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The Economic Situation of Soviet Russia^{*)}

By *L. Trotsky*.

1. The question of the direction taken by the economic development of Soviet Russia must be understood and estimated from two different standpoints by the class conscious workers of the whole world: firstly, from the standpoint of interest in the welfare of the first workers' republic in the world, its permanency, its strength, its enhanced well-being, its evolution towards socialism; and secondly, from the point of view of the lessons and conclusions to be drawn from Russian experience, by the proletariat of other countries for application to constructive activity after seizure of state power.

2. The methods and rapidity of the economic constructive activity of the victorious proletariat are determined by: a) the stage of development which has been reached by the productive forces, not only in the general economy, but in its separate branches, and especially in the relations between industry and agriculture; b) the level of culture and organization of the proletariat as the ruling class; c) the political situation subsequent to the seizure of power by the proletariat (resistance of the fallen bourgeois classes, the attitude of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, the extent of the civil war and its consequences, military interventions from outside, etc.).

The more developed the productive forces of a country, the higher the level of culture and organization of the proletariat, and the weaker the resistance of the fallen classes, the more rapid, systematic, regular, and successful can the transition from capitalist to socialist economics be carried out by the victorious proletariat.

A remarkable combination of historical circumstances has willed it that Russia is the first country to tread the path of socialist evolution, and this, although Russia, despite the far-reaching concentration of the most important branches of its industry, is economically backward, although its masses of workers and peasants, despite the extraordinarily admirable revolutionary political quality of the proletarian vanguard, are backward in culture and organization.

These contradictions in the economic, social, and political structure of Russia, and the fact that the Soviet republic has been, and remains, surrounded by capitalism during the whole of its existence, determine the fate of the economic constructive work of the workers' and peasants' government, determine the

changes made in this constructive work, and the reasons for adopting the present so-called New Economic Policy.

3. The complete expropriation not only of the larger and middle bourgeoisie, but also of the petty bourgeoisie in town and country, was a measure necessitated by economic expediency and political necessity alike. The continued rule of capitalism over all the rest of the world, had the effect that not only the Russian large bourgeoisie, but even the petty bourgeoisie, did not believe that the workers' state could be maintained, and this disbelief led to the formation of reserves for the bourgeois large-agrarian counter-revolution. Under these circumstances the resistance of the bourgeoisie could be broken, and the Soviet power maintained, only by the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie and of the exploiting upper strata of the village population. Victory for the workers' state was only secured by this determined and ruthless policy, which forced the vacillating masses of the peasantry to choose between the restoration of the land-owners and the workers' state.

4. The workers' state thus came into possession, immediately on beginning to exercise its power, of the whole of the industrial undertakings, down to the very smallest. The mutual relations of the various branches of industry to one another, had already been thrown completely out of balance and order long before the revolution, by the reconstruction of industry during and for the war. The personnel of the main apparatus of economic administration had either emigrated or was occupied at the White fronts. In so far as certain elements were still present in Russia, these sabotaged where they could.

The conquest and maintenance of power by the working class was purchased at the price of a rapid and ruthless destruction of the whole bourgeois apparatus of economic administration, from top to bottom, in every department, and all over the country.

These were the conditions under which the so-called "war communism" originated.

5. The most urgent task of the new regime consisted in securing the food supply for the towns and for the army. The imperialist war had already forced the change from free trade in corn to monopoly. The workers' state, having destroyed all the organizations of trading capital under the pressure of the civil war, was naturally unable to make a beginning by reestablishing free trade in corn. It was obliged to replace the commercial apparatus which it had destroyed by a state apparatus, this working on the basis of compulsory collection of the surplus produce of agricultural undertakings.

^{*)} These theses formed the foundation of the report given by me, at the 4th congress of the Comintern, on the question of the economic position of Soviet Russia. L. T.

The distribution of food-stuffs and other articles of consumption took the form of giving out a uniform state ration almost completely irrespective of the qualification and productivity of the receivers. This "communism" was rightly named "war communism", not only because it replaced economic methods by military ones, but because it served military purposes above all others. It was not a question of securing a systematic development of economics under the prevailing conditions, but of securing the food supply for the army at the fronts, and to prevent the working class from dying out altogether. War communism was the regime of a besieged fortress.

6. In the sphere of industry a roughly centralized apparatus was created, based on the trade unions; this apparatus pursued the immediate aim of at least getting out of the industrial undertakings—totally ruined by the war, the revolution, and the sabotage—the minimum of products necessary to enable the civil war to be carried on. Something resembling a uniform plan was obtained only by utilizing the existing productive forces to an inconsiderable extent.

7. Had the victory of the Russian proletariat been speedily followed by the victory of the Western European proletariat, this would not only have shortened the civil war in Russia to an extraordinary degree, but the resultant closer relations of Soviet Russia's economy with those of the more highly developed proletarian countries would have unfolded new possibilities of organization and technique for the Russian proletariat. In that case the transition from "war communism" to real socialism would doubtless have been carried out in a much shorter time, and without the convulsions and retreats which isolated proletarian Russia has had to undergo during these 5 years.

8. The economic retreat—or, to speak more correctly, the political retreat at the economic front—was perfectly unavoidable as soon as the fact was finally established that Soviet Russia was confronted with the task of constructing her own economy, aided solely by its own organizations and technical resources during the indefinite period required to prepare the proletariat of Europe for the seizure of power.

The counter-revolutionary events in February 1921 showed that it was quite impossible to further postpone the better adaptation of the economic methods of socialist constructive work to the needs of the peasantry. The revolutionary events in Germany, in March 1921, showed that it was absolutely impossible to further postpone a political "retreat", in the sense of a preparatory struggle towards winning over the majority of the working class. These two movements of retreat were contemporaneous, and stand, as we have seen, in the closest reciprocal connection. They can only be designated as retreats in a qualified sense, for what they demonstrated was the necessity, in Germany as in Russia, of a certain period of preparation; a new economic course in Russia, a fight for transitional demands and for the united front in the West.

9. The Soviet state turned from the methods of war communism to the methods of the market. The compulsory collection of agricultural surplus was replaced by taxes in kind, the peasantry thus being given the possibility of freely selling its surplus in the market; monetary traffic was restored, and a number of measures taken to stabilize the rate of exchange; the principles of commercial calculation were re-introduced into the state industrial undertakings, and wages were again made dependent on the skill and output of the workers; a number of small and medium industrial undertakings were let to private persons. The essential character of the "New Economic Policy" lies in the revival of the market, of its methods and systems.

10. After five years of existence of the Soviet republic, its economics can be roughly outlined as follows:

a) All land and ground belongs to the state. About 95 per cent of the arable land is at the disposal of the peasantry for cultivation; the taxes in kind paid to the state by the peasantry in the course of the past year amounted to over 300 million puds of rye from one crop, approximately three quarters of a medium pre-war crop.

b) The entire railway system (more than 63,000 versts) is state property. The employees and workmen numbering more than 800,000 perform at the present time, about one third of the work done before the war.

c) All industrial undertakings belong to the state. The most important of these (more than 4,000 undertakings) employ about a million workers, and are conducted by the state itself. About 4,000 undertakings of second and third rank, employing about 80,000 workers, are let on lease. Each state enterprise employs on an average 207 workers, each leased undertaking an average of 17 workers. But of the leased undertakings only about one half are in the hands of private persons; the other

half have been leased by separate state bodies or cooperative organizations.

d) Private capital operates at the present time chiefly in the sphere of commerce. According to the first calculations which have been made, but which are only approximate and unreliable, about 30 per cent of the total commercial turnover falls to private capital, the remaining 70 per cent consisting of sums owned by the state organizations and the cooperative organizations closely connected with the state.

e) Foreign trade, amounting during the current year to one quarter of the pre-war import and a twentieth of the pre-war export, is completely concentrated in the hands of the state.

