police of Mexico City, who is said to be a Socialist and author of a Socialist book, I can say that I have never heard of him arresting any of the respectable crooks, but every day I see his men marching gangs of men and women across the city. These are the petty crooks, victims of the system and members of the working class that have been forced down by the big crooks. Any one who visits this country can see the squalid misery and the scores of human wrecks that receive not the slightest care or consideration from this

so-called labour government, but are forced to eke out an existence that would disgust the lowest animals. These conditions infest not only Mexico City, but every part of the republic. I don't say that they are worse than in any other capitalist country, perhaps they are not so bad as in the slums of America and Europe (for here the poor can enjoy plenty of fresh air and good climate without any extra charge).

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Phrases like "Soviet Mexico is near" and all the rest of the chatter about a red Labour movement in Mexico is child's talk. It is, in fact, nothing short of treason to the working class, whether it be done through ignorance or evil intention. Mexico has no such thing as a red movement, i.e., a well-organised disciplined body that knows what it wants and how to get it. There may be a few scattered groups here and there, but they are of no importance at the present moment. The real Mexican movement is, unfortunately still in embryo. Heretofore, the only labour organisation here has been an entirely reactionary craft union form, with a membership dependent upon the leadership of leaders who are out and out, pure and simple, individualistic self-seekers.

A scattered group of militant unions is so far too weak to be of any decisive influence. The Mexican workers as a whole are not only victims of 400 years of feudal servitude and priestcraft, but are now being preyed upon by their leaders. What is needed here now is a group of clear-headed, well-disciplined workers, capable of educating and organising the Mexican movement into a militant body, one that will brush aside all the leaders and others who stand in the way of the workers' freedom. There is an attempt being made now, to organise a left wing movement, but it is still too early to predict what success it will have. This attempt centres around the newly-formed "Confederation General de Trabajadores, which was organised only a few weeks ago at a congress called by the "Federacion Comunista" of Mexico City. The congress was made up of 53 delegates from 12 states, representing more than 40,000 workers and peasants. It passed resolutions condemning Sam Gompers' so-called Pan-American Federation and provided for the formation of a competitive Pan-American labour organisation which should represent the true interests of the workers instead of those of their bosses. It also endorsed in principle the Red Labour Union International and voted to submit to the unions a referendum on the question of definite affiliation.

Needless to say, the "yellow" readers of the "Confederation Regional" did everything in their power to prevent the convening and successful operation of this congress. Among other things they published false articles about the comrades who called the congress and united with Gale (who uses the name of Communism to cover up anything that may need covering) in the publication of a manifesto calling on the unions not to send delegates to it and hinting that the men who were pushing it were spies in the pay of American capitalism, whose object was to destroy "the unity of the workers." In spite of all this the workers did attend the congress and did organise the radical "Confederacion General de Trabajadores."

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# *The Communist International*

## MANIFESTO TO WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES.

Another year has passed, and yet, with the exception of Russia, in no country can the working class boast of victory. The capitalists of all countries are triumphant. They feel more secure in their saddles than they were last year, and act as if they were confident of a lasting victory. Another year has passed, and still we have failed to throw off the yoke.

Another year has passed since the bourgeoisie, standing at the helm, has shown what it is capable of. The world is a heap of ruins. In the conquered capitalist countries—in Germany, Austria and Hungary—hunger is rife, and every day these countries become more and more the victims of the international vultures who are taking advantage of the low currency to buy out the very last of the wealth of these countries. The home exploiters of these countries are doing excellent business, but the poverty of the working class increases. Prices have long ago exceeded wages, and millions have not the wherewithal to feed their children or cover their nakedness. But what is the position in the victorious countries? Four million unemployed in America, two million unemployed in England, increasing economic disorganisation in France. In England, the most successful capitalist country in Europe, strike succeeds strike.

The masters of the Paris, London and New York stock exchanges believed that they could reduce half the world to beggary and live in peace themselves. They were mistaken. Beggars cannot buy, and Armstrong, Vickers, Schneider, Creusot, and the Bethlehem Steel Corporation cannot consume and grow fat on their own steel plate. Two and a half years have passed, and still world capital has not found it possible to re-establish world industry. On the contrary the only thing they have understood is how to resort to the old forms of violence. Foch has crossed the Rhine in order to take the German bourgeoisie by the scruff of the neck and empty its pockets, as a punishment for its crimes in the war, of which, of course, the Entente regard themselves as innocent as new-born babes. The trenches of the world war have not yet been filled up, and new trenches are already being dug.

The British bourgeoisie, with increasing alarm and mistrust, is following the increasing sea power of the United States of America. Against whom are these preparations being made? Against England and Japan? In the meantime, both England and Japan are replying with counter-preparations. The beast of world war is preparing for another spring. It is sharpening its claws and stretching its paws for new proletarian victims. If the world proletariat does not rouse itself and seize capitalism by the throat, it will not merely have to submit to increasing poverty and enslavement, but it will once again be dragged to the battlefield, and once again it will be compelled to shed its blood in the interest of world capital. The betrayers of the proletariat, Scheidemanns, Renaudels, and Hendersons will once again declare

that the cause is one of defending the fatherland of democracy. Did not Vandervelde, the leader of the Second International and the royal Belgian minister, recently cynically express his agreement with the dispatch of the Sengalese troops by France against the tortured German people? The heroes of the "two and a half" International will endeavour to find reasons in each country for justifying the betrayal of the workers, reasons why the workers should keep their powder dry for a better target instead of sending a bullet into the heart of capitalism. But things will not take place as the capitalists and the Social-Democrats imagine.

The world proletariat is not conquered; the world revolution is advancing, if but slowly; and its progress is evidenced in the increasing incapacity of the capitalists to give the workers any other but slave conditions. And secondly, its progress is evidenced by the growing numbers of the enlightened and determined workers who are rallying round the banner of the Communist International. The bourgeoisie every day feel that they are less able to re-organise the world; and for this reason greater and greater numbers of the workers are drawn into the path of revolution; and for this reason are the ranks of the proletariat becoming closer. Soviet Russia repelled the onslaughts of the armies of the world. England, the bulwark of the counter-revolution, has been compelled to conclude a trade agreement with the "robbers and plunderers" of Moscow. In spite of the fact that seven years of war have extremely weakened Russia, in spite of the extreme poverty of the Russian people, the advance guard of the Russian proletariat will stand loyally around the banner of the Soviet Government, and will know how to rally new fighters from among the wavering and weary masses. It will do everything through its heroic organisation to confound the efforts of the counter-revolution to exploit the weariness of the Russian people.

The White Terror that now reigns in Spain and Serbia, shows how uncertain the rulers in these countries regard their position. In Italy, the bourgeoisie has sown the whirlwind by letting loose the Fascisti. The existence of the Orgesch in Germany is a perpetual reminder to the workers to arm, not to be disheartened by set-backs and to strive for the time when they will be victorious. In Poland, seven thousand Communists are under lock and key; but strike follows strike, which shows that there will be no peace until a bridge has been made between revolutionary Poland and revolutionary Germany. In France, a country intoxicated with victory, and filled with national hatred, hundreds of thousands of workers are becoming acquainted with Communism. No amount of persecution will retard the spread of these ideas, which have been made sacred by the blood of the victims of June and by the blood of the martyrs of the Paris Commune.

The Communist International is making preparations for the Third Congress. This congress will not wail about the progress of world reaction, as did the leaders of the two and a half International, Adler, Bauer, Longuet, Hilferding, and Wallhead in Vienna, but will call for a sharpening of our weapons and the expulsion of all those who will hinder us. Not the diminution of our attacks, but an advance on a wider front, in deeper columns, will be our call to you on the First of May. Above all, we must stand in the forefront of the struggle of

the broad non-Communist masses for the improvement of their position. In this struggle the masses will see how they are being betrayed every day by the reformists, and that the Scheidemann and Hilferdings, the Hendersons and MacDonaldis, the Turatis and D'Aragonas, the Renaudels and Longuets, are not only unwilling to fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but unwilling also to fight for the workers' daily bread.

They will see that the Communists are not those who split up the Labour movement, but those who unite it in the struggle for a better future. They will learn that the capitalist class is unwilling and unable to give to the workers as much even as the peasant gives his horse—enough food and rest in order to have sufficient strength to continue working. In this way, the determination of the workers to overthrow the capitalist system and destroy the power of the capitalist class will increase every day. Any day may bring the moment when the working class will refuse any longer to suffer the burdens which the dying capitalist system condemns them to bear. Any day the situation may arise when a courageous blow of the Communist advance guard will carry with it the working class masses, and the final struggle for the conquest of power will become the task of the moment.

