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POLITICS

The Political Situation in Germany

By Wilhelm Bartz (Berlin).

The German situation, which is developing with exceeding rapidity, has undergone further changes since the following article was written. A further article by Comrade Bartz which appears in this issue gives the latest particulars of the crisis in Germany.

Ed.

"I am perfectly aware that I and my ministers are embarking on a vessel which is in immediate danger of being engulfed by the waves. But so long as the vessel keeps afloat the cabinet will do its utmost to maintain order and unity in the country."

(Stresemann at his interview with the trade union representatives.)

The Bankruptcy of the Ruhr Struggle.

Work is being carried on under high pressure in the ministries in the Wilhelmstrasse. One conference follows the other. Party leaders, and industrialists, representatives of the provincial governments and deputies from the Ruhr and the Rhine, trade union and press representatives—all these are negotiating with the government, or have already negotiated with it, with the object of creating a basis capable of bearing the strain of the capitulation in the Ruhr struggle declared to be unavoidable by the government. And if we are to believe the reports of the press, the government has actually succeeded in persuading the above-mentioned circles of the necessity of immediate capitulation. Stresemann himself appears, however, to be somewhat pessimistic as to the success of his endeavors. Or does the passage quoted above perchance witness to the contrary? He, the head over all, whose parliamentary routine permits him to

form a fair judgment of the negotiations and their success, is by no means enthusiastic; he is merely prepared to cling to the leaky vessel so long as it keeps afloat. And then? Well then: after us the deluge.

What has become of all the eloquent phrases uttered by Stresemann's predecessor, by Stresemann himself, and by his adjutant Sollmann? We shall hold out, cried Cuno, and the German press echoed in chorus: so long as there is a single French bayonet in the Ruhr area, so long shall we refuse to enter into negotiations! These heroes almost called forth our respect. But step by step even the Cuno government edged away from this principle, until finally the evacuation of the Ruhr valley was designated as the aim of the negotiations. But France did not let go her hold. And when Cuno was swept away by the will of the working people, the question of the evacuation of the Ruhr district hardly remained on the agenda. Negotiations at any price, cried the *Vorwärts*, the central organ of the "united" social democratic party; the Ruhr adventure must be liquidated! Germany is breaking down beneath the heavy loads imposed by the Ruhr occupation! But even at this point the pretence was kept up, the hope of at least saving German "honor" was not abandoned. The undertaking was given that passive resistance would be given up if France would promise that the banished inhabitants of the Ruhr area could return to their homes, the condemned set at liberty, and the officials deprived of their positions reinstated. But even this last hope of the ever-hopeful coalition government has been destroyed. Without even a guarantee of being able to carry on successful negotiations with France, the Stresemann-Hilferding government is now compelled to strike its colors to France. It is preparing to agree to the most humiliating capitulation.

The Stresemann-Hilferding government seeks to justify its capitulation policy in the main by arguing that to continue passive resistance would be an irresponsible action, involving the utter ruin of the finances of the country. Finance cannot be put on a sound basis until the Ruhr struggle is liquidated—so declares the government, and with these words arouses the hope that submission to France's dictates would bring about an improvement in the financial situation of the country. As little

as German finances gave scope for optimism before the Ruhr occupation, so little will the liquidation of the struggle be able to retard the rapid collapse of the mark. It is, however, true that rarely has a government of any country decided on such action with an equal degree of irresponsibility. A comparison is perhaps possible with the criminal government in office at the time of the declaration of war. This government, with its famous minister of finance Helfferich, whose name is moreover most closely bound up with Hilferding's financial reform, rushed as blindly into crime as the Cuno government. Both governments based their policy on the great principle of statesmanship which maintains that the vanquished has to pay for everything. Both, instead of thinking in the midst of the action itself about the means of raising the money to pay for it, went on pouring out all the funds they could scrape together, on the first occasion the war loans, now the banknote press. Thus billions and billions have been sunk in the Ruhr area daily. While the workers have been carrying on a heroic struggle, and are today still willing to continue it, while the workers and officials of the Ruhr area have been enduring want and privation, and every description of physical and mental suffering, conscious that the struggle for the Ruhr area is at the same time the struggle for the existence of proletarian Germany, the industrialists have been making good use of the billions placed at their disposal, and have enriched themselves in an unheard of manner! The defensive struggle ceased to exist for them in actual practice, as soon as the billions rolled in upon them. Long before Stresemann began the capitulation negotiations, the industrialists had already capitulated, or only cared for the struggle to be continued because the German government might continue to secure for them their enormous profits.

Thus nothing has been done up to now to finance this gigantic struggle, and towards covering the immense sums thrown into the lap of the big industrialists. Only the banknote press has been kept running, running in every part of Germany, throwing shoals of worthless paper into the country, and having no other effect than to accelerate the sinking of the mark, to raise the prices of goods to giddy heights, and to worsen social conditions in a catastrophic manner. In the face of these facts, how can it be maintained even for a moment that the liquidation of the Ruhr struggle could result in a betterment of our finances? Now everything which has been squandered for months with criminal frivolity will have to be paid for! And not only this. France will also present her bill of costs. And besides this, the regular reparations payments will have to be made. So that Germany's financial position will be much worse today, after the occupation of the Ruhr struggle, than it was before the Ruhr occupation. All Hilferding's financial political quackery cannot alter this fact, the less so, that a not inconsiderable sum of Reichsbank gold has been thrown away in "support" of the mark.

Security Measures of the Government. — Noske in Berlin. — A State of Siege declared? — The "Rote Fahne" prohibited.

This hopeless situation is of course recognized by the coalition government. What is there left for this "last reserve of the bourgeoisie" to do but to take the step already prepared for in the consultations with the various circles of those whose interests are at stake? It must capitulate, because it is simply unwilling and unable to organize resistance at the expense of the capitalists. Of two evils it chooses the lesser: it gives notice that the so-called Ruhr relief is to be reduced, and threatens the cessation of the financial support of the struggle. It need not be said that the carrying out of this threat would destroy the last trace of interest on the part of heavy industry for the continuation of the defensive.

Is it therefore to be wondered at that these circles have light-heartedly agreed to putting an end to the struggle by force? And the trade union representatives, the deputies from the occupied territory—the precaution having been taken of not counting among these either the communist or the oppositional social democratic deputies from the Rhine and Ruhr—what else was to be expected from them than acquiescence in the necessity of submitting to the requirements of the "higher policy of state"? They are the same flesh and blood as the government!

Everything could therefore proceed as desired. Why then this obvious pessimism on the part of Herr Stresemann, who is already, with great foresight, looking out for life-belts from the deck of his leaky vessel? He does not err very far in fearing that the sinking ship of state is not likely to withstand this fresh strain. Hence the mighty assumption of power, the pompous phraseology to the effect that "any attempt at a putsch"—such attempts are thus obviously reckoned upon—is going to be crushed "by all the force at the disposal of the state". Are we not reminded of the days of the Kapp putsch, when Noske solemnly assured

the workers that the militia was being more and more adapted to the needs of the republic? Against whom is this governmental threat intended? Perhaps against the reaction from the Right, standing ready in marching order in Bavaria, Pomerania, Westphalia; and Hannover?

The facts tell a very different story. Firstly, there are rumours abroad that the head president of the province of Hanover, Herr Gustave Noske, has been called to Berlin to consult with the government. With reference to this report the *Lohalanzeiger* speaks of the "establishment of a dictatorship". Noske—dictatorship, what more can the workers require at this juncture! Other rumours say that every preparation has already been made for declaring a state of siege. And we ask once more, against whom are these measures directed?

The reply to this is not difficult to find, for we know against whom this government has directed its forceful measures up to now. One of the first acts of the social democratic minister for home affairs, Herr Solmann, was the prohibition of the *Rote Fahne* and all its supplements. At the time when the working people swept away the Cuno government with their general strike, Herr Solmann was chosen to secure peace and quiet for the coalition government by ridding it of the unwelcome critic whose obvious truth was endangering the existence of the new government. So also as at present. Stresemann's capitulation cannot bear the light of the criticism exercised by the Left; it threatens to destroy Stresemann's plans, threatens to disclose the real facts in all their nakedness to the working people, and thereby involves the danger of depriving the government at the last moment of the "success" of its parliamentary bargain driving. Thus the *Rote Fahne* has to be prohibited again, and this time for a fortnight!

Zeigner — Gessler — an Interlude.

The suppressive measures adopted by the government are thus directed against the working people. And not merely against the communists, or why should there be members of the "United" social democracy in the government? The mouths of the critics in their own party have to be stopped as well. The prime minister of Saxony, Zeigner, a party colleague of Solmann, Hilferding, and Schmidt, had the temerity to bring his struggle against the militia minister Gessler before the Berlin district party conference. Almost the entire conference sides with him, considers his complaints justified, calls upon him to continue his struggle with redoubled energy, and passes a resolution to this effect by an overwhelming majority. And what happens? The editors of the *Vorwärts* simply desert their party comrade Zeigner, and not only fail to defend him against the attack from the press pack of the Right, but construct a "Zeigner case" out of the Gessler case, and write that "the party committee has decided to request the Prime Minister of Saxony, Dr. Zeigner (it would appear that he is no longer even worthy of the proletarian title of comrade), immediately to submit to the party committee the material upon which he bases the assertions made at the Berlin district party conference with regard to corruption in leading party circles in Berlin." Such are the strategic measures with which the *Vorwärts* and the party committees fancy they can prevent the dissolution of the party, and weaken the tremendous effect made by Zeigner's words on the social democratic workers in Berlin and far beyond Berlin.

The Agitation against Soviet Russia.

The agitation which has been renewed of late against Soviet Russia belongs to the same category of governmental official and social democratic measures. On the day following the publication of Zeigner's expositions, the whole bourgeois press—headed of course by the *Vorwärts*—printed a sensational report on the confiscation of weapons in Berlin. Two "stores of arms" had been unearthed, the communists of course suspected of having collected the weapons, and even suspicion thrown upon the Soviet Republic of having a hand in the game. The Weismann spies have again been at fault. The representatives of Soviet Russia declare definitely that no one employed by the Russian government had anything to do with the arms found. In the opinion of the embassy there are only two possibilities of explanation: Either it is a continuation of the campaign of political agitation being carried on of late in an aggravated form by various organs of the press against Russia and her representatives here, or at most it is a misleading and false combination of factors requiring detailed explanation. The embassy declares further that it is in communication with the German government for the purpose of having the matter thoroughly cleared up.

The fact that the weapons were found more than a week before Zeigner's speech, throws sufficient light on the object of publishing the report immediately after the speech was published. For Zeigner, when stating his convincing evidence for the

existence of connections between the militia and illegal reactionary organizations, pointed out that "when stores of arms belonging to the reactionaries are found, and the matter has been put into the hands of the police and criminal law, then we see again and again that the prosecution dribbles gradually away, proceedings are stopped, those arrested are released—and all because the accused are able to maintain that they have been acting in agreement with the government of the country". Such severe accusations as these can only be combatted by a manoeuvre calculated to divert attention. Hence the sensationally got up report of the discovery of alleged stores of communist weapons, hence the agitation against Soviet Russia, which had just succeeded in greatly winning the sympathies of the workers during this period of Ruhr liquidation.

It is in this manner that German social democracy continues to work even in the hour of the greatest danger, and seeks to destroy the united front of the proletariat at the last moment. Instead of calling upon the working people to join in the common battle against the Ruhr crime, against reaction in Germany, it becomes a partner in guilt with those causing the impending events, and does not even shrink from openly supporting reaction.

Now there is no more hide and seek, no more deception in Germany. The state of affairs is such that the reactionary organizations are burning to establish their rule. The German national party leader Hergt, has already spoken of readiness to undertake the government, and the pan-German Herr Wulle is already dreaming of occupying the post of President of Police in Berlin. From Bavaria we hear of the leader of the "Reichsflagge"—one of the innumerable White organizations—declaring with Ludendorff's approval, that the "national revolution" is desired, and that everything is in readiness to "solve the German question in Berlin by the aid of Bavarian fists". The Stresemann-Hilferding government has made all preparations for the bloody suppression of any rising on the part of the proletariat, and it will find ready aid from all reactionary elements in this work.

What are the working class to do? Despite the machinations of the social democratic leaders, the workers must close their ranks to form a mighty defensive phalanx against which the onslaught of reaction will rush in vain. The Communist Party of Germany has won the sympathies of the workers everywhere; it will speedily find an opportunity of showing itself worthy of the confidence placed in it.

Fascists and Communists in Germany

By R. Alperi (Paris).

"Hooked cross and Soviet Star hit it off well together. Count Reventlow and Karl Radek understand each other beautifully. Moscow corruption and the Adventurers of German Reaction have concluded a shameful alliance against Democracy. Tartaric Bolshevism, transformed into German nationalism, is whetting its dagger in order to deal a thrust at the innocent Republics of Leon Blum and Ebert, of General Degoutte and Comrade Noske." This is what one constantly reads in the *Vorwärts* and in the *Populaire*.

The German social democrats, equally with the socialists of France would gladly rest on their laurels of Versailles. The only care of the German social democracy is that of saving capitalism, which is so seriously threatened in its country, while the French socialists think of nothing else but the bloc of the left and of the approaching elections. The German communists, on the other hand, are concerned with the famine conditions, with the Fascist counter-revolution and with Entente Imperialism. Every day they hear the cry of misery of the famished millions. Every day poor people are being shot down by the security police. Every day the oppression increases. Thousands of workers are under arrest. It is under these circumstances that the German communists are creating the Party of revolution and they must also take up an attitude towards Fascism. Our tactics with regard to Fascism have already got successes to record. It was but six months ago that, here and there, Fascism was penetrating the ranks of the working class. The Ruhr occupation and the resulting wave of nationalism gave it a powerful impetus. Today it is true that Fascism has not yet been vanquished, but its progress has been arrested. Today it is no longer national socialist anti-Semitic demagoguery which is making progress among the working class, but the reverse: our revolutionary propaganda is making headway among the proletarianized middle classes. While German Fascism is dividing into two

camps: i. e., the Pan-German and the Separatist, the uniting of the proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany is being accomplished at a continually increasing rate. The Soviet Star is gaining a decided ascendancy over the Hooked Cross.