11. The methods of war communism, that is, the methods of an extremely crude centralized registration and distribution, are replaced by the new policy: by market methods; by buying and selling, commercial calculation, and competition. But in this market the state plays the leading part as the most powerful property owner, and buyer and seller. The overwhelming majority of the productive forces of industry, as well as all means of railway traffic, are directly concentrated in the hands of the state. The activity of the state economic organs is thus controlled by the market, and also to a considerable extent directed by it. Commercial calculation and competition serve for ascertaining if the separate undertakings are working profitably. The market serves as the connecting link between agriculture and industry, between town and country.

12. In so far as a free market exists, it is inevitable that private capital should function in it, and that this should enter into competition with state capital, at first in commerce only, but later it attempts to penetrate into industry. Civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is being substituted by competition between proletarian and bourgeois industry. And just as one of the main points of contest in civil war is the political conquest of the peasantry, in the same manner the present struggle revolves chiefly around control of the agricultural market. In this struggle the proletariat has mighty advantages on its side: the most highly developed productive forces of the country, and the state power. The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, possesses the advantage of greater skill, and to a certain extent of connections with foreign capital, especially that of the emigrants.

13. Special emphasis must be laid on the taxation policy of the workers' state, and on the alliance of the credit institutions in the hands of the state, these being powerful mediums for securing the ascendancy of state forms of economics, that is, of forms socialist in tendency, over private capitalist forms. The taxation policy is one permitting increasingly greater portions of private capitalist incomes to be utilized for state purposes, not only in agriculture (taxes in kind), but also in commerce and industry. In this manner even private capital (the concessions!) is compelled by the proletarian dictatorship to pay tribute to the socialist accumulation now beginning.

On the other hand the commercial industrial credit concentrated in the hands of the state, supplies (as is proved by the statistical data of the last few months) the state undertakings to the extent of 75%, the cooperatives 20%, and the private undertakings 5 per cent at most.

14. The assertion of the social democrats, that the Soviet state has "capitulated" to capitalism, is thus an obvious and crude distortion of the actual facts. As a matter of fact the Soviet state is following the economic path which it would doubtless have pursued in the years 1918-1919, had not the imperative demands of the civil war obliged it to completely expropriate the bourgeoisie at one blow, to destroy the bourgeois economic apparatus, and to replace this by the apparatus of war-communism.

15. The most important political and economic result of the new economic policy is the real and permanent understanding attained with the peasantry which is stimulated to extend and intensify its operations by admission to the free market. The experience of the last few years, especially the increase of winter crops, afford every reason to expect a continued and systematic betterment of agriculture. This signifies not only the creation of a reserve of foodstuffs for Russia's industrial development, but a highly important reserve of goods for foreign trade. From now onwards, Russian corn will appear in ever increasing quantities in the European market. The significance of this factor for the socialist revolution in the West is obvious.

16. The branches of industry working for immediate consumption, and especially for the rural market, have made undoubted and very noticeable progress during the first year of the new economic policy. The situation of heavy industry is admittedly still extremely difficult, but this backwardness of

heavy industry, caused solely by the conditions obtaining during the last few years, will be relieved in proportion to the progress made in the reconstruction of the exchange of goods; real impetus can only be given to the development of machine building, metal working, and fuel production, which are naturally sure of receiving the utmost attention from the state, after the first successes have been obtained in agriculture and light industry. The state will extend its economic sphere, concentrate an ever-increasing turnover capital in its hands, and then renew the fundamental capital by means of state, (the original socialist?) accumulation. There is absolutely no reason to assume that state accumulation will proceed more slowly than private capitalist accumulation, and that private capital is thus likely to come out of the struggle as victor.

17. In so far as foreign capital is concerned (mixed companies, concessions, etc.) the role played by it in Russia, apart from its own extremely hesitating and cautious policy, is determined by the considerations and calculations of the workers' state, which invariably preserves the limits required for the maintenance of the state economy when granting industrial concessions or entering into commercial contracts. The monopoly of foreign trade is in this respect an extraordinarily important security for socialist development.

18. Despite this transference of its economics to the principles of the market, the workers' state does not renounce the plan of systematic economics, not even for the coming period. The fact alone that the whole railway system and the overwhelming majority of industrial undertakings are exploited and financed by the state, renders a combination of the centralized state control over these undertakings with the automatic control of the market inevitable. The state concentrates more and more attention on heavy industry and means of traffic, as economic fundamentals, and adapts its policy with regard to finance, revenue, concessions, and imposts, to a very great degree to the requirements of these factors. Under the circumstances of the present period the state economic plan does not set itself the Utopian task of substituting universal provision for the elementary effects of demand and supply. On the contrary: starting from the market as the fundamental form of distribution of economic produce and of regulation of production, the present economic plan aims at securing the greatest possible dominance of the state undertakings in the market by means of combining all factors of taxation, industry, commerce, and credit, and at establishing the reciprocal relations between these undertakings on the highest possible degree of previous calculation and uniformity, so that, supported by the market, the state can progress rapidly, especially in the sphere of the reciprocal relations between the state undertakings.

19. The inclusion of the peasantry in the systematized state plan of economics, that is, of socialist economics, is a still more complicated and tedious task. Cooperative organizations controlled and directed by the state are paving the way towards this by satisfying the most imperative needs of the peasant and his enterprises. This process will be carried out with the greater economical rapidity in proportion to the increased quantity of the products of town industry which can be allotted to the villages through the intermediation of the cooperative societies. But the socialist principle can only be completely victorious in the province of agriculture after the electrification of agriculture has been accomplished, and the barbaric disunity of agricultural production put an end to. The plan of electrification thus forms an important constituent of the collective state economic plan, and as its importance will increase in proportion to the increase of the productive power of agriculture, it will gain in ascendancy in the future, finally rendering it the fundamental of the whole socialist economy.

20. Economic organization consists of the correct and purposeful distribution of forces and means among the various branches and undertakings, and in the rational, that is, the most economical utilization of these forces and means within each undertaking. Capitalism attains this aim by supply and demand, competition, favorable markets, and crises. Socialism will attain the same aim by the conscious construction of the national and then of the world economy, as a uniform whole, on a general plan founded on the existing means of production and on the existing requirements, and thus completely comprehensive and at the same time extraordinarily elastic. Such a plan cannot be made a priori; it has to be worked out in accordance with the economic inheritance bequeathed to the proletariat by the past, and systematic alterations and reconstructions are to be made, with increasing boldness and decision, in proportion to the increase of economic experience and technical powers of the proletariat.