The Communist International calls you to the greatest concentration of effort. Close ranks, be prepared; we do not stand before a period of slow preparatory work of propaganda and agitation, but before a period of sharp revolutionary struggles. The growing unemployment, the insolence of the counter-revolution, and the menace of war will arouse the revolutionary ferment among the masses. It is the duty of the Communists of the whole world to lead the van, to be the shock forces of the masses, the organised champions that will lead them to battle. It is our duty to raise our blood-stained banner, not only as a symbol of victory in the distant future, but to be carried in the forefront of the battles of to-day and to-morrow. On this First of May we will demonstrate to the world bourgeoisie our preparedness for the struggle. We will decorate our factories with red flags, and carry them in our mass demonstrations, that they may serve as beacons calling to the enslaved proletarians: *Close ranks ye enslaved, despised and exploited!*

Down with the open and concealed servants of the bourgeoisie!

Long live the Communist International, the red representative of the world revolution!

Down with the capitalist state!

Down with the bourgeoisie!

Long live Soviet Russia, the bulwark of the world revolution!

All hail to the world revolution and the international federation of proletarian soviet republics!

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF  
THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

## Germany

### THE CRISIS IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

From the moment that the uncompromising policy of the Communist International, during the period of the consolidation of its organisation in Europe, was made clear in the case of the Italian Socialist Party, it became evident that there was a strong element in the German party which felt that its own future was threatened. The position of the Communist International was, that while leaving the National parties every degree of autonomy consistent with the existence of the Communist International as an organisation of combat and not as an international research department, it must insist upon the exclusion from all its component Communist parties of all hesitating, half-hearted, or openly opportunist strains. Otherwise, having the prestige of the Communist International behind them, they would introduce confusion and doubt into the ranks of the workers when the time came for the latter to look to the Communists alone for guidance. The largest group of the Italian Socialist party did not see the necessity of this, and was aware only of the number of strategical positions which it held in the capitalist State and the working class organisations, thanks to the presence in its midst of the element referred to above—composed, naturally, to a very large extent of the educated middle class. To put the question of expulsion or retention of the opportunists on this footing, however, would have been to invite condemnation at the outset; and, the wish being father to the thought, the question presented itself immediately in another more vivid, more catchy, but more shallow form—*shall Moscow dictate to the International Communist movement?*

The formulation of the problem in this way was so potent in the present condition of things, when masses of the party membership in Italy, as in every country, were too new to the Communist movement to be able to analyse each and every question of tactics on a scientific Marxian basis, that it won the day for the time being. At the Congress of Leghorn, the Serrati group, with 90,000 adherents, preferred to sacrifice unity with 60,000 Communists for the sake of unity with 11,000 opportunists.

The question of "dictatorship of Moscow," however, could not but affect those comrades in other countries who, for one reason or another—mainly their own lack of complete understanding of the essence of the revolutionary method—were also on the point of a conflict with the Communist International. Some, indeed, had already felt upon their backs the relentless pressure of a novel, and not altogether welcome, international discipline, which has been one of the principal contributions of the Russian Communist Party to the Communist International which it founded. This tendency told first of all in Germany, where, after Italy, the situation has been for the last two years more revolutionary, and therefore more exacting, than in any other country. Five members of the Executive Committee of the United Communist Party of Germany (V.K.P.D.)—Levy, Hoffmann, Klara Zetkin, Daeumig, Brass—resigned their positions while maintaining membership of the party.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International immediately passed and published a strong resolution condemning these comrades. After pointing out the elementary facts of the Italian situation, as indicated above, the manifesto reminded the offenders that their resigna-

tions, decided upon even without warning the E.C. of the Comintern, was a lamentable breach of discipline.

"In all Communist Parties the leaders have been placed at their posts by the workers, and they have as little right to abandon those posts, without the consent of the Party, as a soldier in the Red Army has to abandon his. It is only in the bourgeois and Socialist opportunist parties that the leaders consider themselves authorised to act independently of, or even against the wishes of their party comrades."

The manifesto went on to warn the German comrades that this presentation of the Italian position as one of a "mechanical scission," at the orders of Moscow, betrayed either ignorance of Italian conditions or a definite tendency to form a Right Wing.

"All the intelligent Communists of Germany," the manifesto says, "should understand that the E.C. wishes to be found in every country, not little sects, but truly active revolutionary parties grouping the Communist masses. The efforts made, in particular, in Germany, to bring about the amalgamation of the Spartacus group with the revolutionary elements of the former Independent Party and the Communist Labour Party (K.A.P.D.) into one large mass party, are a sufficient proof of this." To represent the activity of the Comintern in the way described above, therefore, shows that shallow protest of thought which is characteristic of international Menshevism, and the Communists are called upon to make every effort in order to nip this tendency in the bud. The manifesto concludes with a statement that Levy was not very far from a break with the Communist International. Confirmation was not long in coming.

During the month of March a series of strikes took place all over central Germany, culminating in many places in open insurrection, brought about by the determination of the German Government to impose upon the workers the rule of the so-called security police, behind whom stands the sinister, secret, White Guard organisation, the "Orgesch." Into this struggle the Communist Party, as might have been expected of any revolutionary party, threw its entire energies, actively taking the lead in districts and in the centre, and issuing appeals to the workers to rise in defence of their emancipation, all over Germany, arming themselves if necessary. For this activity the Party paid a heavy price; for some time it was deprived of a number of its newspapers by the police, many of its most prominent leaders, including eight members of the executive, were arrested, and literally thousands of the rank and file up and down the country were shot, batoned and jailed.

At this moment, on April 3, Paul Levy took upon himself to publish, without even consulting with the Central Committee of the Party, a pamphlet entitled "Unser Weg" ("Our path"), in which he violently attacked the activity of the Communist Party. He asserted, and strove to prove by means of extracts from the executive minutes, that the insurrection had not been provoked by the deliberate intention of the bourgeois state, but was consciously engineered by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party "at the orders of Moscow." He accused the Party of being ready to abandon the legitimate Marxian paths of proletarian mass movement at the behest of a foreign organisation, to enter those of a Bakuninist "putsch" policy, in which use was made of the proletariat, but of the loafer and tramp class, the "lumpen-proletariat."

Needless to say, this pamphlet, echoing as it did all the familiar arguments and accusations of the Majority Socialists and the Independents during the last three years, was eagerly welcomed first by the German bourgeois and reformist press, and then by the corresponding elements in all countries.

At its session of April 15, the Executive Committee of the V.K.P.D. replied by expelling Levy from the party for breach of discipline, summoning him at the same time to resign his seat in the Reichstadt. The Executive Committee at the same time drew up a statement in defence of its decision, condemning Levy for having published these attacks on the party without any warning, and without giving the Executive any opportunity of checking the statements and intentions he was prepared to attribute to it.

"Paul Levy," the statement proceeds, "published his pamphlet on April 3rd, at a moment when the struggle was still going on in several parts of the Empire, and when thousands of revolutionary comrades were faced with special tribunals. The latter are directly incited by Paul Levy's pamphlet to pronounce murderous sentences. The contents of the pamphlet constitute a treacherous denunciation of the policy of the comrades and of the import of their struggle.

By these acts Paul Levy has thrown the ranks of the Party comrades into the greatest confusion, and has prevented the Party from reuniting its struggling members upon a solid and unbroken front."

This decision does not mean that the right of criticism has been suppressed in the Party. "Criticism on the field of combat and based on complete solidarity in the struggle is a vital necessity for the Party, and is even a revolutionary duty. The criticism of Paul Levy, however, is not criticism on a Party footing; it makes its appearance as an open support of the enemy, in a period during which the Party is exposed to a very severe persecution. It tends, not to the reinforcement, but to the enfeeblement and destruction of the Party."

While, on the other hand, Levy followed up one act of indiscipline by another, and refused to resign his seat as he had been instructed, on the other hand, the crisis extended still further. The next day the minority of the Central Committee published in the Party organ a declaration, signed by the four original supporters of Levy, and in addition by Kert Geyer (late German representative on the executive of the Comintern), Paul Eckert, Henry Maltzahn, and Paul Neumann. The declaration protests against the action of the Executive Committee in substituting personal attacks on Levy for a discussion of the activity in question. The declaration does not touch upon the justifiability of the publication of Levy's pamphlet at such a moment, but asserts he said nothing but the truth, and his exclusion is only intended to prevent Party criticism. The signatories declare they completely share Levy's point of view, and demand the immediate summoning of a Party Congress to settle the points at issue, and to decide "whether revolutionary action must be in conformity with the principles of the Third International, or must go back to the principles of Bakunin."

At the same time Brass and Geyer published the declaration they had made at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International at which the vote of censure had been passed on the resigning members of the Central Committee. The declaration protested against the introduction of the phrase "Right Wing," and stated



that they were in favour of the removal of opportunists from the Party, differing as to the method of its achievement.

