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Great Events Preparing in Great Britain!

Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

Moscow, 25th April, 1926.

The capitalists are attempting by determined blows to destroy the British labour movement and to depress the standard of living of the British working class. The British miners are ready for the struggle, the organised working class of England will hasten to their aid. Not only the wages, the working time and the conditions of work of the British workers are at stake, but the standard of living of the workers of all countries. The British labour movement must carry on a united defensive struggle, the international labour movement must stand firm, like one man, in an unbreakable united front against the common enemy. It is a question of the vital interests of the workers of all countries. The English coal crisis is only a part of the general world crisis in coal production. Competition on the world market is becoming more and more fierce and the technically backward English coal mines are being outstripped by the more modern technique of their American and German rivals. The importance of the May conflict for Great Britain is enormous.

The mining magnates threaten to lock out over a million miners, there exists the possibility that the miners will have to resort to the strike weapon, which would mean the paralysing of British industry, and to some extent also of world economy. Victory or defeat for the miners means victory or defeat for the whole British working class. The miners' strike would mean a general strike and a general strike cannot remain an economic struggle, it would become a political struggle, that is to say, the proletariat will fight against the capitalists, class will fight against class. The British bourgeoisie, the British government will mobilise all the forces of the State, as the fundamental questions of capitalist society are involved, as the question of private property is raised and the whole capitalist State apparatus will be used to defend private property. The workers are seeing with growing fury how the government is coming forward more and more brutally on the side of the capitalists, how it is organising special troops against the workers, how the government is affording help in the organising of fascist groups. The

struggle for wages and working conditions will raise in the minds of the working class the question of Power.

The world coal crisis confronts the British capitalists with a dilemma. In order to restore competitive power they have to seek a way out by reducing wages, prolonging the working day, worsening the working conditions and shattering the power of the trade unions. Such a means of cheapening English coal would intensify enormously the competitive struggle on an international scale, would drive the German, Belgian, Czech and American capitalists to a similar offensive against their own mine-workers, would render the world competitive struggle even more murderous. The second way consists in the rationalising of the undertakings, in the closing down of technically backward collieries, that is to say, in the dismissing of tens of thousands of workers, in increasing the chronic mass unemployment. The two solutions mean for the British miners a choice between starvation through low wages or starvation through increased unemployment. The British Empire is on the decline, the British Labour movement is on the up-grade, the decline of British imperialism will synchronise with the world historical victory of the British proletariat. In order to prevent social upheavals, the British government is seeking a solution by means of compromise. The British working class must understand that the compromise can bring no real solution to the mining crisis. **Only the realisation of Socialism can stop the social decline of the British proletariat, only the decisive struggle for the establishment of the rule of the workers can realise Socialism.** Only the abolition of murderous world competition, only the overcoming of the anarchy of world production, only the establishment of the United States of Socialist Europe can finally solve the crisis.

The British bourgeoisie first attacked the building workers, then the railway workers, then the metal workers; it is now attacking the miners. The British bourgeoisie is employing in the fight against the miners the tactics of "divide and rule", in that it wishes to conclude wage agreements not with the Miners' Federation as a whole, but according to districts, leaving the wages of unskilled workers unchanged, but reducing the wages of skilled workers to starvation level. The British working class must understand that the report of the coal Commission is intended to drive a wedge into the united front of the miners, that only the complete solidarity of the labour phalanx can prevent defeat.

The British working class must take up the struggle, and according to all signs the British proletariat is prepared to defend itself. The district organisations of the Miners' Federation have declared themselves ready for the struggle, the Minority Conference of Action was a demonstration of the iron will to struggle of the British working class. The pressure of the masses compelled the trade union leaders to form an alliance of seven trade unions; the Conference of the I.L.P. revealed the growing discontent of the working masses. The working masses are ready to fight, but their leaders are partly hesitant, some of them are betraying the fight before the battle. The Right wing of the Labour Party and of the General Council are shamelessly working for a new "Black Friday". MacDonald and Hedges have openly gone over to the side of the bourgeoisie; MacDonald has come forward against the strike and Hedges advocates the lengthening of working hours. Even the General Council, to which falls the role of General Staff, declared on the eve of the conflict, that it did not demand any increase in its powers, in spite of the decisions of Scarborough. The Executive of the Amsterdam International rejects in language it has learned from the diplomats, the proposal for a united front brought forward by the Red International of Labour Unions. The Executive of the Miners' International adopted resolutions containing pompous words regarding a solidarity strike. Will the big words be followed by deeds? The Communist International declared its readiness to conduct the fight for the rightful cause of the British miners along with all workers' organisations, with the II. International, with Amsterdam, with the Miners' International, to put by all differences of opinion and to organise energetically with them a common action of international solidarity for the British miners. How can we follow the words of the Miners' International when its secretary, Frank Hedges, has already openly betrayed the struggle of the mining proletariat of England. The British and German reformists, in fact, as a way out of the crisis the international justification of the coal

mines. These miserable "labour leaders" thus preach the unity of the employers instead of the unity of the workers; the demand international action of the capitalists instead of international action of the mining proletariat.

Even the Left leaders of the Labour Party and of the trade unions show that they are not up to the situation; they are not determined to take over the leadership of the great struggle. To the challenging report of the Coal Commission the Right wing leaders do not answer with a mobilisation of the masses. The Executive of the Miners' Federation and the General Council of the Trade Unions spoke neither for nor against the report. They have not taken up the struggle against the government, and they have not exposed the Coal Commission as an agent of the bourgeoisie.

Only the Minority Movement and the Communist Party of England summoned the workers to resistance, attempted to organise the struggle, and issued the slogan of the fighting mine of the trade union movement in Britain and on a world scale. The Minority Movement and the Communist Party will continue to fulfil their duty, but they cannot conduct the struggle alone. The Communist International is convinced that the International labour movement will prove its solidarity by deeds, if the General Council places itself at the head of the movement. It is the historical duty of the General Council to take over the leadership of the struggle. If the General Council abstains from the fight and follows the way of a base compromise, it will take upon itself a great historical responsibility. In this great struggle the tendencies and factors of the British labour movement will reveal their true features.

The Communist International calls upon the workers of the world to hasten to the aid of the British miners in the spirit of determined international solidarity. The workers of all countries must realise that the attack of the British mining magnates is directed not only against the standard of living of the British miners, but against that of the working class of the whole world. The miners of Germany, France, Belgium and Czechoslovakia must stand in the front rank. The May conflict renders most urgent than ever the question of the united front and the unity of the Amsterdam International with the Profintern and other miners federations of France and Czechoslovakia. The Communist International, with full consciousness of its responsibility, declares once again that it is prepared to place on one side all differences of opinion which divide the Communist International on principle from the reformist elements, in order to bring about the international solidarity action of the world proletariat at all costs and under all circumstances.

The world coal crisis shows that the solution of the contradictions of capitalism is impossible on a capitalist basis; only the uniting of the international working class, the setting of the United States of Socialist Europe can create a real solution for the proletariat.

The Communist International calls the workers to international solidarity action. The workers of Germany, France, Belgium and Czechoslovakia must prevent with united forces any coal-breaking coal being sent to England, must prevent by united control the supplying of the English market. The transport workers, railway workers, dockworkers and seamen must prevent the transport of strike-breaking coal. If the struggle of these must everywhere be organised wide-scaled actions, support collections of money must be arranged, measures adopted for caring for the children of the fighting miners, the operatives must help in supplying provisions for the fighting miners and their families.

Forth to the struggle! Demonstrate in mass meetings your readiness to struggle, organise measures in support of the miners! The last penny for the English miners!

Long live the internationalism of the world proletariat!

Long live the British working class! the victory of the British miners, the united front of the working class of the whole world!

The Executive Committee of the
Communist International

THE MINERS' STRUGGLE IN ENGLAND

On the Eve of War in Britain.

By R. Palme Dutt.

The long-prepared conflict in Britain is here.

The mineowners' demands have torn the veil from the whole lying propaganda of "conciliation", "hopes of settlement" etc., which have been spread about by the capitalist press and by the right wing labour leaders in order to lull the workers. The character of these demands, which would bring the miners 50% below pre-war levels, or, even with extension of hours, 30% below, lay bare the gulf in hard fact which cannot be concealed by fine words and formulas. The conflict between the requirements of Capitalism and the needs of life of the workers in the coal industry to-day, as in the whole industrial position in Britain at the present stage, is so bare and fundamental that it cannot be escaped. **Either starvation or struggle are the alternative before the workers.**

Only a direct surrender by the leaders on either side can now avert a conflict. But such a surrender cannot be easily made in face of the conscious will of the classes in conflict. The right wing labour leaders can no more easily expect now to put through a direct surrender against the united will of the working class than Baldwin can attempt to repeat last July's surrender in the face of his own followers. The right wing leaders may tremble at the prospect of a conflict; but they tremble also to repudiate all their most basic pledges and destroy their position in the movement. Thus in either case the working class movement stands before its 1914. The situation has passed beyond the control of individual leaders: as in the final stages leading to a war, the whole forces of the situation drive inevitably to conflict, even though the majority of those concerned may wish to avoid it.

The events of last July are repeating themselves with ominous exactness. On Wednesday (the 28th) comes the Miners Delegate Conference. On Thursday comes the National Conference of all Trade Union Executives. On Friday the notices expire. But this time there is a difference. Last July the Government were not prepared for a united Labour front, and, taken by surprise, postponed the conflict. **This time the Government is completely prepared, having spent the whole intervening nine months in preparing for a decisive conflict with the whole forces of the working class, and there is no longer any intention of postponement.** Last July the mere threat of united Labour action was sufficient. This time there can no longer be any expectation of repeating such a bloodless victory. The Government and the capitalists, having prepared to the last detail, are determined to call the "bluff", as they suspect it to be, of the labour leaders. The trial of strength is here. There is no question that, if they cannot put through a bogus "settlement" involving the vital surrender of the working class by the lowering of the miners' standards, the Government and the capitalists are determined to force a conflict, which they are prepared to see involve in the language of Churchill and Joynson Hick, conditions of "war" ("There was a prospect, he might almost say of war" — Joynson Hicks on April 16th; "as in wartime" — Churchill on August 7th last year with reference to the coming conflict).

Such a conflict will bring into the balance the whole future of the working class movement in Britain.

Everything turns on the support given to the miners. The Trades Union Congress has pledged the support in action of the entire trade union movement against any reduction of the Miners' standards. The International Miners' Committee has pledged international strike action against any reduction. **If this support is realised, without qualification, speedily and effectively, the miners cannot be beaten, and a tremendous blow will be dealt to the British bourgeoisie, carrying forward the whole international working class into a new period.** But it is here, in securing speedy and effective unity of working class action, there exists the greatest danger of sabotage by the right wing leaders who are at the head of all the organisations concerned. And it is here that there must be the most energetic, unremitting, activity of the revolutionary workers in every country to secure common action with the British Miners.

The whole working class in Britain, and the workers in France, Belgium, Germany and America and the other countries most closely affected, need to be ready for prompt and decisive action on May 1st and the days immediately following. **The wider and speedier the united front for the conflict, the better the chance of success for the working class.**

The Mineowners' Demands.

The Mineowners' demands were issued on April 22 and posted at the pitheads. This posting at the pitheads instead of first bringing before the Miners Federation indicated the refusal of the owners even to negotiate on a national minimum, and their determination to shatter the whole Federation and settle on the basis of districts.

The terms were so severe that the Mineowners hesitated on publishing them until the very last. According to the "Times", they held a special interview with the Prime Minister as to the advisability of publishing them.

"It is gathered that there was a certain amount of discussion at yesterday's conference (of the Prime Minister and the Mineowners) as to whether these figures should be communicated forthwith in view of the depressing effect which they are bound to have" (Times 22nd April, 1926).

The fact of this consultation is significant, as indicating the complete joint working of the Government and the Mineowners, even on questions of propaganda.