21. It is quite clear that a long epoch must inevitably elapse between the capitalist regime and complete socialism,

and that during this epoch the proletariat must make use of the methods and forms of organization of capitalist intercourse (money, exchange, banks, commercial calculation) for the purpose of gaining an ever increasing control of the market, to the end that this may become so centralized and unified as to be finally abolished, and replaced by a centralized plan based on the whole previous economic evolution, and forming the prerequisite for the further development of economics. The Soviet republic is now treading this path. But it is only at the beginning of the path, and still far from the goal. The fact that the Soviet republic was compelled by conditions to adopt war communism, and forced by the delay of the revolution in the West to beat a certain retreat—a retreat however more formal than material—has veiled the picture, and has afforded opportunity to the petty bourgeois opponents of the workers' state to speak of a capitulation to capitalism. In reality however, the course of evolution in Soviet Russia is not from socialism, to capitalism, but from capitalism—temporarily pressed against the wall by the methods of so-called war communism—to socialism.

22. The assertion that the decay of productive forces in Russia is a result of the irrationality of the socialist or communist economic methods is completely untenable and historically absurd. In reality this decay was above all a result of the war, further a result of the revolution in the form it took in Russia, that of a protracted civil war. The French Revolution, which created the premises for the mighty capitalist development of France and of the whole of Europe, had for its immediate result the greatest devastation and economic ruin. 10 years after the beginning of the French Revolution, France was poorer than before the revolution. The circumstance that in the Soviet republic, industry did not produce more than a quarter of the average pre-war productivity during the past year does not prove the failure of socialist methods, for it has not even been possible to apply these yet, but solely the greatness of the economic ruin inevitably attendant on revolution as such. But so long as human class society exists, every great advance will have to be paid for by the sacrifice of human lives and of material, whether the transition be from feudalism to capitalism, or the incomparably more far reaching transition from capitalism to socialism.

23. The above answers in itself the question as to the degree in which the economic policy designated as new in Russia, forms a necessary stage of every proletarian revolution. Two elements must be distinguished in the new economic policy: a) the moment of "retreat" characterized above; b) the economic management of the proletarian state on the basis of the market, with all its methods, procedures, and arrangements.

a) As regards the "retreat", this can also occur in other countries as the result of purely political events, in consequence of the necessity, in the rush of civil war, of depriving the enemy of a considerably greater number of undertakings than the proletariat is economically able to organize. The partial retreats resultant on this are likely to occur in every single country, but in other countries they are not likely to bear so severe a character as in agrarian Russia, where the actual civil war did not actually begin until after the proletariat had seized power. To-day we can no longer doubt that in the majority of capitalist countries the proletariat will only come into power after an obstinate, severe, and lasting civil war, in other words, the proletariat of Europe will have to strike at the roots of the enemy's power before conquering state power, not after this conquest. In any case, however, the resistance of the bourgeoisie—military, political and economic will be weaker in proportion to the number of countries in which the proletariat has already seized power. This means that the moment of armed conquest of industry, and the following moment of economic retreat, will probably play an incomparably more insignificant rôle in other parts of the world than in Russia.

b) As regards the utilization of methods and organizations made by capitalism for regulating our economics, all workers' states will, in a greater or lesser degree, have to pass through this stage, on the road from capitalism to socialism; in other words, every new workers' government, after unavoidably destroying in a greater or lesser degree the capitalist economic organizations during the civil war (the exchanges, banks, trusts, syndicates), will restore these arrangements again, subordinate them politically, and after having ordered them in the organization of the collective mechanism of the proletarian dictatorship, will have to master them by creative work, in order to gradually carry out with their aid the reconstruction of economics on a socialist basis. The greater the number of countries in which the proletariat is already in power, and the more powerful the proletariat seizing the power in any country, the more difficult it

will be for capital, or even the capitalists, to emigrate, and the weaker will be the support afforded for sabotage on the part of administrative and technical intellectuals, and as a result the slighter will be the derangement of the material and organized capitalist apparatus, and the easier the work of restoring it.

24. The speed with which the workers' state runs through this stage, during which the socialism coming into existence is still enveloped and developing within its capitalist chrysalis—this speed, as already indicated, will depend upon the military and political situation; further, on the level of organization and culture which has been reached by the working class, and on the degree of development and the condition of the productive forces existing when the workers' state comes into power. The further advanced the degree of evolution of these factors, the more rapid, obviously, will the workers' state pass through the transition to socialist economics, and from here to perfect communism.

POLITICS

The British Government and the League of Nations

By J. T. Walton Newbold.

During the first short session of the new parliament recently elected in the United Kingdom, there has manifested itself very clearly a tendency to attach increasing importance to the League of Nations. This is not only to be accounted for by reason of the greater numbers of the Labor Party, nearly all of whose members have an obsession for this most menacing institution of international autocracy. Every party in the House of Commons, except the party of which I am the sole direct representative, has shown a disposition to glorify the League and not the least among them being the spokesman of the new Tory Government and its supporters who, of course, constitute the parliamentary majority.

It may, at first sight, appear strange that the Tory Party, the party of reaction, should thus champion the cause of the League of Nations. Yet, in reality it is not so. It is as natural for the Tory Government to seek to enhance the reputation and extend the authority of the League as it is for it to seek peace and pursue a policy of "tranquility".

The Tory Party, the party of reaction in Great Britain and in Northern Ireland, is not representative primarily of a class having its interests in great landed estates within the British Isles, but of a class whose landed property consists of town lands at home and of town and agricultural lands in the great self-governing dominions of Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and in the great republics of the United States and Argentina. This class consists of persons who have sold or who have not further developed their family properties at home but have, joining together in mortgage, land and cattle ranching companies, become an impersonal and international type of land exploiters. They have, in order to be such landowners, to be capitalists. Being capitalists they own not only or even so much land, as railway stocks and shares at home and all over the world. They have taken their accumulated rents and bought government — British Colonial and Foreign — loan stock and municipal, mining and all kinds of miscellaneous international stocks and shares.

It is this class, a metamorphosed landed class, a class of passive rather than of active proprietors of both land and capital, that is represented by the Tory Party, the party now ruling Great Britain.

The passive proprietors of land and capital, having entrusted the custody of their possessions to the banks, the insurance and the finance companies, who handle their money transactions for them, are in truth in the hands of these concerns and, as politicians permit themselves to be advised and guided in home, colonial, and foreign policy in such ways as best fit in with the interests of the great credit institutions.

The British Government, under the leadership of Bonar Law, reflects the interests and the desires of the great banking, insurance, and investment houses.

Lloyd George fell from political office because the interests which he represented had, from the autumn of 1920 to the autumn of 1922, become increasingly mortgaged to these credit houses, had, in other words, involuntarily abdicated economic power.

Lloyd George, supported by Austen Chamberlain, the son and political heir of his great father, and by the Earl of Balfour, the one time leader of British Toryism in its heyday of imperialist militancy, stood for a policy of British ascendancy in world

politics, for all the old assertiveness of British imperialism, for the maintenance of British sea-power, and British leadership, especially in the East.