"The question at issue is not the policy of Serrati, and his friends, but that of the representative of the E.C.C.I. at Leghorn, the result of which has been to detach from the Communist Party 90,000 Italian workers who belong to the Third International, and desire to remain in it."

The third delegate of the V.K.P.D. at Moscow, Koenen, opposed this declaration of Brass and Geyer. In consequence of the declarations published above, the Executive Committee of the Party addressed on April 21, in the *Rote Fahne*, to those of the signatories who were members of parliament, a request that they should suspend the exercise of their mandate until the next session of the National Council of the Party, which would decide whether they were entitled to continue in their functions.

At the same time, the Executive Committee appealed to the Party to maintain its discipline, and pointed out that in the vigorous discussion which began immediately after the publication of Levy's pamphlet, the Party masses had so far shown their complete solidarity with the Executive.

"The sections so far consulted have declared with a very large majority, if not with unanimity, for the decision adopted by the Executive Committee on April 7th and 8th. The members have consequently declared themselves in complete solidarity with the activity of March, and have shown themselves ready to continue the battle according to the lines indicated by the decisions of the Executive on April 17th and 18th."

This discussion has been going on upon two lines: criticism of the insurrectionary movement, and criticism of Levy's pamphlet. On the first question, it has been generally recognised that, while mistakes were made both in actual tactics (the methods adopted for bringing the working-class mass into the struggle) and in the policy of the Executive Committee (the lack of clarity and determination in its manifestoes) these were due to circumstances which were out of the control of the Party. The struggle was brought about by the provocation of the Noske party while the Communists were still organising themselves; and the organisation had had to be completed in the very midst of the fighting. "The Party, which had been preparing for an offensive movement, suddenly found itself obliged to carry on an offensive whilst in a position of defence." In this phrase the well-informed Berlin correspondent of *L'Humanité* sums up the situation. It is noteworthy that the Executive Committee of the Communist International passed a special resolution congratulating the German workers and the German Communist Party on the action undertaken in March.

The resolution hails the fact that "for the first time since the days of January and March, 1919, the revolutionary workers of Germany have resumed the struggle against the capitalist government not merely to snatch a morsel of bread from it, or to express their protest against the violence of the White Guards, but with the well-defined aim of putting an end to the domination of the exploiters. For the first time, above all, they have entered into this struggle as a compact army guided by an united will. Throughout the whole of Germany they have shown that thousands of workers are ready to sacrifice their lives on the barricades in order to throw off the yoke of capital."

The resolution concludes: "The first assault of the proletarian vanguard has failed. The bourgeoisie and its servants will strive to sow discouragement among the troops in retreat. The Communist International says to you: You have done well, you have written a new page in the history of the German working class. Arm yourselves for the future combat. Study the lessons of the previous struggles, close your ranks; reinforce your legal and underground organisations; strengthen your proletarian discipline and your fighting Communist consciousness. Never forget the victims of this new 'March.'

Long live the Communist proletariat!"

It is not surprising, in view of the facts outlined above, that the local federations of the Party, discussing the tactics of the Levy group, have approved the policy of the Central Committee by large majorities, in many cases approximating to unanimity. Amongst these may be cited the federations of Berlin, Essen, Silesia, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Saxony, Rhenish, Westphalia and Frankfurt.

Another noticeable feature is that all the parts of central Europe—that region, in other words, which is nearest of all to the proletarian revolution, and where consequently the Communist Party is most sensitive to the need for its own self-development—have judged it necessary to pronounce an opinion upon the Levy case. The Executive Committee of the Austrian Communist Party has declared itself in complete sympathy with the attitude of the German Party Executive. Incidentally, this declaration has brought about the resignation of the editor-in-chief of the Party organ, the Vienna *Rote Fahne*, Strasser, who had declared his sympathy with Levy; and of Gruber, a member of the Central Committee of the Party. The central organs of the German-Swiss Communists (*Basler Vorwaerts*), the Hungarian Communists and the German Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia (*Reichenberger Vorwaerts*) have also pursued a policy of approval of the German Party Executive.

The administrative council of the Czecho-Slovakian "Marxism Left" (Czech Communist Party, which is about to unite with the German section) has passed the following resolution: —

"The A.C. approves of the attitude of the Central Committee of the V.K.P.D. relative to the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat of central Germany, and assures the revolutionary German workers of the sympathy and solidarity of the workers of Czecho-Slovakia, organised in the Communist Party.

We condemn with the greatest indignation the attitude of the former president of the V.K.P.D., Levy, who at the critical moment has made an attack on the Party and the Communist movement.

Levy's attitude has nothing to do with the liberty of discussion and of criticism within the Party. The tone of the pamphlet goes beyond all admissible bounds, and shows in certain passages that the author does not possess the qualities required of a leader of a Communist Party.

Considering that in this case it is not purely a German question, but one which interests all Communist parties; and considering that the situation is such as, in the course of development of the revolutionary movement, every Communist Party may have to pass through; the Administrative Council approves of the 'expulsion of Levy from the United Communist Party of Germany.

# Draft Constitution of the French Socialist Party

*Humanité* on April 17/18 published the draft constitution of the French Socialist Party as a basis for suggestions and amendments by branches. The following is a summary of the draft:—

## PARTY CONSTITUTION.

The Socialist Party is founded on the following principles:—International working class action, organisation of the proletariat for the conquest of power and the socialisation of the means of production and exchange. The title of the Party as from January 1st, 1922, is to be "Communist Party, French section of the Communist International;" members accept the principles, regulations, tactics and discipline of the Party.

## ORGANISATION OF THE PARTY.

In each borough (Commune) there will be constituted one branch with the exception of Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles, where several branches may be formed. Members will receive a membership card and pay annual dues, which will be fixed by the national congress. Members of the Party must become members of the trade union of their profession and the co-operative society of their district.

Branches will be grouped into a federation in each department with a federal council; regional unions of federations may be constituted for purposes of propaganda and intensified activity, but in each case the organisation must be approved by the party, and unions must confine themselves strictly to the purposes for which they have been set up. Federations must not consist of less than five branches with a minimum of 100 members. Federations will draw up lists of candidates for parliamentary elections which will be ratified by the Executive Committee of the Party. All candidates must sign a pledge to abide by the principles of the Party and of the national and international congresses; if for one reason or another they leave the Party they must resign their seat.

No one may become a member of the Executive Committee, a permanent propaganda delegate, a delegate to the national congress, or the national council, or a candidate at parliamentary elections, unless he has been a member of the Party for three years.

## THE PARTY CONGRESS.

The Party recognises the principle of majority rule, but admits the right of free discussion for any minorities; for all assemblies of the Party branches will appoint their delegates by proportional representation after a free discussion and vote. Delegates to the National Congress will be appointed by the federation congress, each federation establishing its own method of nomination. Each federation will be held to acquire one mandate for every 25 members of the Party, and will send delegates to the congress on the basis of one delegate for every 20 mandates. The vote by mandate will be taken at the congress if a quarter of the delegates demand it. The congress will be summoned

at least three months in advance, except in cases of urgency, the Executive Committee naming the place of assembly. The Socialist parliamentary group will make an annual report to the congress which shall have been published and circulated to the federations at least one month previously. At the congress itself it will be represented by a delegation of two to five members with consultative votes.

### THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

A commission of control, finance, and accounts will be appointed annually. It will be composed of nine members of which not more than one-third will be parliamentary deputies. A disputes commission will also be elected by the congress. Between the congresses the Party is governed by the Executive Committee, which is controlled by the National Council; in case of conflict between the two an extraordinary national congress will be summoned. The National Council is constituted by delegates from the federations (on the basis of two delegates up to forty mandates and one for every forty possessed in addition by the federation in question. The delegates are elected for one year except where specially suspended by their federation. The members of the Executive Committee of the Party also constitute part of a national council. The national council will be summoned twice a year in ordinary session, but may be summoned in extraordinary session on the demand of the Executive Committee or of one quarter of its own members.

### THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Between the congresses the Party is directed and administered by an Executive Committee composed of 24 members elected by the National Congress by a majority vote. It may not include more than eight members of parliament. It appoints and dismisses the general secretary, the international secretary, the treasurer, the director of publications, and their assistants.

### THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP.

The group is charged with the work of revolutionary party propaganda against bourgeois violence and political methods in parliament; and in addition must undertake fifty days propaganda work outside their own federation according to the directions of the Executive Committee. All sessions of the parliamentary group will be attended by a special delegation of non-parliamentary members of the Executive Committee, and the latter will be consulted on all broad questions of policy affecting the party as a whole, which may arise in parliament. The decision of the Executive Committee is binding upon the members of the parliamentary group.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPUTIES.