"For information" the Miners Federation were allowed to know the terms under pledge of not publishing them. However, the Miners' Federation were sensible enough to issue immediately figures which showed the actual working out of the terms in wages. They showed as follows in the principal areas: —

	Present daily average	Reduction	New Average
Scotland	10s 4d	2s 1d	8s 3d
Northumberland	9s 4d	2s 4d	7s 0d
Durham	10s 0d	2s 9d	7s 3d
South Wales	10s 9d	2s 10d	7s 11d
Yorkshire	10s 10d	1s 0d	9s 10d
Lancashire	10s 0d	1s 7d	8s 5d

This would be the average for all workers in the mines. Those on piece rates would lose considerable more, up to 6/- a day. In addition there were demands for, in some cases, longer hours, and in others withdrawal of special allowances with regard to free coal etc.

These figures are staggering. The mean average deduction of 2/- a day, or 10/- on the five day week, on wages already 30% below pre-war. They would leave an average wage at the best, on a full week, not allowing for short time or deductions, of 22. or the official cost of maintaining a convict, and in many cases even lower.

These figures could not be, and are not, seriously meant to be enforced on the miners: it would be impossible for the work of the mines to be done upon them. An average of 10/- per week from each of one million miners would yield 225,000,000 a year, or the equivalent of the whole cost of the Subsidy, when it is the fact, according to the official Commission Report, that over half the Subsidy has gone to profits, yielding a profit of 1s 6d per ton during the period of the Subsidy or a record high figure. But the object of these figures is to drive the miners into accepting an extension of hours as the only alternative, with a lesser or even no reduction of wages. This is the openly expressed objective of the Mineowners.

The Government's Plan.

What is the Government's plan?

So far, the Government has expressed readiness to grant "temporary assistance" for a limited period of "say, three months" to get over the worst difficulties, that is, to certain pits or districts. This "temporary assistance" may become extended under pressure of the crisis to a more considerable "loan" for a longer period. But the Subsidy has to go, and therefore an alternative has to be found.

It is here that the Mineowners' pressure for longer hours may come into play. The Commission Report already indicated that longer hours might be an "alternative" solution to a reduction of wages (after having conclusively shown that longer

hours could only mean closing of pits, unemployment and increased international competition). That obedient catspaw of the capitalists, **Frank Hodges**, who occupies the position of International Miners' Secretary, has already publicly suggested that the miners might accept an extension of hours as an alternative to a reduction in wages (and been officially repudiated by the Miners Federation for the statement). This Baldwin may no doubt take up as a proposal in order to diminish the reduction in wages.

On these lines the Government's plan for a "settlement" may develop and show the following features:

1. A Government Loan to the Coal Industry (to be paid back with interest by the industry, i. e. by the miners) pending reorganisation according to the Coal Report, which must be accepted by both sides.

2. Extension of Hours.

3. A lesser reduction of wages, or even, if pressure seems strong, no reduction of wages.

Such a type of "settlement" (i. e. a Government loan, plus mitigated reduction of standards, either in respect of hours or wages -- the details are irrelevant) would immediately win rapid support from all the right wing labour elements, who are horrified at the prospect of a struggle and are desperately seeking any and every way out. Already Hodges, as said, has advocated longer hours. **MacDonald** has spoken of a "temporary sacrifice" by the miners, the necessity of recognising the economic "facts" of the industry, and of reaching on that basis an agreement in which "national interests alone are considered and not sectional interests" (Daily Herald April 24). **Henderson** has proclaimed his belief in the "valuable reforms" of the Coal Report, and his confidence that "within the limits of the Report it is possible to find a solution which the miners will accept" (Daily Herald, April 19).

It is significant that **MacDonald** and **Henderson** have been added on to the Labour Committee (previously consisting of the Trades Union Congress Industrial Committee and the Miners) on the proposal of the Trades Union Congress Committee (which includes **J. H. Thomas**) that the Parliamentary Labour Party should be included.

Thus the Right Wing leaders are extremely active to the last, in defiance of all pledges, for a settlement of betrayal.

Such a "settlement", so long as it involved even in any degree either an extension of hours or a reduction of wages, could settle nothing. With regard to hours, it has been admitted in the Coal Report that an additional hour in Britain "would make the working day of the British miner longer than that in any representative area on the Continent of Europe except Upper Silesia", and would have the effect of driving 130,000 miners out of the industry, while it would only lead to retaliatory increases in the other countries in Europe, leaving the competitive position as before. The same applies to wage reductions. The existing standards are admittedly too low. Any reduction will only intensify international competition, while solving none of the problems of the industry. The miners of Europe, under Social Democratic leadership, would be only driving one another further and further down the pit of misery.

The only alternative is the international struggle of the miners against the capitalist offensive, and the international struggle of the whole working class in Europe. The British working class movement stands pledged.

The Miners International and the Transport Workers International stand pledged. These pledges must be maintained, and the Right Wing leaders must not be allowed to shatter them by sham "settlements" which can only bring greater misery for the workers in every country.

The Working Class Front.

The supreme task of the Communist Party and the revolutionary workers in the present crisis is, therefore, to secure the unity in action of the whole working class behind the miners, to prevent bogus behind-the-scenes "settlements", which surrender the standards of the workers instead of fighting for their advance and abandon issues to which the whole movement stands pledged, and to ensure that the united front in action shall be as speedy and as complete as possible.

The Communist Party has issued the call for general strike action of the whole organised movement in support of the miners against any reduction, for a conference of all Trade Union Executives to concert common measures of resistance, for Councils

of Action in the localities, and for a Workers Defence Corps against the attacks of the Fascists and similar bodies. The first has been pledged by the General Council. The Conference has now at last been summoned. The struggle remains that these steps shall find their goal in action as the occasion demands.

There must be no "Black Friday" this time. In 1921 the revolutionary workers had no common organisation; the Communist Party had only just come into existence; the workers were helpless before the betrayal of the leaders, and the miners fought alone to inevitable disaster. This time the lesson has sunk deep. "Red Friday" has shown the way and helped to give new confidence. A million organised workers have through the Minority Movement Conference of Action of March 2 declared their will for united action and their agreement with the slogans of the Communist Party. Let the leaders beware. The conditions of 1921 are no longer here.

The tremendous response to the Communist and Minority Movement lead shows the measure of awakening to the struggle in front. The British working class are advancing to the heaviest struggle and trial of their present history. In this struggle they are looking to the support of the international working class. Alike in the national and the international field, the task of the Communist Party and the revolutionary workers is to defeat the sabotage of the right wing leaders and achieve the united front.

United Front for the English Miners.

Moscow, 22nd April 1926.

The Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions has sent the following telegram to the General Council of the English Trades Union Congress:

"The Red International of Labour Unions, as is known, has proposed to the I.F.T.U. jointly to organise help and support for the English miners. The R.I.L.U. was prompted by the consideration that the approaching struggle of the English miners bears an outspokenly international character and is of international importance. To this proposal the R.I.L.U. has received the following answer: "The I.F.T.U. is already collaborating with the British Trade Union Congress, which is one of its affiliated Centres, regarding the mining crisis". This reply, by referring to the General Council, rejects the sincere and loyal proposal to rally all forces in order to render aid to the English miners in their fight against the mineowners. The Executive Bureau of the R.I.L.U. regards this standpoint on the part of an international organisation as wrong, and in any event not dictated by the interests of the English miners. This standpoint can not only injure the English but also the entire international proletariat.

The R.I.L.U. called upon all its affiliated organisations to render every conceivable help to the English miners. The Central Trade Union Council of the Soviet Union, as is already known, will fulfill its duty of international solidarity. The miners of the Soviet Union of Czechoslovakia and France and all supporters of the R.I.L.U., as well as the transport workers of all countries, have already proclaimed their willingness to do everything that lies in their power in order to help the English miners to victory. This readiness of the revolutionary workers of all countries to aid the English miners in the approaching struggle, results from the recognition that the defeat of one section of the working class means a blow to the entire international proletariat, and that the English miners are now fighting not only against the reduction of the standard of living of the working class of England, but also of the working class of all other countries.

The General Council of the English trade Union Congress, the representatives of the entire English trade union movement, undoubtedly desire that the sincere and genuine will of the workers of all tendencies to support the fight of the English miners, should be systematically and practically realised. The Executive Bureau of the R.I.L.U. therefore, on its part, makes the following proposal: The General Council, which has the greatest interest that the English miners repel the attack of the mineowners on their wages and their working day, takes the initiative for arranging an international Conference of all trade union organisations who wish to render assistance to the English miners, in order to coordinate and regulate the support to be given to the English miners.

The English miners are at present confronted with fresh serious struggles. We recollect that during the fight of the English miners in 1921, the proposal made by the R. I. L. U. to the I. F. T. U. to render joint aid to the miners was rejected. The strike of 1921 ended in a defeat. This deplorable experience should be a lesson to the I. F. T. U. not to repeat that which it did in 1921, by placing considerations of a secondary nature before the interests of the proletariat. We are convinced that the English trade unions, as well as the General Council who have taken the initiative for restoring international trade union unity — for unity is strength — will disapprove of the stultifying of unity actions in a matter which is of the utmost vital importance for the working class. We are convinced that, in view of the offensive of the mineowners, all differences should be thrust on one side. Behind the English mineowners there stands the whole international bourgeoisie. We want the workers of all countries and all tendencies, without distinction, to stand in a firm phalanx on the side of the English miners and that the united front of the bourgeoisie be shattered on the united front of the workers.

In view of the extreme importance and urgency of the matter and in view of the heavy responsibility which the threatening struggle of the English miners lays upon every workers' organisation, for whom proletarian solidarity is the highest law, the Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U. expects an affirmative reply to the proposal submitted.

With fraternal greetings

The Executive Bureau of the
Red International of Labour Unions."

The R. I. L. U. to all Affiliated Organisations.

Moscow, April 25, 1926.

The Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions has sent the following appeal to all its affiliated organisations:

"The Red International of Labour Unions has already twice drawn the attention of all organisations to the approaching mining conflict in England and to the international importance of the same. The conflict will be inevitable owing to the persistent endeavours of the English mineowners to depress wages and to lengthen the working day, which would mean the worsening of the conditions of living not only of the English, but of the international working class. Our solidarity must express itself in deeds! From the moment of the lock-out our slogan must be: **not a pound of coal to England!** The repetition of the deplorable events in 1921, when the British miners suffered a defeat as a result of the lack of solidarity of the workers outside of England, must be prevented. Then, as now, the Amsterdam International refused to organise with combined forces the relief and support of the English miners. After receipt of the negative answer of Amsterdam the Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U. sent a request to the General Council of the English Trades Union Congress that it takes up the initiative for convening an international Conference of trade union Federations who wish to support the struggling British miners. It is clear to everybody that the attack of the mineowners can only be repelled by the united and strenuous efforts of the British and international proletariat. The struggle is at hand. everyone must be at his post.

Miners, transport workers, metal workers, workers of all trades! The cause of the English miners is your cause! no one can remain neutral and passive in the struggle of the English miners with the mineowners; all workers must stand up like one man against the capitalist offensive and for the rightful demands of the British miners. Workers of France, Belgium and Germany! It depends upon you whether the workers or the employers will be victorious! Let us sink all differences of opinion, let us forget everything that divides us, let us only remember that we all belong to the same class. Firm united front against the British mineowners and their allies.

To the aid of the British miners!

Long live the struggle of the British miners!

Long live international proletarian solidarity!

The Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U.

(Signed): Lozovsky.

The Coal Crisis and the Young Miner.

By Harry Young.

The present coal crisis affects about 150,000 boys under 21 engaged in the industry.

During all the discussions, statements, counter-statements, accusations and denials, no voice has been lifted on their special behalf.

In making this statement, we do not for one moment wish to infer the General Council of the Miners' Federation and its responsible officers are not conducting a whole-hearted unflinching struggle for the interests of the whole Federation.

Nevertheless, we deem it necessary that this aspect of the question should also be raised, especially once the Commission has made fashionable the topics of pit-head baths, holidays with pay, and other most desirable innovations long dreamed of by the pit lad.

The General Issues.

