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Chang-Tso-Lin and the Soviet Union.

Leading article of the "Pravda" of 29th January 1926.

The conflict between Chang-Tso-Lin and the Soviet Union regarding the question of the Eastern Chinese railway has taken a favourable turn. At any rate the acute stage has already been passed.

Nevertheless one must pass in review all that has happened and all that is now taking place. The methods of the management and administration of the Eastern Chinese railway are, as is known, determined by a definite Treaty between our government and China, which treaty has also been signed by the Mukden authorities. Contrary to all treaties between China and the imperialist States, this Treaty between us and China was concluded on our part as with a completely and perfectly equal party. Such treaties do not exist between China and the other foreign States. For in all the other treaties China is regarded not as an independent sovereign State, but as an object of exploitation. In addition to this our government, on the conclusion of this Treaty, renounced all those payments and indemnities on the part of China which were payable to Russia as a result of the policy of conquest of Tsarism.

If the other States had acted in the same manner, then China would be free, she would be a real independent State power.

This model treaty was broken by the military authorities of Marshall Chang-Tso-Lin. In this connection regard must be had

to the following: Marshall Chang-Tso-Lin is by no means synonymous with the whole of China. The broadest circles of Chinese society, all masses of the people, see in Chang-Tso-Lin a counter-revolutionary General and an immediate agent of Japanese imperialism. It must be added that Chang-Tso-Lin relies to a certain extent on the armed forces of the Russian white-guardists who were driven into Manchuria.

From the standpoint of the foreign policy of China he is the embodiment not of the struggle for the independence of China, but of the struggle against this independence. From the standpoint of the inner policy of China, he is the embodiment of Chinese counter-revolution.

Finally, from the standpoint of the attitude towards the Soviet Union Chang-Tso-Lin is (or at least was until recently) the embodiment of those tendencies which are by no means of a friendly nature.

The attack on the Treaty regarding the Eastern Chinese railway, an attack which was accompanied by monstrous acts of violence against representatives of the Soviet Union (arrest of comrade Ivanov, suppression of workers' organisations, arrests of railway workers, employees etc.) has called forth fully justified indignation in the Soviet Union. It is not a question of "Chinese" having attacked "Russians"; it is a case of a counter-revolu-

tionary general, probably not without instigation by foreign imperialists behind the scenes, having violated a treaty which constituted the first model of a treaty upon the basis of real equality of both parties, and having attacked the rights of the only State which had fully and completely based itself on the principle of this common equality. The violation of this Treaty in the interest of the counter-revolutionary generals would immediately increase the importance of the Chinese counter-revolution.

The note of Chicherin and the "three days ultimatum", the decided tone of this note and the measures which resulted from it, were by no means dictated by the wish to deprive or rob China of anything. Such idiotic fairy-tales which are spread by the capitalist press aim at weakening the authority of the Soviet Union and increasing the authority of the imperialist robbers and their agents. As a matter of fact this one measure of defence of that new anti-imperialist policy, constituted a defence against counter-revolutionary attacks of that treaty which had for the first time opened the door for the free development of China.

The release of Ivanov and a number of other comrades, along with the other measures have created a new situation. The acuteness of the conflict has passed. The negotiations have entered on another phase, for the chief demand has been complied with. Our diplomacy will undoubtedly succeed in liquidating the entire dispute in an amicable manner and to the advantage of China. A number of measures mentioned in the note of comrade Chicherin have become unnecessary. There is every reason to hope that a complete understanding will be reached between Chang-Tso-Lin and the government of the Soviet Union.

This government, which enjoys the sympathies of the enormous majority of the Chinese people, will continue to defend the principle of the unrestricted sovereignty of China. Precisely for this reason therefore, it will always offer resistance to the counter-revolution which undertakes attacks on the rights won by revolution. The foreign imperialists are perfectly aware that if the Soviet Union were forced to relinquish the Eastern Chinese railway, if the counter-revolution of a single power were to obtain a firm foothold there, or even the Russian Whites or the Japanese imperialists etc., this would mean a decisive blow against the national emancipation movement of China. This is the whole essence of the matter.

The citizens of the Soviet Union and the broad masses of China will undoubtedly be very glad that a sharp conflict has been avoided. We all express our firm will for peace, for peace and again for peace.

POLITICS

Towards a Bloc des Gauches in Britain.

By R. Palme Dutt.

Lloyd George's open overtures towards some form of Liberal-Labour cooperation to constitute the next Government have raised in a sharp form the issues of the political future in Britain, and in particular the future of the Labour Party.

At present the Conservative Party is firmly in the saddle with an absolute parliamentary majority. There need be no election for two or three years. The Conservative Government is practising and preparing a campaign of heavy reaction against the working class, and in the course of it is tearing down the old facade of democratic formulae and liberties. But at the same time that this is going on, the preparation of a further stage is visible. If the growing revolutionary movement represented by Communism and the Trade Union Left can be beaten down by a policy of force, the time may come to endeavour to build again the facade of "progressive" "democratic" advance, purged of all elements of revolutionary menace. So in the midst of the Conservative reaction the first notes of a future Liberal-Labour alliance are beginning to be heard.

The industrial crisis, the economic situation, the international situation may precipitate an election. And it is for the future position after that election, when the Conservative Government may have been defeated and no party may have an absolute majority, that political speculation is active, and preparations for the next stage in the maintenance of Capitalist rule in Britain are in progress.

The Liberal Campaign.

The Liberal Party, through the majority of its organs and spokesmen, has been carrying on a very active campaign for Liberal-Labour cooperation. In the *Contemporary Review* for December Professor Gilbert Murray opened with a direct proposal for an alliance between the Liberal Party and the Labour Party to defeat the Conservatives at the next election and form a Coalition Government. The same policy was pressed by J. M. Keynes in the *Nation*. The *Manchester Guardian* has given warm support. The *Daily News*, the *Star* and the *Daily Chronicle* (Lloyd George's organ) have been friendly. Support has also been given by the *Observer*, which, though nominally Independent Conservative, has always been a supporter of Lloyd George. Practically the only opposition has come from the *Westminster Gazette*, the organ of the old Whig Liberalism associated with Asquith.

The Liberal Party is of course sharply divided. The small remnant of forty members in the House of Commons (representing, however, nearly three million electors) is split up into groups and factions, and has almost invariably voted in opposite lobbies on every issue. On the left, a small group, represented by Kenworthy (an able "Radical" sharpshooter and active advocate of Anglo-Soviet relations) and Pringle (who took up the legal defence of the Communists on trial) already works in close cooperation with their ex-Liberal friends in the Labour Party. On the right, another group, which is at present voiced by Sir Alfred Mond, works closely with the Conservatives against Labour.*

The old Asquith dynasty no longer plays any active political role, although still retaining titular leadership of the party in the country. Finally Lloyd George, with his completely opportunist policy, veering now to hopes of some kind of "National" Coalition with the Conservatives against the "common foe" of Labour, and now to some kind of alliance with Labour in the "common fight against reaction", is at present strongly turning in the direction of the Labour Party as the means to his re-conquest of power. With his new Land campaign, throwing out the suggestion of land nationalisation, he is endeavouring to fight through and win leadership in the Liberal Party, and at the same time to recover his position as a popular leader (the old pre-war speeches against dukes and landlords have begun again). In private he has been making "soundings" of the leaders of the Labour Party. In public he has declared simply his position that the Government after the next election will inevitably have to be based on a two-party combination, as no party is likely to have an absolute majority.

The Labour Party Reply.

The Labour Party has met this Liberal campaign with direct public denials and repudiations of any possibility of alliance with the Liberal Party, and in particular with Lloyd George. This is not surprising. The Labour Party has been bred up on the principle of "Independence" in words (although this Independence has hardly ever been realised in practice, whether in the Asquith Coalition before the war, the Lloyd George Coalition during the war or the MacDonald Coalition after the war). In particular, Lloyd George has consistently been the bete noir of Labour Party propaganda after the war, the direct author of all the evils of post-war Capitalism in Britain, and the visible and personal ally of Satan. In consequence it would be difficult rapidly to patch up an agreement with him.

The Labour Party leaders also have some more solid reasons for repudiating at present the Liberal alliance. The Labour Party still hopes to profit by the further Liberal demise, which opens up to the Labour Party the hope and prospect of becoming the sole "alternative party" ("There are always two parties in a State -- one which seeks to improve matters, the other which tries to keep things as they are. From the middle of last century, when Bright and Gladstone created the Liberal Party, until the beginning of this century, the Radicals sought improvement and pushed the Liberal Party before them. Now Liberals are as anxious as Tories to keep things as they are: Labour is the party which demands change and betterment.

* Since this was written, the news comes of Mond finally joining the Conservatives, thus signalling the victory of Lloyd George. R. P. D.

Therefore all who are in favour of change and betterment must support Labour, which will then get its majority" — Daily Herald 28/12/25). Further, the entry at present into any form of open understanding with the Liberal Party would raise such opposition and certainty of a split within the Labour Party as the right wing leaders are not yet ready to face. Finally, the Labour Party leaders have personal reasons to fear the advent of new rival leaders from the Liberal ranks, and in particular of Lloyd George with his superior demagogic and intriguing powers and his very considerable money-bags.

On the other hand it would be a mistake to accept at face value the very vehement denials and repudiations. These denials of reformist socialism of any relationship with its bourgeois partner have a habit of becoming falsified in the event, owing to the unexpected pressure of "special circumstances". It is only necessary to imagine the situation after the next election, when the Liberal and Labour Parties may very well have a combined majority over the Conservatives, to see the likelihood of some form of concealed Coalition Government, in the first stage of which a Minority Labour Government would pay the price of an "understanding" with the Liberal Party. The full swing of reaction which the Conservative Government is pursuing, the Fascist etc., will afford the plausible justification for such a course.

That the right wing Labour leaders are consciously preparing for a second Minority Labour Government, which will have to conciliate the capitalist majority is already clear. The Liverpool Conference of the Labour Party last September, where the Communists were excluded and a programme adopted abandoning Socialism, showed this. The whole existing policy goes in this direction. And the Labour Party leaders are beginning to realise that their dreams of an absolute majority and of wiping out the Liberal Party may prove premature, and that to realise their aims of a second period of office they will not be able to escape the corollary of an alliance with Liberalism.

The movement of the Labour Party leadership to the right is as inevitably leading to the understanding with Liberalism, as the movement of the Trade Unions to the left is inevitably leading to the understanding with Communism. And in these two processes is expressed the battle within the British working class.

Bourgeois Calculations of a "Bloc des Gauches".

Bourgeois calculations freely assume the likelihood of some form of "Bloc des Gauches" or Coalition Government, whether formal or informal, in which the Labour Party — properly purged of Communism and all undesirable elements — will be involved. This expectation is made conditional on the defeat of Communism within the Labour Party.

At the opening of the parliamentary session of 1925 the Conservative weekly, the *Spectator*, summed up the position:

"The real struggle of the session will be between Mac Donald and Mr. Lloyd George; and the stake is no less than the leadership of the British Bloc des Gauches."

The development of the Trade Union Left, of Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity, of "Red Friday" and the Communist successes at Scarborough put a check to these speculations. But as soon as Liverpool appeared to reverse the current, carried through the Communist exclusions and the adoption of the Programme of "National Reconstruction and Reform", the corollary of future Coalition was at once taken up. The *Times* wrote:

"By disowning and denouncing violent measures the Labour Party leaves possible the cooperation of all men who are bound together in a common citizenship for the promotion of the national prosperity."

And the *Observer* set out more explicitly:

"We do not believe that national safety, confidence and progress will ever be sufficiently restored until Liberalism at least, and Moderate Labour if possible, combine with Progressive Unionism to restore majority rule, the full strength of Parliamentary supremacy and its vital expression — the maintenance at all costs of public transport and supply."

What is the basis of this calculation?