The municipal and departmental councillors will be continuously under the control of the local organisation of the Party and in general under that of the Executive Committee and the National Congress.

## DISPUTES COMMISSION.

Local and individual disputes will be settled by a mixed Commission appointed by the parties concerned and presided over by a neutral party. All disputes not settled amicably will be passed on to the Party Disputes Commission, composed of eleven members, which has plenary power to take into its cognisance all disputes. Appeals from the decisions of this commission may be taken before the National Congress, but may not be suspended on that account. Punishments inflicted may be censure, temporary suspension and expulsion. An expelled member cannot be readmitted except by the decision of the International Congress after consultation with the federation concerned.

## PRESS.

Daily and periodical publications of the Party will be placed under the political and administrative control of the Party organisation to which they belong, and generally speaking, of the Executive Committee and the National Congress. They will express the policy of the majority as decided at the last congress, whether on questions of theory, tactics, or action. The party or federations may create organs of theoretical discussion, for members only, in which discussion will be absolutely free. Members of the Party contributing to journals or periodicals not belonging to the Party are under the control of the various organisations of which they personally are members.

NOTE—Up to January 1, 1922, the title of the Party will be "Socialist Party (French Section of the Communist International)."

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## *The Struggle in the German Trade Unions*

The successes recently obtained by the Communists in the principal German Trade Unions have brought about an offensive on the part of the majority. It is in this way that began the crusade "against those who are destroying working class unity at the orders of Moscow."

At the Tenth Congress of the A.D.G.B. (the General Federation of Trade Unions of Germany) a motion of the Independent Dittmann was adopted. Its tenor is as follows:—

"The elements supported by Moscow are extremely menacing to the unity and cohesion of the labour movement, and the committee of the A.D.G.B. considers it its duty to combat, *by all means at its disposal*, these disintegrating influences."

Nevertheless, the Central Committee would not act immediately. It simply threw out this watchword: "The Communists obeying the theses of Moscow place themselves outside the statutes of the federation and split the organisation." No proof was, or can be made, of this assertion. The pretext given was that the Communists following the orders of Moscow were constituting "Communist nuclei" within the ranks of each union.

This, however, was no novelty for the German Trade Union movement. The Social Democratic members, when they were a minority in a union, had never considered as they do now that the formation of special groups is contrary to the essence of trade unionism. Still more, they themselves put these principles into practice. For example at Berlin the majority members of the Building Workers' Union constitute a special group which meets outside the union with special notices of assembly in the *Vorwaerts* and none of them has ever considered that trade unionist unity was imperilled.

The offensive was launched by the railwaymen's federation. At its session of January 19, the Central Committee decided to expel the Communists. At Berlin at a General Meeting the representative of the Central Committee declared that proceedings for expulsion had been opened against five Communist members "guilty of having taken the lead in a railwaymen's demonstration which had not been authorised, and of having refused to obey the orders of the local committee to suspend a meeting which they had begun ten minutes before." The "defendants" he added were provisionally deprived of their rights; which was contrary to the statutes. The declaration aroused a tumult in the assembly which, a vote being taken, refused to follow the lead of the Central Committee and supported the five comrades.

Similar events have taken place at Cologne. A meeting voted affiliation to Moscow; Comrades Mieves and Klief who were responsible for the motion were expelled. 1,300 railwaymen then forced the summoning of an extraordinary general assembly. The Central Committee sent there one of its members, Breunig. The assembly decided to allow Mieves to speak; whereupon Breunig left the hall. It was then decided to send no more membership dues to the Union Treasury until the persecution of the Communists came to an end. A new local committee was elected, Mieves being placed at its head; the Central Committee refused to recognise it. A new assembly took place on February 4 and passed a resolution demanding where and when the supporters of the Third International had diminished the power of cohesion of the organisation.

The Central Committee replied by expelling all its opponents. Scheffel declared "the Central Committee has appointed a commission of three of its members to examine all expulsions. We are carrying on a unitary policy. For us there is only one alternative: either the Second or Third International."

At Essen five expulsions. At Munich Comrade Kammerer, member of the State Industrial Council and sixteen years an active worker in the Labour movement was expelled. At Berlin five expulsions; at Hanau the secretary Fleischhauer. Everywhere meetings of protest demanding the re-admission of the members expelled and even as at Hanau going as far as to declare that they will follow those expelled.

At Erfurt, Schmeidt, the secretary, has been expelled in the same way. Notice of six weeks has been given only because it is required by the law.

At Munich, Leipzig, and everywhere else the struggle is continuing. Begun by the Railwaymen's Federation it is vigorously raging at

present in the building and metal-working unions. After the Halle congress which disapproved of the bureau dominated by the majority, and voted affiliation to Moscow while remaining in the old unions, Poeplow, the chairman of the Building Workers' Federation and a majority socialist, had a motion of expulsion passed against the Communist organisers Heckert, Brandler, Bachmann of Halle against two from Berlin and one from Munich. This again called forth a storm of activity. Innumerable resolutions were passed and a special congress was demanded.

In the Metalworkers' Federation the minority leaders won local successes. At this stage it was that the Central Committee had expulsions voted. The vote showed 72 for and 14 against. The statement of reason for the expulsion contained the following phrase: "No one can be an official of the federation who receives orders from abroad."

Hitherto there had been no apparent invasion on the part of the General Federation of Trade Unions and only the federations had been at work. But one of the most important working class centres, Halle, where the unions were nearly on the side of the minority decided at the end of January to fuse with the economic organisation of the Workers' Councils. This was the pretext awaited by the majority. The General Federation of Trade Unions, immediately sent to Halle one of its best "Bolshevik leaders," Schulz, with the object of constituting a new Trades Council, i.e., a counter organisation. The cashiers received an order to refuse all payments to the union members of the town. On February 10th a conference was held of all the Halle unions, at which Schulz presided and declared that it was necessary to "split" the unions.

The struggle is continuing.

In Austria the struggle has assumed its own characteristic aspect. The social democrats are profiting by the preponderance they still have in the factory councils, and by the power of employment and dismissal which they enjoy to carry on the struggle by means of the very lowest methods ever used by the employing class. Under pain of dismissal the revolutionaries are forced to enter the social democratic organisations and subscribe to their organs. Reading the *Rota Fahne* is sufficient pretext for dismissal.

*Vie Ouvrier*, 13/5/1921.



## America

### SUMMARY OF C.E.C. REPORT TO THIRD CONVENTION OF THE C.P. OF A.

THE COMMUNIST BULLETIN, the fortnightly organ of the Communist Party of America, gives in its issue of March 31 a report from which the following extracts are taken:—

#### GENERAL PROGRESS.

“ Since the last convention in July, 1920, the Communist Party has made good progress in organisation and propaganda.

At that time the party had not yet quite recovered from the split, which, being led by a former secretary of the party, took away our connections in three districts—the IV., V., and VI.; took away about \$7,000 of our funds; and put the membership into a state of confusion.

But soon things began to pick up. Although we were short of comrades qualified to act as District Organisers, so that District VI. obtained a permanent organiser only in the middle of September, good connections were fully established everywhere, and membership records, both by reports and dues payments, improved right along. Collections from Day's Wages and for the organisation fund (the totals of which are \$13,078.57 and \$6,530.73 respectively for the six months ending Dec. 31) soon put our finances in good shape, so that we could go ahead with the distribution of leaflets, printing pamphlets and books, and in December even to begin to issue another paper.

Although quite a number of our comrades left for Russia, still the membership records show an average of 6,371 for the last three months, Nov., Dec., and Jan. The January figure being 6,693 as against 7,250 for the first three months of July, Aug., and Sept.

From a balance of \$707.53 at the beginning of July, we have gained a balance of \$4,801.87 at the end of January.

The circulation of the COMMUNIST has risen from 6,000 to 8,000; the other paper is printed in 18,000 copies; 11 pamphlets and books have been published, most of them in 10,000 copies each; four general leaflets issued, the last in 390,000 copies, and several local, such as on the Coal Strike, the Street Car Strike and Shipyard Strike. Besides this, the Language Federations have issued their legal and illegal papers, leaflets, pamphlets, books, etc., as will appear in their reports.



## DEVELOPMENTS AND DECISIONS ON ORGANISATION QUESTIONS.

Solution of the one organisation question which was so threatening at the last convention, appointments from top down to (and including) the sub-district organisers, and elections from bottom up to (and including) the local organisers, is working well; there have been no conflicts between the representatives from the central bodies and the representatives of the membership.