The main features of the situation are seemingly clear and need not be repeated. The Report in our opinion is a cleverly thought-out scheme to insert the wedge between petty-bourgeois and the backward proletarian element of the Labour Party and the Trade Union membership by the move of the Labour Party's proposals (nationalisation, Fuel and Power Council etc.). The best comment we have yet seen on the Report is that of the miners themselves. The National Minority Movement Conference, as well known, declared as follows:

"This Conference of militant miners from every coal field in Britain, resolves to work vigorously and perseveringly for the full and complete rejection of the Royal Commission's Report. We recognise the Report to be a subtle manoeuvre on the part of British capitalism to be relieved of the subsidy to the mining industry, through the lowering of wages and working conditions of the miners, which it hopes to achieve in consequence of the pseudo-socialistic bait embodied in the Report, which is intended to divide the miners into fractions for and against the Report.

"We therefore call upon the miners to concentrate upon securing 100% organisation and to prepare to fight for the guaranteed weekly minimum wage, commensurate with the increased cost of living, whilst recognising that the necessary reorganisation, so as to permit this, is only possible by the nationalisation of the mining industry without compensation and with workers' control."

The Effect of the Commission's Proposals on the Young Miners.

The Commission's proposals, especially in connection with the demand for a longer working day, will hit the young workers the hardest. It is our special task to concentrate on making clear to the young miner that the Report robs him of an additional hour of free time, that it means 11% reduction of his already low wage, and that the attractive proposals formerly mentioned (baths, holidays etc.) are reserved for the "return of prosperity".

Our Objective.

Our line is therefore clear — against the Report — for an improvement — not a deterioration of conditions.

This is of tremendous importance to the pit boy. For a considerable period now the programme which the Y. C. L. has propagated for young miners has enjoyed considerable popularity in the mining districts.

That programme was based on the practical immediate conditions of the July crisis, and contributed in some measure to the magnificent unity which was the dominating feature of that situation.

To-day, with the re-appearance of the crisis, we can re-issue our slogans once again and call for support of our programme.

Our first step must be 100% trade union organisation of all employed in the industry. In this respect we are fortunate. Generally speaking we must do our utmost to ensure the most active participation of all the youth. There must be representatives of the youth on all Councils of Action and Committees.

In order to organise this participation we shall undertake a further campaign in which the demands of the Y. C. L. will be the rallying cry. These demands are:

1. A minimum wage of 25/- per week for young miners of 14, rising half-yearly and reaching adult scale at 20;
2. Defence of the 7 hour day and fight for 6 hour day of young miners;
3. A fortnight holiday with pay.

These demands represent, within the framework of the general programme of the Minority Movement, the special Charter which will rally the thousands of lads employed in the British coal industry to the struggle against the Commission's Report and the owners' demands — for the united resistance as a prelude to an advance to their original propositions.

POLITICS

The Russo-German Negotiations.

By Walter Stoecker (Berlin).

The report of the "Times" regarding a Russo-German reinsurance treaty*) have alarmed the whole European Press. There is talk of a new Rapallo, which would seriously endanger the work of Locarno, the League of Nations itself etc.

What is the actual significance of the Russo-German negotiations? Is Germany really abandoning the Locarno policy and entering into such close relations with Russia as to bring herself into conflict and friction with British diplomacy?

Firstly, it is not a question of a so-called reinsurance treaty at all, but of a **neutrality treaty**, which is coming into being at the instigation of the Russian Government. For the last year and a half, the Soviet Government has been proposing to the German Government that they should conclude a serious treaty of friendship and neutrality as a confirmation and continuation of the Rapallo treaty, similar to the one which Russia concluded with Turkey six months ago. **Stresemann**, the German Foreign Minister however, did not jump at this suggestion, because to him, as representative of the Western trend of German foreign policy, Locarno and the League of Nations were far more important. For the last eighteen months Stresemann has taken no important step in foreign policy without a previous understanding with British diplomacy.

Since the conclusion of Locarno, the Soviet Government has again approached the German Government. Unless he wished to expose himself to the serious danger of diplomatic isolation in Eastern Europe, Stresemann was obliged this time to adopt a different attitude. To this must be added the growing opposition in Germany to his one-sided Western policy which was completely dependent on England. This led to discussions with regard to the conclusion of a neutrality treaty between Germany and Russia, not however in the sense of the Russo-Turkish treaty, but in the sense of a **limited, restricted insurance of neutrality**, because the German Government refused to agree to more far-reaching proposals. Germany only pledged herself to a very limited neutrality and beyond that promised to abstain from any economic measures against Russia.

Before Stresemann engaged in serious negotiations with the Soviet Government, he obediently inquired in London, Washington and Paris how far he might go in negotiations with Russia, communicating to these Governments the proposed terms of the treaty. Since the negotiations have become known, the German Government has spared no pains to explain that the intended treaty was entirely within the scope of Locarno and was only an extension of that treaty towards the East. As a matter of fact, Stresemann, in his negotiations with Russia, most anxiously and conscientiously avoided offending in any way against the Locarno Pact, and that not only for diplomatic reasons but because of his whole fundamental attitude in foreign policy. The German National "Kreuzzeitung" was undoubtedly right when it stated that Germany had perhaps "only taken part half-heartedly and without much enthusiasm" in the negotiations. The "Vossische Zeitung" declares that it is only a question of a political interpretation of the Locarno Pact with regard to the East, and **nothing more**. It then continues:

"If there is any truth in the "Daily Herald's" hints as to voluntary pledges on the part of Germany not to join in any

measures of a political, economic and financial nature directed against Russia, they can at the most apply to unprovoked attempts at boycott, such as have repeatedly been made against Moscow, but in no case to the obligation on the part of Germany to participate in a League Executive which might, in certain circumstances, arise out of her membership of the League of Nations."

Rudolf Breitscheid speaks to the same effect when he expressly recognises the right of the League of Nations to march through Germany against Soviet Russia. And the "Kölnische Zeitung", the organ of heavy industry writes:

"Should Russia be the aggressor, Germany reserves the right to a free hand to stand on one side, or even to favour negotiations against Russia as the disturber of the world's peace.

"Germania", the leading organ of the Centre party states: "It would be quite wrong to speak in a political sense of a new Rapallo."

These remarks, to which dozens might be added, clearly show the **limited and restricted** pledges of neutrality which Germany undertakes in this treaty. On this occasion, be it remarked, the whole significance for Germany of article 16 of the statutes of the League of Nations and its interpretation by the Locarno Powers is once more brought on the tapis.

The German Government is, of course, trying within the scope of the Locarno pact and the League of Nations, to play off London and Moscow against one another, as it has hitherto turned to account the dissensions between British and French imperialism, and to steer a middle course. It is however clear that the treaty does not alter by one iota, the **main lines of German foreign policy as carried on by Stresemann**, that the German Government will continue its Dawes, Locarno and League of Nations policy and will only commit itself with Soviet Russia as far as London permits.

Nevertheless the treaty is no doubt a feather in the cap of Soviet Russia and a defeat of Great Britain, for the attempts of British diplomacy to enlist Germany in its anti-Russian bloc are, to say the least of it, not facilitated by the treaty. If Chamberlain now makes no serious objections to the treaty it is certainly to some extent because both Luther and Stresemann received hard knocks from him at Geneva. The zealous intriguing in Warsaw and Prague also shows that the Russo-German negotiations were very unwelcome to these gentlemen.

The treaty may, of course, later acquire quite a different significance from that which is at present intended. The circles in Germany which demand a decisive Eastern policy have certainly widened in recent times, especially since Geneva. The nationalistic tones of **Paul Boncour**, the Curator of the League of Nations, at Warsaw, in his hymn of praise to Polish militarism and its role of protector of European culture against Soviet Russia, has been a particularly valuable contribution in this respect.

There are also growing numbers of the German bourgeoisie who desire, instead of Stresemann's Anglophile policy, a Franco-German orientation which would be rather in the spirit of the foreign policy of Soviet Russia.

At present however, Stresemann, Luther and the influential circles of the German bourgeoisie do not think of abandoning the Dawes and Locarno policy. For them, the treaty between Germany and Russia is really nothing more than a gesture towards the East in the scope of their Locarno policy; it is therefore unnecessary to indulge in illusions with regard to the treaty.

It is characteristic that German Social Democracy once again took up its anti-Bolshevist attitude in the negotiations between Germany and Russia. Breitscheid and even Paul Loebe wrote articles which absolutely bristle with intense hatred of the Bolsheviki and unbounded rage over the suggested treaty. If it depended on German Social Democracy, the present treaty would no more be concluded than was the treaty of Rapallo in its day.

A real treaty of friendship and alliance between Germany and Russia, will only be carried out by the victorious German working-class under the leadership of their best and most revolutionary section.

* Since the above article was written the Treaty between Russia and Germany has been concluded. Ed.

HANDS OFF CHINA

Attempts of the Imperialists to Break the Revolutionary United Front in China.

By Tang Shin She.

When, after the bloody events of 30th May last year, the traders, the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals were compelled to take sides with the revolutionary masses against the imperialists, the newspapers of the imperialists in China expressed their profound regret that the "upper" Chinese were making common cause with the "lower" Chinese, and characterised the emancipation movement as a **Red Danger**. The traders, who live by speculation and bargaining, the "great" politicians and the unapproachable and very learned personalities soon discovered that the imperialists were quite right and formed an open front against the revolutionary population, who not only refused to hand the leadership over to them but even ventured to criticise them.

Owing to the Chamber of Commerce refusing pay out strike support, the powerful strike of Shanghai was defeated. The killing of hundreds of Chinese by the imperialists, which had evoked the outbreak of the liberation movement, was treated as a purely juridical affair. On the basis of this attitude of the traders, politicians and intellectuals, which was favourable to the imperialists, Chamberlain declared in the British House of Commons that the extremists in China had lost the leadership and a peace movement had set in which must be given every support. Japan even came forward with the slogan: "Hands off China!" What is meant by support of the peace movement can already be seen by the help given to Wu-Pei-Fu and Chang-Tso-Lin against the people's armies. But let us see further with what means this support is being rendered.

1. The attempt to destroy the friendly relations between China and the Soviet Union. The friendly attitude of China to the Soviet Union is not based upon the good intentions of individual parties and cliques, but on the will of the whole Chinese people! This is a source of profound annoyance to the imperialists. They have long been attempting to accuse the Soviet Union of "Red Imperialism", and for this purpose spread the most lying reports throughout the world.

A Tokio newspaper has often spoken of a secret treaty between Feng Yu Hsiang and the Soviet Union, according to which Mongolia is promised to the Soviet Union. Long before the Japanese troops occupied Mukden at the end of last year, reports were spread from Harbin that the Red Army of the Soviet Union was marching into Northern Manchuria in order to support Feng Yu Hsiang and Kuo Sung Lin. The dispute regarding the Eastern Chinese railway was a planned manoeuvre of the imperialists, carried out by their Japanese tool, against the Soviet Union, whereby it was intended to bring proof to the Chinese people of the imperialist aims of Red Russia. The most absurd reports were spread daily as to disappearances of Chinese merchants in Moscow, of ill-treatment of Chinese workers in Vladivostok etc. After the withdrawal of the Kuomin armies from Peking, Chang Tso Lin demanded in all seriousness the recall of Karachan, the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in Peking.

2. The attempt to destroy the Kuomintang and to annihilate the Canton government. Already before the death of Sun Yat Sen, the imperialists attempted, by inciting the Right wing members, to split the Kuomintang Party. During last year these Right wing members brought about a split in the Party; nevertheless all the honest revolutionary elements were able to unite again at the Second Party Conference in January 1926. The insignificant group of people expelled from the Kuomintang, with the support of their imperialist friends, held in March last in the foreign quarter of Shanghai their second Party Conference (they proudly call themselves orthodox Kuomintang). In collusion with the imperialists they spread the news that the Communists were contemplating a coup d'état against the Canton government in order then to set up a real Communist government. As a matter of fact Chang Kai She, the leader of the Red Canton troops, was obliged to take action against the Right putchist elements still remaining in Canton.

