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The Contradictions of the Soviet Policy

By *Leon Trotsky.*

No one studying French politics, even those following it in the closest detail, need trouble to read "Le Populaire", the organ of the French reformists and social patriots. The paper offers neither facts nor ideas, and it is a true reflection of its Party. Its articles are written as a general rule by people who devote at least nine-tenths of their attention to questions and affairs which have nothing in common with Socialism. Some of these gentlemen are associated with the socialist movement merely by old habits, others are merely disgruntled over blighted hopes in other spheres, and the third section is associated with it for purely careerist motives. There is not a hint in the paper of socialist thought which from a single standpoint analyzes conditions, estimates contending forces and draws revolutionary deductions. It is written in a conventional style, representing a jumble of casually memorized passages from the old speeches of Jaures and Guesdes embellished by the petty culinary talent of a filthy political kitchen. On reading the latest number of the paper, it seems to us that we have read it several times before. Notwithstanding the fact that among the contributors to the paper are people, many of whom enjoy a reputation for cleverness in their own way, and who understand a thing or two, the paper as a whole bears as it were a polish of stupidity which, however, is quite expedient from the standpoint of the principles that "Le Populaire" advocates.

It is not necessary to read this paper, but to glance through it once in a while will do no harm, because in it we find in its purest form the germ which—alas!—is infecting quite a number of well-known representatives and leaders of the French Communist Party. Thus it is precisely in the pages of "Le Populaire" that you will learn best to appreciate the reason why all these gentlemen, lawyers, journalists and free mason careerists who at labor meetings masquerade as Socialists, attribute so much importance to "liberty of opinion" to "free criticism" and all other higher values indispensably required for the politicians who magnanimously consent to make use of the lever of the proletarian organization, but absolutely refuse to submit their sublime individuality to its discipline.

Just now we would like to deal with what might be considered a classical article written by M. Leon Blum, the actual

leader of the dissidents—on the policy of the Russian Communists towards France and the French Communist Party. Basing himself on reports in the bourgeois press of M. Heriot's visit to Russia, Leon Blum proceeds to draw conclusions and make generalizations which excellently reveal, not the policy of the Russian Communists, but the unprecedented confusion reigning in the heads, not only of M. Blum but the members of his party. Blum states that the Soviet Government offers France "everything or nearly everything"; not only the recognition of the pre-war debts, but even more—"an alliance: an economic, intellectual, moral and even, if necessary, political and diplomatic alliance". Much as M. Blum considers peaceful relations between France and Russia desirable, he emphatically protests—in anticipation, i. e. very timely and sagaciously—against the restoration... of the old Franco-Russian alliance which would be directed against Germany. Nobody, of course, doubted for a moment that the Party of Renaudel, Boncour and Blum would be at its post as soon as the security of Germany was endangered by a new Franco-Russian alliance. Yesterday's actions of this party are a sufficient guarantee of this!

But is it really proven—you may ask—that Soviet Russia is ready to help capitalist France to strangle Germany? But can there be any doubt about it?

"M. Heriot was cordially received as an honoured guest, while Verfeuil and his friends were expelled from the Communist Party, and the same fate awaits others. M. Poincaré and the French capitalists are offered all kinds of alliances, but the adherents of Tours*) are censured for not submitting to absolute discipline, and refusing to be absolutely orthodox. Concessions are to be given to capitalists while social-revolutionaries are kept in prison"... These words fully embrace the philosophy not only of Blum, and of the expelled Verfeuil but also of those of his bashful sympathizers who remain in the French Communist Party.

But, is it not a howling contradiction to cordially receive M. Heriot and unceremoniously expel Verfeuil from the party; to

*) At the Tours Congress in 1920 the majority of the old French Socialist Party joined the III International.

grant concessions to capitalists and at the same time to insist upon the carrying out of communist resolutions in their entirety? It is an obvious and monstrous contradiction! It is quite useless to tell Blum that the Council of People's Commissaries and the Comintern are two different institutions; he knows that the leading Russian Communists are members of the one and the other, and therefore, he exposes their duplicity: their extreme practical opportunism which goes hand in hand with an extreme theoretical irresponsibility.

Difficult as our position is, we shall still attempt to explain it. We shall endeavour to write as simply as possible, since the charges against us emanate from lawyers, journalists, deputies, freemasons, i. e. from a most hidebound, narrow-minded and politically stupid crowd. It is necessary, therefore, to begin with the plainest facts and nail the lies to the counter.

At the *Reno Works* two workers are employed side by side: one is a revolutionary, a Communist, the other is a catholic. But the Communist submits to the same rules of the factory routine as the catholic, executes the orders of the foreman and observes the regulations of the management. Is not the practical "opportunism" of this worker in monstrous contradiction with his theoretical irreconcilability? Here is a theme to ponder over. We confess that to our mind there is no contradiction here, the worker voluntarily joined the Communist Party; he voluntarily undertook to submit to its discipline; he uses all the strength of his will, power and consciousness to make his party the medium for the overthrow of capitalist slavery. But this slavery still exists; the Communist is compelled to sell his labor power in order not to die of starvation; he must submit to the rules laid down by his exploiters. The more hostile he is to this regime, the more irreconcilable does he demand of his party.