The only disturbance in our organisation during the last seven months which is worth mentioning, is the split in the Lettish Federation; and that was precipitated rather on legalistic and nationalistic lines, than on the issues of party organisation, although the demagogues who later went over to the U.C.P. also used the lure of "democracy" for their purposes. In this split the Lettish Federation lost about a little over 200 men, some of whom have recently decided to come back to the C.P. The C.E.C. decided, however, that seceding groups or organisations should not be taken back as a whole.

The seceding groups of the Jewish Federation came back to the C.P. in October. The C.E.C. permitted them to be taken back as whole groups, ordering the exclusion of Raphael, who was mainly instrumental in bringing about the split in the Jewish Federation, and who deserted the Communist Party so shamelessly in the split. The experience with these returning groups in the Jewish Federation prompted the decision that no seceding groups should be taken back as a whole.

The Polish Federation definitely re-affiliated with the C.P. in October.

These two federations, the Jewish and the Polish, suffered most in the Party split, and it was necessary to render them financial assistance, especially to the Jewish Federation, so they should be able to carry on the work of propaganda and organisation in their languages.

Applying to all sub-divisions and organisations of the Party, including all federations, was the decision of the C.E.C. that all party publishing concerns and legal press must be under the direct control and ownership of party management. Important steps have been taken in several federations to comply with this decision.

Another important decision regarding organisation was that providing for the addition of federation sub-district organisers to all sub-district executive committees. This was found necessary in order to make them the point of contact not only between the appointed officials of the party and the elected representatives from the membership, but also between the appointed officials of the federations and the local organisers who are elected from all branches in the local at large. This provision has fully justified itself in practice, and is now included in the draft of constitution proposed by the C.E.C.

The decisions that the C.E.C. should have the addresses of all sub-district organisers for emergency cases; that the dismissal as well as the appointment of all sub-district organisers is subject to the approval of the C.E.C., and that the regular party literature is to be sent to sub-districts directly wherever possible—are self-explanatory.

As to Federation branches in Canada, since there was and is no Communist Party in existence in Canada, the C.E.C. decided that they should belong to Federations of the C.P. of America, and function as

integral parts of the Party. Two sub-districts have been organised there as parts of District four, and all Party literature has been supplied to them under the same name as in the U.S.

Owing to the fact that the C.E.C. has found it necessary to appoint members of itself suitable to act as district organisers, it is unable to find enough comrades outside of the C.E.C. as district organisers in four districts, even though it meant that they would reside then quite a distance from the headquarters of the Party. This has been found quite an obstacle to the proper functioning of the C.E.C., and the provisions of the constitution in this respect should be complied with more strictly in the future.

The issuance of membership certificates has been changed several times, as the circumstances demanded, the final provisions being such as to restrict them to such members as have been in the Party for at least a year, and that they should be issued only by the branch organisers, if the member is not personally known to higher Party sub-division. There was danger of the certificates being misunderstood at the other side, if issued by the central body directly, and there was also danger that persons might join the Party merely to get a certificate. The Party discouraged as much as possible exodus of members to Russia.

The decision that calling of the meetings of more than one group, and large captains' meetings were to be considered violation of the constitution, was taken for reasons of conspiracy, and to insure the authority of action to the regular Party sub-divisions, groups, branches, locals, etc.

This was passed by the C.E.C.; it should be clear that this does not prohibit larger meetings for the purpose of discussion and propaganda, and meetings called for specific purposes, such as shop and union nuclei, etc.

On the basis of experience for the last seven months, the present C.E.C. recommends to the incoming C.E.C. that there should be a permanent assistant secretary, who should be ready to take the place of the secretary whenever emergency demands; that for the same reason there should be one paid sub-district organiser in each district, if means will permit—also to act as assistant district organiser. We are sure that there will be enough work for all these comrades all the time.

#### DEVELOPMENTS AND DECISIONS ON QUESTION OF POLICY.

##### *Shop Committees, Nuclei in Unions, co-operation.*

Your C.E.C. was compelled to change the name of the Communist Party Shop Committees to Communist Nuclei, as the former name created much confusion, leading to the belief that the work of the nuclei must consist only of activity in the shops, while in reality the Communist nuclei must function both in the shops, the unions, and all other workers' organisations, on the other hand, the name of the Communist Party Shop Committees is misleading because it conveys the idea of non-partisan shop committees, and created an erroneous impression that the Communist Party intended to replace the non-partisan shop committees by the Communist shop committees.

As a matter of fact, the C.E.C. never intended to project this idea. The Second Convention of the C.P. of A. did not discuss the creation

of such non-partisan Shop Committees, which were considered by some of the delegates to be premature, as the objective and subjective conditions were not satisfactorily ripe for their organisation.

In connection with this, we must mention that your C.E.C. deemed it necessary to advise our Communist nuclei to co-operate with other revolutionary elements in their common struggle against the bureaucratic officials of the reactionary trade unions. At the same time we have cautioned them to act carefully and not to disclose their identity while co-operating with other groups.

#### ATTITUDE TOWARDS LEGAL WORKERS' SOCIETIES.

The C.E.C. found it necessary to interpret the attitude of the last convention towards legal workers' societies, since there was a serious error in the report of the last convention which appeared in the official organ, the COMMUNIST, with regard to these societies.

Your C.E.C. took a stand against creating new legal societies, but deemed it necessary to advise our members to join and remain in the existing legal workers' societies, and, in keeping with the Theses of the C.I., to use all their endeavours to bring the members of such societies to our point of view.

#### PROGRAMME FOR STUDY CLASSES.

Your C.E.C. issued a programme for study classes which consisted of two parts—an elementary and an advanced course. As the period during which this programme was in effect was very short, we are not in a position to make definite conclusions as to the results, especially as during this time the attention and interest of the membership was taken up with the question of unity.

#### EDITORIAL POLICY OF THE COMMUNIST.

##### THE PAPER NO. 2, LEAFLETS, PAMPHLETS, ETC.

In order that the COMMUNIST, our official organ, should become a theoretical organ propagating Communist principles and tactics, your C.E.C. proposes that it should be issued as a monthly magazine. At this stage of the Communist movement in America, it is essential that the C.P. should publish a genuine propaganda organ, as our official party organ. The COMMUNIST has been neither a propaganda nor an agitation organ; and its tone, form and character have not been such as the magnitude and high purpose of our movement require. With the issuing of Paper No. 2, the work of regular agitation has been taken over by this paper; and therefore our official organ, the COMMUNIST, should devote all its space to propaganda and the discussion of party principles and policies, together with scientific and theoretical articles for the education and training of our membership, and development of Communists out of the party sympathisers. Such a scientific magazine will fill a much-needed want in this country, and will develop real Communist understanding among the membership, and develop Communist leaders in America among the English-speaking elements.

Purely party news and official party matters, together with the discussion of controversial party affairs, should be published in an official party bulletin to be issued bi-weekly, free of charge, to the

membership. Such a bulletin will keep the members of the C.P. posted on all party affairs, and keep them in close contact with their central organisations.

Also Paper No. 2 shall be made a weekly, and carry on the popularisation of Communist theory and practice. It carries the Communist message into the ranks of the organised workers, in the trade and industrial unions, and to the broad masses generally, in popular language. It gives the Communist point of view upon the immediate issues confronting the American working class, and reviews the proletarian revolution in other countries. Paper No. 2 is an important organ of the party, and one of the chief means of maintaining contact with the working masses, of giving a popular expression to Communist theory, and of rallying the advanced workers in the unions for the destruction of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy; thus bringing the labour unions into line with the proletarian revolution in American and other countries.

Popular legal pamphlets on the different phases of Communism were issued, but these pamphlets should be very simply written, so that they may be brought to the attention of the less educated workers. Pamphlet and books dealing with the more advanced and scientific formulæ of Communism are equally necessary. These may be legal or illegal, according to the subject of its treatment. Leaflets, legal or illegal, have been frequently issued on matters of issues, strikes, unemployment, etc. These leaflets should be concise, brief and keep within the bounds of the particular problem and subject upon which they are issued. All pamphlets and books should be issued only by the C.E.C. of the party and Federation E.C. Leaflets of a general nature dealing with theoretical discussion of Communist principles should only be issued by the C.E.C. and the F.E.C. Subordinate units of the Party should be allowed to issue leaflets on local problems, strikes, or the local manifestations of a general strike, etc. Mistakes by inexperienced members in the subordinate units are bound to occur in issuing such leaflets, but the members will learn by their mistakes, and it is preferable to inactivity.

### PROGRAMME AND CONSTITUTION.

The C.E.C. brings before the convention a complete programme for your consideration, based upon the decisions of the second World Congress of the Communist International. The programme presented by the C.E.C. for your consideration at the convention suggests changes and the clarification of the Party's attitude toward the questions of Communist Nuclei, Factory Committees, the Trade Union movement, the Colonial question, Imperialism, the agricultural workers, tenant and poorer farmers and the semi-proletariat, and the function of the Communist Party of America. . . .