3. The suppression of the revolutionary students and the attempt to withdraw them from the revolutionary movement. In China the students play a very great role in the liberation movement. Since the outbreak of the struggles last year they unitedly joined the All-Chinese Students' Union, which the imperialists consider a purely communist organisation and are therefore trying to destroy it. At first the imperialists sought to split the students' movement, in which attempt however they completely failed.

On the 18th of March when the students protested against the shameless ultimatum of the imperialists demanding the abandonment of the Taku forts, Tuan She Sui caused the crowd to be fired upon, with the result that more than 70 persons were killed. The bourgeois press in the pay of the imperialists, and the intellectuals and reactionary professors expressed their opinion that the leaders bore the responsibility for the blood bath; they declared that they had caused the young students to undertake thoughtless action while they themselves kept safe at home. They had nothing to say against the ultimatum of the imperialists and against Tuan She Sui who had caused the blood bath.

In certain provinces the reactionary professors have forbidden the students to enter the revolutionary unions and parties and to take part in meetings. In one of the high schools in Shanghai they even demanded a sworn declaration from the students that they take no part whatever in political affairs. The students are therefore at present engaged in a sharp struggle against such reactionary elements who are acting in the interests of the imperialists.

For their fight against the revolutionary Chinese people and in order to support their reactionary confederates, the imperialists require the millions of dollars of the boxer indemnity, which the Chinese people themselves must furnish. But all the expenditure, all the efforts have been futile and yielded absolutely nothing, for the revolutionary workers and peasants, the entire suppressed population are still continuing the fight against the imperialist oppressors. On the 12th of March, the anniversary of the death of Sun Yat Sen, enormous masses of followers of the teachings of this great leader demonstrated in all parts of China, even in the districts occupied by the reactionary military rulers.

The labour movement has not only set in with all force in the big towns, as the huge strikes bear witness, but even in small towns and right in the interior of China the workers have formed organisations. Even in Manchuria, where the white-guardist General Chang Tso Lin and the Japanese exercise their bloody rule, the tormented workers have recently resorted to the weapon of the strike. Chang Tso Lin, when he demanded the recall of Karachan, put forward as a reason the bribery of students for the purpose of creating unrest. By unrest they mean of course the revolutionary movement. It is this which the imperialist robbers rightly regard as a menace and challenge to their rule.

THE BALKANS

The Balkan Trade Union Conference in Sofia and the Spirit of the Balkan Locarno.

By Lippert.

The Balkan Trade Union Conference called by the Amsterdam International took place in Sofia on the 9th and 10th of April 1926.

At this Conference, the Reformist trade unions of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria were most numerously represented, i. e. by 10 delegates each, whereas the Roumanian trade unions only sent 3, and the Greek Trade Union League of the Reformists, which really only consists of its leading organisations, also only sent 3 delegates. Furthermore, two representatives of the Hungarian and one of the Czechoslovakian Amsterdammers were present. The I.F.T.U. itself was represented by two delegates (Mertens and Sassenbach), the International Professional Secretariats by four. Besides these, 60 guests were present, among them representatives of the Independent Trade Unions of the Balkans, with the exception of Yugoslavia, where the Independents had previously written asking for admission in the interest of the efforts towards unity, but had been brusquely refused ad-

mittance by Oudegeest. The right to attend as guests had only been granted, even to the Independent Trade Union of Bulgaria and Roumania, on the spot and at the last moment — undoubtedly under pressure from the workers in Sofia amongst whom a spirit in favour of unity prevails.

The object aimed at by the Conference of the Amsterdam International was the resuscitation of the Reformist trade union leagues in the Balkans which have only been able to come into being and to carry on a sham existence as usufructuaries and accomplices of the White Terror. The I. F. T. U. wanted to try to establish "harmonious" co-operation with the bourgeoisie even in this unsettled corner of Europe, which is threatened by a Left danger. The Reformists indeed quite officially announced it as one of their objects "to bring evidence before the Balkan Governments that the existence of the trade unions is justified and that they are necessary for universal peace". ("Vorwärts", April 12th 1926; italics by me. L.).

The orientation of the foreign policy of the Balkan Governments has become extraordinarily vacillating in recent times. Whilst the imperialists are quarrelling amongst themselves for decisive influence in the Balkan countries, a fight for the hegemony is going on in the Balkans themselves, especially on the part of Yugoslavia. Since the dissolution of the Little Entente, particularly since Locarno and the disappearance of France's hegemony on the Continent, the Yugoslavian Government has on the one hand coquetted with the idea of a Locarno pact furthered by Great Britain, and on the other hand has tried to come to an "understanding" with Italian imperialism while sacrificing the interests of the Croatian bourgeoisie. The protesting voice of France has nevertheless been strong enough to frustrate the latter plan. There remained the Balkan Locarno plan and with it the support of the financially bankrupt State by British imperialism. This again absolutely necessitates an approach between Yugoslavia and a Bulgaria which is subordinated to its aims.

The Trade Union Conference inaugurated by Amsterdam was very welcome to the Yugoslavian Government as a means of propaganda for the "solidarity of the Balkan peoples" (itself one of the slogans of the trade union Conference"). It consented to a propaganda tour of "esteemed international trade union leaders" in its country — which in view of experiences up to now seems almost incredible — and even readily permitted workers' meetings to be held. Thus Sassenbach and Gal, the representative of the Hungarian Trade Union Council spoke in Subotica and Novi Sad, but had "no striking success" with the masses of workers who are devoted to the Independent Trade Unions. On the contrary, the revolutionary workers everywhere proposed resolutions for unity against the wish of Sassenbach and Gal.

Even in Bulgaria, the country of the most ferocious White Terror, the Government politely obliged the Reformists. Large numbers of workers were allowed to welcome the Amsterdam delegation at the Sofia station on its arrival. The Independent Trade Unions who are honestly inspired with the will for unity, also called upon their adherents to do so. It is true, that the Reformist leaders could not prevent this, but firstly, they did not have the speeches of welcome of the Independent delegates translated, and then, by means of "social democratic organisers", all of whom were students with semi-Fascist leanings, they prevented the formation of a common demonstration procession, by instructing their "organisers" to cut off the much smaller Reformist procession by force. The Independents, who did not wish to expose themselves to provocation, continued their march separately, but their procession was repeatedly attacked by the social democratic students who felt safe under the protection of the police.

The Conference was opened on April 9th with a speech by Danov, the Secretary of the Bulgarian Trade Union League. His speech, in accordance with the high aims of the Bulgarian and Yugoslavian bourgeoisie, was confined to singing the praises of the "spirit of peace which had at last arrived in the Balkans", and the fraternization of Serbs and Bulgars. This fraternization would also promote the trade union movement, as the trade unions would develop into one of the chief pillars of this co-operation of the Balkan peoples (the bourgeois governments being meant). After the speech of welcome of Mertens, the Vice-President of the I. F. T. U., Sassenbach spoke on the already-mentioned aims of the Conference. He, however, stated at once that these aims were by no means of a political nature. There

was no intention of interfering with the political conditions in the Balkans. Incidentally he complained, in depressed tones, of the "defective social policy" of these Governments which practise the most reactionary oppression of the workers.

A still clearer evidence of the foreign political significance of the Conference was supplied by Pavitschevitch, the delegate of the Yugoslavian Reformist Trade Union Council, in the course of a great speech. He behaved as though it were not a question of a trade union conference, spoke enthusiastically of the fraternization between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, and advocated with great skill the "conception" of a Balkan understanding, for which Yugoslavia has stood up officially in other respects also. Not a word about the common aims of a class fight against the sanguinary oppression of the much-tried and revolutionary workers of the Balkans.

In order that the publicly announced aims of this "Trade Union Conference" should not be forgotten, it was resolved to appoint three special commissions.

The first Commission concerned itself with the questions of the right of coalition and assembly in the Balkan countries which, as is well known, has been trodden underfoot by all the Governments.

The second, most important Commission, concerned itself with drawing up general trade union principles for the Balkans. Here, among other things, the unity of the trade unions had to be dealt with and, as the cautious Sassenbach wanted to comply with the mood of the masses of workers, the Independent guests were admitted to the work of the Commission to the extent that they were allowed to put their point of view. The representatives of the I. F. T. U. doubtless realised that the leaders of the Reformist Balkan trade unions are on the whole generals without armies, and that the only way out for them would be to have some kind of alliance with the independent trade unions who possess the confidence of the masses. For this reason they tried to make their Balkan representatives understand that union is necessary.

The resolution passed with regard to this question recommends the Reformist organisations in each of the Balkan countries to carry on separate negotiations for unity, and is elastic enough to admit of being interpreted in any way desired. The resolution however may, in certain circumstances and if the will for unity which prevails among the workers is complied with, serve the cause of unity as, in comparison with the attitude of the Balkan Reformists up to the present, it represents a step forwards.

The third Commission dealt with the social political demands, especially the question of the refugees, which is of eminent importance for the Balkans. The real demands of the workers however, concerning wages, hours of work, the protection and insurance of workers, were discussed very little. The resolution passed in this respect is expressed quite superficially and schematically and only identifies itself in quite general terms with the demands of the Balkan workers respecting the "improvement" of the social legislation, which in reality is non-existent, the introduction of insurance, of sanitary conditions for the workers and the raising of the "intellectual level" of the working class.

Apart from these hesitating and naive reproaches directed at the Government regarding the pitiful social conditions in the Balkan countries, not a word is said in condemnation of the sanguinary persecution of the workers by the despotic Governments of the Balkan countries. On the other hand, in order to soothe the feelings to a certain extent, it was resolved to intervene with the I. F. T. U. as well as with the International Labour Bureau and the League of Nations in the question of the refugees.

Edo Fimmen, also came to Sofia, as the international Secretary of the transport workers, in order to take part in the 11th trade Union Congress of the Bulgarian railwaymen's union, which was held at the same time as the Balkan Conference. His behaviour, the courageous stand he took for unity at the railwaymen's congress, whose trade union is at present in the hands of the worst Zankoff socialists, is in gross contrast to the unity manoeuvres of the Right Amsterdamers. The workers of Sofia welcomed him most warmly when, at a meeting of workers called by the Reformists but entirely under the control of independent workers, he spoke on his own initiative and expounded the necessity of unity in straightforward terms.

The Independent trade unions of Bulgaria which, since the sanguinary destruction of the Workers' Trade Union Federation

which had been affiliated to the R. I. L. U., are once more uniting the revolutionary workers, addressed a manifesto to the Trade Union Conference in which they described to the foreign trade unions, the position of the Bulgarian workers who are exploited by sanguinary oppression with pre-capitalistic methods (child labour, 12 hours and more work per day, prohibition of strikes etc.). The manifesto points out that the only way by which the Bulgarian workers can be helped to rise again, is the realisation of trade union unity, in which the delegates of the Balkan Conference are asked to assist.

As we see, this Balkan Trade Union Conference of the I. F. T. U. was inaugurated by the Reformists with the direct object of distracting the attention of the Balkan proletariat from the revolutionary class fight and further with the object of supporting the Governments of the Balkan countries in preparing for a Balkan Locarno. Whatever the Reformists may once again say and write of one of their "victories", which indeed they do, although laconically enough, in the official I. F. T. U. bulletin, this trade union conference, organised by them with pronounced counter-revolutionary aims, has offered the revolutionary workers of the Balkans the opportunity of manifesting their unflinching determination to fight and their firm revolutionary will for unity, and may in this way help to strengthen the idea of trade union unity and to hasten the day of its realisation.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Big Strike in the Reschitza Iron Works in Roumania.

Bucharest, 22nd April 1926.

It is now more than a month since a huge strike broke out in the greatest industrial district in Roumania, in Reschitza. Up to recently 7000 iron workers were participating in the movement. Now, as the result of the lock-out of the coal miners of these works, who had been guilty of the terrible crime of giving up a day's wages for the strikers, the number of those rendered idle has now grown to about 10,000.

Roumania is known abroad as the land of white terror and corruption. The strike of Reschitza reveals Roumania as a land of scandalous and bloody exploitation.