When Manuilsky bought some tobacco in one of M. Poincaré's tobacco stores, he, a delegate of the Comintern, furnished a definite profit to the bourgeois republic and thus defrayed to some extent its expenditure on militarism. Is not this practical "concession" of Manuilsky in contradiction with his theoretical irreconcilability? Moreover, if the lady who owns the tobacco store were told that the gentleman who a moment ago so politely said "merci, Madame" is no other than the Bolshevik Manuilsky, she would immediately write an editorial on the subject of: "Why this polite gentleman demanded the expulsion of Verfeuil from the Party"...

So far we have quoted individual examples. We shall now attempt with the utmost caution—bearing in mind the character of our opponents—to widen the scope of our analysis.

In order to issue *l'Humanité* the French Communist Party is forced to buy paper, from a capitalist firm and thus facilitate capitalist accumulation. Is not this a monstrous contradiction to the avowed revolutionary aims of the party? We think not. If it were possible not to submit to the laws of capitalist relations—market, legislature, international and other,—there would be no need for a proletarian revolution.

After these preliminary remarks, we shall pass directly to the contradictions which have aroused the sensitive socialist conscience of M. Blum. The Bolsheviks received M. Heriot as a guest. At the same time they voted for the expulsion of Verfeuil from the party. But M. Heriot was not admitted to the party, nor did he apply for membership. He came to Russia as an unofficial but authoritative representative of that section of the ruling class of France which is in favor of resuming normal trade and diplomatic relations with us. We did everything in our power to help M. Heriot gain a most accurate knowledge of the true position of the country. M. Heriot appeared to us as a possible bourgeois business agent. By way of analogy we might compare our negotiations with M. Heriot, a prominent political representative of the country which during five years opposed us with arms and blockaded us, to the negotiations carried on by locked-out workmen with the representatives of that section of the capitalists willing to discuss terms. Such negotiations between the workers and capitalist magnates are only an episode in the class struggle, just as any strike or lock-out is. But Verfeuil is in our ranks as a member of the party which should maintain unity and discipline under all conditions, either in civil war or during the respite; during attack or retreat; during a strike, a lock-out, negotiations or compromise. Verfeuil in our ranks was in the position of a *strike breaker*. He weakened us from within during our struggle with the class enemy. Is there any contradiction in the workers, forced to effect a compromise with the capitalists, not hesitating to drive all strike breakers from their ranks? The Russian workers carry on negotiations with the capitalists not through the medium of the labor unions or the party, but through the Soviet Government. This is the result of the fact that five years ago the Russian workers seized political power.

Following the methods of M. Blum, we could say of him:—"here is a Socialist who obeys the bell of the President of the Chamber, *Paul Peret*, pays taxes to the capitalist republic, submits to its laws, its courts and police, and at the same time

refuses to obey the bell of the President of the Comintern, *Zinoviev*, pays no dues to the funds of the Communist International, and violates its rules.

But no! We would not lay the charge of inconsistency against M. Blum. He could not choose what parliament or republic he could belong to, but he chose his party, which is to his own heart.

Just as the Communist workmen at the *Reno works* cannot ignore the conditions of capitalist production, of the market and the sale of labor power, so the Russian Workers' Republic cannot artificially isolate itself from the international conditions of capitalist production. The capitalist foremen at the *Reno works* and the bourgeois governments the world over still represent an important and indisputable fact. We are compelled to reckon with this fact, i. e., to enter into relations with the existing governments, conclude agreements with the capitalists, and buy and sell. Of the individual Communist working at the *Reno works* we should demand that in his dealings with the capitalists he shall not undermine the solidarity of the working class, shall not act as a strike breaker, but, on the contrary, that he combat all forms of strike-breaking. The same is required of the Soviet Government in its dealings with the bourgeois governments. In this respect we can offer no guarantees, other than those inherent in the nature of our party and of the Communist International of which it forms a part. In our opinion this is sufficient. As for the solemn declaration of Leon Blum, Renaudel and Boncourt, of their intention to uphold the interests of oppressed Germany against the aggression of a Franco-Russian alliance—we shall remain silent. This theme is worthy of the pen of Gassier.*) His arguments will be incomparably more convincing than ours.

Parallel with the hypothesis of the imperialist Franco-Soviet alliance M. Blum constructs another hypothesis which is not less brilliant: that the Russian Soviet Government joining hands, through M. Heriot, with the left bloc in France, will on the next day exhort the French Communists to support the French radicals, and even to conclude an alliance with them. To our knowledge, this hypothesis, had some influence upon certain elements in the Communist Party. It was from this point of view that some French comrades attempted to judge the policy of the United Front. On this point, too, we will attempt to explain ourselves in the plainest possible manner.

We believe that the substitution of the national bloc, increasingly less capable of supporting the domination of the French bourgeoisie, by the left bloc will signify a step forward, provided that at the same time the party of the working class maintains an absolutely independent, critical, and irreconcilably revolutionary line of policy. The new epoch of reformist pacific illusions, after the illusions of the war and of victory, is inevitably arriving in France, and this should be the prologue of the proletarian revolution. The triumph of the revolution will be achieved by the party which is not in the least guilty of disseminating reformist-pacifist illusions; for the disappointment of the working class with the illusions of the left bloc will be converted, above all, into hatred and contempt for democratic-pacifist socialism. Only the Party which, while recognizing the historically, relatively "progressive" character (in the sense outlined above) of the left bloc as compared with the nationalist bloc, carries an unremitting struggle against it and strives to array the proletariat as a class against all bourgeois parties—only such a party, no matter what temporary vacillations may occur in the workers' ranks, will at the critical moment, gain a controlling influence upon the working class and consequently in the life of the country. We have no reason to doubt for a moment that when M. Heriot and his friends will be at the helm of State, M. Blum and his friends will be wholly at the disposal of the left bloc and at the decisive moment will, as formerly, support all international alliances of their bourgeoisie,—of course, under the mask of reformist-pacifist phrases, deluding a certain section of the working class and partially even themselves.