The general position is clear. The headlong advance of the Labour Party in the years after the war — a reflection of the revolutionary changes taking place — wiped out the Liberal

Party in England, as elsewhere. But the role of Liberalism is of essential importance to Capitalism. The problem therefore became to reconstruct the Liberal Party. Since there was little hope of rebuilding the shattered fragments of the old Liberal Party, the task became to permeate the new Labour Party and win it over to the maintenance of the capitalist order.

The first experiment to this end was the experiment of the Labour Government in 1924 — an experiment consciously made by the bourgeoisie as a safe trial under control. But the experiment showed that the Labour Party was not yet "fit to govern": that is to say, that, despite the willingness of the right wing leaders, the direct working class influence within it could still bring dangerous deflections of policy. The Labour Party was shown out, and the direct instruction given that the Labour Party must purge itself, if it was ever to receive office again. ("The future of the Labour Party — even its existence as a party of power in the councils of the State — depends upon the resolutions of the Executive in respect of the Communists being made effective" — *Times* 29/9/25).

Therefore the present stage of bourgeois policy takes on a twofold character. On the one hand the direct offensive is pursued against the revolutionary elements, against the Left Wing, and above all against the Communist Party, which represents the danger of the crystallisation of all the left forces into a single compact body capable of leading the working class. On the other hand, as the necessary corollary to this, the endeavour is made to split the Labour Party, to draw closer the Right Wing leaders with offers of power, and prepare the way for a "Democratic" Coalition against the working class, thus in effect (as near as altered conditions allow) reviving the Liberal Party.

In consequence the Liberal offers of coalition to the Labour Right Wing are as direct a part of the capitalist offensive against the working class as the Conservative prosecutions of the Communists. The Liberals, in discussing the question of cooperation with the Labour Party, invariably stress two difficulties in the way. The first is the organic connection of the Labour Party with the Trade Unions. The second is the presence of "extreme Socialist" elements which are still able at times to influence policy. But both these manifestations are simply the expressions of the class character of the Labour Party which it is the object of Capitalism to overcome. And cooperation with the right wing is directly advocated as the means to this end.

The Liverpool exclusion of the Communists, the Communist prosecutions and the Liberal offers of cooperation with the Right Wing are thus all links in a single chain.

The Battle Within the Labour Party.

But the bourgeois calculations leave one factor out of account — and that is the **working class**. It is one thing to win control of Clynes, Thomas and Henderson; it is one thing even to win control of the machine of a Labour Party Conference; it is another thing to control the Labour Party in the country.

The Labour Party is not a homogeneous Social Democratic Party. It has a General Staff which is becoming more and more a rigid Social Democratic group like any other section of the Second International. But the Labour Party as a whole, throughout the country, is still the loose reflection of the existing working class movement, organised through the Trade Unions. In consequence the policy of the destruction of the class basis, which is the essence of the policy of coalition, and is expressed in the programme of Liverpool and the exclusion of the Communists, is not so easily carried out.

Opposition has at once manifested itself throughout the Labour Party to the Liverpool policy of approximation to Liberalism. The strength of this Opposition is evidenced in a number of facts:

First, that not a single Right Wing leader has dared in public to express anything but a complete repudiation of any possibility of cooperation or understanding with the Liberal Party, although it is notorious that many in private do in fact envisage the possibility.

Second, that the **Independent Labour Party**, which is the organ of reformist parliamentary socialism and nominally dominant in the Labour Party, has taken on itself to profess to voice the Opposition, and came out at the beginning of this year with a manifesto claiming to express the "Left Wing" in opposition to the policy of "gradualism" and the MacDonald leadership. (The contents of the manifesto are wholly divorced

from the class struggle; but there has taken place direct antagonism between the official Independent Labour Party and MacDonald).

Third, that the Liverpool decision of the exclusion of the Communists has in practice failed, owing to the opposition of the rank and file. It is too early yet to summarise results; but it is already clear that upwards of a hundred local labour parties have refused to carry out the instructions to exclude the Communists from their midst. This is so large a number that for the Executive to endeavour to carry through a policy of disaffiliating these local labour parties would mean in effect to split the Labour Party from top to bottom. Attempts at exclusion will still be maintained at national conferences, and the effects of these still remains to be seen in the larger Trade Unions. But the solidarity of the working class in the localities has not been broken; and if this solidarity is effectively maintained in spite of the Right Wing, a heavy blow will have been dealt to any policy of Coalition; since the Liberals have made clear that they could not contemplate cooperation with a Labour Party in which the Communists are able to play a role.

Thus the issues of the future Labour Government and of Communist exclusions are in fact the issues of the growing division within the Labour Party.

The Right Wing Leadership is preparing a policy of a Minority Labour Government — that is to say, in fact of a government of coalition with capitalism. The whole of the Liverpool Conference was a preparation for this. MacDonald even declared at the Liverpool Conference, in the debate on a Minority Government:

"I am far more afraid to go in with a majority than with a minority."

That is to say, MacDonald calculates and depends on the capitalist majority as his safeguard against the Labour Movement. And for this he is ready to split the Labour Movement by the exclusion of the Communists.

On the other hand the mass of the Labour Party are demanding more and more insistently a policy of "Socialism", of less compromise with capitalism, of independence and of the united working class front.

The division within the Labour Party is still confused, and has not yet reached an extreme point, because all sides are nominally united in the endeavour to win an absolute parliamentary majority.

But if at the next election (assuming that the development of the class struggle arising out of the industrial crisis may not have already brought the issue to a head) the Labour Party has not won an absolute parliamentary majority, then the real issue is at once laid bare. For then would at once come into operation, circumstances favouring, the policy of the Minority Labour Government, which is an open policy of cooperation with capitalism. (It is needless to add that the winning of an absolute parliamentary majority, which is in the extreme unlikely, would only raise the issue in a still sharper form).

In proportion as the hoped-for absolute parliamentary majority disappears into the background as a myth of capitalist democracy, the real issue is laid bare for the mass of the Labour Party—Either the policy of the Minority (or Coalition) Labour Government of impotent cooperation with capitalism, on the policy of the Class Struggle, breaking beyond the bonds of parliamentary formalism. Between these the mass of the Labour Party will have to choose.

Thus the issue in the Labour Party, which is beginning to take concrete shape in the question of the Minority Labour Government and the Communist exclusions, is in fact the battle of Liberalism and Communism for the main body of the working class.

The First Days of the New Luther Cabinet.

By P. R. Dietrich (Berlin).

The second Luther Cabinet has been formed. The new members have been recruited from the representatives of heavy industry and big capital and have the support of the parties of the Centre, Democrats, Centre and German People's Party. After the new members had taken the oath before President Hindenburg, there followed at the sitting of the Reichstag on 26th of January the government's declaration by Luther, which was nothing else than a provocation of the working population of Germany. The government's declaration began with the state-

ment that Germany was about to enter the League of Nations and that a protest has already been made against the non-realisation of the famous "effects of Locarno". At the same time Luther declared that the government would not make entry into the League of Nations dependent on the effects of Locarno.

That part of the government declaration dealing with home politics was a mere repetition of the programme of the first Luther Cabinet, in which the German Nationalists still possessed the most decisive influence. Luther expressly declared that the fundamental principle of the second Cabinet will remain the same as that of the first, in other words: the programme of the German heavy industrialists and big agrarians. Luther announced in detail the reduction of taxes for the capitalists and new taxation burdens for the working masses. He declared himself to be opposed to an increase of unemployment benefit and against providing support for workers on short time. He announced a worsening of the franchise law and openly threatened to prevent the holding of the plebiscite for the expropriation of the princes without compensation, if necessary by means of article 48 of the Constitution. Luther further declared that the Washington Agreement will not be ratified and announced the introduction of an Arbitration Bill by which the settlement of labour disputes would be handed over to the ordinary monarchist courts.

The Communist Party replied to this challenge of the second Luther government with the introduction of a vote of no-confidence against the government, and at the same time summoned the proletarian masses to the struggle for the overthrow of this government and the dissolution of the Reichstag. The German nationalists and the fascists also introduced votes of no-confidence against Luther and his Cabinet. Thus right from the outset there was to be seen a strong opposition against the new government, which however does not yet possess a majority over the government parties.

The decision lay exclusively in the hands of the social democratic Reichstag fraction, who, against the will of the broad masses of social democratic workers, decided to abstain from voting. The "Vorwärts" attempted in an article to defend this decision by pointing out that there was thereby created the pre-conditions for "preventing a victory of the German Nationalist-Communist opposition". With this decision the social democratic Reichstag fraction practically rescued the Luther Cabinet and gave thereby, in the eyes of the German working class, again taken on themselves the responsibility for the further anti-labour policy of the new government.

The decisive vote took place on the day following the enormous mass demonstrations of the German working class against the robber-campaign of the princes and against the employers' offensive. The vote of confidence demanded by Chancellor Luther under the threat of dissolving the Reichstag was passed by 160 votes against 150 votes of the Communists, German Nationalists and Fascists and with 131 abstentions of the social democrats. Thus, in addition to the Luther Cabinet, the Reichstag along with its present anti-labour majority was rescued.

Already on the day after the saving of the Luther government by the social democrats, the bourgeois press unanimously declared that Luther, as he had now obtained his vote of confidence, must rely not upon the social democrats, but upon the German Nationalists. The first acts of the new government are already bringing the indisputable proofs of this.

The restriction of the franchise law is to be carried out very shortly by the new Minister of the Interior, Dr. Külz. The draft Bill provides for every conceivable restriction and worsening of the election system in order to rob the workers of their right to representation in the bourgeois parliament. At the same time a Bill has been introduced by the government for abolishing the last remnants of the Rent Restrictions Act, and according to which any tenant who is only a month in arrear with his rent shall be immediately turned out into the street. The Bill further provides for an increase of rent up to five times the pre-war rent.

In reply to the demand of the Communist fraction of the Reichstag for an increase in the unemployed benefit and the extension of the same to all workers unemployed or on short time, the government declared through the press that it emphatically rejected all these demands.

That the government would prolong indefinitely the plebiscite regarding the expropriation without compensation of the princes, was plain from the very outset. The bourgeois press already reports that the government intends to postpone the plebiscite until the Summer months, in the expectation that by that time

the social democrats will have changed their minds. The democratic and Centre press, in accordance with the attitude of the government, is already exerting every effort to induce the social democratic leaders to retreat. If Wels, Müller, Hilferding and Stampfer do not venture to do this at present, it is only because the pressure of the social democratic workers in the last few weeks has become not weaker but stronger. The fighting spirit of the social democratic workers will also frustrate the new attempts at sabotage on the part of the Central Committee of the S. P. G., which has in the sharpest form declared against the formation of proletarian unity committees and has sent instructions to this effect to the Party organisations in the country. The Central Committee of the S. P. G. is being supported in this sabotage by the leaders of the Reichsbanner (Social Democratic Defence Corps) who have published instructions according to which the Reichsbanner organisations are called upon to refrain from taking part in meetings and demonstrations of the unity committees.

While the new Luther government is following the course of the first Luther government and is carrying out the programme of German heavy industry, the army of the unemployed is growing from day to day, and along with it the misery and poverty of the working masses of Germany. Whilst the sabotage of the plebiscite is being carried out by the government and the Central Committee of the S. P. G. along the whole line, the mass movement against the robber campaign of the princes is steadily growing. In many localities the social democratic workers are acting along with communist workers, members of the Reichsbanner and Red Front Fighters are joining hands in the common struggle. The will to unity, the determination to conduct a common struggle is beginning to assume an elementary character which will sweep away all attempts at sabotage.

The acts of the new government, the attitude of the S. P. G. leaders are only calculated to arouse the proletarian masses still further and to consolidate their fighting power. The proletarian class front which is being formed in the fight against the predatory aims of the princes, is already beginning to be directed against the government of heavy industry and big capital and its docile Reichstag.