In Reschitza the workers receive daily wages ranging from 60 to 150 Lei (10 Lei are about a French Franc). They are housed in dwellings — Reschitza is not a big town but an enormous labour colony — which are worse than stables, for which they have to pay 500 to 1000 Lei a month. Thus a third to one half of their wages is taken up in rent. But food in this district, as a result of a form of truck system, is much dearer than in other parts of the country. It is not surprising, therefore, that the workers are living from roots which are collected by their scrofulous, ragged and under-fed children in the surrounding forests.

The causes of the strike, therefore, are easy to be understood. The wage-index amounts on the average to 20-25, the food-index to 60. The workers demanded an increase of wages of 25-30%. The Company, after long negotiations, scornfully offered them a 5% increase. Thereupon the workers unanimously decided to strike.

The management resorted to various pieces of trickery in order to defeat the strike. Thus unskilled workers from the neighbouring quarries were brought into the works and were instructed to beat aimlessly with their hammers in order to create the impression outside that work was in full swing. The strikers, however, soon saw through this manoeuvre as they were able to see from a neighbouring eminence what the "work" consisted in.

After the failure of this manoeuvre, the management and the authorities resorted to a provocation. By means of spies they caused the rumour to be spread that strike pay from 1000 to 1500 Lei was to be paid out in the trade union premises. The authorities thereby hoped that the misled workers would at once assemble round the trade union premises and could easily be made to believe that the leaders had stolen the money, which should lead to disturbances and to bloody intervention on the part of the authorities. But this attempt to throttle the strike also failed.

Finally, Professor Cuza, the leader of the fascist anti-semites, was invited to come to Reschitza and to "persuade"

the "misguided" workers to resume work. The result of this "visit" is not yet known.

In the meantime the Siguranza (Secret Police) and the military who were concentrated around Reschitza, commenced savage persecutions. The foreign skilled workers were arrested and given the choice of leaving the country or returning to work.

Although in Reschitza the reformists are at the head of the trade unions (the unitarian organisation was dissolved in 1924 by the Siguranza), the unitarian union sent its general secretary to participate in the leadership of the strike and the organisation of relief action. All unitarian organisations pledged themselves to contribute to the strike fund, and in addition to this regular public collections for the strikers were held.

By this means considerable sums were collected and there was revealed, by deeds and against the will of the reformist leaders, the solidarity of the unitarian trade unions and their sincere desire for unity.

The Unitarian Metal workers' Federation used the opportunity in order to submit once again its proposals for unity to the reformist organisation, and at the same time got into touch with the local trade union engaged in the strike in order to show the strikers the necessity of unity. The strike leaders declared themselves ready to consider the question of unity.

In order to curb the haughtiness of the employers of Roumania, to develop the feeling of solidarity and to promote the will to unity, the international working class must raise a protest against the terror of the authorities and hasten to the aid of these 30,000 who are starving as a result of the strike of the 10,000 Roumanian workers of Reschitza.

UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS.

The Economic Situation of the Soviet Union and the Economic Policy of the C. P. of the Soviet Union.

Resolution of the C. C. Plenum of the C. P. of the Soviet Union.

I.

The fundamental fact which determined the strengthening of the proletarian dictatorship and the raising of the international importance of the Soviet is the rapid growth of the productive forces of the country in the direction of strengthening the preponderance of the socialist elements in the national economy. This growth was the result of the policy of the Party which, on the basis of the New Economic Policy, has led to the consolidation of the alliance between industry and agriculture and to the consolidation of the leading position of State industry in the whole national economy. This development took place under disproportionate conditions, which had arisen historically, between the development of industry and agriculture and of the general economic backwardness of the country.

The centre point of the New Economic Policy in its early years was the task of restoring agriculture as rapidly as possible as the starting point of the fight against economic devastation in town and country, the task of creating a basis of raw material and foodstuffs for the development of industry and the creation of a market for its products. Industry, which relies on the growth of agriculture and on the ever-increasing power of absorption of the peasant market and adapts itself to its requirements, increased its production in the economic year 1924-25 by 64% and in the current economic year by about 30-40%.

In spite of this growth of industry, the country still has to pass through a long period in which industrial production will be out of proportion to the demands on production and consumption which are growing still more rapidly. The result of this phenomenon is the acute hunger for industrial goods. In this situation, the development of industry and the industrialisation of the country altogether is the decisive task, on the successful carrying out of which depends the further development of the whole national economy on the road to the victory of socialism.

II.

The industrialisation of the country and the increase of the store of industrial products at the stage of development of industry which has been reached, is at present meeting with specific difficulties. Industry has almost entirely used up the

stock capital which had been left behind from the bourgeois epoch and, in its further development, is now faced by the necessity of re-equipping the factories and of building new factories, which again depends entirely on the amount of accumulated means which can be invested in the interest of the extension of industry.

The expropriation of the unproductive classes (bourgeoisie and nobility) the annulment of the debts, the concentration of the income from industry, home and foreign trade and the whole system of credit in the hands of the State etc. — all this in itself provides the possibility of an accumulation of this kind within the country, which guarantees the pace of development of industry which is necessary for socialist construction.

This task however can only be fulfilled successfully in so far as the Party manages, on the one hand, to put into practice throughout the country a regime of strict economy and a relentless fight against any superfluous unproductive expenditure and, on the other hand, to increase the influx of the private means of the population into every kind of credit and co-operative institution and to get hold of these means through State loans, so that the savings in question may be used for the further development of the productive forces of the country and above all of industry.

The rate of the increase of stock capital and of the re-equipment of industry as well as the improvement of technique and the intensification of agriculture depends mainly on the successful development of our export activities and of the importation of the necessary machines, the necessary raw materials, the necessary semi-manufactured goods for industry and of agricultural implements. For this reason, the increase of our exports is an indispensable condition for the industrialisation of the country and the acceleration of the development of industry.

The Party and the State must systematically take the necessary measures to free our economy from its dependence on the capitalist countries. This dependence became particularly noticeable in the present year when our national economy was approaching the end of its period of reconstruction and had used up the whole of the technical equipment which had remained behind from pre-revolutionary times. Consequently we must, besides forcing the export of the products of agriculture and forestry and developing and improving industrial export (naphtha and other mineral riches, etc.), take particularly energetic measures to further those branches of industry in which our dependence on foreign countries is most keenly felt. The development of the production of cotton, sheep-breeding, the increase of copper-mining and of the production of iron and steel, development of the engineering industry etc. must receive particular attention.

The possibility of hindrances in foreign trade as well as the inevitability of disproportion between the individual branches of our industry, which, as a result of the existence of the market and the predominance of irregular elements in agriculture, is subject to frequent fluctuations of the market, demand that the State should hold sufficient reserves in its hands. This is one of the conditions necessary for the systematic conduct of the economic life of our country. For this reason such reserves must be provided in the State Budget, in foreign trade, in industry, in the supply of corn, in the defence of the country etc.

In the present period of the construction of new factories, special importance attaches to the development of the principle of systematical management and to carrying through a strict plan of discipline in the activities of all State functionaries. All activities with any degree of importance for the construction of new factories — whether of State or local importance — generally must be brought into harmony with the general economic plan. A stop must decisively be put to building construction undertaken spontaneously and individually, which leads to frittering away and uneconomical use of means and material. The part played by the functionaries of planned systematic economies must be increased in this field more than elsewhere.

At the same time as we combat separatism in our systematic economy and the irresponsible working out and carrying out of plans, we must see that the higher functionaries for systematic economy are freed from the petty supervision of the accounts of the officials subordinate to them. Less attention should be paid than hitherto to questions of detail with regard to plans of exploitation, whilst on the other hand the responsibility of the functionaries who carry them out, should be increased. At the same

time the number of departments through which the plans of operation must pass before they are finally confirmed, must be reduced and there must be a strict limitation of competence of the individual institutions for planned systematic economy which have the final decision on the various questions.

A higher quality of the plans drawn up, their timely confirmation and the concentration of the attention of the leading functionaries for planned systematic economy on the main tasks of planned systematic economy can only be achieved under these conditions.

The immediate tasks of economic development in the period before us consist in accelerating accumulation, in making an appropriate use of the means accumulated and in carrying out much more strictly than hitherto the principle of planned systematic economy.

III.

In addition to the general disproportion between the development of agriculture and industry, a disproportion can at present be observed, on the one hand, between the development of the transport system and of industry as a whole, and on the other hand, between the development of the individual branches of industry. The transport system has already become that link in the system of the Soviet management, without the development of which a further increase of the traffic of goods within the country is impossible. The production of fuel, the metallurgic industry and the production of building materials are far behind the requirements of the market and the rate of development of industry. It is therefore necessary, in addition to regulating the transport of goods and to making a more economic use of the means of transport by land and water, above all to expand the means of transport in the metallurgic industry, the production of fuel and building materials and the electrification in such a way that the difficulties in the supply to the other branches of industry, the increasing goods traffic and the building of houses can be removed.

In order to prevent a repetition of fuel difficulties in the future, we must to-day, apart from making better use of and rationalising the existing fuel undertakings, devote more attention to the opening up of new coal and naphtha fields.

The Party and the State must, in the coming period, deal with the housing question with particular care, as the housing crisis interferes with the further growth of industry and with the improvement of the material position of the workers.

IV.

The objective economic difficulties of the present period have been intensified during the current year by failures in the management of planned systematic economy which have found expression in exaggerated plans for collecting corn, for export, import, currency and credit, and in this connection also, of the programme of the development of industry and of the investment of capital. These failures in the drawing up and carrying out of plans, have rendered the shortage of goods still more acute.

The general expansion of agricultural production, the increased surplus of agricultural products, the reduced taxation of the peasant population and the considerable rise in the price of corn — which is to be attributed largely to the mistaken forcing of the collection of corn — have produced a great increase in the demand made by the villages.

The tremendous growth of the demands made by the towns and by industry, to meet which money is forthcoming, is explained by: firstly the considerable increase of wages since the middle of 1925 (and a corresponding increase of the amount spent on social insurance), through which masses of new workers were attracted into production whilst the increase of the productivity of labour came to a standstill; secondly the enlargement of the staff and additional superfluous expenses on the part both of bodies financed by the State and of those on a commercial basis, including State trading and the Co-operatives; thirdly a start being made in carrying through the programme of investments of capital, which will only yield an increase of the amount of goods at some remote time and the rapid development of heavy industry which brings about a further demand for manufactured goods.

Further, the influence of a certain increase of private accumulation has been felt in the field of goods traffic, especially in view of the disproportion between wholesale and retail prices and in the growth of the demands of the urban population which is able to pay.

The forcing of the urban demands which have swallowed up a large part of the increasing industrial production, has had a disorganising effect on the goods traffic between town and country, has diminished the introduction of industrial products into the village and thus reduced the supply of the products of peasant farming. All this together resulted in a rise in the general level of prices, a great increase of the difference between retail and wholesale prices, has rendered more difficult the carrying out of the plans for collecting corn and the plans for export and import connected with them, and has created difficulties in the circulation of money. The reduction of the plan for collecting corn, which was in the circumstances inevitable, involved cutting down the plan for export and import and thus made it questionable whether it would be possible to achieve a positive trade balance and finally solvency in the present year. This meant a danger for the stability of the currency, which was all the more serious, as we had an adverse trade balance last year.

The reduction of the plan for import and credit made it necessary to revise the plan for the development of industry also and to bring it into line with the means at the disposal of the State.

In certain branches of industry — especially those branches the activity of which is dependent on the import of raw materials from abroad, of semi-manufactured goods and technical equipment — this resulted in a certain slackening of the pace of development in the current year.

The solution of the difficulties of the present economic year does not exclude the possibility of the occurrence of new difficulties in the future, especially when the new harvests are sold. At present we have not the necessary means at our disposal for determining the amount of the new harvests and to make even an approximate plan for their realisation. It is, however, highly probable that State industry will again be insufficiently equipped after the new harvest and will be lacking in the necessary reserves of both raw materials and manufactured goods. In order to ensure a normal traffic in goods in the village at the time when the new harvest is realised, the C.C. Plenum commissions the Polit bureau to take supplementary measures for increasing the quantity of industrial goods, especially by extending as far as possible the import of raw materials for the textile and leather industry and, in case of extreme necessity, by the import of ready-made goods.