The entrance of Renaudel, Boncourt and Blum into the Heriot ministry is a greater probability than a bloc of the radicals with the Communists. We admit that such a prospect does not frighten us. M. Blum in the capacity of "socialist" minister of bourgeois France would be incomparably more in his place than as a publicist defending socialist principles of international policy against Soviet Russia. At any rate, he would render a more valuable service to the cause of Socialism by showing what a minister should not be, as Tseretely and Kerensky did in their time. All this will be possible on the condition that the Communist Party maintains its fighting spirit, and purges its ranks of the followers of Blum.

*) A French Communist Cartoonist.

There have been radical ministers in France before now. Their disappearance from the scene and substitution by other bourgeois combinations, was caused by the fact that at the time the power of the bourgeois state was much stronger, whereas the proletariat had not yet organized a truly revolutionary party. Now in the post-bellum France a left bloc should appear on the scene as the last political standard-bearer of a shattered regime. The policy of the International in regard to the French Communist Party is dictated by the desire that the left bloc, whose star is rising over France, shall be inscribed in the annals of history as the last Government of the French bourgeoisie.

Even after M. Blum's accusations, we shall continue to politely receive every French bourgeois who approaches us, for establishing normal relations, and to arrange for the exportation of hog bristles — either now or after the triumph of the left bloc.

At the same time the Comintern will as heretofore expel from its ranks every renegade who attempts to preach Left Blocism to the French workers. Will the adherents of M. Blum fail to grasp the logic of this policy? All the more inexorable will the consequences be for them.

POLEMICS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Soviet Republic and the Third International

By U. Steklov.

The coincidence of the dates of the fifth anniversary of the October Revolution with the opening of the IV. Congress of the Communist International is neither accidental nor arbitrary. This coincidence is of profound significance and emanates from the organic connection between the two historic events.

The Soviet Republic celebrates to-day its fifth anniversary and the Comintern convenes its Fourth Congress. Thus the Comintern appears to be the younger of the two brothers. Indeed, it was organized during the second year of the existence of the Soviet Republic and officially its chief sponsor was the Russian Communist Party. The majority of the Communist parties which joined the Comintern were organized at a later date than the Russian Party. This gave rise to the assertion of our enemies that the entire Comintern as such is the "creature" of "Moscow". This is not the case at all.

Paradoxical as it might at first sight appear we maintain that both the October Revolution and the Russian Communist Party, which was instrumental in bringing it about "from a broad historic viewpoint" were the product and creation of the Communist International.

It is true that as a definite and official organization the Comintern came into being later, but as a moral force it preceded them. Before its formal inauguration the Communist International lived in the consciousness of all revolutionary Marxists. Its fundamental elements evolved at the Zimmerwald and Kiental Conferences and in the inter-party debates during the entire period of imperialist war. As the categorical imperative and the moving spirit it acted a long time before the Inaugural Congress of the Third International. The Russian Bolsheviks particularly, as far back as 1914-15 considered themselves part of the future Third International, acted in conformity with its principles and, impelled by them, carried out the October Revolution.

But no matter how we regard chronological sequence of events and their historic continuity, the closest organic and spiritual relation undoubtedly exists between the Soviet Republic, the product of the October Revolution, and the Communist International. Even if this relation had not been repeatedly announced from both sides, it would be equally clear to all.

In his speech at the closing of the last session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Comrade Kalinin observed that the force of the Soviet Federation is a very "important element in the general strength of the Third Communist International" and that the workers and peasants of the Soviet Republics constitute one of the strongest of the parts comprising the Comintern.

This is a profound truth. The counter-revolutionary press ridicule the assertion that the Russian peasants are interested in the Third International, but they do not dispute the fact that the Russian workers are interested in it. Kalinin's assertion, however, is true as regards the peasants. Perhaps, the average Russian peasant has a rather vague idea of the Communist International and is still less familiar with its program. He is fully aware of its existence, however, and feels himself attached to it. Forced during four years to fight, to repel the onslaught of world capitalism, the Russian toiling masses became intimately cognizant of the significance of the international solidarity of

Labor. The worker and peasant masses of the Soviet Republic, still boycotted and blockaded by the capitalist imperialist powers, are fully aware of the fact that their most vital interests are closely bound up with the success of the international revolutionary movement. In this sense Russia is at present a country in which the broad masses feel and think internationally.

Considered from this point of view, the existence of the closest contact between the Soviet Republic and the Communist International cannot be questioned. This contact is a fact not only of a moral but of a material and tangible character. On the other hand, the Comintern is equally bound spiritually and materially with Soviet Russia. We do not refer here to any material support about which the bourgeois press raises such a clamour and which is largely legendary. At all events, the material support rendered by the workers of all countries to the Soviet Republic during the last year's famine was not less than the aid which the Russian Communist Party could ever extend to its sister parties abroad.

Of course, in case of need, both sides will extend to each other the utmost assistance, but at the present time we emphasize, only the contact which exists between them in the spiritual and political sense of the word.