The demands put forward by the Communist Party for the overthrow of the government and the dissolution of the Reichstag are being received with great enthusiasm by the working masses. The forces in the proletariat are coming into line under the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany.

The White Guardist Terrorists and Bourgeois Justice.

The following appeared as the leading article of the "Pravda" of 27th of January 1926 on the occasion of the acquittal of the assassins who planned an attempt upon the life of Comrade Bersin, the Soviet Ambassador in Vienna. Ed.

The sinister band of Russian white-guardists prepared an attempt on the life of the representative of the Soviet Union in Austria, comrade Bersin. Fortunately this attempt did not succeed. The conspiracy was discovered in time and those guilty brought before the court. The Vienna Jury however considered it necessary to acquit these people, who had prepared to murder the Ambassador of a Power with whom Austria maintains normal economic and diplomatic relations.

This truly monstrous decision of the Vienna court has aroused the greatest indignation among the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. The "Court" has acquitted the members of a white-guardist terrorist band, who have been supplied with money and arms by foreign reactionaries for the purpose of murdering functionaries of the Soviet Union. The court has acquitted people who are closely connected with the murderers in the Black International, the so-called "Aubert League" which sends its agents, stained with the blood of revolutionary fighters, into a whole number of European countries. The Austrian bourgeois "Court" has acquitted the white-guardists Borodin and Pichno, although it was clearly proved at the trial that it was intended that comrade Bersin should meet the same fate as comrade Vorovsky.

Once again — how many times already? — the bourgeois court has exposed its perfect "freedom from bias", its highly praised "impartiality", its famous "objectivity". How frantic the

bourgeois politicians and journalists have become and what crocoails tears of indignation they have shed over the "class tyranny" of the Soviet court of the workers and peasants! And now the bourgeois class court reveals such an unexampled baseness, such a blind solidarity with the white guardist originators of the vilest attacks against the proletarian State.

The guilt of Pichno and Borodin was so obvious, that even a considerable portion of the Jury of the bourgeois court (five out of twelve) did not venture to place their signatures to the verdict according to which the accused were acquitted. And as a result of the acquittal, the Austrian bourgeoisie found itself in such an invidious situation that almost without exception none of the bourgeois newspapers ventured to make any comment on the report of the acquittal. Only the official "Reichspost" ventured to take up the defence of the white-guardist bandits. This newspaper of the so-called "christian" socialists took under its wing the immaculate white-guardist refugees who have done so much injury to the workers of the Soviet Union and who are even now continuing their terrorist acts against us abroad.

The verdict of the Vienna court has a definite political import. This verdict means that Russian white-guardists are backed up, the basest and vilest intentions of these bands are encouraged. Whilst in all capitalist countries the most furious incitement is carried on against the Communist emigrants, the bourgeois court extends to the scum of the white emigrants the hand of class "compassion".

Why did the Austrian government have to follow the shameful example of the Swiss government? Why did it have to condone this political crime? Could it not find sufficient means in order to secure the most primitive impartiality in the conduct of the trial and prevent it being converted into an undignified class comedy?

Austrian economic life is passing through a very difficult phase. Austrian industry is in a serious situation. The number of the unemployed is continually growing. The unproductive expenditure of the State apparatus is continually increasing, the poverty and misery of the masses are becoming continually greater. Only economic relations between Austria and the Soviet Union can improve the position of Austria. Does the Austrian government, perchance, believe that the verdict of the Vienna Court regarding the Russian white-guardists, which reminds one so much of the verdict of the Swiss Court, can improve relations between Austrian and the Soviet Union?

The "Reconstruction" Laws of the Government Coalition of Poland.

By Orski (Warsaw).

The bourgeois parties of all the countries of Europe which are hit by the present economic crisis, are unanimously of the opinion that the only way to bring about a "recovery" of capital is to thrust the burden on the working masses, to increase exploitation, to lower the standard of living of the broad masses etc. The ruling classes of Poland are also well aware of this "way of salvation", as is clearly expressed in the measures of the present government. It might therefore be expected that those parties which profess to protect the interests of the workers, would do their utmost to oppose the plans of reconstruction of the bourgeoisie, as is to a certain extent the case under the pressure of the masses in Germany and France.

Not so in Poland! Here, the social democrats — the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.) — extend a brotherly hand to the employers (Right Bloc) and the rich peasants ("Piast" Party) in order to form a government coalition in the spirit of "an understanding in the field of economics which we must establish in common with the bourgeoisie" (as, according to the newspaper "Robotnik", Piotrovski declared at the Party Congress of the P. P. S.).

The "reconstruction" laws introduced by this government correspond completely to the wishes of the possessing classes. In the first place, at the beginning of December 1925, the "Law for the interim Budget" was introduced, Article 6 of which runs:

"Up to December 31st 1926, no laws shall come into force which effect an increase in the expenses of the State or lay new burdens on the State..."

No raising of social allowances, although social distress is growing hourly through the increase in the number of unemployed, and although the rate of allowance per week for each

family is ten zloty (less than 1.5 dollars!)! This is the wish of the bourgeoisie and with it of the P. P. S., while at the same time the Labour Minister Ziemievski, a member of the P. P. S. has the effrontery to promise the masses an extension of social legislation.

The "law as to the means of ensuring the equilibrium of the Budget" which was also intended to serve the purposes of "reconstruction" and was passed shortly before Christmas, speaks in still plainer language. Article 2 of this law reduces the pensions of widows and orphans by 4%, the salaries of the lower State officials and the military by 4.5 — 5%, and of the higher officials by 6%. Thus only 1—2% more is cut off from the salary of a high official, a minister or a general than from the starvation wage of a petty official or the pension of a widow or an orphan! In addition to an increased exploitation of teachers (by raising the number of obligatory hours of teaching in the week) this law further provides for the non-observation of the index figure for the cost of living in calculating salaries!

The P. P. S. voted for this law in Parliament, although it had, only a short time ago, declared that it would never agree to a reduction of the salaries of officials in the 10th—14th categories. (The party numbers among its electors many petty State officials). Laws of this kind are passed through the votes of the P. P. S., laws which will yield the State six million zloty, whilst many millions of taxes which have to be paid by industry and landed property, are in arrears. This is the way the party expresses its thanks to the petty officials and persons living on small private incomes who, to a large extent, helped it to achieve its victory at the election. The reactionary Press might well, on the day the law was passed, mock and "pity this party fraught with internal dissensions", when it wrote:

"The P. P. S. stretches out one hand to the man in the street, calling on him to demonstrate and protest, whilst with the other hand it votes for a reduction of salaries." ("Kurjer Pzanski" of December 19th, 1925.)

Two further "reconstruction" laws are aimed at the middle and small peasants, firstly the increase of penalties for taxes in arrears and secondly the payment of taxes in kind by the peasantry.

In order to mislead the workers, the P. P. S. propagated the lie that these laws were directed against the possessing classes and that they offered compensation for the burdening of the workers. The effrontery of this assertion is evident if we bear in mind that article 1 of the first mentioned of these two laws excepts arrears of the property tax from the increase of penalties. It should be noted that the arrears chiefly concern the property tax.

Thus the Government shows a far-reaching "understanding" for the arrears of taxation of large capital and the large agrarians. The peasant on the other hand who can no longer bear the enormous burden of his taxation, is punished with an increase of penalties which amounts to 24% of the sum of his taxation. The P. P. S. bears the whole responsibility for this law for, when the Independent Peasant Party brought forward a motion in parliament to eliminate the words "with the exception of the property tax", the P. P. S. voted against the proposal.

The "law for guaranteeing a sufficient supply of articles of daily use" which was actually reported on by a member of the P. P. S., is another disgraceful document. The Government declaration with regard to it states openly and cynically:

"The Government... does not maintain that the increase in the cost of living can be combated with the measures provided for in the law. The Government has an understanding for the determination of prices which depends on the conjuncture of events in the world, the fall of the zloty etc., although the prices are undoubtedly high in relation to the purchasing power of the broad masses of the population."

Thus the Government acknowledges that it neither intends nor desires to combat the wave of increase in the cost of living. The law is merely a manoeuvre for deceiving the masses and is without any actual value.

The Communist parliamentary fraction has put up the programme of the workers in opposition to the capitalist "methods of combating" the increase in the cost of living. It made the following demands:

Addition to wages corresponding to the real increase in the cost of living.

Employment of the unemployed or payment of allowances to the amount of the minimum cost of existence to all the unemployed in both town and village.

Automatic raising of the unemployment allowance in correspondence to the increase of the cost of living.

Guarantee of wages in keeping with the minimum demands for existence.

Guarantee of the eight hours' day.

Prevention of sabotage on the part of the employers with regard to the control by the workers of production and the exchange of goods by the factory committees.

No further increase of rents.

Remittance of rents for the unemployed.

Cession of the land to those who actually work it, i. e. to the peasants owning no land or only small holdings, by the confiscation of large landed property without compensation.

Freedom from taxation for all whose income only corresponds to the merest necessities of life, especially for the landless peasants; abolition of indirect taxation.

Away with the squandering of public money on the military and police!

Away with the present criminal military policy which is leading to ruin; establishment of economic relations with the neighbouring peoples, above all conclusion of a commercial treaty with the Soviet Union.

The working masses of Poland will carry on a campaign against the "reconstruction" laws of the bourgeois socialist Government Coalition to enforce these demands.

The Abolition of the Rent Restriction Act in Italy.

By Nino Barbieri (Milan).

In reporting on the work of the Cabinet, the newspapers have, among other things, published the following communication:

"After discussing and considering the question of rents in detail and from every point of view and also on the basis of the results of an investigation made in one of the most important towns of Italy by a high functionary of the Ministry of Justice, the Cabinet resolved not to prolong the validity of the law of Jan. 7th 1923 which has been followed by the desired result of an extensive resumption of building.

From June 30th 1926 onwards, freedom to enter into agreements will be completely restored which will give a new, increased impulse to house-building and will fully and entirely solve the question.

The Cabinet has further resolved to allocate a fund of 100 millions which will be put at the disposal of the municipalities in which it may be taken for granted that the new systematic housing regulations, dependent on the principle of freedom to conclude agreements, will lead to a more active and rapid construction of dwellings which are to be equipped for the temporary shelter of persons who are under notice to leave their dwellings. The Cabinet has further commissioned the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Public Welfare to materialise the financial and technical plan for building small houses on the outskirts of the towns which are to be sold to workers and small employees on a system of instalments.

A commission of five members will be appointed by the Minister for Public Welfare to investigate and make known to the public the best technical means for the rapid construction of dwelling houses."

This regulation abolishes the last remnants of war-time measures.

This resolution of the Fascist Government gives house-owners the liberty to fix the rents of dwellings. In order to grasp the full significance of this... liberty, which practically amounts to once more letting the blood of the proletariat, it is necessary to give some figures of the present rents, in comparison to the pre-war ones, as they exist in spite of all so-called limitations of "armaments".

It should be remarked that the liberty granted to house-owners to exploit their tenants is not the only New Year's gift bestowed on the proletariat by the Fascist Government. We can enumerate some of them: a rise of the price of milk, an increase of customs duties, of tram and motor-bus fares, of foreign

postage, in many towns of the price of bread and in Milan for funeral charges also. It must further be taken into consideration that the maximum wages of workers in 1920 and 1921 were not even at that time adjusted to the increase in the cost of living and that in the meantime they been subjected to considerable reductions which are quoted in the "Labour Year Book" of 1924 in the following figures:

Textile industry by 15—18%, technical industry by 15—20%, chemical industry by 15—20%, building industry by 18—20%, wool industry by 20—25%, food stuffs industry by 20—30%. And meanwhile, the cost of living has risen from 100 in 1913 to 680 in 1925.

All the above increases will cause a considerable lowering of the standard of living of the proletariat and the middle classes.