### COMMUNIST UNITY.

On this question a number of documents and statements are given, showing considerable divergence in views between the two Communist Parties. The position at the beginning of April is summed up by the following letter:—

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND  
UNITED COMMUNIST PARTY.

Comrades:

The undersigned, delegates of the Communist Party and the United Communist Party to the Second Congress of the Communist International, were designated by the Executive Committee of the International to see that its decision for unity in the American Communist movement was realised in life.

Upon our arrival and investigation of the situation, we were convinced that a deadlock had been reached which could be broken only by further intervention by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, and this time in such a form that neither party could evade the issue.

Having come to this conclusion, we wished to end the factional controversy on unity, which is demoralising our movement, until the Communist International compels unity. To this end we proposed the following plan:

That each C.E.C. elect three members to a National Council; that this Council shall function in the name of "The Communist Party of America (Unified);" that it shall issue a central organ which shall have two editors, one from each party; that it shall publish literature, issue proclamations, and carry on as much work as the two parties shall agree to jointly; that the two parties shall maintain their organisations intact, and continue to publish all their papers except the central organ; that each party shall submit a detailed statement to the Executive Committee of the Communist International on why unity has not been accomplished, and what are the real issues which divide the parties, so that the Executive Committee shall instruct the unity convention how to decide on these controversial questions.

It is not our task to pass judgment on the two parties in this matter; but it is our task to try and end the factional controversy, even if only by a semblance of unity.

The C.E.C. of the Communist Party rejected our proposal, declaring that it is unworkable and in contradiction to the instructions on unity of their recent convention.

The C.E.C. of the United Communist Party accepted our proposal in principle, while making certain amendments which they thought would make the plan work better.

To our regret, we have, accordingly, been unable to break the deadlock.

We shall accordingly report to the Executive Committee that we cannot break the deadlock, and we shall make definite, concrete suggestions to the Communist International on how to break the deadlock and how to realise actual unity—unity of a character which will give factional control to neither party, but which shall be the unity desired by the International itself, and in accord with the requirements of the American movement.

In the meanwhile, we call upon the C.E.C.'s and the membership of both parties not to make factional capital out of our proposal, which was intended to end the factional struggle; we declare that to use our

proposal in a factional spirit is to indicate desire for control and not for real unity.

It is futile for each party to try to crush the other—that demoralises the movement and makes unity in the real sense still more difficult to accomplish. We therefore call upon you, comrades, to stay in the party where you are now, to have patience and not increase the bitterness which prevails among us, and to give the Executive of the Communist International time to act, finally and authoritatively.

(Signed) T.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA.

(Signed) C.E.S.

UNITED COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA.

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## France

### THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE NEW WAR.

*Humanité* (May 4th) prints the following declaration of the Executive Committee of the French Party on the subject of the Ruhr mobilisation:—

“The Party does not wish to delay a single day in raising its protest against the mobilisation ordered by the Government.

The present difficulties resulting from the Treaty of Versailles, which the Party denounced as imperialist, impracticable, and fatally productive of new wars and of the policy of violence of the national bloc, which it has never ceased fighting, cannot be solved, but will be aggravated by the recourse to force decided upon by the Government.

The Party declares once again that the Government, entirely swayed as it is by the most insane reaction is taking no thought industrially for the reconstruction of the devastated regions and real reparations. It denounces the deception of which the French nation is the victim.

It proclaims that the young people, torn from their homes, their work and their civil liberty, are bound by no duty towards the minority of profiteers and headstrong reactionaries which has forced the Government to mobilise them.

The workers have duties only to their class—within the nation in the international. The Party affirms its determination to draw together by all means in its power the bonds of fraternity which unite the French Communists with their German brothers. Together French and German Communists will carry on the struggle against the capitalist oligarchy in the two countries.

Henceforth, face to face with the bourgeois Government of France it declares that it will not cease to fight side by side with the working class organisations in order to restrain the threat of imperialism; and that it will spare no effort in order that from the present crisis, aggravated by the inevitable complications, may spring the revolution from which the bourgeois regime cannot escape.”

## Spain

### THE BIRTH OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

The Spanish Socialist Congress held at the end of April, 1921, was the last stage in the decomposition of a party that had once been doctrinaire but honest, but which ten years coalition with the republican parties had corrupted with the vices and disorganisation of the latter. The situation was complicated by personal squabbles which had followed the refusal of the leaders in 1919 to obey the decision of the party, and cease their collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

For this reason the first speakers at the congress were mainly provincial comrades who were less directly involved in the recent disputes. The propagandist, Virginia Gonzalez, made a strenuous attack on the so-called "reconstructors" and particularly Largo Caballero, secretary of the General Union of Workers, for having declared at the Institute of Social Reforms that he participated in the mourning caused by the assassination of Dato, at a time when the workers had fallen by hundreds beneath the repression of that premier. She criticised the feeble tactics of the Socialist members of Parliament, and told them that the best service they could render to the proletariat would be to return to its ranks.

The reformist position was defended by Saborit, deputy for Asturias, and by Largo Caballero. The professor and deputy for Madrid pronounced a diatribe against the supporters of the Third International, saying that they were proposing to initiate not a war of ideas, but a mutiny of non-commissioned officers who wanted to become generals. He affirmed that no post in the party would henceforth be assigned to supporters of the Third International, and if necessary they would be expelled. These words finally made the breach which the more temperate speeches of the two delegates returned from Russia had endeavoured to bridge over.

Of these delegates, de Los Rios, the secretary of the railwaymen, is an opponent of the Third International, while Anguiano is a supporter of the 21 points. The final vote gave a majority of 2,000 to the reconstructors.

The vote was followed by a declaration on behalf of the minority by Perez Solis—a declaration which was signed notably by representatives of the Asturias federation, the most powerful in the party. One of the founders of the Spanish party, the veteran Quejido, rose and declared with great emotion, in the name of the majority of the Executive Committee, that he also was leaving the party to found the Communist Party with the delegates of the Third International.

*Humanité*, 26/4/21.

### THE TERROR AT WORK.

The following moving letter to the French Syndicalist organ *La Vie Ouvriere* describes the methods by which the Spanish Government takes its revenge on those Communists, Socialists, and trade unionists against whom it is unable to establish any criminal charge. The penalty consists of being marched with hands bound between gendarmes along the highways to their native town or village, receiving for their daily

subsistence the sum of 6d. per day. The letter is dated March, 1921:—

“The present state of things in Spain is unheard of.

Caravans of exiles follow one after the other along all the roads of the peninsula.

We have to march for days and days with 6d. a day per head for our food; yet we pay 3d. to 4d. for 500 grammes of bread.

At the simple whim of a police agent or a “gardia civil” (gendarme) we are imprisoned blindly; without trial, without even judicial investigation we are driven to the most distant towns, if they are our places of origin, with hands in fetters, accompanied by other comrades, in interminable convoys.

At each prison we remain several days; and there it is decided what route we shall take further. We are not arrested, it appears, from the point of view of the law, but we are none the less deprived of liberty for several months, and of the possibility of assuring the needs of existence of our parents and families.

Correspondence is a very rare thing for us. For over a month I have received no letters from my wife; I have already sent her several letters, but I am not certain if she has received them. The comrades who are with me have no better fate than mine.

For six weeks the wife of one of these comrades has been in prison. She had the courage to bring him his dinner every day while he was in prison. (She was arrested in her home at midnight and dragged to the police station, where two Browning's were pressed to her breasts to make her tell whence came the money with which she bought the food.

Poor ferocious beasts who seem to consider themselves capable of killing the solidarity in us that exists in all the workers!

I must add that she had not received anything up to that day, and that she had not had need of it.

For five days she was obliged to sleep at the police station, in the presence of a dozen policemen at least, and on the sixth she was taken to the prison where she still remains.

As syndicalists, we are regularly thrown into the worst cells, we are not even allowed to shave, or to wash our linen; as we are merely passing strangers we cannot be granted this as it would be a breach of the rules of the establishment. And we remain for weeks and months in the same clothes.

Judge, comrades, of the state in which we are living, without news of our families, without being able to read a single paper, most of us suffering from lack of food and from exposure—slowly moving along the road to tuberculosis and the grave.”

#### TRADE UNION LEADER TORTURED.

About a month ago the secretary of the National Federation of Labour (the revolutionary trade union organisation in Spain), Avelino Boal, was arrested in his home and taken to prison. Witnesses who have since visited him say that he is now unrecognisable, his head and his face are a mass of bruises, his eyes being driven into their sockets, his face terribly swollen from the blows he has received.



Another comrade was surprised during his sleep at his own home, and assassinated in his bed. At Mataro, a little town near Barcelona, three other trade unionists were murdered as they were leaving work.