It is characteristic that the Anniversary of the battle of Sedan (September 2) was a complete failure for Fascism. It is equally characteristic that, after several discussions with communist speakers, the National Socialist Labor Party, in its organ the *Völkische Beobachter*, on August 14 formally forbade the party members to hold discussions with the communists. The public debates which Comrade Remmele had with the Fascist speakers in Stuttgart on August 2 and 10 have, just like the articles of Radek, gone the rounds of the whole of reactionary German arming for the civil war.

If one reads through the little pamphlet in which are assembled the anti-Fascist speeches of Comrade Remmele, one sees that it is only through stupidity or by wilful distortion that national Bolshevism can be imputed to the Communist Party of Germany. Remmele said to the Fascists: You combat the Jewish capitalists. That is right. But you must also fight against Stinnes, Krupp and Thyssen. And thus Remmele compelled his anti-Semitic audience to acknowledge the class struggle. He further said to them: You fight against the workers because it is to the interest of the great capitalists to hound on the middle classes against the proletariat. And he compelled his reactionary hearers to espouse the united front of all the exploited. You are patriots, exclaimed the speaker to them, and he showed them how the German heavy industry is linked up with French capitalism, to whom it makes over its manufacturing secrets as in the case of the Baden Aulne factory. Remmele demanded of the Fascists: Who of you will give his life for German capitalism? And he received the answer "No one!" With regard to foreign politics, Remmele pointed out: Starving Germany can only be free when it has shaken off the yoke of German capitalism. The Versailles Treaty will only be set aside when there is no longer a capitalist Germany. A people have already shown us how it has freed itself, i. e. the people of Soviet Russia. The national unity of Germany has no other support than the international labor movement.

The communist speaker told the Würtemberg Fascists of André Marty and of the proletariat of France which will bring forward thousands of Martyrs in the event of the French armies being sent against the German revolution. In their discussions with the Fascists, the German communists have not made the least concession. One can read the speeches of Remmele and there will also not be found the least concession nor the least concealment. In order to conduct their lying propaganda, the social democrats of Germany and France have had to distort the words and falsify the facts. They are compelled to preserve silence over the fact that the German communists throughout the whole of Germany are organizing armed resistance against Fascism. The Fascist movement grows out of the impoverishment of the middle classes, and out of the revulsion of the masses from pacifism and reform socialism. Fascism is in a position to summon against the proletariat, millions of desperate people who hate socialism because they have been deceived by the reformists. In Germany, Fascism is the last reserve of Capitalism. If it should succeed in bringing ten million men from the middle classes on the side of heavy industry, of the police and of the Reichwehr, it would constitute a fearfully reactionary power.

But the German communists have got their grip on Fascism and have attacked it in its most vulnerable spots: its absurd ideology, the conscious double-tongued policy of its leaders, its anti-democratic tendencies. The Ruhr occupation produced a mighty wave of nationalism in Germany. The Communists have succeeded in arresting this movement, and partially, even to convert it into a revolutionary factor. Instead of Hitler and Ludendorff dragging the workers into a war of revenge, the communists have neutralized a considerable portion of the middle classes in the interests of revolutionary internationalism, which alone can bring peace to the peoples.

Where otherwise Hindenburg would have been lauded and acclaimed, there now resound the cheers and plaudits for Marty.

The New Fiume Crisis

By R. A.

Mussolini's foreign policy is drifting towards a Balkan war. Italy's strife with Greece has found its complement during the last few days in Mussolini's conflict with Yugoslavia. The disagreement which has arisen concerns, at the present juncture, the possession of the port of Fiume. But behind this there is the

determination of Italian imperialism to rule alone on the coasts of the Adriatic, and thus to cut Yugoslavia off from the sea again.

The strife between Italy and Yugoslavia for the possession of Fiume first led to the Rapallo treaty, signed on November 12, 1920. The treaty laid down that the hotly contested Fiume should belong to neither Italy nor Yugoslavia, but should become a small independent state. In this treaty both states undertake to recognize the complete freedom and independence of Fiume "for ever"! The exact frontiers of the neutral state of Fiume, as well as its economic and financial relations, were to be settled by a mixed commission. The commission was to be composed of representatives from Italy and from Yugoslavia. In the case of differences of opinion the president of the Swiss republic was to act as arbitrator.

The Rapallo treaty did not, however, in any way clarify the Fiume affair. Violent disputes at once arose about the frontiers of Fiume. The question arose as to whether the eastern suburb of Fiume, Suschak, and also the adjacent harbour of Baro, were to belong to Fiume or to Yugoslavia. And again, the economic and financial question remained unsettled, despite years of negotiations. Besides all this, the Italian Fascisti sabotaged any real activity on the part of the Fiume free state government, in order to demonstrate the necessity of Italian intervention in the town.

During the period immediately following his *coup d'état*, Mussolini adopted an exceedingly conciliatory attitude towards Yugoslavia. On February 22 of this year he concluded the treaty of Santa Margherita with Yugoslavia. In this treaty Italy undertook to evacuate Suschak, and this place was given over to the Yugoslavs on March 3. Further, a new commission was formed for the final settlement of the other questions relating to the free state of Fiume. The ordination contained in the Rapallo treaty, according to which the president of the Swiss republic should act as arbitrator in cases of differences of opinion between the Italian and Yugoslavian members of the commission, was revived again. Recently, however, Mussolini's tone towards the Yugoslavian government has greatly altered. The Italian proposals on the future of Fiume were actually tantamount to the annexation of this town by Italy. When the Belgrade government naturally expressed its disagreement with this, Mussolini presented it with an ultimatum to the effect that he would solve the Fiume question entirely on his own account if the commission should have arrived at no agreement by September 15. Mussolini's ultimatum is a direct breach of the agreements of 1920 and 1923, both of which provided for differences of opinion being referred to the president of the Swiss republic. Mussolini completely ignored these agreements, and—as is already well known—set up an Italian military government in Fiume after the expiration of his ultimatum.

Yugoslavia possesses a powerful army, and is supported politically by the Little Entente. Mussolini will therefore not be able to dispose of his Yugoslavian opponent so easily as he did the Greeks. The Yugoslavian bourgeoisie will not surrender the important port of Fiume and is well aware that Italian imperialism will become more and more avaricious if it sees its adversary retreating. The Yugoslavian government is, however, in no very belligerent mood, having difficulties enough at home. The ruling bourgeois clique of Yugoslavia is only maintaining a precarious existence by means of brutal suppression of the working class, and by persecuting the opponents of centralism in Croatia, Slovenia, etc. The Yugoslavian government would, therefore, rather avoid the hazards of war at the moment. To this must be added the likelihood of Italy, in a passage of arms with Yugoslavia, finding allies in the Bulgaria of Zankoff and the Hungary of Horthy.

But the situation possesses its own logic. The crisis in Italian Fascism drives Mussolini upon the path of a violent foreign policy, and there is a limit beyond which even the ruling Yugoslavian bourgeoisie cannot retreat. Meanwhile the frontiers of Yugoslavia are threatened by Bulgarian-Macedonian bands. The Zankoff government, maintaining its position with ever increasing difficulty against the rising indignation of the Bulgarian workers and peasants, seems to be inclined to deal with the danger of revolution in the best Mussolini style, by means of national adventures. It is clear that a new Balkan war—apart from its effects in other parts of Europe—would aggravate the class war to the utmost in all the countries concerned, and would offer far reaching revolutionary possibilities. The reactionary governments of South and South Eastern Europe, who believe that they can lay the ghost of revolution by war, will encounter it most surely along this path.

The French Reparations Profiteers and the Deception practised on the War Victims of North France

By Robert Chenevier (Paris).

The unwearied criticism directed by the C.P. of France against the reparation policy pursued by Poincaré and the Comité des Forges is compelling even non-communist circles in France to devote serious attention to these problems. Thus, the Parisian periodical *Le Progrès Civique*, which is solid for the Left bloc, published in its issue of September 15 an article by Robert Chenevier, entitled: "The war sufferers should know how their interests are being sacrificed by the great reparation profiteers." We print the statements of Chenevier below, which form a striking confirmation of what the communists on both sides of the Rhine have hitherto maintained with regard to the reparation frauds.

When the gentlemen of the Comité des Forges are told that they are the real originators of the treaty of Versailles, and that this treaty is being executed under their supervision, they protest with great indignation. They say: "But we are not the government; there is a minister for foreign affairs and a prime minister. And if the government acts wrongly, we are not to blame." We wish to oppose two points to this assertion. 1. The economic provisions of the Versailles Treaty, especially the paragraphs referring to reparations, are being utilized by certain magnates of French industry to their extreme limits, to a degree utterly scandalous and insolent; 2. these same industrialists have done everything in their power to prevent others, i. e. the war sufferers, from receiving the reparations to which they believed they had a right.

Let us first consider the deliveries of coal as required by the Versailles Treaty. Germany had destroyed our collieries in the North by force; justice demanded that she made good this loss. The first thing which should have been done was to ascertain the extent of the damage. So and so many collieries are to be put in order again, such and such a number of machines are to be repurchased, the total amounts to so much. The French state has advanced sums for repairing these damages, and it cannot be denied that the industrialists participating have received very generous treatment. To take one example only: The Anzin Co., which possessed a capital of 12 millions, has received 343 as compensation.

But there is still another description of reparations. Germany has to pay compensation for the reduced output of coal caused by the destruction of the French mines. In 1913, these collieries produced twenty seven million tons, in 1920, eleven million. Germany would thus have had to deliver 16 million tons of coal in this year, and the compulsory deliveries would have diminished in proportion to the restoration of the French mines. But the Versailles peace does not concern itself with such principles of justice; the influence determining the articles of the treaty referring to deliveries of coal is that of the French coal barons. Here it is not a question of reparation, but of loot.

It is true that Germany has not delivered everything which the treaty demands. But still Germany delivered 14 million tons of coal to France in 1920. In 1921: 11 million, and in 1922: 12 million. If the coal output of the Saar district be added to this, we find the total amount of coal to exceed 20 million tons annually, much more than the difference between the French coal output for the year 1913 and the post-war output. The German coal deliveries have not only covered this difference, but have also satisfied the latest requirements of the Comité des Forges, and have moreover, caused such an accumulation of coal that in 1921 the French heavy industrialists did not know what to do with the whole of the Saar coal, and 3½ million tons of this were exported in that year. Heavy industry has thus reaped immense profits from the Versailles Treaty.

And not only heavy industry. The chemical industry has been treated with equal generosity. One can hardly speak of reparation with reference to the chemical industry of France, as this industry scarcely existed in 1914. What chemical factories have been destroyed? To what extent have the chemical industrial interests been injured? But the peace treaty enacts that the French chemical industry is to receive 50% of the chemical production of Germany in the year 1919, and 25% in each of the years following. Up to the 31. December 1922 the value of the dyes delivered by Germany amounted to 12 million gold marks. A very tidy sum when reduced to paper francs.

This same peace treaty, which so zealously protects the interests of the great undertakings, gives little heed to the sufferers in poorer circumstances. The peace treaty contains scarcely

a word regarding the peasants in the North and East of France, whose fruit trees were cut down and whose fields were devastated. Against this it will be urged: but even if the peace treaty does not concern itself much with this class of sufferers, the government is providing for them. Think of the Wiesbaden agreement, and the Gillet-Rupel contract! These two agreements were intended to bring about direct deliveries of materials from Germany. But the big industrialists have taken great care that these agreements brought nothing to the medium and small sufferers, for the actual execution of such contracts would have entailed competition against the national industry, and would have somewhat curtailed the privileges of those who regard the devastated districts as a "colony"—this term has actually been used. This danger had to be removed.

When the question arose of lowering the duty to be paid on the German productions to be supplied to the war sufferers, then the "consulting committee for trade and industry" fought violently against any such reduction. And who is the head of this committee? Mr. Robert Pinot, the general secretary of the Comité des Forges! The *Journée Industrielle*, the organ of big industry, also combatted the idea of payments in kind with the utmost energy, the deliveries of coal and coke of course excepted. The result is as follows. In accordance with the Versailles Treaty, France in 1922 could have made requisitions in Germany to the value of 600 million francs. As an actual fact France, in this year, only received goods and materials to the value of 209 million, although Germany was perfectly ready to execute the orders to the extent agreed upon.

But there are even better things to come. The Gillet-Rupel contract afforded the war sufferers the possibility of receiving payments in kind in a highly convenient business form. The advantages of this contract were originally intended only to apply to France. Later on the agreement was extended to Belgium, Roumania, and Portugal. Up to the 31. March 1922 these four countries remitted orders to the following values on the basis of the contract:

France 604 orders, value	6,815,000 gold marks
Belgium 161 orders, value	7,785,000 " "
Portugal 28 orders, value	21,600,000 " "
Roumania 40 orders, value	28,640,000 " "

Of these four countries, France will be seen to have placed orders for the least amounts, although she was the originator of the Gillet-Rupel agreement.

It is as well to remember that the people who clamour loudest as to the necessity for reparations are the same who are doing their utmost to prevent the Germans from really paying reparations. The payments in kind, which would have been so useful for the restoration of our ruins, have been sabotaged at the instigation of our big industry. The interests of the whole community? This is nothing to the big industrialists. Their slogan is: self first, second and third. Why should these gentlemen make a secret of it? They have the force, the might and the money. The sufferers may content themselves with the justice of their cause, and with—sympathy.