The Comintern rests on Soviet Russia. The mere fact of the existence of the Socialist Republic which during five years repelled the attacks of all its enemies, increased the revolutionary sentiment of the world proletariat, encouraged it in the most trying moments, and inspired it to carry on the struggle indefatigably.

The world proletariat possesses in the Soviet Republic an impregnable fortress where the world communist program and tactics are shaped and the systematic accumulation of proletarian constructive experience and the building of the Proletarian State is achieved. Here all the fighters for the Socialist Revolution find a secure refuge where they are protected from the fierce vengeance of the bourgeoisie and where they are able to study the process of creating Communist Society.

The mutual solidarity of the Soviet Republics and of the Communist International is a fact of everyday reality. To the extent to which the existence and the growing strength of Soviet Russia is important for the Third International, to the same extent the development and the strength of the Comintern is important for Soviet Russia. The International has already helped Russia to repel the onslaught of world capitalism. In the future its aid will be still more effective. The success of the Communist International will strengthen the economic and political power of Soviet Russia and vice versa. The ideological, moral, and material contact between them is based on the complete identity of their interests.

Hence, the thought of opening the IV. Congress of the Communist International on the anniversary of the October Revolution was a most happy one. It is a symbol with the profoundest meaning which speaks equally convincingly to both enemies and friends.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Crisis in the French Party

By Boris Souvarine.

The French Communist Party has just held a Congress which was expected to solve the crisis in the Party. But all hopes and expectations have been blighted; the crisis has not been solved. On the contrary, the Congress has made it all the more acute. There is a general consensus of opinion among all the factions of the Party that a decisive intervention of the Communist International is inevitable.

On one point the French Congress was unanimous and that was to have recourse to the IV. Congress of the Communist International, in order to overcome its difficulties. All the factions in the Party have expressed their readiness to respect the decisions of the World Congress.

This fact forms the most prominent feature of the French Congress, which otherwise was so confused, so tumultuous and so misleading. It proves the attachment of the majority of the Party to the Communist International, the confidence of the vanguard of the French Proletariat in the international proletarian organization, established under the aegis of the Bolshevik Revolution. It allows us to assert that if misguided leaders were to attempt to drag the French Party into adventures similar to those initiated by Paul Levi and Serrati in their parties, they would not get the majority to follow them.

If the French Party has shown itself powerless in finding a way out of the critical situation into which it has brought itself, this is due to serious causes which all communists fully understand. Frossard has to a certain extent discerned and publicly

demonstrated the origins of the crisis from the floor of the Congress.

"Our Party", said he, "is an old social-democratic party which we wanted to transform into a Communist Party. It has preserved habits, traditions and methods which do not harmonize with the methods and tactics of the Communist International. By changing its name, our Party has not undergone a change of spirit. When voting for the Tours resolution, which it had not read, it did not realize to what it was committing itself; it was under the impression that it was merely expressing a sentimental solidarity with the Russian revolution. Hence, its unwillingness to accept commands from the International... Hence also the dissatisfaction of the International with the attitude of the French Party..."

In speaking thus, Frossard said much that was true, yet he did not say all. There is no doubt whatever that a large section of the old party (and precisely the section which was following Frossard and Cachin) adhered to the Third International in a vague sort of way, without realizing to the full to what it was committing itself. Another large section, however, the left wing, knew exactly what it wanted. It wanted a proletarian party, disciplined, centralized and organized for the struggle, freed from aspiring, professional politicians, a party which would be a true guide of the militant proletariat, which would not rest content with applauding the victory of the Bolshevik party, but would follow its example.

The Tours secession had not cleansed the Party of all the petty-bourgeois elements, neither had it eliminated every vestige of the old social-democratic spirit. This was known by the left wing of the Party, and also by the International. The left wing and the International have worked for the purification, the improvement and the strengthening of the Party, while the chief leaders of the party, of whom Frossard is one, instead of struggling against the social-democratic spirit, habits and methods, have preserved and encouraged them. This is the determining factor in the crisis, and about this Frossard did not say a word.

It is not sufficient to assert the survival of the social-democratic mentality and customs; one must struggle against them in order to overcome them.

Frossard was satisfied with taking a fatalist view of the evils from which the Party was suffering, and did nothing to remedy them. On the contrary, he thought it very clever not to interfere with them in order to counterbalance the influence of the communist forces of the left wing. Thus, the party having become passive, the petty bourgeois elements and the social-democratic spirit, instead of dying out, developed,—which would not have happened had the party been alive. An avowedly reactionary right wing was established against which a serious struggle had to be carried on. Various tendencies came into being. The Party, absorbed by these inner struggles, was obliged to neglect its most essential external tasks.

Frossard endeavoured to justify his policy of equilibrium by making the following astounding statement from the platform of the Congress: "Since the Tours Congress I have been confronted with the following alternative: either to follow the directives of the International and thus do harm to the Party, or not to follow these directives and in that case sever from the International. In order to safeguard the interests of the Party, and at the same time not to sever from the International I have maintained a policy of marking time".

These words throw a vivid light on the crisis. In the opinion of the secretary of the Party, the interests of the International and those of the Party, are antagonistic. In order to spare both, it was necessary "to gain time". Frossard congratulates himself on having done this. We can hardly imagine that the International shares his satisfaction, for the time "gained" by Frossard was time lost for the Party.