In addition to these measures it is necessary, in the interest of the reduction of the general level of prices, that the working costs of the apparatus for collecting corn should be reduced as far as possible in all stages of the collection of corn.

As large industry cannot possibly, in the near future, entirely satisfy the demands for industrial products which could be paid for in ready money, it is necessary for the sake of alleviating the shortage of goods, to encourage in every way the development of provincial industry, both that of the State and of small private firms, especially those factories which are run on local sources of fuel.

Although the difficulties referred to exist, the growth of the importance of our industry and of the working class in the whole system of our economics is continuing in the current year. Industry indeed is growing much more rapidly than all the other branches of economics in the Soviet Union. The total production of industry will increase by about 30–40% in proportion to the production of last year. For the first time, considerable means are being invested in re-equipment and the building of new factories in industry, which will make it possible to extend industry in the subsequent years.

V.

The difficulties which have cropped up in the process of economic growth do not make the development of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry on the basis of co-operation between State industry and agriculture less urgent, but on the contrary, increase its urgency.

Industry will not overcome the difficulties which stand in the way of its further expansion and raise the necessary capital for that purpose, unless the further development of agriculture is assured.

For this reason, all the resolutions passed by the Party (14th Party Conference and 14th Party Congress) and by the Soviet Power with regard to promoting peasant farming and improving the position of the masses of peasants, must be carried out in their entirety.

The increase of the productive forces in the village is proceeding through a contest between the various social groups of the peasantry. The inevitable increase of the strength of the Kulaks in the present period of the New Economic Policy and the struggle of these elements to gain predominance in the village, places before the Party the task of consolidating and extending the economic and political co-operation of the proletariat with the large masses of the middle and poor peasantry. This task should be accomplished by: firstly consolidating the alliance between the proletariat and the village poor with the middle peasantry for the purpose of isolating the Kulaks and, secondly, by giving material support to and organising the village poor against the Kulaks. Apart from possibly enlarging the special relief fund for the village poor which was started in the current year, and from liberating the poorest among the peasants from agricultural taxation, a system of wider measures for the support of the village poor must be worked out. The Party should study with special care the experiences made with labour in the villages and the development of conditions of tenancy, and must take measures to regulate the practice of labour and wages conditions, so as to put a check on the attempts at exploitation on the part of the Kulaks, and to protect the interests of the village poor.

VI.

The stage which has been reached in the exchange of goods and money and the accumulation in the villages, as well as the necessity of regulating this accumulation in accordance with the interests of the proletarian State, demand that a system of taxation of the peasantry should be worked out which would relieve the burden of taxation of the poorer peasants, which, in its type, would approach most nearly to the system of income tax.

The following important changes are therefore necessary in the structure of the uniform agricultural taxation:

a) The income on which the taxation is based, should be determined, not in kind but in money;

b) sources of income of the peasant population (wine-growing, bee-keeping, gardening, market-gardening, if these occupations are carried on commercially, further money earned in other ways than by agriculture etc.) which were previously not counted at all or to an insufficient degree, must now be included as objects of taxation;

c) the rates of assessment should be changed on the lines of a more progressive scale, so that the poorest groups are freed entirely and the burden of taxation is increased for the wealthy and Kulak strata of the peasantry.

With regard to determining the sources of income apart from agriculture on which taxation should be based, a more important part should be assigned to the local functionaries who are best informed as to the peculiarities of their district.

The total sum of the comprehensive agricultural taxation can only be raised in proportion as the area under cultivation is enlarged, the field of objects of taxation is extended and the level of the yield of peasant farming is generally increased.

Out of the total sum of agricultural taxation, at least two thirds should be left to the local Soviet functionaries (municipal, district and provincial functionaries) for satisfying local needs.

VII.

The development of co-operative construction in the village, in particular of agricultural credit co-operatives and of agricultural co-operatives, as well as the general improvement of the economic position of the broad masses of the peasantry afford the possibility of a further advance in enlisting the poor and middle classes of peasants in socialist construction.

Socialist construction must embrace all branches of industry, including agriculture. The organisation of the socialist economy in the Soviet Union can therefore only be guaranteed if agriculture develops on the lines of consolidating its alliance with socialist industry, of strengthening the part played by the latter in the whole national economy and of the increase of the socialist elements in the village, the most important of which are the co-operatives.

The Plenum of the C.C. states that the Party's resolutions (XIV. Party Conference and 14th Party Congress) with regard to co-operative construction in the village, have not yet been completely taken up or sufficiently carried out by the co-operative and Party organisations. The Plenum pledges all Party members to concentrate their attention on carrying out the Party resolu-

tions referred to and in doing so to take the following tasks especially into consideration.

1) The enlistment of really broad masses of the peasantry in co-operative construction;

2) The interests of the middle and poor peasant masses should be well protected in the Co-operatives and a fight carried on against the attempts of the Kulak elements to exploit the Co-operatives;

3) Unproductive expense in affairs concerning the Co-operatives should be ruthlessly cut down;

4) the turnover of the Co-operatives should be increasingly extended by reducing the part played by private capital, and by fighting resolutely for the reduction of retail prices.

5) measures should be taken to ensure the influx of the deposits and savings of the broad masses of peasants into the credit and co-operative system.

6) Every means must be used to enforce stricter credit discipline.

7) the special forms of Co-operatives which unite the peasants in the sphere of production and above all in the industrialisation of agriculture should be established more firmly.

These tasks can only be fulfilled if there is a general improvement in the activity of the Co-operatives, if their authority in the economic life of the peasant masses is increased and if the eligibility of their functionaries and their responsibility to the population is really guaranteed.

VIII.

On the grounds of the above arguments, the Plenum of the Central Committee calls upon all Party organisations to be guided by the following directions in solving the actual tasks of the immediate future:

a) in the sphere of the money issue and credit policy: by the necessity of bringing about, in the course of the next few months, an appropriate relation between the money in circulation in the country and the masses of goods in circulation, and of only permitting an increase of issue in so far as results can be obtained by raising the purchasing power of the rouble.

b) In the sphere of the turnover of goods: by the necessity of achieving a decided reduction in retail prices. In connection with the widening of the disparity between retail and wholesale prices, the questions of organising the market and of fighting for a reduction of retail prices acquire unusual significance. Success in the collection of grain, and with it in carrying out the plan of export, an actual increase of wages, success in the fight against the accumulation of private capital, all these depend entirely on a further reduction of retail prices both of industrial goods and of agricultural products. The attention of the trade unions, of State industry, of State officials, and above all of the Co-operatives must be concentrated on this fight in the immediate future.

c) In the sphere of wages policy, the Plenum of the C. C. states that the measures taken at the beginning of the economic year for generally increasing wages, and the most recent measures of the Polit bureau (Feb. 1926) for increasing wages in coal mining, transport and means of communication (post, telegraph, telephone etc.) were the right ones, and proposes that for the rest of the current economic year, we should be guided by the necessity of ensuring the rate of wages already attained. At the same time, it is necessary to take decisive measures for increasing the productivity of labour both through the rationalisation of production, especially by more complete equipment, increasing the qualification of the workers, improving the organisation in factories and works and, through making better use of the working day, enforcing a stricter discipline in work, fighting against loss of working time and so on.

The measures taken by the Party are directed towards actually ensuring the level of wages reached. In order that these measures should be carried into effect in correspondence with the general growth of the forces of production, the development of industry and the increase of the productivity of labour, it is necessary to ensure a further increase of wages.

d) As regards the investment of capital in industry, the State Budget and the formation of a special reserve for the National Budget, the decisions of the Polit bureau of Feb. 25th of this year should be carried out.

e) As regards the plan of import and export for the year 1925-26 and the formation of a reserve for foreign trade, the decisions of the Polit bureau of Jan. 21st 1926 are authoritative.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Situation in the Communist Party of Germany.

By P. R. Dietrich (Berlin).

The VI. Session of the Enlarged Executive of the C. I. has declared in the resolution on the German question that the Party, in spite of many shortcomings which still exist, both in regard to reorganisation and in the ideological front and the training of the membership, has a number of successes to record since the appearance of the Open Letter. The policy now being conducted by the present party leadership, of the correct application of the united front tactics for winning the proletarian masses, has not only increased the activity of the Party membership, but considerably promoted the political influence of the Party among the working class. The basis of the Party has widened. Influence in the free trade unions has grown, in spite of all the counter-measures of the trade union bureaucracy — a fact which even the "Vorwärts", which almost daily announces the demise of the C. P. of Germany, can no longer deny. The relations of the Communist workers to the social democratic workers have considerably altered from what they were a year ago.

With regard to inner Party conditions, in the ideological training of the membership, considerable progress is to be recorded, in spite of all existing shortcomings. A proof of this is to be seen in the ideological level of the present inner Party discussions: not only in the body of functionaries of the Party, but even in the smallest units of the organisation, in the smallest factory and street nuclei there is to be seen the effort to bring to the fore-front the essential principles involved in the questions at issue.

In spite of these recognised successes of the Party there are comrades who feel themselves called upon to proclaim a crisis in the C. P. of Germany. These comrades do not care in the least that with their war-cries they only create confusion in the Party and thereby hinder its advance. They are not at all concerned that, by their cackling they furnish the social democratic press with material for concealing the severe crisis which at present exists in the Social Democratic Party of Germany. These comrades require a "crisis" in the Party, it is their only political platform.

That which we regard as a "crisis in the C. P. of Germany" is in reality nothing else than the final effects of the crisis in the Party, which, with all its danger for the further development of the Party, has been ruthlessly indicated by the Open Letter. The manner in which the whole Party today reacts to this cry of crisis of these comrades, shows that the Party is now undergoing a process of inner consolidation, of organisatory strengthening, and thereby of increasing political influence in the German working class.

Of what does the crisis in the C. P. G., proclaimed by these comrades, consist? The Open Letter has already given an unmistakable reply to this question. The Party, by following the policy of the Open Letter, has already pushed into the background the ultra-Left tendencies in the Party. The Ultra-Lefts represent to-day no opposition on principle in the Party, but a small group whose influence is daily becoming less.

The VI. Enlarged Executive has pledged the entire Party to overcome these ultra-Left groupings, who, in spite of their attempts to differentiate themselves from each other, represent in the most decisive political questions the same non-communist views, as being "the real disturbing elements in the Party, in order to render the Party capable of winning the masses for the revolution".

The development of the ultra-Left after the Enlarged Executive has fully confirmed the characterisation of the ultra-Left groups contained in the Resolution on the German Question. The leaders of the various ultra-Left groups have, since the Enlarged Executive, alienated themselves still further from the Comintern and the C. P. of Germany.

The Korsch-Schwarz group, by its open anti-bolshevik attack upon the policy of the Executive and of the German Party, as well as upon Soviet Russia, has placed itself outside the ranks of the Party. The views set forth by Korsch in his fractional circulars and in his theses prove that Korsch has

already arrived at the same position as Kautsky, who is a conscious counter-revolutionary. Korsch's "theoretical basis" is a speculation upon the victory of all the forces opposing the realisation of socialist construction in Soviet Russia, as well as on the overcoming of Leninism by reformism. How little Korsch has in common with the Party was shown by his attitude at the Conference of the political secretaries and editors, at which, when asked by comrade Thälmann whether he was prepared to lay down his Reichstag mandate given to him by the Party, he gave an evasive answer and declared that he must first speak with his friends — among whom is to be found, as has been proved, the renegade and traitor Katz. The Korsch-Schwarz group has no following in the Party. Should they follow the way of Levi, Friesland, Souvarine and Hoeglung they will not be followed by a single worker in the Party.