The banks and their clients the Tories, were, however, determined at all costs to maintain their class security and to oppose to the menace of Bolshevism, which they know will follow upon the collapse of Central European credit, a united class front of international, impersonal bourgeois property.

Having broken the jingoistic government of British imperialism and installed in its place a tranquility government, more acceptable to the reactionary bourgeoisie of France and America, they are busily strengthening the defences of international class domination. When, about the beginning of the century, the social democrats and the Laborists threatened, though their victory was still remote, to capture the old popularly elected local educational authorities, the Tories took steps to make direct working class control of education much more difficult. When, after the war, Laborists gained control over certain country authorities, the Tory elements in the late government removed from the county to the central authorities, control of the police forces and checked the activities of labor majorities on Poor Law bodies by the veto of the central government.

When revolution was striding across Europe the governing class, notably the Conservatives Earl Balfour, Lord Robert Cecil, and Viscount Grey — for he is, really, a Tory, — interested themselves in the League of Nations as a new form of governmental institution, in which these subtle serpents saw a means to check Labor from conquering power in sovereign independent states. They busied themselves about that delusion and deception, the International Labor Office.

They looked to and found support from the Labor leaders — those one-eyed politicians who, seeing a superficial antagonism between Geneva and Paris, thought the League of Nations must be the thing to advocate and advance. Now that, by the skilful use of their economic power, the credit houses have aggravated the difficulties of the industrial magnates whose capital, locked up in unprofitable and non-negotiable means of production, has become a liability rather than an asset and have put them into virtual if not always nominal liquidation, all economic power has passed into the hands of these same credit houses and their clients, the passive capitalists whom they use as political catspaws.

The passive elements in capitalism, whether mere investors or investment agencies, deal in the tittle deeds and mortgage bonds and war-loan certificates and share-warrants of properties situated all over the world and under any form of bourgeois administration.

To them, the League of Nations appears, therefore, the same admirable instrument as that "tranquility" administration which, entrenched behind lines and lines of policemen, they regard as the acme of domestic bliss.

To the Laborists, the League of Nations is that international counter-part of parliamentary government which to their myopic vision only requires themselves to be duly installed in a majority in every parliament, to realize the coming to earth amid trailing clouds of celestial glory, of the Prince of Peace.

It is probable, indeed it is almost certain that to maintain the illusion that the League of Nations is not a mere court of revision and of appeal from their own national "parliamentary" institutions, the British Tory and other bourgeois governments will not too openly associate themselves with its deliberations and its decisions.

The British Government, for instance, will continue the make-believe of keeping at arms length their back bench "critic", Lord Robert Cecil. This aiming schemer, the most hypocritical, that the British bourgeoisie has at its beck and call, this is the man to watch.

It is not only those actually in office but those liaison officers of capitalist statecraft who, out of a job, are always doing a job, that one always needs to watch in order to know exactly the kind of rascality to which the British governing class is up to at any given time.

Mosul and the Straits

By R. Louzon.

On the 30th of March, 1865 in Paris, England forced the acceptance of the principle that the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles should be open to the merchant ships of all powers; but closed to war ships. The Turks, established on both banks, were charged to enforce the decision. They were assigned the role of guardians of the Black Sea.

In 1922, at Lausanne, England strenuously resists the continuance of this state of affairs. She mobilized Greece, and

has now mobilized herself, to prevent the reestablishment of the conditions which she herself proposed and which prevailed for half a century to the general satisfaction of all nations.

Why, then, this change of front?

In the Nineteenth century there was already a question of the East and of India, but there was not yet the question of petroleum.

Great Britain caused the closing of the Straits to war ships because she was afraid that the Russian Fleet, finding an outlet into the Aegean Sea, would come to menace her naval bases in the Mediterranean and by penetrating the Suez Canal, interrupt her communications with India and the East, and also, because there was no need for her fleet to penetrate into the Black Sea. For at that time the petroleum in the Caucasus roused no interest in the owners of the Welsh coal fields.

But the technique of motor production has changed profoundly during the last twenty years. The development of the automobile, the manufacture of aeroplanes causes the consumption of continually growing quantities of petroleum each year.

Especially the coming into use of heavy and powerful oil burners, permitting the use of petroleum in the navigation of ships, has made the question of naval supremacy one of petroleum resources.

The use of petroleum in the navigation of battleships, permits an important reduction in fuel space, and consequently increases the amount available for arms and munitions. More essential still, the use of petroleum renders a fleet invisible at a distance, for at present, it is the coal smoke which exposes a fleet to the discovery of the enemy, even at a considerable distance.

These advantages are so great that one is justified in saying that a navy driven by petroleum has the same advantages over a navy run by coal as an iron-clad has over a wooden vessel.

Under these circumstances, the possession of the splendid Welsh coal, with its excellent quality, expressly destined, it seems, for stoking the furnaces of the navy, no longer confers any special superiority upon Great Britain. England must either secure the new fuel for herself, cost what it may, or resign her position of supremacy on the high seas.

England's interest at this moment in the Black Sea is neither Odessa nor Sebastopol, it is Batum and Novorossisk, outlets of the petroleum basins of Baku and Groszny.

When England is able to obtain the free passage of her cruisers and dreadnoughts into the Black Sea and to train her guns upon the entire coast of the Caucasus, it will be easy for her to land her troops at the first favorable occasion and to occupy that narrow isthmus which separates the Black Sea and the Caspian, and which contains the richest flow of petroleum known at present.

Lord Curzon has no other reason for desiring that the Straits be demilitarized, that is that the obstacles which might oppose the passage of his ships and his troops be removed. In demanding freedom of passage through the Straits for men-of-war, or, what amounts to the same thing, the demilitarization of the Straits, England has publicly admitted her intention of seizing upon the Caucasus and its petroleum fields. That is why the question of the Straits is no different from that of Mosul. In the one case, as in the other, it is concerned exclusively with petroleum. All other reasons given by the diplomats are mere pretexts to hide the reality.

Thus the sole question which is being discussed in Lausanne is one of petroleum, petroleum in the Caucasus and in Armenia. And it is for this reason that the United States is so interested.

IN THE R. I. L. U.

The Second Congress of the Profintern

By A. Lozovsky.

The Second Congress of the Red Trade Union International summed up the achievements of a period of development of the international revolutionary trade union movement. The activity of the R.I.L.U. has shown how great are the difficulties with which the revolutionary labor movement is confronted in all countries. The international labor movement is extremely variegated, has different forms, many traditions and many old prejudices only being gradually overcome in the course of severe struggles. It has been the task of the R.I.L.U. to crystallize a solid revolutionary centre-piece out of the whole of this variegated international trade union movement, to collect all revolutionary experiences, and to place this at the common disposal of the

international proletariat. This is a task requiring work of a most tedious nature, the greatest exertion, and iron perseverance.

At the same time the Second Congress extended our sphere of work, and unfolded a great number of practical questions and problems, upon which the revolutionary workers of all countries must concentrate their attention. There were four questions in particular which aroused the special attention of the whole congress. First the question of the united front, secondly the question of the unity of the trade union movement, further the task of organization to be carried out by the revolutionary federations, and finally the relations of the R.I.L.U. to the anarcho-syndicalist.