It is not necessary to put forward theoretic objections to this, which would come quite spontaneously to the mind of every communist. It is sufficient to recall the experiences of the last two years, which indubitably show that the French Party, in as far as it followed the directives of the International has progressed,—and it has retrogressed, in as far as it ignored them. Every time that the Party met with an obstacle, it was only able to overcome it by getting its inspiration from the Communist International or by using the methods of the latter. Whatever has been profitable to the Party, that is to say, to the French revolutionary working class movement, is due to the influence, the initiative and inspiration of the International.

The rupture with the avowed lackeys of the bourgeoisie, the repudiation of the devious policies of the opportunist parliamentary socialism and of war socialism, the condemnation of the policy of national defence under a capitalist regime and of bourgeois pacifism, the idea of the proletarian dictatorship, the conception of a select, disciplined, centralized and well directed militant party, the participation in the economic struggle of the working class, the communist consolidation within the trade

unions, the united front tactics, — all these features of the French Party, the latter owes to the Communist International.

The overwhelming majority of the Party is conscious of this, and it therefore quite rightly identifies the interests of French Communism with those of International Communism. To believe, like Frossard, that one can conceive of an antagonism between the International and one of its sections, is tantamount to ignoring the fact that sentimental attraction is not a sufficient reason to induce a party to enter into the International; there must also be a profound community of interests. This real community of interests between the French Party and the International will break down the sophistries of Frossard.

And it is at a moment when the example of the Italian Party has become a classic, and when the German independent party has been absorbed by the old social democracy, that Frossard enters upon a path which leads him, on his own confession, to a rupture with the International and to the formation of an independent party between the reformists and the communist parties.

The French Party will not follow him on that path. Once more it has understood that its salvation rests in the International. Once more the International will respond to its expectation. The IV. World Congress, will in a few days time, send forth words which will be law to all that is sane, conscious, serious and revolutionary in the Party.

POLITICS

The Fascist "Revolution"

By Umberto Terracini.

The Italian ministerial crisis, which has this time been especially agitated and rich in remarkable episodes, found the proletariat in a state of great confusion and disorganization.

The dissolution of the local organizations, characteristic of the period just passed through, had indeed almost ceased, and trade union work had even been taken up again in many places. The trade union organizations tending to the left, and aiming at the reorganization of the *Alleanza del Lavoro*, held a conference in Milan, immediately followed by zealous propaganda for these demands, and supported by the general approval of the masses. The maximalist fraction of the General Labor Federation declared itself openly and in principle in favor of the Red International of Labor Unions, and thus with one blow turned the balance in our favor within the largest Italian trade union organization. But these symptoms of reawakening life, bare of any material reality, were opposed by other elements, elements of weakness, exercising a direct influence on the whole proletariat.

The disbanding of the *Alleanza del Lavoro*, finally confirmed by a circular sent by the central committee of the railwaymen's union to its district organizations, requesting these to give up their functions as secretariats of the *Alleanza*, was a heavy blow to the unity of the proletariat, a unity which had cost many months of struggle for the united front. The *Unione Sindacale Italiana*, using the arrest of the Russian anarchist Shapiro by the Soviet government as an excuse, recommenced anti-communistic propaganda in its publications and organizations. The *Unione Sindacale del Lavoro*, which joined in the shameful subjection of the republican party under Fascism, adopted an attitude far removed from the trade union organizations based on the principle of the class war, and took up the sindacalismo à la d'Annunzio, which strives to make the trade unions a national organ of the state. In the General Labor Federation, whose leaders are reformists, zealous underground work was carried on with the object of influencing the members in favor of the right wing, which wing is striving to unite the Labor Federation with the national Fascist trades union organizations; finally, the psychology of the *Seamen's Union*, which, on the initiative of its general secretary Guilietti and favored by the structure of the organization, which deprives the members of any possibility of interference or control, openly entered into an agreement with the Fascisti, by which the union places itself under the protection of the Fascisti.

The *Unitarian Social Democratic Party* had to overcome the detrimental effects of the unsuccessful collaboration attempts of the August crisis; on the other hand, the undoubted advantages which must accrue to the policy of the reformists by separating from the Maximalists were not yet apparent.

The *Republican Party*, seriously compromised by its attitude during the last general strike, rapidly overcame its last scruples and went over to the Fascisti, in order to aid these in their anti-communistic efforts.

The Communist Party did not show in October that compactness of organization which generally characterizes it—in comparison to other parties—when action is called for. The split in the Social Democratic Party, and still more the resolutions of the Executive of the Communist International regarding this split exercised a temporary harmful influence on the organization of the C.P.I. The differences of opinion respecting the attitude adopted with regard to the dissolving Social Democratic Party, which had been limited to internal discussions between the party and the International became a question of actual importance and danger when the Maximalists separated from the reformists.

The conflict between the convictions of the great majority of the Italian communists on the one hand, and their fixed determination to submit to the decisions of the IV. Moscow Congress on the other, was expressed by a temporary standstill in the normal activity of the party, which was bound to reckon with the future decisions of the International, but was simultaneously determined to defend its standpoint to the last moment. Another important result of this difference of opinion was the slackening of internal discipline, caused by the contrast between the directions issued by the party central and the Executive of the C.I., which naturally brought about dangerous contrasts in local party activities.

The action of the Italian proletariat was paralyzed by the situation above described, and as all labor parties were more occupied by their inner organization than by preparations for external events, the bourgeois parties were given the opportunity of more safely grasping the initiative.

On the 27. October the communist press published a manifesto of the C.P. in which a definite attitude was taken with regard to the coming events.

