

# The Opponents of the Unity of the Trade Union Movement — Agents of Capital.

By A. Lozovsky.

For several months now, there has been a violent conflict in the international Labour movement, as to whether the trade union movement should be united or not. After the 6th Trade Union Congress of the Soviet Union, at which an alliance of the English and Russian Trade Unions was brought about, this conflict entered on a new phase. All will remember what cries of rage were raised by the social democratic Press when the first news of the approach towards an alliance between the Russian and English trade unions became known to the public. Everyone will remember the ado made by the reformists in all countries, when the English Delegation, after it had had a look round in the Soviet Union, described the facts as they are in reality. There is no lie and no calumny which the bourgeois reformist Press would not have cast in the teeth of the English Delegation on account of its "criminal" behaviour in the Soviet Union.

The question of the unity of the trade unions was the centre point of all attacks. This was the sorest point of all — this was why all the reformist baritones thought it necessary to reproach those who defended these ideas and who had "fallen into the trap" of the "Moscow provocation." Who then played first fiddle in this concerto? Who conducted the whole Right wing of the International Labour movement? Who dragged the English and the Russians through the mud because they had tried to organise the rapprochement already made in the form of an Anglo-Russian Committee? Who turned to Gompers with a pitiful appeal for help to prevent this unity at any price? Who carried on an embittered campaign against the Soviet Union and the Russian trade unions and put every possible stumbling block in the way of this unity? German social democracy and its central organ, "Vorwärts", the German trade union bureaucrats and their numerous organs. This whole worthy band carried on the conflict in the name of Democracy, of the salvation of Labour organisations from Soviet infection, in the name of the high humane principle of International Social Democracy.

We knew that behind all these phrases, behind the back of Social Democracy, the firm and strong hands of the leaders of the employers' unions and concerns was hidden. We knew that the zeal of these gentlemen is in direct proportion to the amount of filthy lucre and all kind of material advantages which they receive from the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois State. When we maintained that **only agents of capital could be opponents of unity, many workers** thought that it was a polemical exaggeration. When we called these gentlemen agents of capital, the honest social democratic workers said: "that is nothing but a Moscow strategical method." Now, in view of the revelations as to the corruption and venality of the heads of the social democrats in Germany, the distrust of the masses in our assertions are reduced to silence.

A whole series of leaders of German social democracy defile before us: Bauer, Wels, Heilmann, Richter — the whole elite of German social democracy. All of these have proved to be bribed lackeys of the speculator Barmat. Every day more and more persons are drawn into the muddy stream of judicial examination. The whole German social democracy was in the pay of this clever speculator. None went away with empty hands — some received money, others gifts in kind. How could these courtesans help being opponents of unity? Unity is of course a danger to the capitalist order. The unity of the trade union movement naturally implies the end of speculators. Who will pay big lump sums to the "leaders" of the working class if capitalism and the speculation which is born of it, are destroyed in the whirlwind of social revolution . . . . . ?

In opposing the unity of the trade union movement, they were only defending their sources of income. Now we understand the zeal of "Vorwärts", and the extraordinary cynicism with which it attacked the English delegation for publishing the truth about the Soviet Union. German social

democracy prefers a united front with the speculators, and especially with the cash-box of the speculators, to a united front with the workers. The "Vorwärts", which showed such unusual zeal when it was a case of frustrating the approach which was already inaugurated between the Russian and English trade unions — the "Vorwärts" which found in its arsenal thunder and lightning with which to unmask the manoeuvres of Moscow — this same "Vorwärts" has for some weeks been lipping with a toothless mouth of the corruptibility of the leading stronghold of German social democracy. All that the "Vorwärts" could find to say was: "are not the bourgeois delegates connected with big business and limited companies?" Indeed they are. That is why they are bourgeois delegates who are connected with their class organisations. But you claim to be representatives of the working class. A connection between the representatives of the workers and the world of employers is, in the unadorned language of the workers, **treason**.

We should however be wrong in supposing that bribery and corruption have spread only among the German social democrats. It has come to light that Dutch social democracy, in the person of Troelstra, has received 500,000 gulden from the same enterprising speculator Barmat. It has come to light that no less a person than the well-known leaders of the Belgium Labour movement, Camille Huysmans, introduced this adventurer into social democratic circles. What then did the leaders of the 2nd International do, who recently in Brussels inveighed so bitterly against the English Delegation for having disregarded all Reformist habits and customs? **Did they suggest excluding the corruptible elements from their midst?** No. In the doubtful company which calls itself the 2nd International, it is only for partisans of unity that there is no room. Bribery however is given every freedom. Does not this same Troelstra, who received such liberal hush-money from the speculator Barmat, belong to the most violent opponents of unity? For this man, who is in the pay of Barmat, was the one who, at the International Peace Congress at the Hague, replied to our proposal to form a united front: "We shall not form a united front with the Communists until they have been in quarantine."

Did he perhaps mean a Barmatine? Now it is clear what this phrase means in Troelstra's mouth: if you will individually and collectively enter the service of the bourgeoisie, we will form a united front with you.

The Barmat case threw light into the darkest corners of the activities of international social democracy. Only a small fold of the curtain was lifted. If we were to examine these leaders of social democracy more closely, we should discover in all countries where employers' organisations, big business, the League of Nations and so on, have a finger in the pie, hundreds and thousands of big and little "Barmats" in the international social democratic and reformist trade union movement. All these gentlemen are rotten to the core through the bribes of German, French, Belgiums and all other Barmats, and form the reformist guard against unity. These lieutenants of capital in the midst of the workers, who sell the interests of the working class for a few pieces of silver, cannot reconcile themselves to the approach which has already begun between the workers of the various opinions. For them disunion is advantageous, for they are well paid for it by the bourgeoisie. Neither Barmat nor the gentlemen of the League of Nations pay money to the leaders of the workers for nothing. Every leader of the workers who takes money, pledges himself to work in the interest of his employer. The nature of this "work" is known to us. It is the same work as was done by Judas Iscariot nearly two thousand years ago. For this reason we raise again and again our old slogan which has proved its value in life:

**Down with the agents of capital!**

**"Long live the unity of the trade union movement!"**