The Famine Hells of the French Military Prisons

By André Marty (Paris).

It is noon, the bell rings, and the silent throng of prisoners enters the great refectory. Each carries in his hand the piece of black bread (600 gr.) which he received in the morning. They take their basins and sit down on the benches. Each man empties his basin greedily, though this is merely half full of turbid water with a few pieces of vegetables floating about in it, a mixture unfit to be offered to an animal. Since the spring of 1922 the prisoners have received an additional piece of bread with their dinner, as the condemned soldiers had been too greatly weakened by their long imprisonment. After eating, the prisoners leave the room again. For supper there are inedible dried vegetables. On Thursdays, and on Sundays and holidays, the prisoners receive a piece of meat for supper in place of this. It may easily be imagined what kind of meat this is. The prisoners can earn additional food by special industry. The administration of the prison pays them wages for their work, if but meagre ones. Of these wages the state claims 50 to 70%. One half of the remainder may be expended by the prisoners for buying food in the canteen. The unhappy prisoners work to the utmost of their capacity in order to obtain a few potatoes or 40 gr. of bad margarine. The wages are so low that there is no possibility of receiving sufficient food to recuperate to any extent.

Only those who have endured constant hunger can conceive what the prisoners suffer during these years. To get up

hungry, to work hungry, to be hungry after eating, to be hungry all night and to dream of proper meals. These soldiers from the "war of justice" are always hungry, and one glance at their wasted forms suffices to show what they suffer. But the well nourished officials pass them by without any feeling of shame, though these are prisoners who have already paid with six or seven years of hell for having once forgotten the civil law for a moment.

Here in the prisons as everywhere else, the activity of the notorious Clemenceau has signified death. It was he who made the punishment of starvation into an intolerable torment to the prisoners. In 1911 and 1918 the ration of almost uneatable black bread was reduced to 300 gr. in the course of ten months. The canteen practically did not exist at all. At that time there were many frightful scenes in the prisons. The prisoners even ate the leaves of trees when they could obtain these. Death found a generous harvest. Under these circumstances the slightest illness had a fatal effect. During this period 200 prisoners died out of 1600 at Clairvaux. In 191 of these cases even the official register of the hospital admits that they died of starvation. To these must be added the many whose weak condition caused them to succumb to tuberculosis. And such things happened in the middle of France; in Nimes and Rouen, in Poissy, Melun and Clairvaux. But no prison governor uttered a word of protest against this shameful system! In the spring of 1918 a number of these military prisoners were brought to the vicinity of Paris for the purpose of building fortifications. The railwaymen will doubtless remember transporting these soldiers, men in ragged uniforms who threw themselves like wolves on anything eatable. Americans regarded this spectacle with something of the air with which they would have looked on at the feeding of the lions in the Zoological Gardens. These Americans would then be able to retail to their countrymen the beauties of French culture.

It may be thought that I am exaggerating, and I can understand this. Only those who have themselves been in prison, and have seen with their own eyes these disgraceful deeds of the republican government, whose whole course of action is determined by class hate, will understand that in what I have said there is no exaggeration. The existing system ruthlessly crushes every human being who dares to rebel, to threaten the sacred cash box.

Once more I appeal to all comrades who have been liberated. In Clairvaux despair has reigned for 14 months. The prisoners are asking: "What are they doing outside? Have they forgotten us? The workers cannot have any idea of what we are suffering. If they knew it, they would have broken open our prisons."

All of you who have been in these accursed places must relate again and again what you have seen there! Every discharged prisoner must be a centre of propaganda. The whole proletariat must know what is going on in these prisons. And if you meet the chosen representatives of the "sovereign" people, ask them why they grant no amnesty! These bought hypocrites must be ruthlessly unmasked. Hypocrites like these do not venture to have the prisoners openly shot, but rather let them slowly die of starvation. Workers, how much longer will you permit these miscreants to murder your brothers?

Recognition of Soviet Russia as an Issue in the United States

By I. Amler.

"If the United States is waiting for the Soviet Government to fall, it will wait a long time. So it might as well recognize Russia now as later." This was the message that Senator Wheeler, of Montana, took back to the United States from a visit to Soviet Russia in May of this year. Mr. Bush, chairman of the New York Chamber of Commerce, who also was recently in Soviet Russia, stated that closer economic relations between Russia and America would be of great mutual benefit. He laid down what he considered the bases for the resumption of economic relations between the two countries.

During the month of July a group of United States senators and prominent industrialists were in Moscow. Among them were ex-secretary of the Interior Fall, Mr. Sinclair, chairman of the Sinclair Oil Corporation, and Mr. M. Day, president of the International Barnsdall Corporation. It is clear that the latter two men are interested chiefly in Russia's oil. Nevertheless, Sinclair stated that "American public opinion is more and more inclining towards the recognition of Russia, and this may still force the government to renew relations with the latter; though this in any case will be the result of a Progressive victory".

Not only is a large part of the American people inclining towards the recognition of Soviet Russia, but recognition is becoming an issue. The influx of prominent public men of America to Soviet Russia is not a matter of chance, it is not the desire to obtain a summer vacation in the Caucasus. The question of economic relations with Soviet Russia is one of the questions of the day in America. It is one of the questions that are dividing the ranks of the bourgeoisie and of the workers. It will be one of the issues of the coming electoral campaign, if it is not settled before.

It is not generally known that six European and four Eastern governments have granted de jure recognition and established semi-normal diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia. Trading relations have been established with seven other European countries. Japan is in negotiation with the Soviet Government regarding treaty relations. Influential circles in France are working for opening negotiations between Russia and France.

In June, M. Duverget, when in Moscow, stated that he hoped that the commercial interests that he represents would be able to induce the French Government to resume economic and, later, political relations with Soviet Russia.

For some time, Senator Borah has been conducting widespread propaganda in the United States for the recognition of Soviet Russia. As a matter of course, his meetings have been attended by radicals and liberals but it has been noticed that even the conservative press has taken a sympathetic attitude toward them. That he did not stand alone was to be noted in the number of progressive senators and representatives who have come to visit Soviet Russia. Senator Ladd, a member of the Progressive Bloc, accompanied by Senator King, Democratic Senator of Utah, and Mr. Frear, Congressman from Wisconsin, recently were in Soviet Russia, but were silent about recognition. All of the visitors, without exception, expressed their astonishment at the progress that has been made in Soviet Russia in the past year and the stability of the government—a good augur of recognition. Several were interested in Baku oil—further reasons for economic relations and recognition.

What is the basis for the movement in favor of relations with and recognition of Soviet Russia by the United States? The oil industrialists and the farmers are highly interested in Soviet Russia; so also are the machine manufacturers. The interest of the oil industrialists needs no explanation. The competition between England and America, in particular, for the oil resources of Europe is very keen. By the so-called "treaty" of Lausanne, England and France have been beaten, and America is making a separate treaty with the Turkish government. Morally France and England won, but practically, Turkey remained in possession of the oil wells of the Mosul, the transfer of which to American oil magnates for exploitation she is now negotiating. The oil wells of Russia are alluring. Recently the Standard Oil Co. had to negotiate with a California oil producer for the delivery of 36,000,000 barrels of oil. The race is sharp—and Soviet Russia is taking her time; oil becomes more valuable from day to day.

The farmers have a peculiar interest: there is a glut of wheat on the American market. America's best customer, Germany, is unable to purchase a large share of the surplus that is worrying the American farmer. The situation is so serious that the American farmers are endeavoring to devise some method whereby 200,000,000 bushels of wheat may be removed from the American market this year. Prices are far below the cost of production. Russia is now beginning to invade the European market. Russian wheat is far cheaper than American wheat. Little by little, the European market, which had become largely the property of the American farmer, is being and will be threatened by the Russian peasant. A short time ago, the fear was expressed that American farming would not be able to supply even the American market. The outlook is for an overproduction for some years to come, unless the American farmer deliberately limits production. There is, however, another method: to come to an agreement with the Russian farmer, delimiting their mutual spheres. This presupposes recognition of the Soviet Government de jure or de facto. In any case, it is obvious that the American Government, through which the farmers will have to act, will be obliged to give the Soviet Government, through which the Russian peasant acts, some compensation for restricting her market. Hence the widespread demand among the American farmers for the recognition of Soviet Russia.

There is another element among the farmers, an honest element that believes in fair play. They are the poorer farmers, who today are suffering from the depredations of Wall Street. They sympathize with the Russian peasants and, being opposed to the present regime in the United States, both Republican and

Democratic (which has given rise to independent political action of the farmers and workers), demand that Soviet Russia be recognized.

Producers of big machinery are interested in Soviet Russia, since they recognize the vast market that Russia represents. This conviction is not limited to American manufacturers. On August 2, Premier Baldwin said in the House of Commons: "The largest potential market in Europe is Russia. Sooner or later that market will be open, and the German exports will go largely into Russia because in the past Germany has been the country most familiar with trading with Russia and the most competent to conduct it." The hopes of crushing Soviet Russia having been abandoned, the capitalist governments are now eager to capture the Russian market. They recognize the disadvantages that they must submit to, but the necessity of securing a further market for the tremendous production that is taking place in all industrial countries, is inducing them to accept many disadvantages that otherwise they would oppose.

Thus there is a big element that is interested in the recognition of Soviet Russia and is making insistent demands that such action be taken. It is obvious that economic interests will be the chief factors in forcing the recognition of Soviet Russia. The strength of these interests is growing and they are backed by a large section of the working class. There is a committee called the National Labor Alliance for Trade Relations with and Recognition of Soviet Russia, which is made up of influential trade union leaders. Borah has held several very successful meetings under the auspices of this organization. In addition, large labor bodies have endorsed the idea: among the latest advocates is the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, one of the largest State labor organizations in the United States. The Federated Farmer Labor Party, which was recently organized in Chicago, also endorsed recognition.

The lines are being clearly drawn both between the two flanks of the bourgeoisie and of the workers. Just previous to the departure of Senators Ladd and King to Soviet Russia, Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, and an enemy of Soviet Russia from the very beginning, addressed a letter to them, pointing out the fearful deeds of the Soviet Government. Not only does it aim to destroy the American Labor Movement by sending revolutionists into the country to revolutionize the unions, he declares, but it also plots against the American Government, intending to supplant it with a Soviet Government. This, honest workers like Mr. Gompers cannot tolerate. After accusing the Soviet Government of various other offences, and displaying an ignorance of Russian conditions that even a school-boy would not be guilty of today, Gompers asked the American senators to procure information on eight diverse subjects.

In most recent times, Gompers has given sufficient evidence of his "interest in the Russian people". Only a short time ago, he threatened to expel the Seattle and Minnesota central labor bodies, among other reasons, for favoring the recognition of Soviet Russia.

Gompers gave Secretary of State Hughes occasion to express an official opinion on the question of Soviet Russia; Hughes remains immovable in the matter of recognition: the American Government will not and cannot recognize the Soviet Government. Making the usual charges that have bored the world for the past six years, Mr. Hughes gives utterance to such a profound knowledge of events and facts that a short quotation from his statement would not be inappropriate. "A new constitution has just now been promulgated, providing in effect for the continuance of the regime of the 1917 coup d'état under a new title. The constitution, it is understood, contains no bill of rights, and the civil liberties of the people remain insecure. There is no press except the press controlled by the regime, and the censorship is far reaching and stringent. Labor is understood to be still at the mercy of the State. While membership in official unions is no longer obligatory, workmen may not organize or participate in voluntary unions."

Official, conservative Washington has spoken—and the challenge is being accepted. The official position of the American Federation of Labor has been announced, and the progressive and radicals are out to contest it. Recognition of Soviet Russia is the issue!

However, one feature of the situation is remarkable: United States Senators and Congressmen, prominent business men and the president of a Chamber of Commerce, manifest sympathy with and understanding of Soviet Russia, while Samuel Gompers, professed labor leader, combats not only Soviet Russia, but also who support her. Senator Brookhart, however, answered eight questions that Gompers addressed to Senators King and Ladd. Among the frank statements in support of Soviet Russia, Brookhart said: "The Russian press is practically free. Its

opposition to the government is negligible. No one wants to start an opposition paper. It would receive no support. Peasants and laboring people are all united for the present government. No decent foreign correspondent is censored. So long as he does not attempt untruthful propaganda there is no censorship.

"The workmen are organized and there are very few 'scabs' such as Gompers encounters here. It is a workingmen's government and the laboring classes are 99% per cent in favor of the existing government and they are all in the unions."

Brookhart is against the form of elections, he dislikes the fact that the former Czarists are not allowed to vote. But he categorically demands the immediate recognition of the Soviet regime.

While on his tour in the West, Harding likewise declared against recognition. Economic and political conditions, however, favor the progressive group: not only the United States, but the other European capitalist governments will be obliged to renew relations with Soviet Russia within the near future. It will be a disastrous step: it will mean a strengthening of the very forces that are leading to the disintegration of capitalism. But as Baldwin said, "the largest potential market in Europe is Russia", and that is the basis of the philosophy and morality of capitalist governments. The progressives have a winning issue: they declare they will force it in America and win.

The Position in Germany

By Wilhelm Bartz.

Berlin, October 3, 1923.

Events in Germany are developing more rapidly than we can follow them; but they are developing in the direction already indicated by us. Things are veering violently to the right. Kahr rules in Bavaria. He is said to have taken over the government. This report is, however, denied. And what need is there for a change of government? Kahr has only to whistle and all the authorities, including those of the Reichswehr, will obey his call. The latest is that he has had one of the members of the social democrat defense units arrested, because he is said to have molested the national socialists. The harmless occupation of the old portion of the town of Küstrin, appears now, according to the more recent official reports, to be a concerted Putsch plan. The guilelessly designated "national communist bands", of which the first official reports spoke, turn out now to be the "Steel Helm" people who, on the Oder and the Havel and in other places, wished to launch an attack on the 1st of October. The bomb has exploded prematurely.