The Party further addressed a circular to its illegal organizations, directing them as to the line of conduct to be adopted during a conflict between the Fascisti and the government. The general opinion was that the democratic parties, which had been in possession of power for years, would at least make an attempt at defence—not at defence of their policy, for this is scarcely to be differentiated from that of the Fascist right—but of their interests and the interests of their followers, immediately threatened by a re-grouping of leading circles.

The various declarations of the democratic leaders: Giolitti, Amendola, Fera, Pasqualino-Vassallo, etc., strengthened this assumption by their authoritative and warning tone. And the first acts of the resigned Facta cabinet, as also the proposal to declare a state of siege, and the order to arrest the military Quadrumvirate of the Fascisti, appeared to confirm general expectations for the moment.

In the course of the forenoon of 28. October it almost seemed as if the Fascist movement, which had been designated as seditions in a government manifesto, would end under the fire of the army; and on the same forenoon of the 28 October the trade union executive committee of the C.P. proposed to the various trade union organizations that the compact mass of the proletariat should be thrown into the fight kindled between the bourgeois fractions so that events might be directed to a solution favorable for the proletariat. This proposal, was published by the *Ordine Nuovo*, and passed on without delay to all the trade union centrals.

The proposal of the communists, dictated by the elementary tactical principle that a neutral attitude during such acute social crises can only injure the proletariat, was at once outstripped by events.

In actual fact the comedy of the insurrection was ended by noon of the same day, the state of siege raised, the democracy forced to fly, and the parties of the right were offered the formation of a new cabinet by the king. Not only did the possibility of a bloody conflict between the Fascisti and the armed forces of the state disappear, but the two parties united on a plan prepared before hand, and turned together against the workers. The overwhelming superiority of the opposing forces was such that any offensive or defensive action of the workers would have been only harmful.

Still, it is instructive to learn what reception the communists proposal met with, and at a moment when the victory of the Fascisti could not be foreseen.

The Railwaymen's Union, which had been the vitalizing centre of the *Alleanza del Lavoro*, sent no reply whatever, although a special delegate of the communist Executive was sent to them; the same was the case with the *Unione Sindacale* and the *Italian Labor Union* (*Unione Italiana del Lavoro*); the *General Labor Federation*, without replying directly to the communist proposal, published the following communication by means of the bourgeois press and the official telegraph agency *Stefani*:

"The communist papers publish a proposal of the trades union committee of their party, in which the proletarian organizations which formed the disbanded *Alleanza del Lavoro*, are expressly called upon to unite at once, for the purpose of proclaiming the general strike among all categories.

The General Labor Federation leaves it to the healthy common sense of the proletariat to judge rightly on the bluffing, unscrupulous, speculative, and provocative character of the communist proposal, but considers it its duty, at a time when political passions are rising, and two forces widely removed from the proletarian trades unions are struggling with one another for the possession of state power, to warn the workers from listening to the incitements of certain parties and political groups, which are endeavouring to entangle the proletariat in a struggle from which it must hold itself absolutely apart if it is to retain its independence. We call upon the workers to keep quiet, and to have no fear for the future. Every summons emanating from the non-responsible organs must be rejected. The federated organizations, bound to no political party, are in duty bound to solely observe trade union discipline, and must absolutely avoid compromising the trades unions with actions, or by taking up defined attitudes, which may originate from political parties or irresponsible committees.

The Executive Committee.

With this declaration the Reformists held faithfully to the same line in proletarian action, as they followed in parliamentary politics when they fell into the trap set by Mussolini, and accepted the offer, soon afterwards withdrawn, to take part in the Fascist cabinet.

The proposal issued by the communist trades union committee is the sole responsible pronouncement of the organized proletariat issued during recent events. The reactionary deeds of violence committed by the state and the Fascisti, who attacked all proletarian organizations with unexampled rage, made any action and any activity impossible.

The most conspicuous acts of violence accompanying the Italian crisis had for their object, not by any means the struggle between the opposing bourgeois fractions, but a renewed mutual offensive against the proletariat. Of the sixty or seventy, who lost their lives during the four days of fighting, about forty were workmen; all class organs have been suppressed; so that at present it is impossible for the whole radical press to appear. The *Comunisti*, which does not possess its own plant, appeared for three days, by secret means and in reduced size, more a leaflet than a newspaper. After this there was no printer to be found prepared to print the paper, especially after the tragic episode of the chief editor, comrade Togliatti who, surprised by the Fascisti when at work, only escaped certain death by a happy accident. The *Avanti*, burnt down for the third time, is completely destroyed. The *Ordine Nuovo* is occupied by an armed force, and its editors accused of having prepared the building for defence. The anarchist *Umanità Nuova* is destroyed. The Fascist military command has prohibited the appearance of the *Lavoratore Comunista*; the same applies to the Reformist *La Giustizia*.

The trade union organizations have also received heavy blows: Biella; Genoa, Brescia, Trieste, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, Bari, have either been placed under levy or occupied. The meeting places of the centrals of the *General Labor Federation*, the *Syndicalist Union*, the *State Union of Agricultural Laborers*, have been completely plundered. The house in which the socialist party leaders had their headquarters was occupied and ruined, and afterwards used as barracks for Fascisti.