In an article published in the "Stato Operaio" (The Labour State) in February 1924, estimates are made as to the effects of the anticipated reintroduction in 1926 of the liberty to conclude agreements in the form in which it was desired by the houseowners and in which it will, as a matter of fact, come into force on June 30th 1926.

The estimate for the annual increase for each category is interesting:

	1924	1926
	Lire	
Attics	60.—	500.—
Small rooms	200.—	1000.—
Medium sized rooms	350.—	1500.—

These preliminary estimates were of course optimistic. They were exceeded before June 30th 1925 in reality, and that as early as in March and April 1925, through the restrictions of the arbitration commissions.

Some medium sized rooms exceed the rent of 2000 lire. If, in spite of the existence of restrictions, houseowners have been able to raise the rents for every category in the measure quoted above — the rents of attics have been increased from 100 to more than 800! — it is easy to imagine whither the freedom to make contracts will lead.

The Cabinet has resolved to allocate 100 millions and to work out a plan of technical works for the construction of wooden houses and of emergency dwellings for persons turned out of their abode. For anyone well informed as to the cost of building, this figure is simply ridiculous.

The other fact — emergency dwellings for persons turned out of their houses — is evidence that the Government in its eagerness to serve the houseowners has not deceived itself as to what will happen, and contradicts the first statement in its communication, namely that the order of Jan. 7th 1923 has promoted the construction of houses and that the difficult question of the shortage of housing accommodation is solved or on the way to being solved.

It is enough to point out that there are families in Milan who are accommodated in the most inhuman way in the premises of a former prison and in wooden huts on the outskirts of the town.

Statistics from the end of 1923 show very clearly the circumstances in which the greater part of the population of Milan is living. The following are the figures relating to more than 636 families:

1. 2.7% (17 families) have more than one room per head.
2. 13.7% (87 families) have one room per head.
3. 24.5% (156 families) have less than one room per head.
4. 25.5% (162 families) have half a room per head.
5. 33.6% (214 families) have less than half a room per head.

Thus, the great majority — groups 3, 4, and 5 — i. e. more than 83% live in unhygienic conditions of overcrowding.

The census of Jan. 1921 showed that there were in Milan 39,951 dwellings in a condition of overcrowding. At that time, 14,500 rooms were needed partly to provide for the deficiency of dwellings and 24,000 if the question was to be solved to any degree. Since then the question has become more serious, as the population has increased to a considerable degree. In spite of the restrictions and of the arbitration commissions, rents have enormously increased and a resumption of building activities is hardly perceptible even since the order of Jan. 7th 1923.

It is interesting to go into the question of the people's dwellings.

There are about 10,000 demands for rooms, and 2500 rooms will be ready between September and the end of 1926; and people will be being turned out of their dwellings in June.

In the large urban centres of Italy, conditions are almost similar, not to speak of the small centres and of Southern Italy, where the peasants sleep under the same roof with their domestic animals.

The lack of housing accommodation will therefore not make it possible, as the Fascist Government seems to hope, for a competition to start between building enterprises to the benefit of the inhabitants.

On the contrary, there is reason to fear, as the Government also realises, that there will be a larger number of evictions than ever was possible even when the houseowners had plenty of pretexts before the arbitration commissions. The result of the resumption of the free right of contract and consequently of free competition, the only object of which is often a greater freedom of disposal, offers no guarantee to the tenants in the case of the abolition of the system of compulsory letting which is still valid in other countries. If the tenants' associations are dissolved, there will still exist in our country, the firmly and impregably organised associations of houseowners who, thanks to the resolution of the Fascist Cabinet, have carried off a great victory.

When a stop was put to evictions on the order of the Prefect of Milan who was prompted to this measure by the seriousness of the situation, Stucchi, the president of the association of houseowners, wrote last April — in appealing to the Ministry against this regulation — that in Milan "the constitutional order of the State along with the authority of the central power had been overthrown."

The victory has come. The authorities in Rome are convinced that the constitutional order is in serious danger and that therefore the houseowners must be given a free hand as regards their tenants, to raise rents and literally to turn them out of their half room or their attic, into the street, if they do not submit to the increase of rent.

Yankee Imperialism Shows its Teeth.

By Harrison George (U. S. A.).

There are lessons to be found for the workers in a study of the "Renters' Rebellion" in Panama City, Republic of Panama, situated in the centre of Central America, the region most acutely oppressed by the expansion southward of United States imperialism.

These lessons pertain not only to the terrible economic and social conditions of those Latin-American workers suffering under the heel of ruthless exploitation, and they reflect not alone the vast power of oppression of Wall street imperialism — which is known to these oppressed peoples as 'The Colossus of the North', — but teach as well the fundamental function of the capitalist state, as written by its own hand.

The strike of the renters in Panama, it will be remembered, occurred in October last. The landlords had raised the rents, already high, of workers that toil for the merest pittance and who live in the worst of horrible and unsanitary hovels. Extracts from a letter, given below, tell something of their conditions in the following words:

"A New York acquaintance once showed me around that city's infamous East Side. My comment on the abominable, filthy and generally unsanitary conditions under which those workers exist, was that here we had a crime against civilization that cried to heaven. But that was before I started travelling around Central America. Your East-Sider is a pot bellied plutocrat in comparison to the Central-American worker."

Against such conditions the workers of Panama City rebelled. The whole world proletariat should know that they fought valiantly against their venal and corrupt government, that they rushed into the struggle with a will for sacrifice, and that many gave up their lives in open, although unequal, combat.

The Panamanian government used all its power to crush the renters' strike, but disaffection arose in its police force, and the government was swept along — was on the point of accepting defeat with a wry face, when the soldiery of the United States invaded the country without the slightest pretext of inter-

national law to justify the invasion, and saved the rights of capitalist property from the sacrilegious hands of the Panamanian worker. Bayonets through the breast of a few brave proletarians who fought under red flags with their bare hands, triumphed. But even at that the renters won a ten per cent cut, though they demanded a fifty per cent reduction at the beginning. Brute force again triumphed over workers armed only with a just cause and isolated from the larger masses of workers, whose co-operation alone would have ensured success — the organised workers of the United States.

Only when a common fight is made by the workers of the United States in close conjunction with the miserably oppressed workers of Central America, can the latter hope for permanent betterment to be forced out of the exploiters. And only when the workers of the United States understand that their own standards are menaced by the oppression suffered by Latin-American workers, will a common fight be made.

We come to the revelation in the struggle that went on in Panama City, of the basic nature of a capitalist state. In the decree issued by the mayor of the city on October 31, a decree with ten separate articles and a preamble, the latter states:

"The mere fact of inciting or advising by any means the non-payment of rent, is to induce citizens to ignore the natural and legitimate right of property, and therefore said act constitutes an attack against the right of property which it is the unavoidable duty of the State to protect."

What could be clearer? Here there is stated the "natural right" of capitalist property, and the equally supreme duty and function of the capitalist state to protect that right.

That the right of human life and happiness is wholly immaterial when it conflicts with this "natural right" of capital, and that this "natural" right nevertheless required the assistance of artifice in the way of jails and bayonets is seen in the provisions of the decree.

These provided that all personally or indirectly inciting non-payment of rent should be arrested and imprisoned, if Panamanian citizens, foreigners to be deported. Panamanians of "Notorious bad conduct" who participate are sentenced to two years in prison — and in such a prison where such a term is worse than immediate execution. Printers who print circular matter are subject to arrest. All meetings relating to the tenants' question are prohibited and public demonstrations in which the red flag is displayed or the Internationale is sung are prohibited, and participants are subject to arrest.

Thus was crushed by summary decree and the aid of Yankee bayonets the movement which the mayor's preamble stated "was aimed at disturbing public order and to change by violent means our institutions for the purpose of substituting them with others", but which, in effect was a typical example of the savage treatment by capitalist government of workers who dare even to lay the weight of a finger on the holy "natural" right of property.

Thus was crushed the first brave effort of the Panamanian workers to battle for freedom under red flags and with the Internationale on their lips. But it was only their first effort, and the neat little axiom used by the Spanish people in all occasions of temporary reverses comes sharply to mind — "Manana sera otra dia" — "To-morrow will be another day".

THE BALKANS

The Situation in Yugoslavia.

by Milan Gorkitch (Belgrade).

On January 25th — after a long silence and continuous protests on the part of the whole Yugoslavian public — the Department for Public Safety of the Yugoslavian Ministry of the Interior published a communication on the persecutions of communists in Yugoslavia (which began in the second half of January and are still going on) in which it is stated that the arrests were made

"because the persons arrested were suspected of attempting to organise communist nuclei among the workers."

The actual reasons for this new attack aimed at the Yugoslavian working class by the Coalition Government of the

"Radicals" (Serbian hegemonistic bourgeoisie) and the Raditch party — for the whole working class of Yugoslavia is hit by these persecutions — are quite different from those which are expressed in formal juridical language in the police communications. They are deeply rooted in the present internal economic situation of Yugoslavia and its relations to foreign countries. The following factors can be cited which show up this new wave of terror in its true light.

1. The economic situation of Yugoslavia is becoming worse from day to day. The public expenditure which this year reached 13 milliards of dinars (55 dinars = 1 dollar) exceeded, according to the statements of the Minister of Finance, the financial maximum of the State by no less than two milliards. The deficit on the Budget has never been so high as it is this year. On the other hand the whole industry of Yugoslavia is passing through a serious crisis by which trade and heavy industry, which predominate in this country, are suffering most heavily.

The uncertain state of the currency which has been artificially forced up by constant manipulations of the Ministry of Finance, whose policy is at present identical with that of financial capital, the large banks, causes an uncertainty which, in such periods, on the one hand intensifies the antagonism between financial and industrial capital, and on the other hand has a negative influence on the situation in industry.

All this has called into being, first of all an intensification of the anti-social policy of the R. R. Government (government of the Radicals and the Raditch party), and secondly a rapid deterioration in the position of the working class. Hence there results the symptoms which are characteristic of the present situation in Yugoslavia and which are in obvious contradiction to one another. On the one hand: growing unemployment, an enormous increase of indirect taxation, an anticipated increase of credit on goods, and on the other hand: abolition of the Ministry for Social Policy, reduction of the unemployment benefit, cutting down of wages, reduction of the public expenditure on the various social institutions (Labour Chambers, factory inspectors). At the same time, increase of military expenditure (in the spirit of Locarno!), the King's apauage raised to 24 million dinars.

Apart from this, the situation of the poor and small peasant is becoming worse; not only because of the increase of indirect taxation, but also because of the liquidation of agrarian reform which is to be carried out by the "peasant" Minister, Pavle Raditch. In a short time the legal terms for the payment of the land of the large property owners, which was taken possession of by the poor peasants in 1819 — 1919, will expire, and even now measures are being prepared against most of the peasants who cannot meet these payments. This will lead to a fresh aggravation of the peasant and agrarian question and in some provinces — Dalmatia for instance — even to peasant "disturbances" and revolts.

A situation of this kind leads to a great increase of discontent among the workers and the poor strata of the population in town and country, and also to an increase of the possibilities of development and of the influence of the Communist Party, which has recently been making progress along the path of consolidation in its internal organisation. It was therefore absolutely necessary for the present Government, by framing up a "communist conspiracy", to avert this inevitable strengthening of the C. P. and at the same time to weaken its strongest and most dangerous enemy by a hard and brutal blow.

2. A further object of the Government, and especially of the Great Serbian hegemonistic bourgeoisie, whose interests are represented by the Radical party, was to compromise its ally in the Government, the Raditch party, in the eyes of the broad masses, by violent persecutions of the communists and by intensifying the illegal methods and the police methods. The Raditch party has in recent times begun to extend its influence to the non-Croatian provinces and thus seriously to injure the influence of its ally — the Radical party. The Radicals therefore wish to answer with a "counter-offensive" and, by communist persecutions, to compromise Raditch who, up to the present, has been known as an "opponent" of the police regime and of brutal persecutions. Furthermore the Government wanted, by this manoeuvre, to distract the attention of the masses from the burning questions of internal and foreign policy and from the crisis within the Government which is becoming more and more acute every day (intensification of the dissensions between Raditch and the Radicals), and to turn it in another direction.