Those objections which have hitherto been raised against the united front, and against the unity of the trade union movement, were no longer to be heard. Some months ago voices may still have been heard against the united front, but at the congress itself this was no longer the case. Life has proved the severest teacher. It has shown that the tactics of the united front are no empty imagining of the Moscow Bolsheviks, but the sole escape from the desperate position in which the workers of Europe and America find themselves. And if the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. have been the first to resort to the united front, all honor is due to them for it. At the Second Congress the united front was no longer discussed merely as a general question, but the practical execution of united front tactics was debated, the question was raised as to what problems form the main points of interest for the working class, and what concrete problems are to be set up as a central point for our propaganda and agitation. The resolution moved on these points opens out a number of practical questions, and proposes that all revolutionary workers shall concentrate the attention of the proletariat on the concrete practical tasks of the daily struggle.

The Congress further occupied itself particularly with the question of the unity of the trade union movement. The participants in the congress felt clearly, that any further split in the trade union movement would mean the greatest possible weakening of the forces of the working class. The R.I.L.U. has, on its part, adopted every possible measure for preventing this split. With this object it has applied several times to the Amsterdam International with proposals for putting an end to the split. But at every point it has encountered the desire for a split on the part of the Amsterdammers, and has thus been forced to take up the fight not only against capital, but also against the Amsterdammers.

How can unity be attained? In all its resolutions, declarations, and references, the R.I.L.U. has expressed itself willing to enter into any kind of agreement. Naturally unity is only possible if the workers of the Left receive at least a minimum guarantee of freedom of action. The Amsterdammers shouted at the top of their voices about unity, but when the French C.G.T.U. proposed to the reformist confederation that they convene a common congress based on proportional representation, the reformists, who are in the minority in France, replied with a cynical resolution stating: we are in the majority; anyone wishing to complain can do so in our own organizations. The Amsterdammers in Czecho-Slovakia behaved in a similar manner. We for our part were, and still are, ready to re-establish unity on the condition that the minority — alike whether we or the reformists be the minority — receives beforehand a guarantee, that it has the liberty to propagate its ideas — strict discipline being at the same time observed in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The resolutions passed by the Second Congress on this subject are formulated with the utmost clearness and precision. We shall fight obstinately for the union of the parallel trades unions, for the re-admittance of the expelled, and for the creation of a real united front for the fight against bourgeois reaction.

The question of unity also occupied the leading place in the discussion of questions of organization in the trade unions. The congress had to reply to all questions on the organizational structure and work of the revolutionary trade unions. The congress was clearly aware that the slogan of strengthening the trade unions may easily be misinterpreted, and that the strengthening of the trade unions may easily signify a temporary enhancement of the influence of the reformist leaders. But the congress relegated these considerations to the background under the conviction that the strengthening of the trade unions implies a strengthening of the organization of the working class, and that the strengthening of working class organization establishes the basis of the social revolution. If the reformists derive a passing advantage from this work, this is no reason to hold us back from it. This standpoint could also be observed in the treatment of the other practical questions on the agenda. The practical tasks in the most important countries were dealt with from this point of view. The congress discussed the situation in one country after another, at the same time showing the comrades

what practical tasks lie before them, when they begin to adopt the general principles and lines of action of the R.I.L.U. in their respective countries. The congress placed in the forefront of battle for all workers the united front, the strengthening of the trade unions, and the gathering together of the working masses to fight for communism by means of fighting for the daily needs of the working class.

The congress had to give a practical reply to the question of the international industrial federations. It is well known that the international federation secretariats, being under the influence of the Amsterdam International, systematically exclude the revolutionary trade unions. These tactics are excused by the statement that the trade unions in questions are affiliated to the R.I.L.U. These international federation secretariats, which however only represent European federations, have thus no scruples about isolating a considerable part of the revolutionary European workers and the revolutionary workers of the rest of the globe from the other part of the proletariat.

From the first day of its establishment, the R.I.L.U. expressed itself opposed to the immediate founding of international revolutionary trade union federations. And the whole activity of the R.I.L.U. has been in accordance with this line of action. But the R.I.L.U. cannot look on and see the revolutionary trade unions scattered, and thus even at the First Congress the question of the creation of international propaganda committees, to be arranged according to the different branches of industry, and around which all revolutionary federations could gather, was placed on the agenda.

The task of the revolutionary propaganda committees was to unite the revolutionary trade unions, and to strive to create a united international in each branch of production. Although a number of the revolutionary workers expressed the wish to form industrial and craft internationals, the congress rejected this plan. The Second Congress again emphasized the urgent wish of the R.I.L.U. to create united industrial internationals, and made it the duty of all revolutionary trade unions to exert every endeavor to attain this end. The revolutionary federations recommended the congress to keep to the corresponding international propaganda committees, and to continue their struggle on the same lines as before the Second Congress. The creation of united internationals now depends on the secretariats belonging to Amsterdam. We for our part have done all that lies in our power towards creating an international for every branch of industry.

The congress had also to solve the question of the relations of the R.I.L.U. to the Comintern, or rather that of the relations between communists and syndicalists. As is well known, the anarcho-syndicalist organizations subjected the resolutions accepted by them at the First Congress to severe criticism, especially that part of the resolutions establishing close connections between the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. The French syndicalists headed this campaign against the resolutions of the 1st congress, but themselves split up into several groups on the matter. One tendency, the so-called purely syndicalist, found the results of the First Congress sufficient cause for the founding of its own international, and was joined in this by many small syndicalist groups in some countries, with whose aid it then combatted the R.I.L.U. The German localists, and the Italian, Swedish, and Dutch syndicalists, agitated for the creation of a new international. They used as a pretext the alliance of the R.I.L.U. with the Comintern, and the necessity of founding an "independent" and in every respect "autonomous" international.

All this time the anarcho-syndicalists have been carrying on their fight against the R.I.L.U. under the flag of independence and autonomy. But among the syndicalists there existed another fairly powerful tendency, having the closest affinity with the communists, being in favor of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and of working in common with the communists. This tendency however held the opinion that the co-operation of the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. should not be an essential part of the organization, but should take place as occasion required. This group of syndicalists, whose tactics were based on the assumption that the syndicalists, and not the communists, form the vanguard of the labor movement, showed a decided wish to establish the united front with communists against the bourgeoisie. This wish permeated the resolutions of the congress of the C.G.T.U. held at Saint-Etienne. The proposals made by the French delegation at our congress were also further evidence of this wish.

The communists had come to a definite conclusion on the subject. For the communists, the connection between Comintern and the R.I.L.U. is a matter of course. We were aware that our syndicalist comrades were still under the influence of old prejudices. But as these are the prejudices of revolutionary workers who are earnestly and anxiously willing to fight, and as they are not the prejudices of single individuals, but have been held

by a fairly large number of labor organizations, the communists have here made perfectly conscious concessions for the purpose of enabling them to form a united front with the syndicalists against reformism and capitalism. The resolution moved by some of the delegations was based on this point. We are desirous of forming a revolutionary bloc with the syndicalists, and thus we make concessions in the hope that in the course of the struggle the correctness of our point of view will become apparent. With this resolution the congress put an end to the debates between the R.I.L.U. and the anarcho-syndicalist organizations. In order that this question should be even better cleared up, the congress made a special appeal to the anarcho-syndicalist organizations of all countries, and to the Berlin bureau of the syndicalists, asking them to work no longer at splitting the international trade union movement, but to enter the *R.I.L.U.*, and to fight within this organization, with the revolutionary workers of all countries, for the emancipation of the working class.