The **Urbahns-Ruth Fischer** group is the group of entire lack of all principle "on principle". So far as documents of this group, in the form of declarations and resolutions, are available, this group in its attitude to the decisions of the XIV. Party Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the VI Enlarged Executive as well as to the policy and inner-Party position of the C. P. of Germany only differs in terminology from Korsch. The anti-bolshevism which finds open expression in the documents of Korsch and Schwarz appear in a veiled and hidden form with Urbahns and Co.

In the same way as Korsch and Schwarz overstep all Party discipline and consciously set out to destroy Party unity, so we also see in the Urbahns-Ruth Fischer group daily new attempts to create a faction fight in the Party. Regardless of the most elementary rules of revolutionary Party discipline, comrade Urbahns and his friends seek to shake the authority of the leadership of the Party and to awaken doubt and mistrust in the leadership of the Comintern.

The entire insignificance of both the Korsch group and of the Urbahns group found expression at the National Conference of political secretaries and editors, and is also to be seen in the present discussion in the Party. The National Conference unanimously decided, with only one abstention, to exclude Korsch from further participation in the Conference. In the course of the discussion in the Party not a single organisation of the Party decided for the platform of the Korsch group. At the Reichs Conference Urbahns managed to get two votes for his resolution.

The inner relationship between the Korsch and Urbahns groups in the most important political questions, in their attitude to the Comintern, and to the Soviet Union, has, after the Enlarged Executive, extended to the group of Comrade **Weber**, which developed out of the old Ultra-Left. Although the group of Comrade Weber repudiates every personal connection with Korsch and the Urbahns group, it does not differ essentially from the completely non-communist views of these groups. The anti-Party and anti-Comintern attitude of the Weber group results from the complete incapacity of appreciating the objective situation and the tasks of the Party arising from it. The criticism of the policy of the Party by this group is a completely negative one. Comrade Weber sees as the only result of the policy of the Party since the Open Letter, the consolidation — not of the C. P. of Germany, but of the S. P. G. Comrade Weber makes this assertion at a time when the S. P. G. is involved in a severe crisis, which in Saxony already shows signs of an open split, at a time when even the bourgeoisie have to admit the constant increasing success of the C. P. of Germany.

The discussion which is now being carried on in the Party, on the broadest basis, on the decisions of the VI. Enlarged Executive, has already shown that the overwhelming majority of the Party has recognised the danger to the further development of the Party to a revolutionary mass Party which lies in the uncommunist and partly open anti-bolshevist views of the various ultra-Left groupings. The Party, in the course of further discussion, will overcome the last remnants of the ultra-Left non-communist ideology and will weld the whole Party together on the line of the Comintern and under the present leadership of the C. P. of Germany. The more determinedly the Party fights against the ultra-Left non-communist views, the more determinedly it will lead the struggle against the opportunist dangers and deviations which arise out of the objective situation.

The Party is now on the march. It will not allow itself to be hampered in its approach to the masses by the ultra-Left crisis-mongers.

In the Camp of Social Democracy

Noteworthy Speech by Stenhuis at the Congress of the Dutch Social Democrats.

By H. S. (Amsterdam).

The Dutch Social-Democratic Labour Party undoubtedly belongs to the extreme Right Wing of the Second International. Its newspaper, "Het Volk", breathes the spirit of the German "Vorwärts" and never fails to take part in an attack made upon the Soviet Union and the Russian labour movement. According to numerical strength it is the second of the Dutch political parties, i. e. it ranks immediately after the Catholic State Party. We are now living in the period in which the Dutch Social-Democratic Party is doing its utmost to form a government coalition with the Catholic and petty bourgeois "Democratic Party". It is perfectly willing to make big concessions to the Catholic elements. Although this attitude shows ever more clearly the rightward tendency of the Dutch Social-Democratic Party, no left opposition of any strength has as yet emerged. For this reason special significance attaches to the big speech, which **R. Stenhuis**, the president of the Dutch Federation of Trade Unions (N. V. V.) made at the Congress of the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Holland, held at Easter. In this speech Stenhuis brings right into the foreground the views of the Left elements of the Social-Democracy (**Brailsford-Otto Bauer**). His speech had the effect of a bomb-shell on the Congress and caused great excitement among the delegates, who had not anticipated anything of this kind. There was an encounter last year between Stenhuis and the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party over the relation of the Party to the trade-union movement. On that occasion he advocated the reorganisation of the forces in the Dutch labour movement and the fusion of the Party and the Trade-Union Central into a Labour Party. The executive of the Party succeeded, however, (September 1925) in getting Stenhuis to refrain for several months from writing anything more concerning his viewpoint, nevertheless, he was invited to express his views during the Congress.

He availed himself of the opportunity, but he did not confine his observations to the regrouping of forces. He treated this matter as a secondary consideration. The principal affair was his analysis of international relations, his criticism of the "old and tried" methods of reformism, his damaging review of the Social-Democratic policy in Holland and his demand for fresh fighting methods.

Stenhuis further emphatically opposed the attitude of the former president of the Party, **Vliegen**, who has for many years declared on principle against the employment of extra-parliamentary means, and he warned the Social-Democratic Party not to adopt this attitude of Vliegen's, for in case they did the Social-Democratic Party would be excluded from the leadership of the labour movement.

Before Stenhuis began his speech, the Party had chosen a new president for the immediate future. The reformist, **W. Vliegen**, who had been president of the Party for many years, was succeeded by **Henri Polak**, President of the Dutch and International Diamond Workers' Union. Polak is, undoubtedly, the **Samuel Gompers** of the Dutch trade-union movement. He is a good organiser, who has been able to create for the special conditions of the diamond industry a strong organisation, whose influence, however, has diminished considerably since the war. He is a very decided opponent of the Russian revolution and of every revolutionary tendency and is, furthermore, a combative individual who has several times had sharp encounters with Stenhuis and other elements of the Dutch Trade Union Federation.

This choice means that the leadership of the Dutch Social-Democratic Party has moved even further towards the Right than it already was. After this choice it was clear that the leaders of the Party would repudiate the whole of Stenhuis' speech. This they actually did. They were of the opinion that Stenhuis was giving way to desperation, that he had no faith in a healthy labour movement, that he was a pessimist and, therefore, desirous of leading the Party and the trade union movement into the wrong path. They were naturally against Stenhuis' proposal to elect at the Congress a commission to

investigate more closely the relation between the Party and the trade union movement. Stenhuis' speech was regarded as an insult to the Party and to the trade union movement. The trade union leader, **Brautigam**, transport worker, declared that he would call Stenhuis to account at the Congress of the Dutch Trade Union Federation.

After the conclusion of the Congress the whole Press expatiated upon Stenhuis' speech. The former Catholic Minister, **Aaalberse**, declared that the Congress had been a Stenhuis' Congress, despite the fact, that Stenhuis had been repudiated. Although **Aaalberse** expressed satisfaction with the fact that the moderate elements won the victory, he still holds the view that the Dutch Social-Democratic Party has not yet settled the question of the relation between the Party and the trade union movement and the other more important question of parliamentary action or revolutionary action. At the conclusion of the Congress the Social-Democratic daily, "Het Volk", again repudiated Stenhuis and his theory.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The 40th Congress of the Co-operatives of the U. S. S. R.

Karl Bittel (Moscow).

The 40th Co-operative Congress of the Soviet Union was held in the trade union house in Moscow from the 5th—12th of April 1926. It is the 6th Congress of the "Centrosoyus" since the October revolution. It was attended by 665 delegates entitled to vote from the Co-operatives of the whole Union. The movement has made enormous progress in the last few years. The following gives a numerical survey:

Statistics of the Co-operative Organisation of the U. S. S. R.

	Members	Unions	Stores
Oct. 1st 1924 . . .	7,104,831	22,641	37,069
Oct. 1st 1925 . . .	9,437,938	25,536	50,961

The turnover of all the Co-operatives and their central leagues has risen from 2.05 milliard to 3.7 milliard, 2.22 milliard of which was the turnover of the local co-operatives.

Side by side with the Consumers' Co-operative Store movement, there is in the U. S. S. R. a wide-spread agricultural co-operative movement, the central league of which is the "Seiskosoyus". It includes 40,000 Co-operatives with 3 million peasant families and a turnover of 900 millions.

The Congress of the 10 million co-operative members began with an international meeting. The first speaker was Comrade **Clara Zetkin** who brought greetings from the Communist International and congratulated the Soviet Co-operative movement on the great progress it had made.

Comrade **Kalinin**, who spoke in the name of the Communist party of the Soviet Union and in the name of the Soviet Government was received with frantic applause.

Sir **Thomas Allen**, the director of the English Wholesale Co-operative Society in Manchester was present, representing the Co-operative International. He congratulated the Russian Co-operative movement on its tremendous progress and expressed his disapproval of the calumniators, who are still carrying on their work abroad. He strongly condemned the infamous Book of the International Labour Bureau in Geneva which has just appeared. He emphasised the fact that confidence in the power of the Russian Co-operative movement is constantly increasing, in spite of all the differences of opinion which exist with regard to the question of international co-operative policy.

Representatives of the Co-operative Union of Great Britain, of the English and Scotch Co-operative Wholesale Societies, of the Workers' Co-operatives of Finland and Denmark and the representative of a Communist Co-operative Society in Paris then spoke. Although there was again no representative of the former Central League and its G. E. G. (Co-operative Wholesale Society) present, the hostile front of the German co-operative bureaucracy was broken through this year in that a leading social-democratic co-operator, **Hans Bauer** from Munich, the manager of the Co-operative Society in that city and at the same

time a member of the supervisory council of the Hamburg G. E. G. spoke at the Congress.

As has been the custom every year, the business report of the Centrosoyus was given by Comrade **Chintchuk**. He used figures to show that a strong development had taken place in the co-operative movement, that the turnover of the local Co-operative Societies had been doubled, that the membership had increased by more than two millions and he pointed out the progress, which had been made in the thorough organisation in the co-operative system. Comrade **Chintchuk** gave an analysis of the general position of the Soviet economy and of the co-operative situation. He pointed out the difficulties which, in his opinion, are definitely connected with growth. Some difficulties arise for the co-operative movement, especially with regard to the reduction of goods and money credits, from the re-arrangement of the State economic plan, in consequence of the diminution of exports, of the increasing development of heavy industry and of industrialisation. The State trusts have a commercial network of their own; the fight for a larger share of goods and for better terms of delivery must be carried on. It is a gigantic task to supply 10 million members. The purchasing power, and with it the demand for goods has increased. The turnover of the local Co-operatives has increased from 1175 to 2223 millions. The whole co-operative trade amounts to-day to 20.1% (1923/24 it was 12.3%) of the total turnover of the U. S. S. R., whilst 41.1% (34.9) is in the hands of State trade. The business costs now only amount to 2.3% and the extra prices to 3.3%. The total amount of the capital of the Co-operative Societies is 1231 millions, of which 12.4% is their own capital and 87.6% borrowed capital. The production of the Centrosoyus amounted to 43.3 millions and will be increased in the current year by more than 70%. The loss of 568,000 roubles, indicated in the balance-accounts had arisen through the writing off of old debts founded on bills of exchange and through unpaid accounts from former times, as well as through losses consequent on the State regulation of prices for corn and meat. Altogether the economic and financial position of the Centrosoyus was considerably strengthened, and the balance of Feb. 1st already showed a gain of 4 million roubles.

With regard to international relations, it was reported that they continue to develop favourably; that business connections exist with the English and Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Societies in particular, but also with the Belgian and French.

The special report of the Central Workers' Section emphasised the necessity of the closest co-operation with the trade unions and described it as the chief task that real wages should be raised through the reduction of co-operative prices. The report of the Transport Workers' Section showed that 75% of all railwaymen are organised in Co-operatives and that 44% of their wages were spent in the co-operative stores. The report of the Revision Commission concerned itself with a criticism of the trade in grain and of the clumsiness of the staffing apparatus.