3. The R. R. Government hoped that the intensification of its anti-communist policy would, to a certain extent, improve its situation as regards its foreign policy, and that in two directions:

a) it hopes in this way to give the West European imperialist Powers, especially Great Britain, a proof that its recent coquetting with the Soviet Union was not meant seriously. The friendly reception of the Turkish foreign Minister who had come to Belgrade direct from Paris where he had signed a treaty of alliance with Chitcherin, the People's Commissary, further the conclusion of the Turko-Yugoslave treaty of friendship and the rumours as to negotiations between Balugdzitch, the Yugoslavian ambassador in Berlin and Chitcherin — all this caused considerable discontent in English government circles. Violent Press polemics resulted, from which it is easy to see that this supposed new attitude of Yugoslavia to the Soviet Union was only a strategic move, the object of which was to strengthen Yugoslavia's position in the question of the Balkan guarantee pact which is being prepared.

b) The Government wanted in this way to improve its position with regard to the question of receiving a large foreign loan, on which depends the salvation of the whole State from financial collapse. Stojadinovitch, the Finance Minister, was entrusted with this difficult task and is at present trying to induce the bankers and the Government of the United States to grant Yugoslavia such a loan after she has settled the question of her old debts. The attack on the communist movement was intended in this case, to serve as evidence of the strength of the political position of this Government. That this was not an abstract hypothesis but a fact, is proved by the following statement of the bourgeois Zagreb "Morning", of Jan. 26th:

"The arrests and persecutions of the Communists did not meet with as favourable an echo in American economic circles as had been expected (!)..."

("The Morning", Zagreb No. 933.)

These then, in addition to the preparatory blow against the Independent Trade Unions which were to have held their Congress in these days, and the whole of whose representatives and leaders were arrested, are the real reasons for this new brutal attack of the Yugoslavian Government on the Communist Movement. This is why the Belgrade police wishes at any price, even by the methods of mediaeval inquisition, to extort from the arrested workers a confession that they had been preparing a "putsch", a "military mutiny". "For the same reason, the young worker Joschko Jerzo, whom they want to compel to make statements as to communist activity in the army, had both legs broken at his "cross-examination", and was so ill-treated that he had to be taken to hospital in a half dead condition. Some of the prisoners even maintain that he will not escape with his life.

These facts should call forth the unanimous protest of the workers of the whole world. Only international solidarity can wrench the best Labour leaders of Yugoslavia from the hands of the brutal Serbian police.

Appeal of the R. I. L. U. against the Persecution of the Yugoslavian Trade Unions.

Moscow, 1st February 1926.

The Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions has issued the following appeal to the working men and women of all countries against the persecution of the Yugoslavian Trade Union Movement:

"On the 24th of February the Congress of the Independent Trade Unions of Yugoslavia was to have been held. The agenda, among other items, included the question of the unity of the trade union movement which has been split by the reformists.

The trade union movement of Yugoslavia, after its affiliation to the R. I. L. U. in the year 1920 was persecuted in the cruelest manner. All Trade union premises were closed, the workers' clubs were handed over by the police to the social democrats, who founded their own unions and since then have held aloft the flag of the Amsterdamers in Yugoslavia. In spite of the years of terror the workers of Yugoslavia have succeeded in setting up class trade unions and fighting against the attacks of the social democracy and the police.

The independent class trade unions of Yugoslavia now wished to discuss at their Congress the means for establishing

a firm strong organisation in order successfully to defend the interests of the Yugoslavian proletariat, for uniting it and for establishing closer connections with the international trade union movement. The Yugoslavian government however attacked with all the resources of the white terror the independent trade unions. On the day before the holding of the Congress all leaders of the independent trade unions were thrown into prison. All the leading active groups of the independent trade union movement and of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, consisting of 350 of the most devoted leaders of the Yugoslavian working class were arrested. Their crime consists in the fact that they had prepared the Congress of the legally existing independent trade unions of Yugoslavia.

In destroying the workers' organisations the hangmen of the Yugoslavian working class make use of a pretext, which the reformists have prepared for this purpose by expelling six of the largest independent trade unions from the Belgrade Labour Chamber. The reformists, who have continued without cessation to carry on a campaign in their press against the most honest leaders of the workers, have at the same time constantly called the attention of the government to the "criminal activity" of the independent trade unions.

The preparatory work of the reformists and of the Yugoslavian government has achieved its aim: the independent trade union movement of Yugoslavia has been destroyed and the best workers torn from the steadfast ranks of the Yugoslavian proletarians who are organised in the independent trade unions. The victory of reaction, however, is only a temporary victory. The workers of Yugoslavia will put forward comrades from their ranks who will replace those who have been removed by reaction for a time from the fighting front. The white terror of Yugoslavia will not succeed even this time in suppressing the labour movement, just as the savage hangman of the workers and peasants of Bulgaria, Zankov, has not succeeded in crushing the Bulgarian labour movement.

Down with the white terror in Yugoslavia!

Long live the working class of Yugoslavia, long live its united and firmly welded independent trade union movement!"

Declaration of the Communist Party of Greece against the Military Dictatorship.

For some weeks past the entire press has been devoting its columns to the question of Communism. There is talk and discussion regarding it, as well as regarding the measures which the Pangalos government has already taken and will yet take against the communist and the labour movement. The Pangalos government and its supporters are endeavouring to prove to the whole world that the communists are desirous of resorting to practical action, and that they must therefore speedily and thoroughly defeat communism and every movement of the working people, even if the "security of the State" does not absolutely require it. It is evident that the Pangalos government is striving for the same aim for which the other Greek governments strove: in order to maintain its rule, in order to be able to carry on its policy of exploitation and plundering of the masses, the class movement of the workers, peasants, refugees, employees, small traders etc. must be defeated. Why is Communism being more severely attacked today than ever? The reason is clear:

1. The great "communist danger" was discovered precisely at the time when the Pangalos government had suffered a serious defeat in the elections in Salonica.

2. At a time when mutton costs 42 Drachmas, and the family income of a worker or employee does not exceed 35 drachmas a day, the Pangalos government, in order to silence all voices of protest, announced that the centre of the Communist movement of the entire world is to be found in Athens.

3. In order to divert the attention of the masses from the increase in the rates of postage and in the price of bread, milk and all other articles of food, the Pangalos government discovered that the C. P. of Greece had received money from Vienna sent from Moscow, in order to organise the revolution against the system of Pangalos.

4. In order to divert the attention of the population from the new orders for 3000 machine guns and 6000 rifles, the Pangalos

government exaggerates the importance of the speech of the Yugoslavian Minister Raditch and the nationalist-chauvinist meeting at Monastir, and even takes advantage of these facts in order to prepare a new war, in which the working masses must sacrifice their lives in the interests of the capitalists and imperialists of the Entente and of Greece.

5. In carrying out the commands of England who holds us in slavery, the Pangalos government with the greatest eagerness discovered the "Müller affair", and is seeking to provoke a conflict with the Soviet Union, which would mean an intensification of the economic crisis and still greater misery for all sections of the Greek people.

Workers, Peasants, Refugees, Petty Bourgeois!

In carrying out its reactionary policy of exploitation the Pangalos government is first attacking the Communist Party and the labour organisations. In order to remove every obstacle from its way, in order to prevent the Communist Party from representing the present and future interests of the masses, the government is resorting to strengthening the police, throttling and forbidding the press, is arresting, interning and condemning, and wishes to get the senate into its hands as an organ of fascist and Pangalos dictatorship. If the Pangalos government is raising a great outcry over the "Communist danger" it is because it wishes to prepare the ground in order to place first the Communist Party, and afterwards the other labour organisations outside the law, to settle accounts with them and to deprive the whole working class of its one real and determined defender, the Communist Party and the Young Communist League.

We have at present the military dictatorship. This does not in any way surprise us; we expected all that. The workers' organisations and all sections of the Greek workers have long lived under the dictatorship. In the undisguised proclamation of the dictatorship there is openly proclaimed what has already actually existed for a long time. The dictatorship means the bankruptcy of democratic illusions.

As an answer to the dictatorship of Pangalos and the rest of the military and monarchist adventurers, we issue the slogans:

Bread for the workers!

Possibility of existence for the Refugees!

Down with the taxes which crush even the small traders and small business men!

Right of organisation and political freedom for the masses!

Elections on the basis of the system of proportional representation!

Our cry is forwards!

Long live the solidarity of the workers, peasants, refugees, employees and all working masses!

Long live the Communist Party and the Young Communist League of Greece, the advance-guard of the Greek working class in the struggle!

The C. C. of the Communist Party of Greece.

The C. C. of the Young Communist League of Greece.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

New Phenomena in the International Labour Movement.

By John Pepper.

A number of new phenomena are to be observed in the international Labour movement. The temporary stabilisation of capitalism has, in some countries, given fresh vigour to the ranks of the aristocracy of Labour and increased its privileges, with the result that the Labour movement has to a certain extent, veered to the Right. On the other hand, two powerful factors are more and more driving the masses of workers into opposition to capitalism, and in this way producing a strong current towards the Left in the Labour movement; these factors are 1) the crisis and the wholesale unemployment in a number of countries, 2) the successful building up of socialism in the Soviet Union. In view of the general veering to the Left of

the proletariat and the crystallisation of Left groups, we can speak with some justification of a new growth of tendencies in favour of a Second and a Half International. We will cite the most important signs.

1. The alliance of the English and Russian proletariat. The Joint Advisory Council for Trade Union Unity of the working classes of Great Britain and the Soviet Union in itself represents a form of organisation of this alliance. The continued unemployment and the hopeless industrial crisis compel the English workers to regard the Soviet Union as the only market in which it would be possible to sell English wares. The rapid succession of a Liberal, a Conservative and a Labour Ministry and the return to power of a Conservative Government have given sufficient evidence of the impossibility of improving the situation of the English worker in the capitalistic anarchy. At the same time, the prospects of social construction in the Soviet Union fill them with fresh hopes. That the Finnish and Norwegian trade unions have joined the Unity Committee is a further sign of the growth of this fighting spirit.

2. The success of the Labour delegations. One of the most important characteristics of our time is indubitably that in European workers have begun to "discover" the Soviet Union. The success of the English delegation of workers was extraordinary, and the results of the visit of the German workers' delegation are gradually becoming more and more evident. There were years in which the Soviet Union was an inexhaustible source of revolutionary inspiration to the workers of the whole world. Then came the civil war. Both the form and living conditions in the Soviet Union began to be used as a "terrible warning" by social democratic agitators. A great change has now come over the scene. Even in America about 200,000 workers have formed committees with the object of sending workers' delegations to the country of socialist construction and of government by the workers.

3. The formation of a Left wing of Social Democracy in all countries. There is now hardly a single country in which there is not an embittered fight going on between the Left and Right tendencies in the bosom of Social Democracy.

The stabilisation of Social Democracy has proceeded parallel to that of capitalism. The Hamburg World Congress had brought about the amalgamation of the Second and the Second and a Half Internationals. The rejoicing over this amalgamation however, did not last long. An embittered fight between the fractions is now raging throughout international Social Democracy.

The Minority Movement in the English trade unions gave rise to the first organised form of the Left wing, and now the first steps are being taken to organise a Left wing in the British Labour Party. The social democratic opposition in Saxony which for a long time preserved its local character, has now grown into a movement which embraces the whole of Germany, and organised Left groups are opposing the official policy of the party in Frankfurt, Mecklenburg, Hamburg and even in Berlin. We have seen how, at the Party Congresses of French, Polish and Hungarian Social Democracy, powerful opposition movements have simultaneously come into being. The question of coalition government and of an understanding with the bourgeoisie is now shaking French, German, Polish and Hungarian Social Democracy to their foundations.