Mention must also be made of the trade union question in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. We must take into consideration that the R.I.L.U. is a really international organization, while the Amsterdam international is merely an European one. During the past year the Russian revolution set a new world in motion. The labor movement is developing rapidly in Java, China, Japan, and India. The Russian revolution called fresh forces into existence. In these countries the labor movement is still tinged with nationalism, especially where a struggle against foreign rule has to be carried on. But nevertheless in the midst of this gigantic revolutionary stream class strivings may be seen with ever increasing clearness. And the R.I.L.U. and the Comintern are alike confronted with the task of giving this class movement form, of imparting to it an actually revolutionary character, of filling it with the spirit of communism, that the movement may be enabled to attain the greatest possible success in the struggle with foreign and national capitalism.

The Second Congress was above all a practical congress. It centred around questions of organization, questions of practical activity. The general principles had been already laid down by the First Congress. Our program had already been drawn up in its main outlines, the revolutionary workers of all countries know our aims; the present question is as to the best method of attaining these aims. The Congress confirmed the program of action worked out by the First Congress; it confirmed it because it contains the concentrated experience of the revolutionary trade union movement in all countries. The Second Congress has not attempted to conceal the difficulties confronting the revolutionary trade union movement. There are many tens of millions of workers still under the influence of the reformists. There are millions still under the influence of the Catholics, the democrats, the protestants, etc. And there are ten millions still outside of any organization whatever. As we are faced by a working class of which a large organized part still supports capitalist rule, the Congress has been obliged to work out its tactics and program of action accordingly.

The Amsterdam International, which represents the conservative part of the working class, is in the habit of boasting of its millions of members. We are ready to admit that the numerical strength of the R.I.L.U. is less than that of the Amsterdam International, but the R.I.L.U. is an international organization, while the Amsterdam International is merely a European one; the R.I.L.U. is composed of workers, possessing in general the same program, the same tactics, the same desire to fight against capitalism, while the Amsterdam International has many passive and reformist elements in its ranks, and on the other hand many workers in actual sympathy with us. We have followers even within the Amsterdam International while it has none in our ranks. This strengthens us and weakens the Amsterdamers. We do not over-estimate our powers, but do not want to underestimate them.

The Second Congress of the R.I.L.U. showed how great is the influence which has already been won by the revolutionary idea in the international trade union movement. The workers of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia gather round the flag of the R.I.L.U., for on this flag there is inscribed the motto of fight to the death against capitalism, and of conquest of power for the working class. How long it will be before this victory will be attained the Second Congress could not and must not say. It could only say one thing: our goal will be reached by systematic and persevering work towards gathering the masses together, uniting the workers beneath revolutionary watchwords, and untiring combat against the bourgeoisie.

The Second Congress has been a step of the utmost importance along the long road of struggle of the international proletariat for its emancipation. The international proletariat is a stage further towards organizing its forces. It will still have to suffer many single defeats in battle, but these battles and defeats only serve to steel the international organizations of the

working class, the Comintern, and the R.I.L.U., and will lead the working class to final victory.

Yesterday and To-day

By Gaston Monmousseau.

In France we have been proud of our past. The revolutionists of the whole world have derived strength from the lessons of our history. But for some years we have fallen behind the other countries. We had believed that it would be ours to bear the torch of revolution, but in reality we are belated stragglers, limping on the crutches of the old world along the new path pointed out by the Russian revolution. Everyone has his turn.

And now we are in Moscow, somewhat torn from our environment, somewhat confused by new methods, but nevertheless we are in Moscow.

Once, in the year 1793, we made a revolution, and now it seemed to us that after this experience the bourgeoisie, convinced of the unconquerable power of the proletariat, would submit to it on the first day of the coming fight. We even believed that the voice of reason would induce the bourgeoisie to bow to the new order. Our ideal revolution was to come about as result of the class consciousness of the masses of workers and peasants, won over by the lessons of the new gospel, and so permeated with creative spirit that it would only be necessary to give them freedom to build up a new world.

This was the conception of the social struggle worked out by the French revolutionists, this was their strategic plan in the class war, and the federalist spirit of the anarchists was still implanted in this conception.

The revolutionists of the old school still employed the old formulas of the democratic republic: Liberty, fraternity, equality. The liberal bourgeoisie united with the anarchists in the endeavor to fill the proletariat with the false idea, that revolution is an act of sentimentality and idealism.

The French revolution overthrew the feudal regime by force. To-day the proletariat must fight through the second stage of its emancipation, and purchase its freedom with the blood of its heroes, by the sacrifice of a whole generation. These are the lessons which we draw from the Russian revolution.

The old International fell into decay through pacifism. In the name of pacifism and of fraternity among the peoples it created for itself a charmed circle and inhaled the chloroform of national sentimentality, instead of consolidating its structure with the spirit of class antagonism. In Moscow we feel as if transported into another world. At every step we lose something of our old prejudices, the vestiges of our old ideas are dispelled.

No pacifist speeches were delivered at the congress of the Profintern, but speeches on fighting and strategy. The paths of the proletariats of Germany, Russia, Bulgaria, France, America, and Japan, all lead in the same direction. In every country our class enemy reveals the same features the same will, the same strategy, and uses the same weapons, against the international proletariat.

In Moscow one is on a world peak which far out-tops the mountains and frontiers of one's native land. The army staff of the international revolution follows the manoeuvres of the enemy, and makes preparations for the fight. Various theses contend with one another, and all nationalism is shattered on the platform of the congress.

At this congress each one of us discards something old, be he German, Russian, French, Italian, or Pole; we French cast away our romantic syndicalism, but we do not abandon the whole of our syndicalism. There is much that is excellent in our syndicalist methods, and they correspond to many psychological peculiarities of the French proletariat; a harmony must be found between them and the experience and peculiarities of the labor movement of other countries.

There is a science of revolution, but this science originates solely out of revolutionary experience. The revolutionary international is the great laboratory in which we work at the common task of laying down the main strategic lines of the class war.

In France we have done everything possible to develop our movement in the direction of revolution. We are discarding the crutches of tradition, and creating a firm basis for the international movement. We shall do our utmost to give back to the revolutionary fighters who sent us here, everything which we have seen, and everything which we have learnt during our brief sojourn in Red Russia.

It is only since I have been here that I grasp the reason why the reformists, the bourgeoisie, and the so-called "ideologists" of revolution, hate the red International so intensely; i. e. because it compels our functionaries to think, it forces them to unite for action.

Thus the tares will be separated from the wheat.

APPEALS

"Peace on Earth"

The Amsterdamers will deliver you over again defenceless to the wild beasts of war.

Fellow workers!

Between December 10, and 15, the conference of the Amsterdam Trades Union International and of the 2. and 2½ internationals was held at The Hague for the purpose of considering the best means to be adopted by the international working class against the dangers of a new imperialist war.