A number of reckless spirits find themselves in custody. In North Germany the military dictatorship continues. Such measures of freedom as had hitherto existed for the working people were to be entirely done away with by an authorization law, which would empower the government to render invalid, by means of special orders, such laws as the eight hour day law. Behind this authorization law stood the social democratic ministers, as well as the ministers of the People's Party, but not, however, the parties from which these ministers came. The German People's Party was, of course, heart and soul for this law. But it demanded that it be carried through by a government in which the German Nationals, that is, the rightest of the right, should be represented. Nay, more. It demanded that these German Nationals should supplant the social democratic ministers. The social democrats would not immediately consent to this act of suicide. They stood by their ministers; in fact, as an answer to this thrust from the right, they were going to support a motion of the communists which demanded the setting aside of the state of siege in Bavaria, which meant the destruction of the legal cloak for the dictatorship. Hence the crisis. This ended, as was not otherwise to be expected, with a compromise. The social democrats gave way.

A cabinet meeting which lasted until the early hours of the morning deliberated on the situation. Up to the time when these lines are given into the press the position is as follows. That in the Bavarian question, the social democrats will vote against the communist motion demanding the abolition of the state of siege. The social democrats agree to swallow the authorization law which will endow the government of the Republic with extraordinary powers, provided that this law shall not remain in force to the 31st March 1924, but only so long as the present cabinet is in office. With regard to the setting aside of the eight hour day law, it is stated that "a formula has been found to which all the coalition parties could consent. In the event of the resignation of the Food Minister for the Republic,

Dr. Luther, which up to the present moment has not yet been finally confirmed, the social democrats will assent to this post being filled by a nominee of the agrarians.

The state of confusion obtaining in the social democratic Reichstag fraction is continually increasing. The fraction has held sittings lasting for hours, without coming to any final decision. The leader of the fraction, Hermann Müller, runs to the Reichschancellor, makes a report and the fraction then continues its deliberations. The opposition which has hitherto existed in the fraction is being augmented by all those who have stood behind the Finance Minister for the Republic, Hilferding, whom they do not yet wish to be allowed to fall.

This government crisis only marks a small stage in the great march to the right, which in turn is determined by the outer and inner situation. Poincaré is obdurate. The result is an increase in bitterness which seeks to find vent in a national struggle for liberation. The financial and economic crisis is becoming more acute. The discontent is to be held in check by bayonets.

The overwhelming mass of the workers do not as yet see this clearly. The ruling classes are deliberately steering in this direction. They even venture to make such an attempt.

ECONOMICS

The End of Hilferding's Financial Dictatorship

By E. Ludwig (Berlin).

The Stresemann-Hilferding government is a government of capitulation at home and abroad. Stresemann as Chancellor capitulates abroad to Poincaré. Hilferding as Minister for Finance capitulates to German heavy industry, which is already fraternizing with French heavy capital.

The new currency project just made public by Hilferding puts the hall mark on this capitulation. It is the confession of the collapse of the financial dictatorship of the new cabinet announced with so much clamour. It is the victory of the heavy capitalist tax saboteurs over the working people, a victory won with the aid of the Grand Coalition.

The plan, regarded superficially, may appear feasible. It is based on one of the fundamental premises of any currency reform: the cessation of banknote printing as a medium for covering the limitless credit requirements of the Reich. The Reichsbank is to discount no more treasury bills, and may not issue new notes on the basis of these. It is to become a purely gold note bank, as it was before the war.

The aim in view is perfectly clear. But what is not so clear is where the gold is to come from if Hilferding, who was going to start a foreign bill and gold fund, continues daily to squander the Reichsbank gold in supporting the mark on the Exchange. Here is the first reef upon which the whole plan of renewed financial solvency will suffer shipwreck, even if everything else should go well.

But the road to the goal at which Hilferding aims is extremely long. And on this road he runs into the outstretched arms of Helfferich and Stinnes. How is the credit of the country to be covered, if the Reichsbank does this no longer? That is the question.

In reply, Hilferding puts forward the idea of the currency bank. This is also to issue notes—real value notes—intended to absorb the paper money now degraded to the office of small change, and to satisfy the paying requirements of the Reich. In order to prevent the old paper money swindle from being continued under a new name, the stable value of these notes is to be ensured by a "gold levy on private enterprise (agriculture, industry, commerce, and banks)". This gold obligation is to amount to about 5% of the wealth assessed for the purpose of the defence levy. Besides this, a new property levy assessment is proposed for the end of this year. The gold obligation itself consists of a levy of gold, foreign bills and precious stones.

And, finally, we have the seizure of real values. Without civil war, without a workers' and peasants' government, Hilferding appears to have accomplished this by the charm of his personality alone. But let us look at the matter a little more closely. Hilferding's currency bank, divested of all Hilferding's theoretical phraseology, is identical with the rye note bank proposal of Helfferich, combined with the note bank proposal of the Stinnes general manager Friedrich Minoux, the self-appointed guide of German economics.

Helfferich and Minoux, despite the difference of their propositions, are agreed that annuity bonds should be employed

to cover the notes issued by their banks, secured by a guarantee given by agrarian and industrial great capital. According to Helfferich, this guarantee is to be given principally by agrarian capital, which would thus get the currency of the country into its hands in the interests of the recipients of ground rent. Minoux's idea is to put the annuity certificates at the disposal of the Reich, which is to sell them to big capital. The motive for the purchase of annuity bonds for gold, foreign bills and precious stones, is to consist in having interest paid on these bonds by the Reich to the value of 10%, and in their being exempt from taxation. We see, therefore, that all those who ran away from the worthless paper mark, and invested the proceeds of their fortunate speculations in foreign bills, gold and pearls, treasures bringing in no interest at the present time, are to be rewarded by the country for having energetically contributed to the destruction of the German standard, and for as energetically contributing to its restoration at the expense of the broad masses.

Helfferich declares with brutal candour that the giving of the guarantee for the annuity bonds is to be taken as an equivalent for all the taxes on property resolved upon by the Reichstag 7 weeks ago in a sudden fit of patriotism. Minoux and Hilferding attain the same end in a more roundabout way: by exempting the annuity certificates from taxation and by paying interest on them.

Hilferding, to be sure, in his official announcement of the new plan, preserves silence upon this method of rendering the real value notes of stable value. For this method would be too much for even the social democratic workers most faithful to the Coalition. But Georg Bernhard, the journalistic confidant of the Stresemann cabinet, writes plainly enough in the evening edition of the *Vossische Zeitung* of Sept. 18, that the real value note is not redeemable in cash, but in the form of interest-bearing gold annuity certificates, for which the economy stands security. This is Minoux's proposal. And Hilferding follows his pilot faithfully into the Stinnes harbour.

The result is: Instead of enforcing the property taxes, whose enforcement is the ground for Ebert's issuing a new decree every 8 hours, these are to be annulled. Instead of taxes on property, taxes for property. Instead of covering the deficit in the state finances, the creation of fresh expenditure through a grant of usurious gold interest at 10% to heavy and agrarian capital.

It remains an open question whether Hilferding, even though he offer these advantages, will be able to obtain sufficient gold and foreign bills from big capital to establish the new currency, since he plainly renounces the seizure of real values. The failure of the gold loan shows that he is not likely to succeed; and the assessment according to the defence levy of 10 years ago leaves big capital countless means of evading the gold obligation.

But, even should the gold levy be enforced, still one thing is certain: The new deficit created by this work of putting the currency on a sound basis has to be covered as well. As Hilferding has solemnly renounced taxes on property, it can only be covered by new burdens on the masses. New direct taxes will follow the real value note as inevitably as night follows day. Hilferding announces further that his new note bank is to be accompanied by the measures enforcing the strictest economy: the offensive against the small and medium officials will be continued. And, finally, in order to make sure that this plan works out successfully in the interests of heavy capital, the 10 hours day, already stated in Minoux's proposal to be absolutely imperative, has become for Hilferding such a matter of course that he no longer even mentions it.

When the seizure of real values first came up, Stinnes countered with the industrial guarantee, longer working hours and the denationalization of the state undertakings. Hilferding, a social democrat, is now about to realize this Stinnes plan.

The transition period of this currency bank is to last three to four months. By then the Reichsbank is to be reorganized. Three to four months is the term which heavy capital sets itself, through its mouthpiece Hilferding, for the final subjugation of the working class, for forcing the ten hours day upon the workers and teaching them more thoroughly than before the art of slow starvation. Hilferding reckons a term of three to four months as necessary for complete submission to the French bayonet, in the last analysis the foundation of this project for the restoration of sound finance.

Within this term the fate of the German working class will be decided. It must be ready to begin the struggle, and to enter at the eleventh hour the path of its salvation through the seizure of real values by the workers' and peasants' government, before Hilferding delivers it bound hand and foot to Stinnes and Poincaré.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Working Women as New Active Troops in the Class War

By Hertha Sturm.

The rising revolutionary movement in Germany, visibly expressed in the great strike wave in the first half of August, is showing a characteristic feature which distinguishes it from all former movements: the spontaneous activity of the masses of proletarian women. The character and significance of this phenomenon must be accorded due consideration.

During former revolutionary struggles of the German proletariat in Berlin and Central Germany in the year 1919, during the Munich Soviet republic, the Kapp putsch and the March action, women played an important part. But—and this was the decisive point—in all these cases it was a question of a few individuals or small groups, politically schooled to a certain degree of clarity, and consciously fulfilling a political duty. These were communists and their immediate adherents, following the Party slogans, but not able to carry along with them the broad masses of politically unenlightened women.

In August 1923 the matter was very different! Here mighty masses were engaged in the struggle—in many districts the majority of the women, of the working class, and of the proletarianized middle class. And the extent of the movement was so wide that the women communist disappeared in the great mass, and did not appear to have the leadership any longer. Women comrades hitherto unknown and without name, and even non-partisan women, grasped the initiative, placed themselves at the head of the others, and had not the least trouble in carrying along with them thousands and thousands of fellow-women of their class. And more than this, the masses themselves acted so spontaneously, so energetically, that their leaders and spokesmen were at the same time only the executors of their demands.

This does not signify that the movement has passed out of the hands of the Communist Party. On the contrary: No slogan was issued, no action carried out, which had not been for weeks or even months the subject of daily agitation in the Communist Party, and especially of the national Women's Secretariat of the CP, of Germany, in the press and at meetings, at home and in the market. But that which had merely seemed lifeless words now sprang suddenly into life, as if the women had all at once grasped the true significance of that which they had heard so often: "We have to do this and that ourselves! We only. Nobody else can help us!"

Since the Ruhr occupation, there have been two questions which have forced themselves into prominence in the daily struggle for bare existence: wages and prices. The masses of working women do not yet understand much about the fundamental laws of capitalist economics, nor much about the real or pretended relations between their position and the Ruhr occupation. It is not from books or newspapers, but from their own personal experience, that they have learnt that the basis of their existence is vanishing from beneath their feet day by day. The rising excitement, hitherto finding its safety valve in the everlasting repetition of the sigh: "It cannot go on like this much longer!", finally reached boiling point and exploded. The women took action. Their first and immediately intelligible demands culminated as a rule in a cry of: "Prices must be reduced and controlled—wages must be raised, if we want to live!"

It was the women who exercised the most powerful pressure on the men, inducing them to strike. How many workmen knew anything of the daily and hourly rise in prices of all food stuffs, when they placed their apparently high wages in the hands of their wives on payday, or sat down to the meal prepared for them when they returned from work? What idea had they of the hours and days spent by the housewives running from one place to another, or standing and waiting endlessly, for potatoes or margarine? All the care and worry of the household was borne by the women. And thus inner necessity led to the formation of these hitherto unknown processions and demonstrations: hundreds, even thousands, of housewives, in their aprons, their shopping bags and baskets over their arms, women who had gone from one empty shop to another, and tried every market, without being able to buy even the barest necessities. These processions march to the factories and workshops, call out the shop stewards, bring about the immediate convocation of meetings of the workers, and explain the situation to these personally. The housekeeping money is insufficient. Under these conditions we and our children will starve. You must have higher wages! If you cannot get them by any other means strike!

OUR PROBLEMS

L. Trotzky "The Fundamental Questions of Revolution"*)

By L. Trotzky.

The Hoym publishing firm is bringing out a work by Trotzky under the above title; this work comprises three books of his which have already appeared, and which are of special interest at the present time in view of the greatly increased tenseness of the revolutionary situation. We give below the preface written by the author to the Russian edition. Ed.

The books here combined, mainly directed against the Russian Mensheviks and social revolutionists, have, as far as I am aware, not encountered even the slightest theoretical refutation from this quarter. And this is not to be wondered at: the petty bourgeois parties, thrown out of their course by the revolution, have lost all interest in the theoretical treatment of the main questions of revolution. What is left of these parties exists on insinuations, slanders, petty trickery, mean flunkeyisms, and alms.

German Menshevism, possessing a much greater degree of historical inertia—the steam roller of proletarian revolution not having yet passed over its spine—has replied with a number of critical and polemical works, amongst which Kautsky's stream of learned verbosity takes the first place as far as hopeless banality is concerned. Such of his arguments as might be regarded as in any way useful for purposes of revolutionary criticism, have already been accorded full consideration by comrade Radek. There is not the slightest reason for entering into these questions again here. German Menshevism, like that of the rest of the world, is condemned to decay—and it will continue on its path of decay and dissolution until its inevitable end.