This Left opposition within Social Democracy is still to a large extent uncertain and wavering. Nevertheless it exists, and if in the future it continues to grow as it has done in the last few months, we shall soon be able to say that before long nothing but two wings — without a body — will remain of Social Democracy which was once a united whole.

4. The success of the Communists at elections. The last few months have brought success to the Communist Parties at the elections in Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Germany. The most recent municipal elections in Berlin, the Prussian provincial elections and the elections for the South German Landtag have shown an increase in the number of communist and a decrease in the number of social democratic votes. Even the bourgeois Press was compelled to acknowledge that after the letter of the E.C.C.I. and after the defeat of the policy of Ruth Fischer-Maslov, the masses have again begun to draw nearer to the Communist Party. The Czech Communists polled about a million votes, and even the Berlin "Vorwärts" had regretfully to state that the result of the parliamentary elections represented the complete annihilation of Czech Sozial Democracy. Even the small Communist Party of Belgium succeeded

in making the first breach in the mighty wall of Belgian Social Democracy.

5. Attempts to draw nearer to the 3rd International. Leftward tendencies are making their appearance not only in a national but also in an international measure. One of the first signs of this was Otto Bauer's speech in Vienna. He was forced to acknowledge the socialist development of the Soviet Union and emphasised the necessity of an alliance between the international proletariat and the first workers' republic. At the same time, true to his nature, he demanded, more or less as a reward, the liquidation of the Austrian C.P. A second sign is given us by an interesting article from the pen of Nielson, the Danish social democratic member of Parliament. He writes that, whilst the Russian worker is building up socialism, the situation in Denmark and in the whole of Europe is getting worse from day to day and that wholesale unemployment has become a permanent phenomenon and that revolution is inevitable. In his opinion however, the communists are unnecessary because they are only disturbers of law and order and because, if revolution should become necessary, it could be carried out by the Danish social democrats alone.

The most important sign of the tendency to approach the Comintern is however the latest resolution of the English Independent Labour Party, which consists of two parts. In the first part it is stated that the Independent Labour Party must endeavour to unite the Second and Third Internationals. It will bring up this question at the next conference of the Second International and at the same time approach the Third International in writing. It proposes to relegate the question of armed force to the background and to concentrate all its strength on the fight against capitalism and imperialism. The second part of the resolution states that the Independent Labour Party will not in the future absolutely strive to obtain complete unanimity in the resolutions of the 2nd International. It no longer conceals its Left point of view, and thanks to that "a Left wing is being formed and a lively discussion on the new ideas and the new policy will develop in the whole International."

All these facts and events are signs of the movement, the differentiation and the revolutionising of the international Labour movement. It is already possible to discern the outlines of tendencies of the nature of those held by the Second and a Half International among the masses of workers. Once more the wind is in the same direction as in 1920 when the Independent Labour Party and the German Independent Social Democratic Party sent representatives to Moscow to negotiate as to the conditions of admission into the Third International. The significance of these signs should not of course be exaggerated, on the other hand however we should be guilty of thoughtlessness if we closed our eyes to the importance of these facts. It is necessary to manoeuvre with care, patience and wise tactics, though of course this involves a certain danger of opportunism. It would however be a great mistake on our part if we did not get in touch with the masses of workers who are pressing towards the Left.

A New Epoch in the Swedish Trade Union Movement

By Smolan.

The class antagonisms in Sweden have visibly increased in the last few years, although this country which was quite undisturbed by the war and inflation, has since the year 1920, almost without interruption, been ruled by purely social democratic "labour governments".

Under the eyes of this government private employers, as well as municipal administrations, organise armed fascist shock troops, who are employed as strike-breakers in all labour conflicts. It has even happened that these bandits — who in a short space of time have committed several murders among the working population — have been entrusted by the town authorities with police powers.

In view of this fact and also of the complete passivity of the head organisations, the masses were finally induced to take matters into their own hands. The metal workers' trade union of Göteborg, the second greatest trade union in the country, issued an appeal "To all Swedish workers", and which con-

tained a fighting programme which met with the enthusiastic approval of a great portion of the organised masses.

As the Free Trade Union Federation whose Central Committee consists of social democratic members of parliament and town councillors, refused to undertake the realisation of this programme, the metal workers of Göteborg convened a Unity Conference of all the organised workers of the Kingdom which took place on the 23rd and 24th of January in Göteborg.

The Conference was attended by 163 delegates, representing over 250 trade unions in all parts of the country, including 17 provincial federations of the most important and prominent groups, such as the paper and saw-mill workers, railway workers, metal workers and forest workers, among them being many syndicalists. The conveners of the Conference had decided that only those delegates should have the right to vote who had been officially delegated by their trade unions; these alone, according to a modest estimate, represented over 80,000 organised workers. Delegates who were sent by minorities only had advisory votes. In addition to this numerous trade unions had expressed unconditional approval of the programme, but explained that owing to financial reasons it was impossible to send their own representatives. It must not be forgotten that the enormous distances in Sweden which is 2000 km. in length, with a population of 6 millions, played a very great role in this case.

We are therefore justified in including in our reckoning these sympathisers, with the result that this Conference represented not less than 150,000 out of the 440,000 trade union organised workers of Sweden. This magnificent result of a campaign which lasted scarcely two months will be appreciated all the more when it is remembered that it was achieved in the sharpest struggle against the trade union bureaucrats, social democrats and revolutionary syndicalists. Both the "free" and the syndicalist trade union leaders opposed in the most hateful manner "the splitting Conference of the Communist sect", its well-prepared press maintained a conspiracy of silence regarding the Conference or endeavoured to represent it as being absurd and entirely without importance.

Of the head organisations invited only the C. P. of Sweden took part in the Conference; the leaders of the free trade unions, of the syndicalists and also of the social democracy boycotted it.

The Conference has, by means of concrete discussion, clearly laid down the programme for future work in the trade unions, and this programme, after a thorough debate, was unanimously adopted. In order to conduct and organise this work systematically, a committee of 19 was elected, consisting for the greater part of well-known trade unionists.

This programme provides:

1. The setting up of 100% trade unions, that is to say, the trade unions shall be extended and embrace all hand and brain workers, the aim being to achieve a Trade Union Federation of 800,000 members.
2. Establishment of national and international unity.
3. Fight against Fascism and Strike-breakers.
4. Measures for supporting the unemployed.
5. Enactment of an effective law regarding working hours, which shall embrace all groups of workers without exception.
6. Adopting of measures in order to bring the juvenile workers into the trade unions and ensure them decent human wages, so that they cannot any longer be used as wage-cutters.

"The splitting of the trade unions must not be tolerated in any circumstances or in any form. A decisive front must be set up against every attempt to expel a minority group from the trade unions or to induce them to withdraw..."

The Conference, which received a great number of telegrams of sympathy from various countries including France, Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, sent a telegram of sympathy to the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee which was unanimously agreed to and was signed by two social democrats, two communists and a non-Party worker.

The holding of the Conference as well as the great number of delegate attending it show that great masses of the Swedish trade unionists have finally broken with decade-long social democratic tutelage; and therein lies its great importance.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Results of the Report of the XIV. Party Congress of the All-Union Communist Party in Leningrad.

By W. Molotov.

Now that the meeting of the Party organisation of the Leningrad "Red Putilov Works" is over, the balance can be drawn of the whole course of the reporting campaign of the Party Congress in Leningrad. In the plans of the opposition, the factory "The Red Putilov Worker" represented the main stronghold upon which it relied for support. Both the leaders of the Leningrad district Moscow-Narva, and the party organisation of the factory with their organiser at their head, did everything in their power to ensure that one of the largest party organisations of Leningrad, the organisation of the "Red Putilov Worker" should firmly support the point of view of the Leningrad delegates to the Party Congress.

Before the plenary session of the organisation, which was held on January 20th, its leaders had posted all over the factory a special appeal to all members of the organisation, in which the organisation was called upon "to express its point of view in an organised form" with regard to the report of the representatives of the C.C. The directors of the factory organisation, in common with a number of responsible functionaries of the Leningrad district committee, had previously worked indefatigably at preparing this "organised reception" of the representatives of the C.C.

The overwhelming majority of the members of the Party in the Putilov works therefore emphatically repudiated the opposition at the meeting, withdrew full powers from the bureau of organisation and condemned the district and county committees because these have been carrying on fraction work, have made use of pressure from above on the Party and have largely contributed to the disintegration in our ranks. Following the example of many other factory organisations, the meeting demanded that a conference of the representatives of the districts and counties should be convened with the object of electing the new district and county committee. By this resolution, the communists of the "Red Putilov Worker" confirmed the general result that can now be summarized. This general result is as follows:

In all the factory organisations of the party in Leningrad which received a report on the 14th Party Congress, resolutions were passed without exception, recognising the correctness of the resolutions of the 14th Party Congress and condemning the point of view of the delegation to the Party Congress of Leningrad.

The following are the most important data:

In the six urban districts of Leningrad there are 717 factory organisations with 77,656 members and candidates. The reporting campaign was carried on in 652 organisations which include 73,268 communists. The meetings were attended by 63,003 comrades, i. e. 82% of the whole of the Leningrad membership. In five urban districts (the Moscow-Narva district being excepted) the reporting campaign may be regarded as ended, as in these five urban districts there are only four factory organisations (with a total of 63 members) which have not yet received a report.

In the urban district Moscow-Narva the reporting is not yet finished, 61 organisations with a total membership of 3725 having not yet held meetings to receive the report.

The number of persons taking part in the meetings varies, reckoning by urban districts, between 72% (the central urban district, where the attendance, it is true, has been calculated somewhat inaccurately and does not include those who took part in the preliminary meetings) and 98% (Vyborg urban district). Unconditional approval of the resolutions was expressed by 60,228 communists, i. e. 96% of all who attended the meetings. The votes in favour of the resolution of the opposition amounted to 2100, i. e. 3.5%. 275 communists, i. e. 0.5% abstained from voting.

The largest number of votes for the opposition was registered in the Moscow-Narva district, where 14,870 voted

against the opposition and 1530 (i. e. rather more than 9%) for the opposition (52 refraining from voting). In the other urban districts, 98.3 — 99.6% of those attending the meetings voted against the opposition. To this must be added the result of the meetings of the Leningrad communists belonging to the Red army and navy; there are 11,356 of these comrades. Of these, 10,129 comrades (89%) took part in the meetings held to receive the report, of these 10,023, i. e. 99% voted against the opposition. In actual figures, the opposition received 54 votes, 47 abstaining from voting.

Thus, altogether 72,967 comrades (i. e. 85% of the whole of the members) took part in the meetings to receive the report in Leningrad. The proportion of votes was 70,389 (96.3%) against the opposition; 2244 (3.2%) for the opposition, 334 (0.5%) refraining from voting.

The results of the reporting campaign in the provincial districts of the Leningrad government show that the opposition was decidedly condemned in all districts.

The majority of the urban district committee of the Vyborg district was from the beginning, in favour of the unconditional recognition of the correctness of the C. C. majority and the 14th Party Congress. In three other urban districts, the district committees have now, on their own initiative, dismissed their staff who had worked on the lines of the opposition, and appointed a new staff.

On Jan 21st, the bureau of the Leningrad Committee passed a resolution according to which the organisers of two urban districts (Moscow-Narva and Vassilievsky Island) were replaced by other comrades who stand for the unconditional approval of the resolutions of the Party Congress. All the urban district organisers in Leningrad and the majority (4) of the bureaus of the urban district committees are now decided supporters of the policy of the whole Party.

Finally, on January 20th., at the plenum of the government control commission, a new presidium and new secretariat of government control commission was appointed in consideration of the resolutions of which the majority of the Leningrad communists had expressed their approval.