Such a congress was never more suitable than at this precise moment. The wretched agreement made at Washington, on the limitation of armaments in the Far East, has not been ratified up to now. At Genoa the proposal of the Russian Soviet government, to place the question of limitation of armaments on the agenda, was unanimously rejected by the great capitalist powers. At the very time when the Hague conference was holding its sessions, Poland, Finland, Esthonia, and Latvia these vassal states of the Entente, refused to reduce their armaments, although the Soviet government proposed to reduce the Russian army to 200,000 men, that is, by 75 per cent.

In all capitalist countries energetic work is being carried on towards developing air fleets and gas weapons, mediums which will play a decisive part in the next war. In September the world stood on the verge of war, when the Turks were victorious over the Greek vassals of England, and proceeded to march towards their own capital city, Constantinople, and to occupy the Dardanelles as the passage leading to this capital. Had Turkey not renounced the obvious right of being master in her own house, the world would have been plunged into a fresh Balkan war, which would have developed into an Anglo-French war.

The reparations question, that is, the question of how the Entente should best set about the work of fleecing the German people, has been transformed into a wrestling match between England and France as to who should dominate in Europe, and the relations between these two countries become more acutely antagonistic from day to day. While the position of the workers becomes daily more wretched, while the states have no money to provide the unemployed with a morsel of bread, while all cultural work is being neglected to an extent hitherto unknown, the capitalist states are expending more on armaments than ever they did before the war. Among the broadest masses of the workers the feeling is growing that it is not possible for matters to continue as they are. And all bourgeois politicians speak openly of the danger of a new world war.

An alliance with bourgeois pacifism instead of a proletarian united front against war.

The Hague congress was confronted by a great task: To gather together all the forces of the working class against the capitalist attempt to use the proletariat as cannon fodder again. But unfortunately the Amsterdamers, and the representatives of the 2. and 2½ Internationals, renounced beforehand every idea of mobilizing all the forces present in the working class for this struggle for life itself. Although there can be no actual struggle for peace unless the masses of the peoples of the Near and Far East participate in the conflict, and so long as capitalist and militarist cliques are doing as they like in these countries, still the leaders of the Amsterdam Trade Union International, of the 2. and 2½ Internationals, never even thought of inviting the representatives of the labor organizations of these countries to the conference. There are trade unions in Constantinople, in Japan, in China, and in India, which have already conducted extensive strikes, and which are permeated with the will to fight in the interest of the working class. But the arrogant representatives of the Western European labor aristocracy did not even move a finger towards getting these peoples to participate in the congress. And more than this: they deliberately kept away from the congress the three million members of the communist parties belonging to the Communist International of the whole world, although these parties have been formed by precisely those proletarian elements who fought most bravely against war during the war. They deliberately excluded from the congress the millions of workers behind the Red International of Labor Unions. They invited the Russian trade unions only.

The representatives of the Russian trade unions immediately proposed that the representatives of all communist parties and of the red trade unions be admitted to the congress, and

declared to the Amsterdammers and social democrats: "We are divided from you by great antagonisms, but if you are willing to fight against war, we are with you. In this case we are prepared to ally ourselves with you—despite your shortcomings, and to fight side by side with you against the dangers of war. For every other antagonism must retreat before the danger of war." The reply of the Amsterdammers to this was abuse of the communists, of whom they allege that they cause the split in the trade unions. Hereupon the representatives of the Russian trade unions answered: "Every child knows that we are opposed to the split in the trade unions. It is not we, but you, who expel minorities holding different opinions from the trades unions. But whoever may be at fault for the schism in the trade unions, we offer our help towards overcoming this schism. For strong and united trade unions are necessary for the war against war. We propose that committees of action be formed for healing the split in every country, and for making all further schism impossible; if you will only give us the possibility of agitating for our ideas in the trade unions, we are ready to submit to trade union discipline in the conflict against capital." This proposal was scornfully rejected by the Amsterdammers.

And at the same moment when they were preventing the formation of a proletarian united front against imperialism, they allied themselves with the bourgeois pacifists. For the first time in the history of the present day labor movement, the trade unions and the political labor organizations held a congress in common with the representatives of a part of the bourgeoisie, and thus gave the bourgeoisie the possibility of participating in decisions affecting the most important questions of the labor movement.

The united proletarian front is opposed by the alliance of the Amsterdammers, the 2. and 2½ Internationals, with the representatives of a part of the bourgeoisie.

It is attempted to justify this procedure by the statement that all forces directed against war must be collected for the conflict. But this assertion is a pure swindle. The Amsterdammers have refused to ally themselves with the revolutionary workers, the only real opponents of imperialist war. They only ally themselves with the bourgeois pacifists, the overwhelming majority of whom went over into the camp of nationalism, precisely like the Amsterdammers, during the war, and aided imperialism to tear the flesh from the bones of the proletariat.

Words in place of deeds against the danger of war.

When the Amsterdammers and the 2. and 2½ Internationals, rejected the united proletarian front, and formed an alliance with the bourgeoisie, they pronounced the condemnation of the Hague conference. People who refuse to join the revolutionary proletariat, and who prefer to ally themselves with the bourgeoisie, do not really want to fight seriously against war. Imperialist war serves the interests of the bourgeoisie, and those who ally themselves with the bourgeoisie enervate and weaken the working class, and render it impotent to fight against the danger of imperialist war. And thus we have witnessed that the Amsterdammers, the 2. and 2½ Internationals, actually went so far as to make speeches for the war against war, oblivious to the fact that at the same moment in Lausanne, the allies were throwing a noose around the necks of the Turkish people endeavouring to force a new Versailles peace on the Orient, the sure forerunner of a fresh war. The intervention of the representatives of the Russian trade unions was required as a reminder that in January there will be fresh decisions made by the great powers in regard to the reparation question, which may render the situation very acute all over the world. But all the endeavours of the Russian delegates failed to persuade these remarkable pacifists

to organize even so much as a demonstration strike,

which should show the international bourgeoisie that the proletariat is beginning to gather its forces against imperialism. Instead of organizing the fight against the danger of war, the Amsterdammers threatened an international strike in case of war. To these threats the representatives of the Russian trade unions replied that an international strike against war would be a trial of strength demanding the complete equipment of the proletariat. When war breaks out, every nationalist passion is unchained, military laws are proclaimed, and self-defense is only possible to a proletariat equipped and trained by years of uninterrupted class war. How can the proletariat be prepared for a revolutionary fight against the outbreak of war, when years of coalition policy have yoked it to the chariot of the bourgeoisie, when it has become accustomed to renounce all revolutionary propaganda against the bourgeois idea of defense of native country, when it possesses no illegal organizations, when it has delivered all weapons into the hands of the bourgeoisie?

*Break with the policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie!
Fight to the utmost against the policy of defence of the native country!
Prepare the working class for the war against war, agitate in the army!*

Open up relations with the working masses in the Near and Far East, and in the colonies!—

These were the watchwords of the Russian trades unions. These are the watchwords of the Communist International and of the Red International of Labor Unions. These watchwords were replied to, without causing the slightest protest in the congress, in a speech by Emile Vanderveide, former chairman of the 2. International and subsequent royal Belgian minister, in which he expressed himself in favor of defence of native country, and defended the reparations policy.