This does not by any means signify that in the field of theory we can continue to live on the interest from former capital. On the contrary. The theoretical treatment of questions of revolution—not only of its methods (to which the present book is mainly devoted), is at the present time more urgent and necessary for us than ever. No epoch in the past is to be compared in complexity with that in which we are now living. The immediate revolutionary prospects opened out before us in the years 1918-1920 have withdrawn into the distance, the struggle among the great social forces has assumed a tedious character, while at the same time the underground activity does not cease for a moment, and threatens unceasingly now with military, now with class, and now with national explosions. Thorough theoretical work in the sphere of revolutionary thought, for the clarification and valuation of the inner forces of the world-historical process and its not infrequently contradictory tendencies, before all guarantees the fundamental and active self-maintenance of the Communist Party, and constitutes a pledge for its victory.

The transformation in the revolutionary parties takes place unnoticeably, but is catastrophic in effect. German social democracy, under the leadership of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel, did not by any means come into existence with the same thoughts and feelings with which it entered the great war, 50 years later, under the leadership of Scheidemann and Ebert. During the course of this half century, the generations have been gradually renewed, and that which was merely temporary and isolated for the older generation became deposited as a foundation in the consciousness of the younger. The inferior practicalness of the younger generation again influenced the older, and diverted the party further and further away from the revolutionary standpoint. The first Russian revolution (in 1905) was chiefly reflected in Germany by the fact that it interrupted the automatic process of decay of the party, by bringing about a revival of the revolutionary tendency and—simultaneously, as always!—of theoretical interest on the part of the younger generation. This source nurtured the elements of the radical wing of German social democracy, and later on of the Spartacus group. Taken as a whole, however, the party once led by W. Liebknecht and A. Bebel encountered

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In this manner the strike among the Berlin metal workers was brought about in July of this year, after thousands of women had tramped about unwearingly for three days, from early morning until the end of the working day, in Oberschöneweide, Niederschöneweide, and Johannisthal, going from one great factory to another, and continually plaguing the men. These processions became typical features of the August movement. In Hanover, the strike began by a procession of women forming before the largest undertaking in the city, the Continental Co. Ltd., and inducing the men to come out. In many quarters of Berlin the women went from one works to another to make sure that all workers were striking, and to fetch out the unenlightened. In Magdeburg the women thus controlling the strike, found men working in the carpenter's shop of a large factory. They took away the men's tools and drove them into the street. In Halle, where the tramwaymen did not follow the strike slogan at first, the women stopped the cars, pulled down the drivers, and beat them in their indignation. In numerous places, the factories in which the majority of those employed were women were the first to go whole-heartedly into the strike; this was the case for instance, in the textile factories in Gera, the aniline and celluloid factories in Dessau and Bitterfeld. In various places in the Ruhr area women voluntarily offered to do picket work.

The same masses of women still further seized the initiative: In the cities they went to the mayors and food supply offices, in Berlin even to the minister for food supplies, and demanded concrete measures for the alleviation of the most urgent necessity: confiscation of all food obtainable; food for the strikers, unemployed, and social pensioners out of public funds; feeding of children in schools, postponement of payment for milk for infants, old people and invalids; recognition of the control committees, etc. In many cases not only were promises received, but the women were successful in having a commencement made with the carrying out of their demands. Besides this, women have taken active part in the spontaneous action of existing control committees, and of those rapidly springing into existence, which have fetched out food hoarded in the great storehouses of the wholesale dealers, have confiscated corn, milk, and cattle on large farms, and have sold these at low prices.

The interruption of the acute struggle has caused the driving force of the masses of women to disappear from the surface for the time being. But they are latently effective. Women are and remain members of the control committees, and of the commissions negotiating with the mayors; they are preparing for the election and participation in the factory council congresses; they form 40, 50, and more per cent of those attending the public meetings held by the Communist Party. They have lost their fear of the street and of politics, their consciousness of power is increased by their successes, their respect for the God-imposed lawful authorities who have trembled before them is greatly shaken, if not gone for ever.

What rôle will these women play in the coming struggles? No action has ever proved so plainly as the last that the masses, though far from being ready to enter into a struggle for distant political aims, are ready to take up action today for wages and bread. It has never been so evident that the proletarian masses are still well capable of and desirous of fighting. And it has never been so obvious that the working class possesses, in its women, powerful fighting forces which have never yet been mobilized, and which, if systematically employed, would be capable of exercising a decisive influence on the issue of the revolutionary struggle. The fresh and unbroken elementary power of the masses of the women are a factor with which both sides must reckon in the beginning of the civil war. The bourgeoisie and its social democratic flunkeys will exert every endeavor to divert the proletarian women from their class, and to split the united front just forming. Woe to the revolutionary proletariat, woe to the Communist Party, if this danger is not observed or properly estimated. The uprising of the women, primevally forceful and promising great aid to the proletarian cause in its instinctive power, born of misery and despair, can become an instrument of disaster if permitted to act as an uncurbed force without clear political aims, if it is led into false channels, if counter-revolution and reformism gain possession of it. Everything depends upon the energy, the tenacity, and the skill exercised by the communists in sustaining and invigorating the interest once aroused among the women of the proletariat, in clarifying the class instinct as yet so vague, in deepening political knowledge, in securing the sympathies already won, and in leading the fresh and willing up activity of the proletarian women into the path of conscious revolutionary class warfare!

the war and the revolution a completely transformed body and adopted the executioner Noske as its standard bearer.

The tactics of the united front and of struggles for transitional demands, now being pursued by the Communist International, is the necessary policy for the communist parties of the bourgeois states in the present preparatory stage. But we must not close our eyes to the fact that this policy undoubtedly involves the danger of deteriorating into futility, and even of leading to the complete degeneration of the communist parties, if the preparatory stage is drawn out too long, and if the daily work performed by the western parties is not rendered fruitful by that active theoretical thought which comprehends to their fullest extent, the dynamics of the leading historical forces.

Even our own Party, in the country of the proletarian dictatorship, is to a certain degree, exposed to this danger. Our work is of necessity specialised, and goes into details. The questions of state economics, of scientific organization of work, of reduction of the initial costs of industrial productions, of profit, and of accumulation are unavoidably the central points of our Party life at the present time. Without correct and systematic work, and without real and permanent success, everything else in this sphere will be ill-timed agitation, mere useless verbiage. But on the other hand, even our undeniable economic successes threaten to weaken and shake the Party, for they are liable to engender a narrow utilitarian outlook, official and business limitation and narrow-mindedness—unless the theoretical thought of the Party continues indefatigably to renew its fighting positions by fertilizing our whole work by means of efficient international and inner orientation. Short-sighted practicalness at one pole, and propagandist activity skimming over the surface of every question at the other—these are the two incontestable dangers, or the two polar forms of expression of one and the same danger, facing us on our by no means easy path.

This danger would become disastrous if we were to allow the theoretical tradition of the Party to be broken through. In the sphere of material culture we have had the opportunity of observing how difficult it is to restore continuity of work, once interrupted, but here the interruption was inevitable, arising as it did out of the nature of class warfare and its revolutionary culmination. As a Party we require revolution least of all in the sphere of ideology, on the contrary, the maintenance of mental continuity is at the present time the most imperative need of revolutionary thought. The line of our further theoretical evolution is sufficiently determined by two points in the realm of thought: one of these is Marx, the other—Lenin.

The synthetic grasp of the situation, on the basis of the materialist and far-reaching analysis of its fundamental elements, is the essence of Marxism (the greatest weight being laid on the side of historical prevision) and of Leninism (the greatest weight being laid on the side of activist conclusions). The peculiarities of the one or the other do not arise from difference of method, but from the difference of the epochs. Leninism can be defined as Marxism translated into the language of the epoch of the imperialist dissolution of the bourgeois state of society.

Although Lenin as the theoretician invariably generalized that which Lenin the politician performed, despite this—or it would be better to say, because of this—Lenin's theoretical study and generalization of revolutionary work have, in the course of the third of a century, come to represent a tremendous and independent task, one whose elaboration can and must form in itself a school for the theoreticians of the Party in the coming generation. Regarded from this viewpoint, that creation of our Moscow Party organization, the Lenin Institute, is in itself an enterprise of the utmost importance. The whole Party must come to the aid of Moscow here, for the whole Party will in the future, slake its mental thirst at this spring.

Capitalist society lies in its death agony. But this agony has assumed a protracted character corresponding to the enormous vitality of the dying organism. We have seen how a relative "tranquilization" set in after the desperate post-war convulsions, how something like equilibrium established itself among the vital functions of the capitalist organism, how in a certain sense the revolutionary prospects have paled and receded, how the bourgeoisie has become filled with arrogance and has set up the dictatorship of a fool on its weakest, the Apennine territory. Measured by the standards of historical prediction, a fool remains—a fool. But for the present revolutionary struggle, a fool armed with the apparatus of an imperialist state is—a great political factor. History is concentrating all the multifarious means and methods common to the decaying exploiter class into this brief period—ranging from the bloody dictatorship of imperialism to the fool's mask of a harlequin and a charlatan. Our times are pregnant with surprises; a bloody threat may always end in a jester's quip, but the jests of the imperialist bourgeoisie are always pregnant with bloody crime.

The present epoch, dragging along its protracted course, bears within it the possibility of abrupt accelerations of speed and mighty convulsions. Our sober and cautiously meditative policy must therefore retain the capacity for sudden adaptations of front. If it cannot do this, a fresh wave of revolution may surprise the Communist Party and throw it off its balance. But this would almost certainly involve a fresh defeat for revolution. Thorough theoretical work in the Party, combining yesterday with today, is the necessary prerequisite for the retention by the Party of its capability for sudden adaptation.

The theoretical attention of the Party must once more descend from question of "politics", in the narrow sense of the word, to questions of economics—to the economics not only of our Soviet states, but to those of the capitalist world's markets as well. At the present time there is a regrouping going on in this historical head laboratory, and a preparation of fighting forces for a new epoch of open civil war. The III. congress of the Communist International, when the change of speed in the evolution of events became observable, reminded the staff of the communist parties of the necessity of probing deeper with the dissecting knife of analysis, that the further course to be pursued might be the better ascertained. Although at that time some comrades were inclined to regard this almost as "economism" (!), such a valuation will scarcely find even isolated support today. Comrade Bucharin, in his report on the situation of the Communist International, held at the XII congress of our Party, devoted much space to the analysis of the economic situation of the most important countries, and this was not by accident. The time for summary revolutionary generalizations is over. It will begin afresh as soon as the present semi-stable equilibrium is destroyed through the contradictions constantly accumulating within it. At present, however, this explosion is still in its preparatory stage. Attention to economic questions! This is what the present period requires of the thinkers of the Party, and requires it in all seriousness. For whilst much can be grasped instinctively and on the wing in pure politics, economics are much more difficult in this respect: here it is necessary to accord earnest and conscientious work to studying the facts in their quantitative and qualitative relations. But such collective scientific work is the sole means of keeping the Party consciousness fresh and elastic.

The following of tradition does not imply religiously following one beaten track; for one of the greatest and best of our Party traditions is that it possesses an unsurpassable capacity for manoeuvre, and regards retreat or advance as links in the chain of one and the same project. An abrupt adaptation demands a great exertion of thought and of will; the necessity for the adaptation must be recognized, the wish to execute it must be there, and—it must be carried out. Narrow practicalness and hollow propaganda are here alike incompetent; both of these types are prone to impotence, to dispiritedness, and to panic at moments demanding special concentration of consciousness and will. The maintenance of the Party traditions, which means, at bottom, the maintenance of the Party, is only possible when the flower of the coming generation is educated to the point of independent theoretical judgment of the questions of revolution, with closest reference to our whole inner and international activity.

Certain it is, and there is no possible ground for doubting it, that we shall fulfil this task, as we fulfil every task which confronts us!

May 4, 1923.

IN SOVIET RUSSIA

Letter from Soviet Russia.

A Journey to the Caucasus in the Summer of 1923.

By Frida Rubiner (Moscow).

The Moscow-Batum train leaves Kursk station in Moscow at 1 o'clock punctually. In precisely 48 hours it arrives at Mineralnye Vody, the station for the group of Caucasian health resorts. The "Prussian" punctuality corresponds to the cleanliness within the train. The train has a dining car, two "international" sleeping cars, a number of "soft" cars with sleeping berths, and a number of "hard" cars with sleeping berths. The attendants are obliging and friendly. If we recollect the conditions obtaining in the Russian railway service in 1919 or 1920, all this seems like a fairy story.

Moscow is left behind. First we pass through the district of country houses round about Moscow, and then comes the actual countryside of Central Russia: Fertile meadows, endless fields and tracts of arable land, forests, here and there a brook,

a quiet straw-thatched village on the horizon, a few birches, and the low dull sky above the endless level plain. We pass through the Moscow colliery and industrial district: the industrial towns of Serpuchov and Tula. Here the towns are few and far between, but each one is a centre of mighty possibilities. After a ten hours journey, Kursk is reached, the central point of the newly discovered "Kursk anomaly". Here, beneath the soil of the fields, repose the mightiest iron reserves of the earth, and to the North and South the earth conceals the richest treasures of coal. The earth cries out: come, take me! All that is lacking is the hand to grasp, the means, the capital, to unearth and develop all this incredible wealth. With the eye of imagination one sees mighty cities arising here in the future, a mighty industry providing the broad land with the most magnificent triumphs of technique, a whole country at the highest point of development, awakened to intense enjoyment of existence. Soviet Russia—the proletarian America! to use an expression coined by comrade Bucharin.

But at present, these treasures still rest in the bosom of the earth. Though coal and iron lie beneath the soil, the mujik, clad in home woven linen and in raffia shoes, is now following his primitive plough, and the earth yields but the scanty gifts of a stepmother—this is the old mother Russia, the inheritance of centuries of enslavement and absolutism.