From the figures and facts quoted it is quite evident that only an insignificant part of the Leningrad organisations still maintains the point of view of the opposition. It should however be taken into consideration that, in a number of factory organisations, a decided swing of the pendulum as regards the question of the relation to the opposition, has only taken place quite recently, and that a large percentage of the 2244 comrades who voted for the opposition consists of party functionaries. This circumstance emphasises the task by which the leading party bodies of Leningrad are faced, the task of finally overcoming the attitude of opposition which exists in the organisation.

An increased party activity must now be developed in all organisations so that the resolutions passed by all the factory organisations of Leningrad may be carried out and the Leningrad organisation may actually submit to the leadership of the whole Party on the basis of the resolutions of the XIV Party Congress.

Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of South Africa.

By James Shields (Johannesburg).

On December 26th, 27th & 28th there was held in Cape Town the 4th Conference of the Communist Party of S. Africa. The changing situation in the political field, the growth of Trade Unionism among the natives, and the proposed segregation policy of the Government were examined and reviewed, and the lines of action of the Party for 1926 discussed and decided upon. A big portion of the delegates' time was occupied with dealing with the Party organisation in order to secure the proper machinery for putting our policy into practice, and it was decided that the system of area groups be adopted in order to increase the recruiting work of the Party and effectively organise the sale of the party organ and literature.

The Conference revealed the weakness of the Party's Trade Union connections and the need for definitely organising nuclei within the Trade unions to advocate the unity of all sections of workers, to counteract the strongly existing racial prejudice, and to bring the question of International Trade Union Unity to the forefront.

It was agreed that a more systematic education of the membership in the Party Programme should be undertaken in order to equip our members for their tasks and to facilitate the work of recruiting new blood for the Party — one of the most important needs of the moment.

With regard to the proposed segregation policy of the Pact Government, which aims at taking away the franchise of the native in the Cape Province, etc. the Conference decided to commence a campaign condemning these re-actionary proposals, and mobilising an opposition to prevent them being put into operation.

The Asiatic Bill was reported upon by Com. De Norman who pointed out that it was aimed against the wealthy Indian traders, leaving the Indian workers practically unaffected. He urged the Party to establish contact with the Indian workers in Natal with a view to organising them for the struggle for their demands, chief of which were increased wages, shorter hours and an equal status with the European worker. The working-class aspect of the Indian question in S. Africa was strongly stressed, and the Party decided to act accordingly.

One of the most important items on the agenda was that which dealt with the **Land & Peasant Question**. A long discussion revealed the terrible conditions of the agricultural workers and poor peasants, and the necessity for formulating a programme embodying their demands in order to rally them against capitalist exploitation. The Conference decided to commence propagating the slogan of a **Workers' and Peasants' Government**, and to carry on serious communist activity among the country population. It was felt that the drawing up of a programme for agricultural workers should first of all be carefully considered and much more information secured before being definitely published. This task was left to the new C. E. to deal with and will probably be completed in three or four months.

The revival of the Y. C. L. which had gone out of existence, some six months ago, was resolved, and an organiser appointed to commence its re-organisation immediately with the assistance of the Party. The formation of the Y. C. L., it was decided, should go hand in hand with the formation of the **Communist Children's Section**.

The successful carrying out of the Party's policy depends to a very great extent on the ability with which the task of recruiting more workers for the Party can be successfully carried out. In order to assist this important work as much as possible the price of the Party's weekly organ has been reduced from 3d to 1d, and the name changed from the "International" to the "**South African Worker**" in order to emphasise more clearly the class character of the Party's objective.

If the Conference decisions are taken up in an active spirit by the Party membership, resulting in an increase of our native work, T. U. work, and increasing membership, then the 4th Conference will indeed mark a decided step forward in the history of the Party.

UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS.

Concerning some Questions of the NEP.

A Hitherto Unpublished Article by Comrade Lenin.

Introductory Remarks by the Moscow "Lenin Institute".

At the end of October 1922 the correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian", Arthur Ransome, submitted to Lenin a number of questions regarding the New Economic Policy, and to which he asked him to reply:

The following draft of a reply by Lenin to Ransome was written in the first days of November 1922 and only contains the answer to three of the seven questions submitted by Ransome.

These three questions are as follows:

1. I see a gigantic economic revival, where everybody is buying and selling, and where, it appears, a new merchant class is beginning to arise. I wish to ask: how does it come about that the NEP-man has not become a political force and is not endeavouring to become a political force?

2. I have the impression that the sale and exchange now going on in Russia is at present yielding a great profit, whilst production, with few exceptions, is impossible. Purchase and exchange are in the hands of the NEP-man. That production which is yielding a profit is very limited and is in the hands

of private persons. That production which is carried on at a loss is in the hands of the State. I would ask: does not this continual economic strengthening of the NEP-man involve a corresponding weakening of the State?

3. It is said that an attempt is being made to compel the NEP-man (by means of taxation) to support industry. I would ask whether that will not result in higher prices, in an increase in the profits of the NEP-man, and lead indirectly to an increase in wages, and therefore to the previous situation.

Lenin's Answers to Ransome's Questions:

In regard to your questions my replies are as follows:

1. I believe that the NEP-man, that is to say the representative of commerce which is growing under the "New Economic Policy", would certainly like to become a political force, but he does not show any signs of this wish, or only shows signs in order to hide his real wishes. He has to endeavour to conceal his wishes, as otherwise he would run the danger of encountering serious opposition, and often even something worse than opposition, i. e. direct hostility on the part of our State Public Prosecutor.

I believe that as the overwhelming majority of the means of production are combined in the hands of our State power, freedom of sale and purchase of articles of necessity constitutes a real economic need of the petty Bourgeoisie.

The word "NEP-Man" used by you leads to a certain misunderstanding. This word consists of the abbreviation "NEP", which means "New Economic Policy", with the addition of the little word "man"; this means, therefore, representative of the New Economic Policy. In journalistic language this word was originally a contemptuous description of the small trader or of a person who in various ways abuses the freedom of trade.

Outwardly considered, what is most characteristic of the New Economic Policy is that this type of NEP-man, or as you say, everyone who buys and sells, comes to the forefront.

The real economic activity of the actual majority of the population by no means consists in buying and selling. It suffices, for example, to point to the activity of the enormous masses of the peasantry, who precisely at the present moment are working with enormous energy and with the greatest self-sacrifice in bringing their fields under cultivation again and at restoring their means of agricultural production, their dwellings, farm-buildings etc. On the other hand the industrial workers are now working with an equally feverish energy in improving the means of production, in replacing the worn out means of production with new, in re-building the destroyed, ruined or damaged buildings etc.

The "NEP-man" — if one wishes to make use of this term, which is more suited to ironical newspaper language than to be used as a serious expression of political economy — makes a far greater impression than his economic power justifies. I fear therefore, that anybody who applied in a simple form the thesis of historical materialism, according to which political power must follow economic power, would incur the danger of committing a very great error and even falling a victim to a whole series of ridiculous misunderstandings.

The real nature of the New Economic Policy consists in the fact that, firstly, the proletarian State has allowed freedom of trade to the small producers, and secondly, that the proletarian State has applied a number of principles regarding the means of production of big capital, which capitalist economists designate as "State Capitalism".

I believe that an NEP-man who drew from the foregoing the conclusion that it would be advantageous for him to become a political force, would run the danger not only of making a mistake, but also of becoming the object of the derision of journalists on account of his vulgar conception of Marxism.

2. Your impression that sale and purchase are at present acquiring big profits in Russia, whilst on the other hand production is only possible in rare cases, seems to me calculated to provoke a rather justified smile regarding the political economy of the "NEP-man".

If I am not mistaken, there is in Russia an enormous majority of the small peasant population which has now thrown itself with extraordinary energy into the work of production, and (thanks partly to the supply etc. granted by the State) has achieved enormous, and in fact incredible results, especially when one takes into consideration the enormous devastation caused by the civil war, famine etc. The small peasants have achieved such success that they have yielded up the taxes, amounting to

hundreds of millions of puds of grain, with remarkable ease and almost entirely without compulsion.

The only production being carried on by the State which is not making a profit, is that which in the scientific terminology of political economy is described as production of the means of production (ore, metal etc.) or production of basic capital. In capitalist economy this kind of capital usually demands for its replacement state credits amounting to extremely large sums (hundreds of million of Roubles or even dollars) in order to be able to reorganise a number of undertakings which will be capable of restoring the destroyed means of production.

With us the restoration of the destroyed means of production is not likely to yield us any profit for a very long time, or, as you express it, will not "pay". In order to restore our basic capital we shall be compelled for a fairly long time to rely on the income from the concessions, or on state subsidies.

That is the actual position of our economy. As you see, I view the matter from an essentially different standpoint than you do. I am afraid that your opinion that there is taking place with us „an unceasing economic strengthening of the NEP-people“ and „a continual economic weakening of the State“ would probably have provoked the scorn of Marx regarding vulgar political economy.

I am still of the opinion that since the time of Marx one can only speak of another non-marxist political economy in order to delude petty bourgeois, and even „highly civilised“ petty bourgeois.

To conclude my answer to the question regarding „political force“: The workers and the peasantry, they are the foundation of the political force in Russia. In all capitalist countries the peasants are plundered both by the landowners and by the capitalists. The more conscious the peasants become, the better they will understand this. For this reason the mass of the population will not go with the „buying and selling“ NEP-people.

3. Will not the taxation of the NEP-people only result in an increase in wages and prices, instead of yielding means for production?

No, as the the price of grain will determine all other prices. A portion of the grain is collected in the hands of the State in the form of taxes. The NEP-man will not be able to exercise an independent influence on the determination of prices, as he is not a producer. The foreign trade monopoly, by the way, will help us to keep the NEP-man in our hands, as prices, without his influence, are determined by the price of foreign products plus our state profit, which is used for the promotion of production.

I am afraid that you often regard the increase of prices as expressed in our paper money, due to the increasing emission of paper money, as an increase of prices brought about by the NEP-people. That would be a mistake.....

IN THE CAMP OF OUR ENEMIES

In a Blind Alley.

Concerning the Extraordinary Congress of the Socialist Party of France.

By A. Bernard (Paris).

The delegates to this "extraordinary Congress", numbering about three hundred, were crowded into too small a hall. Extraordinary, because it is the sixth in eighteen months which is to decide on the tactics of the party; extraordinary, because the further development of the Government crisis depends to a large extent on its decisions.

From the wall, Lenin smiles down ironically on the assembly: placards and banners call upon the delegates to join the "Red Aid", to promote the wall newspapers, to fight against Fascism. Over the heads of the delegates swings a lantern, the glass of which is decorated with hammer and sickle. It is the hall of a communist co-operative society in the largest working class district of Paris.

A symbol?

Paul Faure thinks: "Yes." "Let us beware of the adventure of a coalition. Do not let us feed the illusions of the workers and peasants. The hammer and sickle hover over our heads!"

At the Press table.

On my right, Zeretelli, the hero of the 3rd Duma, the fieldmarshal of the Georgian adventure. His long nose hangs down to his chest. He is meditative and distraught. "Well, what do you think of our Congress?" asks Leon Blum. Zeretelli raises his head, makes a deprecating gesture with his hand and says: "I stand above it all."

My left-hand neighbour is less apathetic. Suchomlin seems to have come from Prague especially for this purpose. He discusses, makes notes, negotiates about articles.

These "dear guests" have their own opinion about what is happening. They do not come to the fore. The Congress is left to itself. Tom Sender from Frankfurt also prefers only to take part unofficially in the debate. But they all understand the game.

When, on the last evening, I look for a place at the Press table, I find an inscription on the paper which covers the table. It is the place where Zeretelli and Suchomlin sit. In large Russian letters (written as a person writes whose thoughts are elsewhere and who lets his hand do as it will) there is written: "W tupikje" — "in a blind alley."