The discussion was extremely animated and showed that the co-operative movement in Soviet Russia is, unlike any other in the world, an active movement, in which there is nothing of the bureaucratic rigidity and dictatorship of authorities. As usual, much criticism was exercised, and the management in particular was attacked for not having done enough to bring the Co-operatives on to an equal footing with State industry. The delegates made practical suggestions, for instance **Tichomirov**, the representative of the Tartar Republic proposed to fight for the abolition of State retail trading. It was further demanded that special efforts be made to increase the capital of the Co-operatives and to train a numerous staff of active functionaries, especially of peasant women, by special courses.

In his concluding words, Comrade **Chintchuk** pointed out the relative success as compared with State industry; thus for instance, as a result of the activity of the parity commission, 100 waggons more of textile wares had been supplied to the Co-operatives than had been originally planned.

In the resolution which was passed unanimously, it is stated that the Co-operatives form a main factor in the construction of socialist economy. The future tasks of the co-operative movement and the special tasks of the Centrosoyus were then set forth in detail.

The elections at the final sitting resulted in a Co-operative Council of the Centrosoyus being appointed, consisting of 89 members, Comrade **Chintchuk** being elected as president. The managing committee of the Centrosoyus was enlarged so as to consist of 21 members and 9 candidates; Comrade **Ljubimov**

was elected president and Comrades Kissin, Sorokin and Agejev vice-presidents.

The Congress gave the impression of a movement of great strength and powerful impetus. The proud consciousness of power of the Co-operative movement of Soviet Russia made a strong impression on all those present especially on the foreign co-operators. They recognised it as a living mass movement which, of its own strength, is building up the economic foundations of a socialist order of society on the secure ground of political power in the hands of the workers and peasants.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Agenda of the International Conference for Work among Women.

To all Sections of the Communist International.

In accordance with the decisions of the Org Bureau of the E. C. C. I. of the 10th April 1926, the **International Women's Secretariat** is convening in Moscow on 27th May 1926 an **International Conference for work among women** with the following agenda:

1. Report on the activity of the International Women's Secretariat and the next tasks of the work among women. (The report embracing U. S. S. R., West and East, including the most important results of the work in the sections).

2. The organs of the Party for work among the women. On this question the following sub-reports will be given:

a) activity of a Moscow district women's department among the women.

b) activity of a Russian factory nucleus among the working women.

3. Work in the mass organisations (co-operatives, trade unions etc.).

4. Special organisational forms of work among the women.

a) Meetings of women delegates.

b) Extra-Party women's organisations.

5. Work among the peasant women.

6. Press and political training.

All further details on the preparation of the Conference and the question of delegates will be communicated to the sections by circulars.

International Women's Secretariat.

(Signed): Clara Zetkin.

THE YOUTH MOVEMENT

To the Young Workers of all Countries!

Comrades and brothers!

It will soon be nine years since the working class in our country took the power in its hands and, with the support of the broad masses of the peasantry, began to build up a socialist society. In spite of the great difficulties and the unprecedented obstacles which stood in the way of the first workers' republic of the world, the working class of the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics has achieved great and important results. As a rising class which is building up a new society, the working class of the U. S. S. R. considers the education and training of the young generation to be one of its most important and chief tasks. In the whole world there is no single State where so much careful attention is devoted to the youth and the children; there is no single country in the whole world where such an atmosphere of public care and concern surrounds the question of the education of adolescents and children, as in the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics.

The truth about the only country in which the dictatorship of the proletariat has become a reality, is misrepresented in every possible way by the bourgeoisie and the leaders of the Social Democratic parties and Youth Leagues. The organ of the Young "Socialist" International maintains that Soviet Russia is not a proletarian State. Impudent and monstrous stories are told about the position of the young workers in our country. The bourgeoisie and their lackeys can lie all the more easily because not all the young proletarians in the world have a clear conception of the results of the great October revolution.

of our success in the domain of socialist reconstruction, of the conditions of living and of work of our young workers (a 4-6 hours day, 4 weeks holiday, holiday homes etc.), of the system of the socialist education of youth in the Soviet Union etc.

But the truth about the Soviet Union is beginning to penetrate through all the barriers of lies and calumny, which have been set up by the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy. Last year, delegations of adult workers from England, Germany, Sweden, and other countries had the opportunity of seeing with their own eyes all the light and dark sides of our constructive work. Our working class showed these delegations everything they wanted to see: factories, schools, hospitals, organisations, prisons etc. In August of last year, the Moscow, Leningrad and Central Committees of our League invited delegations of young workers from the capitalist countries, to visit our country. Delegations of young workers from Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and Czechoslovakia have already visited us. We did not conceal from them either our achievements nor our deficiencies which are still great. The young workers of the Soviet Union listened attentively to their opinion of our work.

The young workers of the Soviet Union consider it of extreme importance that young fellow-workers from the capitalist countries should be sent to our country. These delegations transmit to the young workers of the world the truth about the Soviet Union as it is, not coloured and not distorted, as by the deliberately malicious enemies of the proletariat.

In accordance with the resolution of the 7th Congress of the Leninist Young Communist League of the Soviet Union, we invite you in the name of 1,700,000 young proletarians and peasants organised in its ranks, invite you once more, comrades and brothers, to send delegations of young workers to our country.

Choose them in the factories and workshops, at the conferences of young workers, in the labour organisations. Whatever their political creed may be, if they really represent the masses of young workers, if they really wish to make a close study of our life and our struggle, we shall heartily welcome them. The young workers of the Soviet Union will receive them as cherished guests, as fellow-workers and class-brothers.

A few months ago, the Young Socialist International, which tries in every way to prevent delegations of young workers being sent to the U. S. S. R., made the suggestion that it would send a delegation to our country, which was not however to consist of young workers, but of the leaders and employees of the Y. S. I., a delegation which was not to be chosen by the workers in the factories and at the conferences but by the S. Y. I. itself, and was to be selected from the point of view of party.

Comrades! Every thinking worker will immediately realise the meaning of this proposal. A delegation such as the Y. S. I. proposes would be a prejudiced delegation which would not come with the object of learning the truth about the proletarian country and of passing on this truth to hundreds of thousands of young workers. A delegation of this kind would be nothing more nor less than a court held by one party to judge the other. The Young Communist International expressed this perfectly correctly in its answer to the Y. S. I. and we entirely identify ourselves with this answer. Every intelligent worker understands very well that a non-party, objective estimation of the situation in the Soviet Union could only be given correctly by a delegation which was not brought together according to party principles, but was chosen by the broad masses of young workers without distinction of party. We therefore attach no value to such a consciously prejudiced delegation, one which is deliberately not objective. We therefore forego the privilege of having the Social Democratic party pass judgement on us. We invite the young workers of the whole world to chose their own delegations which may consist of representatives of the most varied political creeds.

We on our part are equally prepared to send delegations of young workers from the factories and works hops of our country, so that we may become acquainted with the life, the work and the struggle of the young proletarians in the bourgeois States.

Long live the close alliance between the young workers in the Soviet Union and those in the capitalist States!

On behalf of the 7th Congress of the Leninist Young Communist League of the Soviet Union.

Central Committee of the L. Y. C. I. of the S. U.
Moscow, April 12th 1926.

MAY DAY

To All Metal Workers of the World.

Dear Brothers,

We 14,500 metal workers of "Red Sormovo" works, in the U. S. S. R. send our warm greetings to the revolutionary metal workers of the whole world for May 1st, the proletarian holiday of solidarity.

On this day, we workers of the first and only Proletarian Republic in the world, which has existed 9 years without the bourgeoisie as ruling class, come out into the streets to review the forces of the proletarian front and struggle and together with you we hurl at the face of the class enemy our hatred and readiness for a further intense struggle.

But as distinct from you who live under the yoke of bourgeois rule, we, on May 1st, besides a common demonstration of forces with you before the International bourgeoisie, on this day we will thoroughly review the results of the work of construction of our Socialist economy.

Once more we hope, by means of the facts of our successes in the sphere of construction of Socialism in our country, to demonstrate to the whole world that the working class can successfully direct the country and build up Socialism without the aid of the bourgeoisie.

But despite our success in the field of construction of Socialism in our country, despite the fact that we have reinforced our conquests and are moving ahead, we have still great difficulties before us. We draw your attention to the fact that the International bourgeoisie has not abandoned the thought of a struggle against the only republic of workers and peasants. Of late the bourgeoisie of the whole world has actively sought for measures which could weaken our country. We also cannot fail to observe that the last year has been a year of the sharpest bourgeois offensive on the working class in all parts of the capitalist world. We know that reaction is endeavouring to take away your conquests and to make an attack on the existing revolutionary trade union and political organisations which really defend the interests of the working class.

The bourgeoisie, under the cover of talk about peace and disarmament, is increasing armaments to gigantic dimensions. Is it for the sake of "peace" that the most vile robbers' war is being waged in Morocco and Syria and that the national movement in China is being suppressed. The world is threatened with a new conflagration of war.

We have been witnesses of the so-called "peaceful aspirations" of the bourgeoisie, the endeavours to conclude an alliance between the victors and the conquered in the imperialist war. This diplomatic comedy at Locarno, which has already met with failure, better than anything else reveals the true meaning of the "peaceful" desires of the capitalists. We are also bound to share with you your indignation at everything that is taking place with the consent and participation in one way or another of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals.

You proletarian metal workers, the most active section of the working class, fully realise that all these factors create the threat of peril to the conquests of the working class received after many years of struggle. Here there cannot be any two opinions as to how to act, and we, workers of "Red Sormovo", who have actively struggled in the ranks of the Russian labour movement, participants in three Russian revolutions, under the leadership of the immortal Lenin, call upon you to oppose the capitalist offensive by the united front of the toiling masses.

You must be pioneers in the creation of this united front. The united front of the bourgeoisie must be smashed and the brazen enemy must be compelled to retreat. The bourgeois offensive against our Union of Socialist Republics should serve to rally still more new workers of capitalist countries with our

workers of the U. S. S. R. Together with you we must firmly oppose the violence of the bourgeoisie against the Eastern peoples, by fraternal solidarity and support in their struggle against the imperialists.

On May 1st, we call upon you, brothers by class and trade to demonstrate your firm desire for the formation of a united really revolutionary class trade union international, embracing the trade unions of all countries and all races.

This will ensure success in the struggle and we hope that you will find the force and energy to unite into a single proletarian front even over the heads of the reformist leaders.

Long live the united front of the toilers!

Long live the First of May international holiday of proletarian solidarity!

Long live the world union of Soviet Socialist Republics!

To the Working Youth of all Countries!

The Young Communist International calls upon the working youth in town and country to demonstrate on the 1st of May, the day of international class struggle and of international solidarity, together with the adult working class, for the demands of the working class and of the working youth. The slogans of the working youth are:

Regaining of the eight hour day and beyond this the six hour day for young workers!

Fight against reduction of wages and for increase of wages of all young workers and apprentices!

Four weeks holiday with pay for all young workers!

For the organising of the entire working youth in the trade unions!

For sending delegations of the young workers to the Soviet Union!

Against the danger of imperialist war, reaction, fascism and white terror!

Support for the suppressed youth of the East and of the colonies!

For the united front of the working youth!

Into the Young Communist League!

Long live the Young Communist International!

The Executive Committee of the
Young Communist International.

Letter from Russian Women Workers.

Dear Comrades,

We working women of the Khamovnichesky Silk Weaving Factory dedicated to "Rosa Luxemburg" on the day of the proletarian holiday, May 1st, send our warm proletarian greetings to the women of the West. On the day of May 1st, our thoughts are directed towards You. We follow with hope your struggle and victory, note with joy in our hearts the approach of the world Socialist Revolution. We women of the U. S. S. R., the only country of Soviets in the world have achieved our emancipation, our labour is protected by the law, most favourable conditions have been created for our children, crèches, kindergartens, schools, dispensaries — where our children are trained in the spirit of our dear leader V. I. Lenin.

Women of the West get closer to the Communist Party.

Nearer to the Red Trade Unions.

Long live the World Socialist Revolution which liberates the women of the whole world from slavery.

Long live the first of May, festival of labour and victory.

Women workers of the "Red Rosa" factory Khamovnichesky District. (Moscow).