The train passes through Ukraine, the granary of Russia. Here is the land of the "black soil", and nature expends her forces extravagantly. It is as if we had reached the Castle of Indolence: at the railway stations mountains of food are heaped up, sausages, hams, cheese, bacon, and so forth. Women bring dishes up to the train, laden with roast chicken, at ridiculously low prices; great pots with butter and lard, milk in great buckets. Involuntarily we think of the famine years. Is there any place in Europe now where there is such an abundance of food? Here we see no starving or ill-nourished people. Even the boys who swarm over the train, begging for newspapers and money, look better nourished than the children of the middle class in Berlin or Erfurt. These boys disdain to accept bread.

In Ukraine the landscape differs conspicuously from that of Great Russia. No forests, only fields, held without end. The villages, with their friendly-looking, whitewashed, clean little houses, appear like oases in this endless plain. After the capital of Ukraine, Charkov, has been passed, another colliery district begins, the Denez basin with its immeasurable riches, as yet scarcely opened up. The train rushes past blast furnaces and industrial villages. At Rostov on the Don the sea comes into view, and for some hours the train runs along the coast of the Sea of Azov. Here the North Caucasus begins. The arable land is substituted by the steppe. No tree, no field, far and wide on the horizon only the dry and monotonous steppe. Here and there a pasture and a flock of sheep; dusty roads cross the plain.

In South Ukraine and North Caucasus new surprises await the traveller from the North. Great fields of marrows and watermelons. Maize fields appear, then fields planted with sun-flowers. The landscape becomes more and more southern in character, the sky bluer and deeper. In North Caucasus one sees the camel being ridden. And then the first hills may be seen, in the midst of the plain, the forerunners of the Caucasian ranges. On the horizon we see the finely drawn outlines of the white chain of the snow-covered mountains of the Caucasus, with the Elbrus and Kasbeck peaks. Here begins the land of legend and story, the primeval land of gold of the Greeks, now the Soviet states Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, the one-time Kautsky paradise, where the Mensheviks are now disavowing their old program and confessing allegiance to the Soviet star and to communism.

The Soviet star and communism are the uniting and life-giving principle influencing this whole district. The express train coming from Moscow and travelling far into the country, is like an artery through which life flows. The communists in the train are true Argonauts, and they will find the golden fleece of the Caucasus. The communists in the dining car of the train, men who once stood at the lathe, and whose horny hands shattered the colossus of Czarism, are now statesmen. They travel in comfortable railway carriages, and enjoy all the privileges of a ruling class, but the destiny of this great country is their responsibility. During this whole journey to Caucasus there was nothing so characteristic to me as a small incident which occurred in the train. As a rule the train consists of 10 carriages; an extra car had been attached to this train for the use of some "important personality" from Moscow. Another such special car was added at Charkov. The engine could not find the extra train of two additional cars, and went on strike on the road. There was a delay of two hours. A number of responsible communists in the train inquired into the matter of the special cars and their occupants, and it turned out that in

one of these carriages a Soviet official, a Sovbour (Soviet bourgeois) as these are designated in Russia, was travelling on some business with his secretaries and typists. A collective notice to the central control commission of the CP. was at once drawn up. I am confident that this Sovbour will lose all inclination to travel in a special car, and the railway management will equally lose all inclination to grant special cars in such cases.

E. C. C. I.

The Criminal Attack of the Zankoff Government on the Bulgarian Communists

Events in Bulgaria have reached the pass foreseen by the Comintern as early as the day following the White coup of June 9. The waiting attitude wrongly adopted by the leaders of the Bulgarian Communist Party was utilized by the bandits gathered around Zankoff to establish their position and pass over to the offensive. On September 12, Zankoff's bands, on the pretext that the communists were alleged to be planning a *coup d'état*, arrested thousands of communists, including almost all the responsible functionaries of the Party. All communist newspapers have been suppressed, all Party political organizations destroyed.

Zankoff's government spreads the lying report that compromising correspondence with Moscow has been found with Comrade Kabaktschew and other well known Party functionaries who have been arrested; letters from functionaries of the Comintern are alleged to be among the correspondence found.

The imprisoned leaders have been declared to be hostages, and it is threatened to shoot them should any revolutionary movement take place.

The Executive of the Comintern declares that all reports of finding letters, of a conspiracy and the like, are malicious provocations.

The Zankoff government, feeling the ground slipping from under its feet day by day, finds itself compelled to clutch at the most wretched straws, its downfall is inevitable, and the fresh provocations of the communists will only serve to accelerate this downfall. Zankoff's following seeks some occasion furnishing a pretext to proceed against the leaders of the Bulgarian proletariat. M. Zankoff, his ministers, and the best known of his flunkies, ought to remember that they will be called to account for their misdeeds by the Bulgarian workers and peasants, and by the international proletariat. Zankoff, his ministers, and the leaders of his bands, the supporters of his party, should not forget that they will have to answer to the Bulgarian workers for the lives of the former leaders of the proletarian movement in Bulgaria. Not one drop of the blood shed will be pardoned them when the day of settlement comes! Bulgarian reaction may rage as it will—its days are numbered! Yellow Bulgarian social democracy may continue to do its utmost to prove by its example that there is no treachery of which a party of the II. International is not capable, may grovel in the dust before the Bulgarian Fascist alliance of working class and peasantry will be omnipotent in a country like Bulgaria the moment that it is an accomplished fact. The tactics being pursued by the present criminal government contribute more than anything else to the rapid realization of this alliance.

The Comintern sends fraternal greetings to the Bulgarian workers and peasants in their hour of severe trial. The workers and peasants of Bulgaria must reply to Zankoff's provocative policy by closing their ranks, by organizing illegal groups all over the country, by mass agitation among the hundreds of thousands and millions of toilers, and, when the moment arrives, by the formation of a workers' and peasants' government.

The wave of hate against the government of the White executioners mounts higher and higher; the moment will come when the Bulgarian workers and peasants will mete out just retribution for the brutality they have suffered.

Organize for the protection of your interests! Organize for the overthrow of the Zankoff government! Organize for the protection of your imprisoned leaders!

Long live the Bulgarian Communist Party!

Long live the alliance of the workers and peasants of Bulgaria!

Executive Committee of the Communist International.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE

The Latest General Strike in Argentina

By Andrés Nin (Moscow).

In January of this year a German anarchist named Kurt Wilkens threw a bomb, in Buenos Aires, at Colonel Varel, the leader of the punitive expeditionary forces which shot down more than 1000 workers in November, 1921, in Patagonia, a province in the south of the Argentine Republic. This bomb killed Colonel Varel on the spot. Wilkens was arrested immediately.

The reactionary press, and particularly the Argentine "League of Patriots", a Fascist organization, raised a frightful outcry over this assassination, and demanded the execution of extraordinary measures of suppression against the working class. But Wilkens had the entire sympathy of all the working people in the country. As it was not possible for reaction to get rid of the young German worker by legal methods—capital punishment having been abolished in Argentina—it resorted to a quicker process: In July of this year a relation of Colonel Varel shot the workman Wilkens whilst he was sleeping quietly in his cell. The cowardly murderer, called Perez Mil, who had participated as a soldier in the massacres of the year 1921 in Patagonia, had, through a series of secret favors, contrived to obtain a situation as warden in the prison.

When the Argentine working class heard the news of Wilken's murder, it was filled with burning indignation. The "Argentine Trade Union Federation", which comprises the overwhelming majority of the organized workers of the country, arranged a general protest strike at once. The central of the anarcho-syndicalist "Regional Labor Federation", as well as the whole of the other independent trade unions, joined this movement unanimously. The strike was commenced on June 17 and continued until June 19. It was an imposing demonstration of the power of the Argentine proletariat, and of its determination to oppose the crimes of the reaction by every available means.

On June 19, the executive committee of the Argentine Trade Union Federation ordered the general strike to be called off, whilst the anarchists of the Regional Labor Federation decided to continue the strike at all costs, and convened a mass meeting for the same evening. This meeting was prohibited by the authorities, but this prohibition could not prevent a great multitude from assembling at the meeting place. Here there were collisions with the police, and a number of shots were fired on both sides. The balance yielded by the day was two dead and a large number of wounded.

To all appearances the decision to continue the strike, and to call the meeting, was the work of agents provocateurs in the service of the capitalists and the police. The intention was to raise a fresh wave of bourgeois reaction, and to take the opportunity of completely shattering the organization of the workers. The continuation of the strike in the face of the contrary decision of the Argentine Trade Union Federation meant nothing more nor less than the condemnation of the movement to certain failure, the more so when it is remembered that the anarcho-syndicalist central unites only a few organizations of little influence and power.

The strike demonstrated at the same time that, despite the present disorganization of the Argentine proletariat, the workers are perfectly able and willing to take up and carry through the fight under definite concrete slogans, and that the anarchists, who once played a most important role in the Argentine Labor movement, are losing prestige and influence among the masses every day.

The Communist Party of Argentina has utilized this movement for the purpose of extending and strengthening its campaign for the united front and for the consolidation of the workers' ranks, and has done this in spite of the tactical errors and mistakes made by the leaders of the Argentine Trade Union Federation, which is at the present time the only important labor organization in the Argentine Republic.

IN THE CAMP OF OUR ENEMIES

The Amsterdam and Hamburg Internationals and the German Tragedy

By Z. Leder.

At the moment when the "leading" capitalist powers—France, Great Britain, and America—are driving half of Europe deeper and deeper into the abyss of economic chaos by their piratical policy; when the imperialist robbers of secondary rank—Italy, Bulgaria, etc.—are once more waving the torch of world war over the powder casks of Europe; at this moment, the task set the vanguard of the international working class is clear and obvious. It is its daily and hourly work to remind the great working masses, that it is solely the imperialist antagonisms of various capitalist groups which is to blame for their misery, that only the seizure of power by the proletariat can save them from hopeless anarchy; it must arouse the masses by unceasing propaganda and agitation to mobilize for the struggle, and prepare them for its inevitable end.

How do the International Trade Union Federation and the Hamburg Socialist Labor International act in this situation?

Two years have passed since the Amsterdamers worked out their program for Europe's "restoration", and for the reconstitution of expiring capitalism. This program was approved by the leaders of the International of Ministers—the 2. International—and by those of the 2½ International, and the bourgeois pacifists from the liberal circles accorded it their blessing. But those with whom rested the decision of the fate of Europe would have nothing to do with it. America demanded the payments due from England, England from France and Belgium, all of them from—Germany. And then France seized her "pledges" in the Ruhr area. Here we must quote a few words from one who stood as godfather to the new code of international law at Versailles, and who is now engaged in writing articles about it in his capacity of retired prime minister. "French armies"—Lloyd George wrote recently—"invade a neighbouring country, occupy it, proclaim martial law, seize the railways and undertake their management, put the press under compulsory laws, banish tens of thousands of the resident population, send anyone to prison, or even shoot him if he offers resistance. And with all this they declare that this is not to be regarded as an act of war. It is only a peaceful occupation, for the purpose of forcing the execution of a peace treaty."

This state of affairs has continued for eight months. The International Trade Union Federation, which had resolved at The Hague to summon the working masses to a general strike in the event of war danger, decided to appeal to the League of Nations. The united socialist internationals followed the same example at Hamburg, both refusing obstinately to cooperate with the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions to bring the working masses in action against the crimes of the imperialist robbers.

After nine months of occupation came the Corfu incident. Again I quote the words of that great ironist of the Versailles Treaty, Lloyd George: "Signor Mussolini bombards a town belonging to a country with which he is at peace. He occupies a part of its territory by force of arms. Then he solemnly declares that this is no act of war, but a natural measure of diplomatic caution. Force settles the conflict and makes its own laws."

And what has the League of Nations accomplished—this League of Nations upon which the Amsterdam and Hamburg organizations have been building all their hopes for the past eight months? We all know that it exercised no influence whatever. And once more Lloyd George characterized this fact in a few blunt phrases in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*: "It may be stated without exaggeration, that a great part of the Versailles treaty is a dead letter. A standing irony of the European situation is that the Versailles treaty is continually being flouted by precisely those countries which are the actual originators of the treaty, and which have most to gain by its execution."

This is how the facts appear from the standpoint of witnesses who can by no means be suspected of slandering the League of Nations from any "communist ambushcade". It might be thought that what has been recognized by Lloyd George might also penetrate into the brains of the "leaders of 20 million workers organized in trade unions all over the world". But the paths which these gentry pursue are mysterious indeed.

In a declaration issued on January 24, the first month of the Ruhr occupation, the English Amsterdamers designated the invasion of the Ruhr valley—as the chairman of the German General Trade Union Federation, Leipart, very appropriately

recalled to memory in his letter greeting the British trade union congress—as "an attempt being made, by military means, to force a new order which was rejected by Great Britain and the United States at Versailles, a new order in Europe, based on a Ruhr—Rhine frontier for France, on the dismemberment of Germany, on the complete control of the German raw material and key industries by the French, and on the military dominion of France on the continent". It might have been expected that this extremely sharp but accurate characterization of the Ruhr invasion would be followed by equally sharp measures to be opposed by the international working class to the policy pursued by the leading pirates of imperialism. Tom Shaw, the secretary of the Socialist Labor International, and at the same time one of the leading Amsterdamers, recently expressed his views on this subject. He declared to the editor of the *Vorwärts*: "It was the propaganda of the English Labour Party which had taught public opinion to regard the questions unsettled between Germany and France with justice and objectivity." Tom Shaw then enlightened the *Vorwärts* editor as to what the English Labour Party and the trade unions understand by "justice and objectivity". To the question concerning the "increased activity" of England he replied with the counter question: "What can England really do?" We have undertaken to pay our debts to America, and this is a heavy burden upon us. The proletariat classes pay very high taxes. On the other hand, unemployment is rife. We must candidly state that we are unfortunately not in a position to pay everything and to help everybody."