These most important facts are further accompanied by the shooting of workmen in the streets of Rome, Pologna, Perugia, Ravenna; forced entrances into prisons for the purpose of lynching arrested proletarians: the plundering of dwellings and levying contributions, the shameful and most repugnant public torture of members of the proletarian parties; hundreds of proscriptions, driving dozens of workers from every town into exile; innumerable threats and abuses; the terror reigns everywhere. The new government covers and legalizes all these acts of violence, it permits the continuation of this wild reaction, and aids it with all the auxiliaries of a state which had observed an apparent and ambiguous neutrality, under the leadership of the democratic parties, until the last government crisis. Now begins the tragic period for the Italian proletariat. The trade unions alone, if they do not fall a prey to the delusion that their salvation lies in a compromise with the national parties, can hope to weather the new storm, and to preserve a minimum of strength which will enable them to resume their activity. The communists have issued the slogan "Red versus tricolor", characteristic of the union of the trades union left. Only those parties which in the past have already adapted themselves to

illegal existence and action can hope to keep their network of organization intact under the frightful despotism. The Communist Party, prepared for this for more than a year, has now transformed its legal system of work into an illegal one, by which it escapes the hardest blows which have hitherto seriously threatened the existence of the Social Democratic Party.

Despite the acute crisis brought about by the present régime, there is no doubt that the Italian Communist Party will succeed—even at the cost of bloody sacrifice—in proving the correctness of its principles and the firmness of its organization. It alone will weather the storm, and will take up the position for which it has striven for two years, and which is due to it: The position of acknowledged leader of the proletarian masses of Italy.

The Sovietization of the Far East

By V. Vilenski (Sibirniak).

The occupation of Vladivostok by the Red troops brings to a close the first stage of the struggle of Soviet Russia against Japanese intervention. The struggle lasted for nearly five years and cost the Russian workers and peasants great sacrifices.

Taking advantage of the exhaustion of Russia during the period of the imperialist war, Japan decided to drive her from the coasts of the Pacific and the Japanese imperialists stubbornly and undeviatingly strove to fortify their domination in the Russian Far East on the pretext of safeguarding the Japanese islands from Bolshevik contagion.

Japanese intervention gave rise in the Far East to a buffer state organized on the principles of democracy in the form of the Far-Eastern Democratic Republic, and which in its constitution recognized private property, and based its entire government apparatus upon all democratic principles embodied in the so-called democratic bourgeois countries.

This democracy existed in the Far East for two and a half years, and it seemed that here indeed was an ideal spot for a "democratic paradise", but soon it became apparent that these principles were of no use to anybody. The Japanese imperialists manifested little inclination to respect the democratic Far Eastern Republic, and during the entire period of their occupation they not only refused to recognize it, but conducted open warfare against it by organizing the Russian counter-revolutionaries who were centered at Vladivostok, and, at the behest of the Japanese militarists, directed from there their piratical raids against the Far Eastern Republic.

Still less did the democratic principles satisfy the workers and peasants of the Far East. Having drunk the cup of bitterness of Japanese intervention to the full, they with clenched teeth tolerated the democratic makeshift until Japan finally withdrew her troops from Russian territory, and now emphatically declare that they will no longer endure their unnatural separation from Soviet Russia and its form of government.

This demand of the workers and the peasants of the Far East is quite comprehensible, considering the social-economic condition prevailing there. Owing to its enormous natural wealth, it is an attractive morsel for foreign capital. On the other hand, the population is too small, — numbering only two million people scattered over an immense territory, — to maintain an independent economic life. Without the aid of Soviet Russia the people could not defend the Pacific coast from encroachments by foreign capitalism which will never abandon its attempts to make itself dominant in the Far East.

The destiny of the Far East is closely and indissolubly bound up with the destiny of Soviet Russia, and the Far-Eastern workers and peasants refuse to allow foreign capitalism to fasten its yoke upon them. This they can achieve only in fraternal union with the Russian workers and peasants. Hence arises the necessity to Sovietize the Far East, and to include it in the All-Russian Soviet Federation.

In its turn Soviet Russia cannot remain indifferent to the future destiny of the Far East and its people. The Far East is the corridor to the Pacific wherein enormous masses of oppressed peoples are commencing their struggle for liberation from the yoke of imperialism. Soviet Russia is the first country to raise the banner of the world revolution; she stands as the shining example for all the oppressed peoples of the Eastern Hemisphere. Hence the emergence of Soviet Russia on the coast of the Pacific is the lighting of a socialist beacon to the oppressed people of the Far East.

The workers and peasants of Far-Eastern Russia will plant the Red banner of the Russian Soviet Republic which will serve as the symbol of world revolution and which will emancipate the oppressed peoples of the Eastern Republic.

The National Elections in Britain

By E. T. Whitehead.

Great Britain is divided into about six hundred electoral constituencies. There is no second ballot nor proportional representation as there is in most European countries. A few cities are what are termed "two member constituencies", and in these cases the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes are elected.

One result of this system is that the number of candidates elected, representing any particular party bears little relation to the number of votes cast for that party throughout the country. For example, in this election the Labor Party secured 4,084,199 votes and secured 139 seats, whereas the Conservatives polled 5,291,058 votes to secure 345 seats, and the Asquithian Liberals polled 2,609,419 votes and secured but 59 seats. It will be seen that the number of seats gained bear no proportion whatever. The Liberal Party and the Labor Party together polled 1,400,000 more votes than the Conservative Party, but together they secured not much more than half the number of seats of the latter. These anomalies of the English electoral system need to be understood in order to understand the results.