And in the commission of the congress the former secretary of the 2. International concisely declared that, should war break out, the social-democratic parties and the trades unions would be obliged to act as they did in 1914, that is, betray the proletariat.

Camille Huysmans told the truth about the sort of conflict against war carried on by the Amsterdammers, the 2. and 2½ Internationals. At present they threaten with the international general strike against war, but they do this solely to keep the working masses quiet, and will deliver these over to imperialism, bound hand and foot, for they have no intention of fighting against the bourgeoisie. Those who have for years renounced all idea of fighting against the bourgeoisie, will not rise against it when it is an actual matter of life and death.

The united proletarian front against the danger of war.

Fellow workers! The Hague conference has proved that the leaders of the Amsterdam Trades Union International, of the 2. and 2½ Internationals, are not ready to fight against the growing danger of war, that on the contrary they are doing everything to make such a fight impossible. If you do not want to be dragged defenceless on to fresh battle-fields and annihilated in millions, you must gather together in factories, workshops, and mines, in town and country, even against the will of your leaders, to form a united front of the fighting proletariat. You must gather together in one united proletarian front, without thought of party differences, or another unity may be your lot — the unity of death on a common battle-field. You must overcome the paralyzing influence of the reformist leaders, who split your ranks and ally themselves with the bourgeoisie. You must begin to-day to fight the war danger in every country, with the greatest energy; you must liberate the masses from the influence of imperialism, you must render them capable of rising like one man against the danger of war. The masses of workers in the victorious capitalist countries must learn to recognize that they are no less defeated than the masses of the vanquished capitalist countries. They must recognize that if they do not oppose the rapacious raids of their governments, it is not the bourgeoisie of the conquered countries that will pay tribute, but the masses of the working people in these countries, that these will sink to the level of Chinese coolies, and will be driven by want and misery to work on terms of slavery, enabling the bourgeoisie of the victorious countries to force their workers to accept starvation wages. The workers of the vanquished capitalist countries must recognize that it is not in coalition with their own bourgeoisie, but only in

unity with the proletariat of the victorious countries, that the chains of Versailles, Trianon, and Neuilly can be broken.

The whole international proletariat must gather around Soviet Russia, the sole proletarian state power opposing the organized power of 150 million human beings to the rapacious policy of international imperialism.

Down with the imperialist policy of the capitalist governments!

Down with the Versailles treaty of peace!

Long live the united front of the proletariat against the danger of war!

Away with the coalition with the bourgeoisie!

Away with the reformist leaders, who render the proletariat incapable of fighting!

Long live the Communist International!

Long live the Red International of Labor Unions!

Moscow, 19. Dec. 1922.

The Executive of the Communist International.

The Executive of the Red International of Labor Unions.

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The International Conference in Essen

(Special Report to "Inprekorr".)

Essen, January 6, 1923.

Today there was a meeting here of the representatives of the Communist Parties of France (among others Cachin, and Monmousseau from the C.G.T.U.), England (among others the newly elected member of Parliament Newbold), Belgium, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, Holland, and Germany. There were also present the trade union leaders of the revolutionary railwaymen, metal workers, building workers, and textile workers of France and Germany. Representatives of the Red International of Labor Unions and of the Communist Youth International were also present.

Monmousseau brought with him 11,000 francs for the workers dismissed through the Ludwigshafen strike.

The agenda was as follows:

1. Fight against the Versailles peace after the failure of the Paris conference.

2. Organizational relations.

Clara Zetkin and Meyer (Germany) and Marcel Cachin (France) are elected to the chair.

Cachin is the first speaker. He calculates with certainty on the occupation of the Ruhr valley. For Poincaré this is a question of *to be or not to be*. He owes it to his Bloc National. The French workers have taken up the most energetic fight against this fresh adventure of French imperialism. A common committee of action has been formed against the Versailles peace by the French Communist Party and the *Confederation Generale du Travail Unitaire* (C.G.T.U.).

Monmousseau (C.G.T.U.) speaks to the following effect: This meeting has nothing in common with that notorious conference held in 1914 in Brussels, where Jouhaux and Legien were present. At that time these men made the most sacred promises of peace, only to break them afterwards. Jouhaux and Legien, these false apostles of peace, transformed themselves later into unscrupulous apostles of war. We are no pacifists. We are in favor of peace because proletarian interests demand peace. We shall carry out the decisions resolved upon here without reserve. We shall do our utmost to prevent the occupation of the Ruhr valley.

Brandler reports on the position of the German party. This has now been considerably strengthened. Its influence reaches far beyond the limits of the party itself. Still we must not over-estimate our powers. But what we undertake to do at this conference shall be carried out.

Thalheimer gives a general survey of the international situation. Various possibilities are to be reckoned with. It may be that England and America will interfere at the last moment. But on the other hand it is equally possible that the pledges are seized without military measures. Should the Ruhr district be occupied, we must also calculate with the likelihood that the French government will first try and appease the workers with sugarplums, that is, with wages paid in francs, as the best way of corrupting them. Thalheimer welcomes the energetic attitude

adopted by the French workers. They may be assured that we make common cause with them. The present international situation renders it imperative for the German proletariat to issue the foreign political slogan of: *A bloc between Germany, Soviet Russia, and Turkey*, able to defy the Entente.

Gallagher (England) speaks in favor of the sharpest possible action against the occupation of the Ruhr valley.

Ker (France) reports that the position of French industry is comparatively good. The position of state finance, on the other hand, is very bad. The government utilizes this circumstance for purposes of nationalist agitation. It casts the blame on Germany, and makes propaganda for taking military action. The overwhelming majority of the French people however, is opposed to any warlike measures, for it is fully aware that it is the proletariat that foots the bill in the end, with its property and blood. The occupation of the Ruhr valley would raise a mighty storm in the French proletariat.

Prohibition of the international demonstrations against the occupation of the Ruhr district.

The demonstrations announced to take place against the occupation of the Ruhr valley, at which French, English, and Belgian representatives were to speak, have been prohibited in Düsseldorf and Munich-Gladbach by the French occupation authorities.

Great demonstrations in Gelsenkirchen and Duisburg.

Essen, January 7, 1923.

Today, Sunday morning, gigantic demonstrations were held in Gelsenkirchen and Duisburg. These demonstrations were participated in by workers of all proletarian parties and tendencies. Speeches were made by French, Belgian, English, Italian, Czech, German, and Dutch communists and trade union leaders. Their speeches were received with frantic enthusiasm. The whole atmosphere was one of readiness to fight.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the session of the international conference was continued.

Kreibich (Czecho-Slovakia) pointed out that the Czech social democrats do not want to hear anything about a revision of the Versailles treaty. They are the most faithful supporters of the policy of Poincaré-Benes. At the present time Czecho-Slovakia is shaken to its foundations by a severe economic crisis. It is not alone the workers who are opposing the policy of the government, but also the officials, petty bourgeois, and peasants. The non-Czech bourgeoisie is also antagonistic to the government. The work of the communists is rendered more difficult by the circumstance that their aims are misrepresented as being irredentist. Our struggle must thus be carried on on international lines, in common with the proletariat of France,