

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee and the Right Wing Amsterdamers

By A. LOSOVSKY.

I.

Scarborough—a New Defeat of the Amsterdam International.

THE British Trade Union Congress at Scarborough had to decide who was correct, the left or the right wing of the Amsterdam International. All the Amsterdam reactionaries had set their hopes on their English friends—Thomas, Clynes, Cramp, etc., who were expected to lead the English trade union movement, which had exceeded the bounds set by the Amsterdam International, back into the fold. The social-democratic press had maintained in a demagogic manner that the resolutions of the general council indicated merely a change of attitude of some trade unionists, but not of the English trade union movement. The congress was called to decide this question.

The most prominent leaders of the

Amsterdam International (Jouhaux, Oudegeest, Leipart, etc.) did not appear at this congress, as they obviously could not hope to be received with approval. This was declining the fight before the battle began. This foreboding did not mislead the right leaders of the Amsterdam International; the congress in Scarborough, in spite of many weaknesses, was a brilliant demonstration of the anti-Amsterdam tendency. Has such a thing ever happened as that the Amsterdam trade unions declared themselves in favor of supporting the struggle of the colonial peoples even should they declare themselves independent states? Do not German social-democracy and German trade union bureaucracy dream day and night of receiving colonies, and here was what might be described as a Bolshevik attitude towards the most delicate question of world imperialism.

In comparison with the congress at

Hull, this congress took a step forwards in the question of trade union unity. In Hull the unity was provided for by the Amsterdam International and round the Amsterdam International. In Scarborough it was a case of the creation of an all-embracing trade union international which is only thinkable thru an international unity congress. In the question of shop committees the congress also took an attitude opposed to that of Amsterdam. Let us bear in mind that the French reformists have frequently declared the abandonment of shop committees to be a prerequisite to unity. Finally the Scarborough congress took an openly revolutionary attitude towards the question of the Dawes' plan, the pet of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals.

SCARBOROUGH represents a defeat of the Amsterdam International not only in the question of unity, but in a number of other questions which

are of the greatest significance for the whole English and international labor movement. Whether it likes it or not, Amsterdam must now take this decision into consideration, for the English trade unions represent a third of the whole Amsterdam International.

The congress at Scarborough further brot to light the deep-reaching differences of opinion which exist between the English trade union movement and the leaders of the English labor party. A curious phenomén may be observed in England; the political party lags behind the trade union movement. This must inevitably lead to a struggle which would mean a most serious upheaval in the British labor party.

A PART from objective causes which are drawing the labor movement to the left, the systematic and deliberate tactics of the Communist Party of Great Britain and of the Mi-

nority Movement played an important part in the move towards the left of the English trade unions. Before the trade union congress, the conference of the adherents of the Red International of Labor Unions took place. At this conference, 750,000 workers were represented; this necessarily had an influence on Scarborough; with the growth of the revolutionary wing, the right and left wings had to take up a definite attitude.

As far as the Red International of Labor Unions is concerned, we cannot but rejoice at the results of the trade union congress. The resolutions of the Scarborough congress have already borne fruit; the Anglo-Russian Committee has begun to function and this is of enormous significance for the fate of the whole international trade union movement.

The Amsterdam right is still obstin-

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ately resisting the international unity congress and the creation of a united international. The only result that they will obtain by their tactics is that they will detach themselves from the international trade union movement. The unity of the international trade union movement has taken a serious step forward at the Scarborough congress, whether the Amsterdam right wished it or not.

II.

"A Disgraceful Document."

THIS description is taken from the Vorwaerts, the central organ of German social "Barmatism." It refers to the last proclamation of the Anglo-Russian Committee which, as is well known, was finally constituted after the Scarborough congress. The Vorwaerts is extremely disconcerted at the "remarkable paths" along which the English trade unionists are marching towards unity. The Vorwaerts quoted the most important passages from the proclamation published by the Anglo-Russian Committee and adds:

"One cannot lay down this document without a feeling of shame: the fact that the Russians could demand that the English members of the committee should accept such a manifesto, is an irrefutable proof of how completely the latter were under their thumb. The analysis of the present economic situation is Russian, the inclusion of the Dawes' plan is Russian, the formulation with regard to the guarantee pact in the west as a military alliance is also Russian as is finally the echo which the Anglo-Russian discussions are said to have found among the workers thruout the world, the description of which in no way corresponds to reality. It is anyhow a piece of impudence merely to record enthusiastic assent and to quote this as an incontestable "proof that the way taken was the right one, and not to breathe a word of the fact that millions of organized European trade unionists have looked on at these negotiations for unity with a mixture of incredulity and horror and have only observed silence because they wished to avoid giving the British bourgeoisie the chance of exploiting their protest against the English workers.

With the latest document however, the British trade union representatives have allowed themselves to be maneuvered by the Russians into such a position that it should be impossible for the international trade union movement to maintain silence any longer. It is high time that the other trade unions organized in the Amsterdam International should give emphatic expression to their dissentient expression to their dissentient attitude; for there is good reason to suppose that the

members of the British trade union executive are no longer in the least aware how for they have already alienated themselves from their colleagues on the continent for the sake of their friendship with Russia."—(Emphasis by me, A. L.)

THESE expressions of opinion of the Vorwaerts with regard to the approach between the trade unions of the Soviet Union and of Great Britain deserve very serious consideration. The Vorwaerts had no feelings of shame at the time of the Barmat scandal. The Vorwaerts had no feeling of horror when Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered, with the moral participation of German social-democracy. The Vorwaerts felt neither shame nor horror when thousands and thousands of German proletarians were thrown into prison; the Vorwaerts never lost its sangfroid when the German proletariat, helped by German social-democracy, lost day by day, one after the other of the positions it had conquered and gradually became a European collee.

No, this is all in order, this is all as it should be in accordance with the new Heidelberg program. When, however, the trade unions of the Soviet Union and of Great Britain come to an agreement on the basis of mutual concessions, when a way is found for the creation of a united international, when the English labor movement gets on to the lines of class war, then the Vorwaerts becomes hysterical and is overcome by feelings of "shame" and "horror."

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the demand that pressure should be exercised on the English trade unions, German social-democracy is making endeavors to draw the reactionary bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor into the Amsterdam International thru the delegation of the A. D. G. B. which is at present in the United States. The cynical venality of the reactionaries in America produces no feeling of horror in German social-democracy, but the move of the English trade unions towards class war produces a feverish attack in the whole social-democracy, the most secret thots of which are so crudely expounded by the Vorwaerts.

The appeal of the Vorwaerts to the right wing of the Amsterdam International has not failed to take effect. Amsterdam has appeared on the scene with explanations which explain nothing except the feeling of horror of the Amsterdam right for the growing will of the masses for unity.

We are proud of this "disgraceful document" which causes German social-democracy to shudder with horror.

If you want to thoroughly understand Communism—study it.