*La Vie Ouvriere*, 22/4/21.

#### TOWARDS UNITY.

*L'Avant Garde*, the Swiss Communist daily, of May 2nd, contains the following article from the pen of its Spanish correspondent:—

“The Extraordinary Congress of the Spanish Socialist Labour Party, which was held at Madrid on May 10th and the following days, decided by 8,808 votes to 6,025 not to accept the 21 conditions of Moscow, and to join its fate with that of the reconstructors. The Spanish bourgeoisie is making holiday. At the Congress two or three of the principal orators, men who had posts in the official departments of the state, showed themselves openly and frankly enemies of the Communist International. The capitalist press has praised and exploited their speeches, issuing them as sources whence to draw the conclusion that Russia of to-day is a chaos. None the less, at the end of the Congress many of the delegates left the Party and signed a manifesto to the masses which proclaimed the Communist International of Moscow as the only revolutionary International. This group has a very small body of representatives in Parliament.

The old leader Pablo Iglesias has lost all his old prestige, the congress has given a proof of this, for everyone knows that Pablo Iglesias never ceases attacking the dictatorship of the proletariat in the columns of the bourgeois press; none the less he was appointed director of the Socialist Party organ *El Socialista*, which is now becoming definitely reformist, nearly all of its editorial staff enjoying Government posts.

On the other hand the Communist Party, Spanish Section of the Third International, founded a year ago, expects to receive into its midst within a very short time, the honest revolutionary elements which have broken away from the Reformist Party. Its organ *El Comunista*, was at first published fortnightly, then weekly, and now appears bi-weekly; in a short time it is expected to become a daily.

The next Congress of the Party will take place at Madrid in May or June. At this Congress Merino Gracia, the Party delegate to Moscow will present the report of his journey.

From another source (*Humanité* of May 4th) we learn that the Minority section of the Congress immediately assembled separately constituting themselves the Communist Labour Party of Spain. The Provincial delegates were instructed to return to their districts in order to bring about the reconstruction of the new Party, leaving at Madrid a National Organisation Committee, composed of Quejido (one of the founders of the old party), Anguiano (ex-secretary of the old party), Nunez Arenas, Virginia Gonzanex, Torralva Bece, Mancebo and Evariste Gil. The National Committee set to work actively, deciding that the Communist member of the Madrid Town Council, Garcia Cortes, should separate himself from the Socialist group of councillors.

The first number of a new weekly, entitled “The Class Struggle,” appeared on May 1st.

## Czecho Slovakia

One of the most striking events in the recent history of the movement in Czecho-Slovakia, has been the trial of the fourteen Communists accused of high treason for participation in the general strike of December, 1920. The speeches made at the trial created a great sensation amongst the Bohemian workers.

*Muna* speaking first declared that he was a Communist and a supporter of the Third International. He claimed as his own the Marxian programme.

Passing on to the details of the accusations made against him he denied that the December insurrection had been organised at Kladno. As for the charge made against him personally, of having preached the confiscation of the estates of the great landlords, all he had done was to follow out the programme of the Kramarcz-Tusar Government which had on many occasions spoken about socialising the land.

Questioned as to his attitude about sabotage in the Army, *Muna* replied that he had only carried out the mandates of this party, but that the party had not spoken of sabotage.

*Naprstec* declined all responsibility for the events of December. He declared that up to the month of June, 1918, he had been a member of the Narodni Vybor at Kladno, and had assisted in organising the overthrow of the Hapsburgs. "In this sense, certainly," he said, "I am guilty of high treason, and if I had been condemned by an Austrian justice I should have held my head upright on the scaffold."

The next speaker was *Sadmek*. He admitted having incited the proletariat to strike and to take possession of the great estates. "I see no reason," he said, "why the Communists should be obliged to continue to leave the great landed properties in the hands of the ex-Emperor Charles, or the enemies of the Czech nation, Clam-Martinec or Fuerstenberg.

Comrades *Benat* and *Macak* admitted having been members of the Revolutionary Committee; but declared that their part in the movement had been a theoretical one.

The latter made a fiery speech against the charge laid at their door, and exposed all its iniquity.

*Humanité*, 9/4/21.

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## Turkey

Returning at the end of March to Moscow M. Pavlovich, member of the Council of Action of the Eastern Peoples, gave a report of the Turkish Communist Party and the last conference of the Council of Action. At the latter conference there were present Narimanov representing the Communist Party of Azerbeidjan, the chairman of the Foreign Bureau of the Turkish Communist Party, Ismael Shaki, and a number of delegates from the revolutionary parties of Asia. It was found necessary to set up in addition to the Council of Action and Propaganda at Baku, two supplementary bureaux in Tashkent and Central Asia. It was decided to send delegations to Persia and Turkey.

At the head of the Turkish Communist Party stands a group led by Ismael Shaki and Subki, which publishes *The New World*. A number of pamphlets in Turkish have been published. There exists in addition to this party the so-called "Angora Communist Party." From the speeches and articles of its leader, Mahun Asara, it is clear that the Angora Party is only a tool in the hands of the young Turks. The members of the Angora Party persecute real Communists. According to the latest information Subki, the leader of the Turkish Communist Party, has been arrested by the Angorans.

Rosta.

## Italy

### THE WHITE TERROR.

The following article, dated April 10th, by the Rome correspondent of the *Populaire*, gives a graphic picture of the scenes which now occur almost daily in the industrial centres of Italy during the struggle between the workers and the white guards secretly organised by the Government.

The general strike which was declared at Padua, in consequence of the attack on the Deputy Pane Bianco, came to an end on the evening of April 7th. In all enterprises and factories the workers resumed work.

During the day of the 8th no incident took place. The calm was broken, however, by three young Fascisti, who had the audacity to ride through the Rue Savonarola in the working class quarter in a carriage. Here, during the riots, there had been wounded a little girl of five years old, Genevra Doborat. The street was crowded with workers, who received the three young men with stones. They then descended from their carriage and opened fire on the crowds, killing a working man of 35. It was only then that the police appeared to re-establish order.

At Venice a general strike took place to avenge the looting which had been done by the Fascisti at the railwaymen's club. A combat took place, and as always, the police came to the assistance of the Nationalists against the workers. During this conflict one man was killed and sixteen wounded. Two members of the police force were disarmed. In the afternoon the workers held a meeting in the Santa-Margherita Square and declared they would continue the strike until further orders from the railway union. The latter did not give an order for resumption of work until the Fascisti disavowed their own handiwork.

At Reggio Emilia, in consequence of a shot fired by a Socialist against a Fascist, the latter organisation attacked the Trades Council, looted it, and threw out of the windows the furniture, books, and all the documents, which were burnt. The Red flag was torn down and the national flag was hoisted in its place.

The work of destruction was continued by the sacking of the Socialist library and the burning of the office of the newspaper *Guistizie*. It was their intention to arrest the Deputy Zibordi, but in the office only the Deputy Prampolini was to be found. He was escorted to his own house by three Fascisti.

Everything was turned upside-down in the Socialist club. In the evening all the shops were closed and the theatres suspended. A general strike is expected.

*Populaire*, 12/4/21.

### *Workers' Guard for Norway*

To preserve order and thus protect the Workers' interests in strikes, demonstrations and other economic and political conflicts the Christiana Labour Party and Christiana's Federated Trades Unions establish, in co-operation, a Workers' Guard of Order. The Guardians of Order consist of:—

1. Leaders of the two co-operating organisations.
2. A representative for every 100 or part of 100 members of the Trades Unions and the party organisation.

The "Guardians of Order" have the right to elect their own leaders or Committee of Order, but until this is appointed the committees of the two co-operating organisations act as Committee of Order.

The Guardians of Order are intended to be used:

- (a) At great trade and political demonstrations.
- (b) At comprehensive strikes, lock-outs and other great trade or political conflicts.
- (c) When in a conflict a single organisation makes a request to the Committee of Order for assistance and the Committee of Order finds same justified. Otherwise it is taken for granted that in smaller trade disputes each group will arrange for the Guardians of Order it considers desirable and necessary.

All expenses to be borne in equal parts by the two co-operating organisations. The arrangements which demand expenses must first be accepted by the committees of the two organisations. In case of great expenses the case must be laid before representatives of the two organisations for consideration.

*Arbejder Bladet* (Denmark).

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### *Reaction in Yugo Slavia*

(FROM A BELGRADE LETTER).

Since December last the Belgrade Government has declared a merciless war on the Communist Party. When the miners of Bosnia and Slovenia went on strike, the Belgrade Government applied the method of Briand in 1910. It militarised the mines and mobilised the miners.