The old Menshevist fox has understood the situation. He "stands above it all".

They are in a blind alley.

Whereas the general crisis of the regime has brought about an evident strengthening and clarifying of the Communist Party, the Socialist party has entered on a critical period, the end of which cannot be foreseen. The Congress, in any case, has not affected the crisis but has only driven the party further into the blind alley.

On one point, all the groups of the Congress were unanimous: the eighteen months' policy of the party within the frame of the Left Bloc have benefitted it nothing; nothing but a severe crisis in the feeling of confidence between the members and the leaders of the party.

What is to be done in order to make good this negative result?

The great majority of the members, especially in the working class districts, reply: any kind of coalition policy must be abandoned even in the form of "supporting" a Left Bloc government without taking part in it.

The minority of the members, especially the petty bourgeois strata, who, with the Left Bloc policy, have joined the party during the last two years, demands a Right coalition policy in the form of joining the Left Bloc Government.

The pressure of the majority with radical tendencies is very strong; so strong that not only have numerous sections of the party in the provinces got into touch with the Communist Party and declared themselves in favour of the united front, not only are cases increasing of whole sections going over to the Communist Party, but even the leaders of the "Left", old politicians like Compère-Moral and Paul Faure, have been compelled to recognise the united front and the journal of the Parisian opposition majority has been compelled to recognise "the temporary dictatorship of the class" after "the revolutionary seizure of power".

This strength of the opposition majority among the members must not deceive us as to the strong support which a conservative pro-coalition policy finds in the whole structure of the party. Like all socialist parties, this party is, by its apparatus and its leading upper stratum, so bound up with the bourgeoisie and its apparatus of power, that the crisis conjured up by the political crisis in the country will, in all probability, end with a final victory of the Right minority with some secessions at its base, and not in a splitting off of the extreme Right group, as many Left leaders desire.

One need only have seen this band of well-fed petty bourgeois, burgomasters, parliamentarians, merchants, State and municipal officials, party and trade union functionaries! One need only have followed their "fight" at the Congress to understand how it will end.

The few workers among the delegates who came to us Communists during the intervals to explain to us that they feel they belong more to us than to Renaudel, that they are in favour of the united front etc., are a misunderstanding in this party of the petty bourgeoisie.

The attitude of mind of the members who are clearly divided into two groups, finds its expression in the existence of three groups among the leaders.

In the first place there is the Right group. To it belongs the majority of the parliamentary fraction (of which a speaker

said: "it spends most of its time debating how best to frustrate the resolutions of the party Congress!"). Its leaders are Renaudel, a man without consideration or scruples; one feels that this is our enemy of to-morrow, that this man will be France's Noske!; Vincent Auriol, a cunning profiteer; Paul Boncour (the man of the League of Nations, a real "orator", a perfect actor. He seems to have drifted in here from the Radical party by mistake.)

Then there is the Centre. Its leaders, partly old Guesdists such as Compère-Morel and Lebas, are still strongly enough connected with the masses to react to the development of the social democratic workers towards the Left. But they are also already too closely linked up with the bourgeois apparatus of power or of capitalist economics to be able really to go with the masses. Compère-Morel, director of the agricultural office of the Government during the war, wholesale dealer in motor-lorries and agricultural machinery, owner of a house in Paris; Lebas, burgomaster of Lille, the largest town of the industrial North; Leon Blum, millionaire and personal friend of the great banker Finaly (director of the "Banque de Paris", which caused the Morocco war.)

Finally the Left group, which is particularly strong in Paris. At its head, Zyromski and Maurin, typical "Left socialist" opportunist politicians who, if it came to extremes, would themselves, with a portion of the Left workers, come over to us.

The debate is a lively one; the Right has a strong position.

"The policy of support has borne no fruit. We have not been able to exercise an actual influence on the Government. We must take our share in the responsibility; then we shall succeed in carrying through a policy of democratic reforms in a government of coalition with the Radicals. If we fail to do this, we shall be overtaken by reaction; we shall then be responsible if Fascism succeeds."

This point of view has the advantage of being clear. In the last few months it has gained much ground; it is backed by the large group of the petty bourgeois which, under the regime of the Left Bloc, has gone over from radicalism to the S. P. There is however quite a number of workers who, like the miners of Carillaux, are trained in Jaurès' spirit.

The line of argument of the Left is weak. They cannot speak the whole truth. They are opposed to the coalition policy in words, they must be if they do not wish to lose those electors among the workers who have a bias to the Left. And if one of the Left leaders dares to express rather more plainly what the revolutionary workers want, active work towards a united front on the basis of class, he is met by a howl from the Right pack: "Go to the communists!" This happened even to the worthy Compère-Morel himself who dared to state: "Our chief task is to prepare for unity among the workers on a trade union basis." Such things can be said to the workers, but, at a Congress, which is to determine the tactics of the party?

The whole line of policy of the Left — for the Centre and the Left had united for common action — was thus a negative one, no coalition policy in the form of joining a radical government. The only positive thesis which the Left represented in the Central Committee, was the formation of a purely socialist government, possibly with a few "experts". Everyone knew however that this was a platonic statement, for no one will offer the socialists the sole power.

At bottom it was a struggle between two groups of leaders for the party apparatus. The socialist party which, after the split at Tours, had been a sad ruin, made great progress under the Left Bloc. The election alliance and the policy of support have brought a large number of liberal petty bourgeois elements into the party, the membership of which has increased to 100,000. This transformation in the composition of the party at its base has roused the hope in the circles of old and new opportunists among the leaders that they could use this opportunity to push aside the old "Marxist" clique of leaders and to seize the helm themselves.

From Congress to Congress, the Right have gained ground. At the same time, the Left, under pressure from the masses, have been compelled to take a still more left direction.

This has finally led the party into the blind alley in which it is now caught.

And, after all, the Congress was much ado about nothing; the Left came out victorious with a majority of 1765 to 1331 votes. A Pyrrhan victory! And even this, in order not to lose

Blum and his friends, was bought at the price of taking up as the first and only positive point, the continuation of the policy of support! Nothing could characterise better the hopelessness of the situation of the party than this majority resolution to continue the policy with regard to which the experience of eighteen months has led to the unanimous conviction that it is fruitless.

In a blind alley! The old fox Zeretelli knew what he was saying!

Was the reason why he was so meditative and distraught at the Congress, that he knew what is the only way out from this blind alley?

IN THE R. I. L. U.

Convening of the Plenum of the Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U.

Moscow, 2nd February 1926.

(Telegraphic Report to the "Impreccorr.")

The Plenum of the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions has been convened for the 25th February with the following agenda:

1. Business Report of the Executive Bureau.
2. The Next Tasks of the Trade Union Movement (Reporter: Comrade Lozovsky).
3. Anglo-Russian Unity Committee (Reporter: Comrade Tomsky).
4. The Trade Union Movement in China (Reporter: A representative of the All-Chinese Trade Union Federation).
5. Trade Union Conference of the countries of the Pacific (Reporter: Comrade Heller).
6. Trade Union Work in the United States of America (Reporter: Comrade Foster).
7. Trade Union work in Germany (Reporter: Comrade Heckert).
8. Trade Union Movement in Japan (Reporter: A representative of the revolutionary Trade Union Federation of Japan).
9. Organisatory Construction (Reporter: Comrade Lyss).
10. The fight for the Eight Hour Day and social legislation (Reporter: Comrade Schumann).
11. Miscellaneous.

THE YOUTH MOVEMENT

The VII. National Conference of the Communist Youth of Austria.

By F. F. (Vienna).

The 7th National Conference of the Communist Youth of Austria which took place a few days ago was in many respects of interest and importance for the whole Youth International.

Many events of importance for Austrian Working Youth preceded the Congress: the catastrophic collapse of the socialistic Working Youth of Austria, due to the complete victory of the line of the Hamburg Congress in the Austrian Union; the split of the Socialist Labour Youth of Austria (SAJO) (caused by exclusions) and the founding of the United Socialist Labour Youth of Austria (U. S. A. J. O.); the beginning of the united fight of the Austrian Working Youth (Russian delegation and first National Congress of the Working Youth) against the will of the social democratic leaders and their attempted sabotage; finally the VIII. annual conference of the S. A. J. O.

The collapse of the S. A. J. O., its splitting up, the founding of the U. S. A. J. O., the united fight expressed through the Russian delegation and the first National Congress of Working Youth and the resulting union of the U. S. A. J. O. with the Young Communists all this its cause in the ever increasing poverty of the Austrian working youth and in the fact that the S. A. J. O. not only does not fight against this poverty, but

also sabotages, while the Communist Youth has proved in practice to be the leader of the Working Youth.

This is why the 7th National Conference of the Communist Youth of Austria found an entirely changed situation. While formerly the relation of the two organisations of proletarian youth was such, that the S. A. J. O. numbered about 33,000 members while the Communist Youth comprised hardly a thousand, the S. A. J. O. has now, according to the highest estimates, not more than 15,000 members (some say there are only 9,000—10,000) and the Communist Youth, compared to what it was, has increased its influence considerably. (An exact estimate of its growth in numbers is not yet possible.)

At the same time as the 7th National Conference accepted the report of the Central Committee (which thoroughly analysed and recorded the experiences of the work of the last two years) the General Meeting of the U. S. A. J. O. took place. The only real question to be decided at this conference was the question for or against the Young Communist International. After thorough discussion the conference unanimously agreed to acknowledge the programme of the Y.C.I. and the 21 conditions of the Comintern and the entry into the Y.C.I. In the accepted resolution the following portion deserves special attention.

"Our entry in the Young Communist International is nothing but the fulfilment of our duty towards the revolutionary working youth and has nothing whatsoever to do with the office hunting which is practised in the social-democratic party of Austria and in the Union of the socialistic working youth and which we were accused of by the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour Youth. On the contrary, we regard the work among the masses as our duty, and therefore, as a protest and proof that the statements of the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour Youth are nothing but libels, we determine not to accept any offices at the Unity Congress. We call upon the whole Working Youth to follow our example, to strengthen the ranks of the revolutionary fighting proletarian youth, and to join the Young Communist International and the Communist Youth of Austria."

This resolution of the former members of the S. A. J. proved conclusively that they joined the Y.C.I. from inner conviction and that they are honestly desirous of fighting in its ranks.

On the following day the resolution was unanimously passed to admit the U. S. A. J. members, and their representatives were admitted to the Congress, with the right to vote.

Speeches of welcome were delivered by the representatives of the German, French, and Russian Youth Leagues and the Executive of the Y. C. I.

The reports of the Committee who examined the credentials of the delegates showed that 117 delegates were present at the Congress; among them being 90 with full voting powers, 67 of

whom came from Vienna. (At all the former congresses more than 35—40 delegates took part).

After hearing the political reports the Congress turned to the principal task, viz. the discussion of their future tasks.

On the basis of the experiences during the last two years, especially during the last few months — the time of the Russian delegation and the first National Congress of the working youth — the Congress in the resolution on the next tasks of the League submitted to the Organisation, the following main tasks:

1. Continuation and intensification of the fight to establish a revolutionary united front for the following aims:

Against the slave treaty of Geneva! For the fighting Programme of the Working Youth of Austria! Against reaction and danger of war! For Soviet Russia! For International Trade Union Unity!

2. Intensifying the work among the masses of the young workers.

3. Making propaganda, especially in most important large industrial concerns, to gain new members; re-organisation on the basis of factory nuclei.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

The new Central Committee which was unanimously elected, comprises 16 members. As to its social composition the Central Committee consists of 13 workers, 1 employee and 2 intellectuals.

Thus the 7th Congress of the Communist Youth of Austria may be considered as a complete success. It has provided an excellent basis for the futur work of the League, for real mass-work, and it is to be expected that the Austrian Section of the Young Communist International, further developing on the basis of its recent successes, will embrace ever larger masses of the young workers.

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