Thus: The invasion of the Ruhr valley is an attempt to alter the map of Europe according to the wishes of the French imperialists by force of arms, an attempt to do that which was refused them at Versailles, and which is to be the foundation of their military predominance on the continent. Might it not be expected that the Hamburg and Amsterdam Internationals would reply to this predatory intention by summoning the international working class to rise in a determined struggle against France's design? But far from it! England is not in a position "to pay everything and help everybody". So Germany has to put up with it, that is, pay, or perish in the attempt. This is what the Hamburg and Amsterdam organizations describe as regarding the Franco-German question with "justice and objectivity".

But the Amsterdamers and Hamburgers have not only studied the German question with real "objectivity", but also with "arduous endeavors". Proof: their recent publication on "The position of the Working Class in Germany", an elaborate treatise of 133 pages (and no fewer than 28 tables and diagrams). The "objectivity" and diligence with which this has been compiled are deserving of highest praise! Although the data were long obsolete when the publication appeared. For the *Vorwärts* of 21st. September was able to state that the wages of the German worker had sunk, by the 18th. September 1923, to one sixth of the actual purchasing power of his wages of 17 months ago! But what matter! The English Amsterdamers and Hamburgers have accompanied their scientific studies by an actual deed; at their trade union congress in the first week of September they resolved to call upon the Belgian and French workers to so influence the policy of their countries, that peace be furthered among the peoples! The English cannot help everybody, cannot pay everything; the English bourgeois is already burdened with heavy taxation. But the French and Belgian workers—these should whisper a serious word in the ear of their Poincaré and their Theunis! Truly the word internationalization is not merely a hollow sound on the lips of the Hamburgers and Amsterdamers.

And yet: the International Trade Union Federation exists! The *Vorwärts* frequently announces the fact to the starving proletarians. Just as often as it announces that this Federation—"backed up by 20 millions of workers organized in trade unions"—is coming to their aid. And indeed it has come already! On September 18, it submitted a memorandum to the League of Nations. The Wolff agency and the *Vorwärts* publish a synopsis, and we learn that: 1. the Germans may pay—but in accordance with the tenets of Amsterdam justice, 2. that the present occupation policy is disastrous, and 3. that the settlement of the reparations can and must be an international question.

The first act of the comedy has been played. Falstaff has shown the people that he is "fighting" in the cause of justice; he has brought the matter before the court of his fellow actors—before its majesty the League of Nations. Let this now perform its office!

But this actor too has played his role to an end. In the second commission of the plenary meeting of the League of Nations, held on September 18, and 19, the reparation question was brought up on the initiative of the South African delegate. But the French and Belgian delegates declared that a debate on the reparation question would only aggravate the situation and render its solution more difficult. The motion was with-

drawn by its mover. Only the Danish delegate insisted that "public opinion" would not comprehend why the League of Nations excludes the most important question of all from its consultations, and occupied itself solely with small matters instead of great ones. Poor devil! He understands nothing whatever—he grasps neither the "stinging irony" of Lloyd George nor the theatrical performance of justice arranged by Tom Shaw, Jouhaux, and Oudegeest! We propose that he be nominated honorable chairman of the Amsterdam and Hamburg Internationals.

And now the Hamburgers and Amsterdamers have performed their "class duty": They have appealed to the League of Nations. If this has again failed to do anything well, that is not their fault, and we must just wait until the League improves. Meanwhile, however, the Amsterdamers and Hamburgers will arrange for a fresh inquiry into the position of the German workers. Should they then ascertain that the 15 million proletarians, whom Clemenceau and others have asserted to be too many in Germany, have died of starvation in the meanwhile, well—then they will say: We cannot help everybody. We cannot pay everything. The English bourgeoisie are already paying heavy taxes.

And how long will the sincere German, English, French, and Belgian proletarians permit themselves to be led by these Judases?

THE WHITE TERROR

A Greeting from the Prisons of Barbaric Finland

We have received the following, written on an odd scrap of paper, from one of the prisons of the Finnish White Terror. It is of interest as showing the characteristic attitude adopted by the Social Democracy and the spirit which continues to animate our comrades who are victims of bourgeois class justice. Ed.

The heroic revolutionary rising of the working class of Finland in 1918, is well known to all class-conscious workers in every land. It is equally well known how the bourgeoisie came out of it victorious, establishing a most savage white terror, during the period of which, 90,000 workers of both sexes were driven to concentration camps, where about 15,000 were starved to death, and some 16,000 executed. All the labor organizations were suppressed, of course. And in this manner the demands of "civilization" were satisfied.

But the defeated working-class rallied again. And in May 1920, the representatives of the revolutionary workers gathered together to establish the "Socialist Party of Finland". By breaking up that congress the bourgeoisie demonstrated that the "white terror" still reigned. (The social-democrats, of course were allowed to organize their party as early as in 1918.) The workers replied to the action of the chief of police of Helsingfors (the instrument of reaction) by establishing the "Socialist Labor Party of Finland" in June 1920. From that date our party has been continually under fire. The bourgeois have charged us with receiving gold from the Russian Government. Their newspapers tell hair-raising stories of our alleged underground-work. From the very birth of our party they have warned the ruling class of our treasonable activities. These knights of the defence-guard of bourgeois law and order have pointed us out to the state-police (okhrana) as being plotters, who, with the help of the Red Army of Russia, are trying to convert Finland into a Russian colony. And their efforts have not been in vain. Their labors have born fruit.

Hundreds of the active members of our party are languishing in prisons and penitentiaries for being true to the cause of socialism. But the fury of the bourgeoisie reached its climax on the 3rd of August, when the mass arrests of alleged communists were carried through. On that day all the members of the party executive, and of our parliamentary group (27), besides innumerable ordinary party members were dragged behind prison bars. All the party organs were suppressed and the printing establishments and all other property of the party confiscated. The number of arrested amounts to about 300.

According to bourgeois papers, we are to be charged with "high-treason". And the sentences will be as heavy as the law allows. Newspapers are agitating for that end already. A paper published in the Swedish language, entitled *Nyland* writing of the arrested communists demanded: "—most of them must be hanged as a punishment for their crimes and as a warning to others. There are enough telephone-posts along the highways." Fine proof of the barbaric instincts of our bourgeoisie! They are out

to uproot communism. But they will see that the day of the triumph of communism shall come. After rain comes sunshine.

One will ask, what are the social-democrats doing now the field is cleared for them? They, of course, had to change their tactics in order to retain the support of the workers. On one hand they condemn the government for its actions against the communists, and on the other hand they back the same government by bringing evidence against us, though it is false. On the 4th of August, some social-democratic leaders visited the Minister of the Interior hypocritically asking why such harsh action had been taken against the communists and on what ground. The minister replied that such action was taken because the communists are attempting to overthrow the government by force and with the aid of a foreign state. The chairman of the Social-Democratic Party, Vaino Tanner answered, according to the official organ of the party: *Sosialdemokraati* of August 6th: "In Sweden and England the Communists are allowed to talk freely as much they please. Our communists, of course, are different, for some of them are ready, with the aid of foreign power to destroy the independence of our country". That is the main charge against us. And the social-democratic leaders are testifying it. But how could they do otherwise without severing their friendly relations with the government, which pays high salaries to many of them. In the *Sosialdemokraati* of August 17th, appears an appeal to the workers of this country. It bears as a heading "Leave the Communist Party". The appeal declares that the communists have no right to defend the attacked communists of Finland. And the article ends with the following appeal to the workers: "If you don't want to yield up the independence of Finland, if you don't want to be defeated in the struggle against the bourgeoisie of this country, there is at least time to denounce communist principles, to leave that (communist) party, and to return to the old Social-Democratic Party". These few quotations show the game being played by the social-democratic leaders in the suppression of our party.

We felt somewhat encouraged when reading in the papers that comrades in Norway have boycotted a Finnish bourgeois choir on its visit to Christiania and that the Communist youth of Norway are heading the boycott-campaign against the bourgeoisie of Finland. It is a fine example of international class solidarity.

We in the prisons of barbaric Finland want to proclaim to the workers of the world, that although we are in chains behind iron bars, we are not defeated. The struggle will be carried on by those outside, whatever form it will take. In Comrade Ralph Chaplin's words: "We make a vow no tyrant might shall make us bend a knee". Jailed or free we will fight for the common cause of the proletariat.

On behalf of the imprisoned Communists of Finland.

One in chains

Helsingfors, August 24th., 1923.

THE COLONIES

The Political Situation in China and the Communist Party

The following Statement has been issued by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of China.

The present political crisis in China has its roots in events now long past. Li-Yuan-Hung's overthrow from the presidency by the Tsao clique is only one of the many crises which have followed one another in rapid and uninterrupted succession. If the people are taken by surprise by the latest events, but do not accord sufficient attention to the fundamental causes underlying them, how is it to be expected that they can find the right way of saving their country, shaken as it is by these crises?

Twelve years have passed since China was declared a republic. And yet Pih-yang's militarism, which is entirely inconsistent with a republic, exists now as then. First came Yuan-Schi-Kai's coup d'état, the restoration of the monarchy by Chang-Hsun, the devastation of the country by the Anfuist club, and finally the intrigues of today, the work of Tsao Kun. This endless chain of unrest was the natural consequence of the existence of the military power of Pih-Yang, who works hand in hand with the foreign imperialists. The longer this military power continues to exist, the greater will be China's exploitation by foreign imperialists. Here we have the fundamental cause of the chronic crisis under which China is laboring.

Since the civil war of last year between Tshihli and Fengtien, we know that the defeat of Chang-Tso-Lin signified the defeat of Japanese imperialism, just as the victory of Wu-

Pei-Fu was a victory for America imperialism. At that time the Communist Party published a report on the political situation, emphasizing that the reintroduction of a parliament, the creation of a federation of autonomous provinces, the return of Li-Yuan-Hung to the presidency of the country, and the taking over of the government by Wu-Pei-Fu, would all be without the slightest effect in altering the situation. In our opinion, the sole possibility of saving China lies in the establishment of a democratic united front, and in the continuation of the revolution until victory is gained over the native militarists and the imperialist powers backing them up.

Tsao's coup d'état was not a sudden change of government. Since Fengtien's defeat last year, America has almost completely supplanted Japanese imperialism in Peking. Already at that time Tsao's followers tried to replace Hsu-Shih-Chang by Tsao. The attempt was not successful, owing to the disunity of the Tshihli party, which believed that it could make use of Li-Yuan-Hung as an occasional tool, and at the same time retain all practical power in its own hands. After the conquest of the South and the uniting of the whole country under military power, it intended to have Tsao Kun nominated as legal and popular president of the country, by means of election by a parliament which was to establish the constitution. It was confident of being able to secure this election by means of bribery and terrorization of the members of parliament. "Reunion of the country under military power, and the presidency of the country for the Pih-Yang party!" these were the slogans of Wu-Pei-Fu's policy.

The Tientsien group, Tsao-Yui, and Oy, were however anxious to make Tsao Kun president at once. But as Wu-Pei-Fu's power was still very strong, they renounced the idea at this time. Poor Li-Yuan-Hung was thus obliged to serve as a temporary cloak for the militarists of the Tschihli party. In the meanwhile, the intrigues in the Tsao party continued. As soon as it was finally realized that the establishment of the constitution was merely a pretext on Li's part for the prolongation of his presidency, and that Wu-Pei-Fu was making no progress whatever with his conquest of the South, the Tientsien group was placed in a position to supplant Li-Yuan-Hung from the presidency. In this it was supported by the Americans, and by the pro-American Christian general Feng-Yu-Hsiang. Tsao derived support not only from the army of this general, but also from the diplomatic clique assured him by the American subsidies. His aim is to seize political power by bribing the members of parliament and the army.

Short-sighted people see the whole essence of the political crisis in the intrigues of Tsao Kun and Li. But the problem is not so simple. Tsao only ventured to overthrow Li because he felt certain of American support. This overthrow was the natural expression of the cooperation of foreign powers with the militarist, who are constantly causing unrest and provoking political crises in China. But this overthrow is not the cause of the present dangerous political situation. The cause of the innumerable political crises in China lies rather in the rule of the Pih-Yang militarists, who suppress all democracy, work hand in hand with foreign powers, and bargain away the rights of the country. If we do not find means to put an end to this essential cause, the political crises will continue in the future as in the past.

Li-Huan-Hung, who seized political power by force, subordinated himself voluntarily to the militarists. As his presidency possessed no legal foundation, he made agreements with the Chang Tschao-Tseng cabinet and with the parliament, both of which were in the service of the militarists. An actual triple alliance was brought about. Li approved of the murder of workers and students, sent agents to Kwangtung and Fukien to stir up insurrections, and only joined forces with the militarists for the sake of retaining his post as president of the Republic. His crimes are, however, by no means less numerous than those of the Pih-Yang militarists. At present he is the tool of the Tshen-Hsueh-Hwe clique, which is fighting against Tsao Kun. This clique is now improving the opportunity to return to power. All the remaining enemies of the Tschihli party, who utilize Li-Yuan-Hung as a puppet, would like to accompany him to Mukden or Hang Chow, and retain him as president. But this solution is not acceptable to the people.

The Tuan-Club-Jui clique is the deadly enemy of the Tschihli party. The crimes of the Anfuists are notorious all over the world. These are also anxious to utilize the people's hate of Tsao for the purpose of re-establishing their own power. The subordination of Tschang-Tso-Ling and Lu-Hung-Hsiang to Tuan signifies precisely the same as the subordination of Wu-Pei-Fu, Feng-Yu-Hsiang, and Chi-Hsieh-Yuan to Tsao. Should any change take place in the future, the candidature of the Tschihli party and of the Anfuist clique still remains. Both of these groups receive support from the imperialists. The victory of Tsao-Kun or of Tuan is in no way congruous with the welfare

of the country. The people will recognize neither Tsao nor Tuan should they succeed in obtaining political power for themselves and in forming their own government.