The Executive Committee of the Communist Party proclaimed a general strike of protest; whereupon the Government two days later declared that it was going to place "the forces of the State at the service of liberty and order."

Communist papers were suppressed, and their offices closed; the People's Houses of Belgrade, Zagreb, and Serajevo were occupied by the police. Finally, under the title of "Notice," the Government published a sort of "ukase," of which the following are the principal points:—

- (1) Until the vote of the Constitution, there are forbidden all revolutionary propaganda, Communist and otherwise; Communist organisations; their meetings; their papers; and all writings which have for their object to disturb public order and to propagate, to justify, or defend dictatorship or revolution.

- (2) All publications intended to criticise measures taken by the Government are forbidden.
- (3) Severe measures will be taken against agitators, whether shewing themselves openly or hiding behind an alibi.
- (4) All persons possessing arms must declare them.
- (5) During the work of the Constituent Assembly, demonstrations at Belgrade of every kind are forbidden; and offenders will be brought before courts-martial.
- (6) All foreigners having relations with fomenters of strife will be expelled.
- (7) All civil servants compromised in the Communist movement will be dismissed, and Communist students deprived of their scholarships.

After the execution of these various measures, the only opposition paper that remained was the *Republika*, the organ of the Republican Party, and the newspapers of the Radick group (the Croat-Slovene Party).

Our Comrades Pavel Pavlovich, and Dr. Simko-Markovitch, Communist deputies, went to demand from the Minister for the Interior the publication of documents justifying his accusation against the Communists of organising a plot. The Minister for the Interior replied by a refusal which is a model of its kind:

"Excuse me, gentlemen," he said, "if you desire to ruin the State I have no intention to assist you by publishing the documents in our possession, and thus indicating to you the channels by which they came to us."

Some bourgeois journals, however, did not find this reply satisfactory, and demanded proofs of the plot and all foreign influence. The Republicans organised a meeting of protest against the attitude of the Government, and demanded the publication of the documents.

The meeting was dispersed by the police.

*Humanité.*

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### *The Movement in Italy*

*Il Comunista* of March 13th publishes an appeal to the Communist Women of Italy, issued by the Communists of Turin.

It calls on the women to spread the doctrines of Communism among their friends and associates wherever possible; to encourage and inspire the men of their family to make a brave stand in the fight that is being waged in Italy. "But above all, the voices of women must be raised to affirm and demand their right to participate in the spiritual and intellectual life, which up to now has been almost totally denied to them; to participate in the political struggles which will decide their fate and future condition, and by which their future rights and duties will be largely shaped."

The Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, in conjunction with the representatives of the Communist International in the Latin countries, informs all the organisations and members of the Party that:—

(1) Everything regarding the relations and Communications with the Communist International and with the Communist Parties of other

countries must be issued exclusively through the C.E. of the Communist Party of Italy. No other way will be considered valid by the C.E. of the Communist International.

(2) Anyone presenting himself as representative of the Communist International, of the Council of the Red Trade Unions, or of the Communist Parties of other countries, without having first got in touch with the C.E. of the Communist Party of Italy and being accredited by that Party, will be looked upon with suspicion and distrust.

(3) The Communist International and the C.P. of Italy recognise and support only those periodicals and newspapers authorised and announced by the E.C. of the I.C.P. as official organs of the Party in Italy.

### *The Polish Communists and Parliamentary Elections*

The *Kurjer Polski* states that at the Second Congress of the Polish Communist Party the following resolution was passed:—

“The Congress recognises that after the struggle which began in 1919, ending in the victory of the bourgeoisie which created its own political apparatus, the Councils of workers’ deputies (Soviets) were destroyed, thanks to the combined action of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) and the government. It is the duty of the party to make use of the electoral campaign and the parliamentary platform to propagate its views and to attract the masses into the ranks of the Party.

The conference, therefore, charges the Central Committee to take the necessary steps to realise this decision in real life. It is necessary to pay particular attention to the criticism of the activity of the first parliament and the parties represented in it.

*Novy Mir*, 6/4/1921.

### *Persecution in Roumania*

The Socialist Party branches in Old Roumania and in Siebenburgen have refused to acknowledge the leaders, who have split the Party by their opposition to the Third International, and will not accept their decision. Provisional committees of workers are being set up to replace the leaders and carry on business until a national conference can be called. The Roumanian delegate to the Red Trade Union has already left for Russia.

Persecution because of participation in the general strike continues. The Trade Unions are hindered at every step. Four members of the executive of the Communist Party have been condemned to death, and thirty-three members of the Party imprisoned.

Demobilisation, first postponed, has now been cancelled. Discontent in the army is growing; the death penalty is in force for propaganda.

Six parliamentary deputies are doing hard labour; according to the law they ought to be immune from arrest. The secretary of a Socialist branch in Transylvania, who led a local general strike of one hour’s duration, has been sentenced to death. “Unofficial” organised assassination has appeared. Workers in the annexed provinces are emigrating hastily.

### *Police Methods in France*

The following is the text of a letter delivered by pneumatic post at the office of *La Vie Ouvriere* on February 14, 1921. The message was written in Russian.

" Comrade—

Please come to me as soon as possible, I shall be at home from 6.45 in the evening. I want to give you the funds and to talk to you very seriously about a comrade. Bring also the Polish papers. I cannot get them. You know my address, if you have not got it, find out from Albert.

Greetings.

Var."

Not a soul at the office either of *La Vie Ouvriere* or of "*Humanité*" knew either the writing or Albert, or what funds were spoken of.

*Vie Ouvriere.*

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### *Soviet Armenia*

The Revolutionary Committee of the Armenian Soviet Republic published on the 24th April the following decree:—

"The victorious revolution of workers and peasants has completely freed the toilers of Armenia. The appeal of the Soviet Government asking the population to take up pacific work, and to collaborate in the reconstruction of the country has been welcomed with sympathy by the popular masses of Armenia. The sympathies of the workmen, peasants and intellectual workers are the solid base on which the Soviet power is established, and assure its lasting existence.

"The Revolutionary Committee of Armenia, considering this state of affairs, has decided to add the following modifications to the decree of April 10:—

1. No pursuit will be exercised against persons, whatever their social state or profession may be, who have combatted one way or another, the Soviet Power.

2. These persons will recover all their rights.

3. All the military and civil authorities of the Armenian Soviet Republic must immediately execute this decree throughout the country, set free all these citizens or permit them to return from exile, and stop all measures of reprisals against them.

4. This decree comes into force on the day of publication, and should be, by means of telegraph, made known to all civil and military authorities.

Signed: For the president of the Revolutionary Committee of the Armenian Soviet Republic, Karsian; secretary of the Revolutionary Committee, Mrasvian."

### *Industrial Activity in Soviet Russia*

Prof. Lomonossov, of the Foreign Trade Dept., on returning to Moscow, declared to a representative of *Rosta* that the first locomotive ordered by Russia at Henschel's factory, Kassel, would be finished on the 22nd May.

By March, 1922, Russia will receive from abroad 770 locomotives whose power will be twice as great as ordinary locomotives. By next spring the number of locos will have grown by 25%. For the repair of engines actually out of use the necessary spare parts have been ordered abroad, (some having already arrived in Russia). Russia has bought some types of spares at less than pre-war prices.

On Sept. 1st a certain number of cisterns for the transportation of naphtha will have arrived at Novorossisk.

Budienny, the chief of the Red Cavalry, in an interview, gives the following sketch of the work done by his corps:—

The cavalry has sown in the Ukraine 40,000 decatins of land belonging to the poorer peasants. It has created 4,000 market-garden farms. The army workshops have repaired the agricultural tools and machines. Furthermore, the political delegates have done educational work in agricultural districts.

*Rosta*

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### *An Appeal to the International Proletariat*

(Published in the French daily *l'Humanité*).

The All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions has addressed the following appeal to the workers of all countries:—

"The fourth All-Russian Congress of Trade Union Federations held at the important moment when Russia being no longer obliged to defend herself arms in hand is putting herself to the task of the pacific reconstruction of the country, sends fraternal greetings to the workers of the whole world.

Firmly convinced that the Trade Union movement in every country will in the near future take the road of Revolution, the All-Russian Congress invites all proletarians energetically to perfect their organisations and to prepare for the coming conflict with world capital.

The working class of Soviet Russia holds solidly in its hands the Red Standard of world revolution. But it counts the days and hours until such time as the workers of the world come to its aid. The Fourth Congress invites all workers to break for ever with the social-traitors and the opportunists, and to decide for a merciless struggle against the international bourgeoisie and only to follow the road that leads straight to Proletarian Dictatorship.

Long live the Revolutionary Trade Unions of all countries!

Long live the champions of the Working Class who are languishing in bourgeois gaols!

Long live the World Revolution!"