The shameless, impudent, and brutal members of the parliament have long enjoyed the support of Tsao-Kun. If there are really any honorable and straight-dealing elements among them, why do they not come forward? The organizations of craftsmen, of workers, and of students, have been solemnly deprived by parliament of the right to speak in the name of the people. What section of the population then are represented by this parliament? The suggestion of moving the parliament to the South is entirely opposed to the views of the people. Should the parliament really draw up the constitution and elect the president, then the people will declare its decisions to be null and void.

The generals in the South West, who maintain a powerful army, violate the rights of the people, and shamelessly enrich themselves, are not one iota better than the Pih-Yang militarists. They allege their intention of creating a federation of autonomous provinces, but in reality they merely want to establish a federation of autonomous Tutschunates (Brigands). But anyone who thinks that this would signify a strengthening of the power of the south-western provinces as opposed to the North, should learn from the experience of the past that the question here is not one of aiding democracy to make its way against feudalism, but merely of a struggle for the possession of certain territories. Those advocating this plan are would-be politicians out of a job, and these are anxious to utilize the power of the south-western provinces for their own interests, or to support Li-Yuan-Hung's presidency.

The creation of an independent state and the appointment of a revolutionary government will be a great tax on the efforts of our suffering and much troubled people. We have no wish to imitate the example of certain Korean nationalities, who sought for recognition at the conferences of Versailles and Washington, hoping thus to attain their object, but not moving a finger to further the revolution. The militarists who join forces with foreign powers are hated by us. But many of the people who hate these militarists are nevertheless trying to gain the support of foreign powers for the purpose of crushing the militarists. But those who are incapable of comprehending the close cooperation between the militarists and the foreign capitalists are equally incapable of calling any independent and autonomous state into existence.

We, on the other hand, demand a government created by the peoples out of its own forces, a government arising out of the revolution. The people can never recognize a government appointed and controlled by any imperialist power.

The combatting of Tsao in any of the ways mentioned would not correspond with the real feeling of the people.

We hold the view that we must speedily convene a national congress in some suitable place, composed of delegates from the peasants' associations, the trade unions, the students' associations, and the other craft organizations of the whole country. As the parliament in Peking is a tool in the hands of the feudal militarists, and is not recognized as representing the people, the national congress, as the true representative of the whole nation, must take upon itself the task of drawing up the constitution, of bringing together and uniting the people, and of appointing the new Chinese government.

This congress alone is entitled to deny any other organ the right to rule over China in the name of the Chinese people.

The new government of really revolutionary nationalists which will be called into being by the national congress will break the power of the militarists all over China, and the power of the foreign imperialists backing up the militarists. This government will be no mere local government, but a real people's government. And in no case will it be a government in which militarists cooperate, and which is under the supervision of foreign imperialists.

This is the sole way in which the Chinese can emancipate themselves from the double suppression of militarists and foreign powers.

APPEALS

The R.I.L.U. for the Japanese Proletariat

The position of the Japanese workers was always a very arduous one. They were brutally exploited by employers, by the capitalists, they were suppressed and kept under by the government of the Mikado. They were compelled to suffer hunger and to endure continuous repressions on the part of the bourgeoisie.

The position of the Japanese workers is now even more difficult. An unparalleled natural catastrophe has destroyed the industry of Japan. It has destroyed those meagre means of existence which constituted the wages of the workers.

Many Japanese workers have died, many others have been crippled and wounded, many are without work, without a roof to cover them, doomed to death from starvation on account of the lack of foodstuffs. And the Japanese bourgeoisie is organizing itself, it is gathering together all the forces of reaction in order to be able to transfer the whole burden of restoring the destroyed Japanese industry on to the Japanese proletariat.

Workers of all countries, working people of the world, do not forget your suffering brothers in Japan, help them, collect funds for them—but now, immediately. In Japan, thousands of workers, thousands of brothers belonging to the great international family of toilers, are perishing.

The Red International of Labor Unions calls its organizations to immediately open a campaign for the collection of funds for the suffering and needy Japanese workers. As a first contribution the Executive Bureau of the R.I.L.U. gives 15,000 gold roubles.

Workers of all countries, support your brothers in Japan!

The Executive Bureau will notify in what manner the money is to be remitted.

BOOK REVIEWS

Radek: The Struggle of the C.I. against Versailles and against the Capitalist Offensive*)

By Emil Höllein (Berlin).

We publish the following review of Comrade Radek's recent book as much of the matter contained in this work has already appeared in English in the reports of the last Session of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International. Ed.

We are living in times pregnant with events and agitated by many tempests. The belligerent raid made by the rabid Fascist chieftain Mussolini on Greece, and the destruction of Japanese imperialism for many years to come by the terrific natural catastrophe in the Far East, again shake the tottering edifice of capitalist economics and world peace to its foundations. The imperialist antagonism between France and England becomes daily more and more aggravated, thanks to Poincaré's obstinate endeavors to secure control of the Ruhr coal for French imperialism. At the same time economic and social struggles are blazing up in every country. But it is in Germany that the situation is worst and most acute, for here the labor pains of approaching social revolution are being felt in all their intensity. The fear of Bolshevism induces the new Stresemann-Hilferding government, under pressure from heavy industry, to capitulate to the French Comité des Forges, and at the same time to make every arrangement for loading the toiling masses with all the burdens resultant on this capitulation, and for the bloody suppression of any sign of rebellion among the tortured victims.

In these times of tremendous inner and foreign political stress it is not only good and useful, but absolutely imperative, that the armies of fighting workers seek to obtain the greatest possible clarity on the causes, connections, and effects of the home and foreign political events and phenomena. They must learn to recognize that the national and social antagonisms and collisions everywhere, are merely the delirious ravings of a system and society condemned to death by evolution, and that the duty of most intense political activity and revolutionary fighting readiness is therefore imposed upon them, if they are not to be drawn down into the depths of the whirlpool with disappearing capitalism.

For this reason Karl Radek's booklet comes just at the right moment. It is a reasonable reprint of the reports given by Comrade Radek in June and July of this year at the sessions of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International and of the Communist Youth International.

*) Karl Radek, "Der Kampf der Kommunistischen Internationales gegen Versailles und gegen die Offensive des Kapitals." Published by the C.I., Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahmbley, Hamburg 8. Groundprice 0,50 marks.

In the earlier of these reports, Comrade Radek presents the main foreign political events of the first half year of 1923, to the mental vision of the reader in the light of Marxist research and dialectics. We are shown in succession the attempt made by the British minister for foreign affairs, Lord Curzon, to provoke Soviet Russia to war; the fiasco in which Lloyd George's world political plan of improving the situation of British economics by settling the interallied debt problem and the German reparations question resulted; the conclusion of the Anglo-American debt agreement, intended to ensure for England the requisite backing in her conflict with France; England's ambiguous and provocative tactics in the Ruhr conflict, which speculated on Poincaré's pledge policy speedily bringing about its own destruction and thus making possible the direct participation of England and America in the compromise to be finally arrived at; the national treason of the German bourgeoisie and its social democratic accomplices, who are anxious to capitulate to Poincaré, but are seeking at any price to shift the responsibility for the surrender of the Ruhr on to the communists, so that the mass anger aroused by capitulation may fall on their heads; the increasing ruin of German economics, and consequently of world economics, as a result of the Ruhr war; the liquidation of the Washington agreement, which aimed at fettering Japan in the Far East, but is sabotaged and circumvented by the whole of the powers participating, whilst victimized Japan seeks to protect herself against possible armed conflict with England and America by concluding peace with Soviet Russia.

Radek draws a number of conclusions from the situation described. Firstly, that the attempt to restore the ruined economy has proved a complete failure, and that the total economic breakdown of Europe is going forward with every increasing rapidity. Secondly, that the great war has not been followed by disarmament, but rather by a mighty increase of armaments, so that the danger of war is much greater and more imminent at the present day than in the year 1914. Thirdly, that revolutionary Soviet Russia is again exposed to the danger of a capitalist attack, and that it is a question depending solely on the international proletariat if an attack of this nature is to be repulsed by Soviet Russia alone, or if the whole proletariat will take part in a counter-attack. Fourthly, that the German working class, and with it the German revolution, is in a position of the greatest danger, for the German bourgeoisie and French militarism will alike exert every endeavor to drown it in blood, so that the French Party finds itself confronted with difficult and responsible tasks. Fifthly, that the revolutionary movement in the Orient is likewise threatened, implying special fighting duties for the British Party and the English labor movement. Comrade Radek closes this report by pointing out that the complete failure of the three reformist internationals on the occasion of the Ruhr occupation, despite their heroic speeches at the Hague, imposes upon the communists the duty of realizing the full significance of this failure and its consequences, and should show them the necessity of not standing aside as spectators in international political questions in the future, but of taking a more energetic part than ever before, as the champions of the proletariat.

The second part of the booklet deals with the slackening of the capitalist offensive and the task of the C.I. Here Radek first points out a number of facts: Weakening of American reaction through the rise of a promising Farmer-Labor Party; reintegration of the liberal bourgeoisie in England accompanied by simultaneous increase of strength in the working class; decay of the Bloc National in France and strengthening of the influence of the communists; embarrassing dilemma of Italian Fascism, which as the tool of big capital is unable to keep any of its promises to the peasants and workers, and will have to suffer the consequences of this before long; growing acuteness of the antagonisms between the separate strata of the bourgeoisie in Germany, despite their common offensive against the working class; and, finally, the Bulgarian upheaval, not as the fruit of a mass movement, but as the result of a military plot.

All these facts do not mirror the victory of counter-revolution after a period of revolution, as maintained by Otto Bauer, but rather the struggle of young and growing revolution with counter-revolution.

The object of the capitalist offensive was to turn back the wheel of history to the times before 1914. This attempt has been a failure, politically and economically. Soviet Russia stands more secure and firm than before. The capitalists' world state system is being opposed by the development of a new state system, the proletarian, and the Union of Soviet republics in former Russia is the first example of this system.

The capitalist offensive has already passed its zenith. The trade unions in numerous countries are increasing in strength

again after a period of retrogression. The English labor movement is gaining class consciousness and class strength. In France the latest bye-elections show a mighty increase of votes for the Communist Party. In Germany one wave of strikes follows another. And, even in Hungary, the White Terror cannot terrify the working masses any longer into abandoning defensive and offensive struggles.

But does this increasing determination to fight, now evident among the proletariat, find an echo in the international organizations of the reformists. Not in the least. The Hague conference proved to be nothing more than a fresh impudent bluff on the part of reformism. The leaders of the Amsterdam trade unions and of the two social democratic internationals are resolved, in spite of all their heroic declamation, to drive the proletariat into war again without a struggle, as in 1914. And the Hamburg amalgamation congress of the 2. and 2½. Internationals showed that the reformists are not only obviously unwilling to fight, but are systematically endeavoring to prevent any fight on the part of the workers.

This changed situation is again reflected in the application of our united front tactic. The failure of our efforts to form a common front, with the reformist leaders is something positive, taken in a historical sense. For the action of the 2. International has been the most unequivocal proof to the workers that this International does not want to fight at all, and the recognition of this fact sows the seed of dissolution in its ranks. We ourselves have also committed many errors in the application of the united front tactic, as for instance in Saxony, and such mistakes must be avoided in future. Above all, we ourselves must show no sign of irresolution, to the workers we must always appear as a steadfast fighting phalanx, clear of purpose and of aim. It is only thus that we carry the working masses along with us, as our successes have already proved.

The chapter dealing with questions of political alliances and our relations to Fascism deserves special attention at the present time. Regardless of the shrieks of open or concealed counter-revolutionists, the revolutionary proletariat must go straight forward to its goal of splitting and destroying the fighting front of the bourgeoisie. For the victory of the proletariat and the maintenance of proletarian power are only certain when they are not opposed by a united bourgeois front. The working class must therefore seek for active or passive allies among the social strata oppressed and decimated by capital, such as, for instance, the intelligenzia and petty bourgeoisie in town and country.

Fascism does not precisely imply counter-revolution, but it is a proof that those who do not want the proletarian revolution and the rule of the proletariat find themselves inevitably degraded to the rôle of instruments for the reconstruction of capitalism. Our tactics towards the nationalist movements must be adjusted in accordance with their social character. We must fight such movements relentlessly when they are tools of big capital, but when they represent serious anti-capitalist tendencies we must attempt to capture them by way of their class and national interests. In Germany the desperate situation of the state and the economy renders this question more burning than elsewhere. We must be prepared for the sharpest armed conflict with the Fascists, but must at the same time never neglect the political struggle against the false ideology of the nationalists, so that we may win over the sincere national petty bourgeois elements organized in the ranks of Fascism, or at least prevail upon them no longer to act as open enemies. The dictatorship of the proletariat lays claim to represent the nation through the working class. The defence of Germany against French imperialism is not only the prerequisite for an improvement of the material situation of the German worker today; but is, beyond this, the means of leading the whole suffering people towards a better future. The prejudiced shrieks uttered by the defenders and accomplices of capitalism in Germany against the "nationalism" of the communists are the best proof of the correctness of the communist tactics, which threaten to deprive these gentlemen of their counter-revolutionary shock troops. For us the watchword must remain: The continuation of our endeavors to find allies for the impending revolutionary struggle, that all may unite to defeat the enemy, capitalism!

Even this slight summary of the problems treated in Radek's booklet suffices to show its tremendous importance for the struggles of the international proletariat. Accordingly, every worker, and particularly every active functionary, should not only obtain this pamphlet, but should convert its contents into a permanent mental possession.