The net result of the whole election is that the Conservatives, under the leadership of Mr. Bonar Law, have secured a clear majority of 85 over all other parties. The representation of the Labor Party has increased from 77 to 139; the Lloyd George National Liberals have only secured 49 seats, and the Asquithian Liberals 59 seats.

A feature of the Labor returns has been the return of practically all the prominent pacifists and intellectuals in the party, including J. Ramsay Macdonald, Philip Snowden, Fred Jowett, E. D. Morel, and George Lansbury. A very influential group of former members of the Liberal Party, who have joined the Labor Party in recent years, such as Arthur Ponsonby, C. P. Trevelyan, H. B. Lees Smith, Noel Buxton, Roden Buxton, and the two barristers Patrick Hastings and Mr. Hemmerde, have all secured seats on the Labor ticket.

The Communist Party of Great Britain put forward two official candidates, J. T. Walton Newbold, M. A., who has an international reputation as a research student, and William Gallacher. Newbold succeeded in defeating three other candidates in Motherwell, an industrial constituency in Scotland that has greatly suffered from the industrial depression. One of his opponents belongs to the family owning the great steel works in the constituency, the Colville Steel Works. Such was the nature of our comrade's campaign that this candidate was at the bottom of the poll.

Gallacher failed to secure election at Dundee where Scrymgeour, a teetotal crank, and Morel, the I. L. P. pacifist were elected, but his campaign had much to do with the very decisive defeat suffered by Mr. Winston Churchill in this constituency. The defeat of this arch-imperialist and enemy of the workers was a triumph in itself.

In addition to these two official candidatures, Comrade Geddes, a leading party member, was adopted at the last moment in the absence of an official labor candidate by the unemployed at Greenock (Scotland), and was endorsed by the Communist Party. He fought a wonderful battle and was only defeated by a narrow majority.

Further, four more members of the Communist Party of Great Britain went to the polls as nominees of either the local or national Labor Parties, and of these four, Comrade Saklatvala a Hindu comrade, was elected for one of the industrial districts of London. Phillips Price, Berlin, Correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, failed to secure election by only 51 votes in the very reactionary constituency of Gloucester, and Comrade Windsor failed by the very narrow majority of 115 at Bethnal Green (London). There are thus two members of the Communist Party of Great Britain in the new House, and for the first time the party has succeeded in winning a seat outright on a clear Communist ticket. The fights at Motherwell and Dundee were splendid examples of the Communist tactic of rallying the masses round the slogans of the proletarian revolution. Throughout the elections the Communists emphasized the slogan of the united front, and in no case was a communist in the field in opposition to a Labor Party candidate. The success of the Labor Party candidates in many constituencies is directly due to the support and life introduced into the fight by the Communists.

For the last three days of the election, the Communist Party of Great Britain, which does not possess a regular daily organ of its own, issued a special daily paper, *The Daily Communist*. The sale of this paper was very great, and it was published under the slogan:—"Support the Labor Party candidates from the Communist point of view".

Throughout the fight, Labor suffered greatly from want of an adequate press. Labor has only one daily paper in the country, *The Daily Herald*, with a circulation of approximately

350,000, and against this the capitalist parties have a dozen or so huge daily organs with perhaps an average circulation of a million each, in addition to scores of daily local and evening papers with smaller circulations. The few weekly publications which Labor also possesses are in no way any adequate counterblast to the corresponding scores of local and district weekly newspapers which the capitalists own. In no country in the world does Capitalism exercise its "dictatorship of money" in such an overwhelming fashion as to obtain practically a monopoly of the press. As regards the communist papers, these are boycotted completely by the big newspaper distributing firms, and depend for their circulation exclusively on the party machinery and sympathetic local newspapers.

Labor gained its most notable victories in Scotland, where in the southern industrial districts there was almost a complete sweep of the constituencies for Labor. The main planks in the program of the Labor Party were the *Capital Levy*, *No Indemnities*, *Unemployment*, *Housing Reform*, and *No More War*. The Conservatives made the *Capital Levy* the main issue, and floods of misrepresentation were poured on to it. Against this program, the Conservatives proposed, absolutely no alternative program whatever, their motto being: "Tranquillity, and let things stay as they are."

Continental issues, as usual, played comparatively little part in the election, the insularity of Britishers and their absorption in local affairs being noteworthy. However, the presence in Parliament of our Comrades Saklatvala and Newbold, the former as the spokesman of a people suppressed and exploited under British imperialism, and the latter as one of the clearest and most brilliant exponents of international affairs, is a great gain of strength to the communist forces. Both the Communist Party and the Labor Party have every reason to be satisfied with the progress achieved at this election.

Compulsory Work for Women in Bulgaria.

By Dina Schreiber (Berlin).

The idea of introducing general compulsory work for all persons capable of working, has frequently appeared in the programs of radical social reformers. As a rule it is based on the hope that the introduction of a general obligation to work will enable a just state of society to be established on the basis of capitalist economics, without any radical attack on private property. The bourgeois state has long since accorded these well-meant suggestions every attention, and has wrought its most powerful weapon against the oppressed from this general obligation to work.

The rising wave of revolution among the great masses of the workers, and the increasing decay of traditional conditions of production have compelled the bourgeois state not alone to force the men into its system of exploitation, but also the women. It is characteristic that *Bulgaria* is the first country which has introduced obligatory service for women; a country whose foreign policy is so closely related to Soviet Russia, and which possesses a communist party well capable of fighting and with a large membership among the peasantry and women, so that it is ready to strike at any moment.

Every Bulgarian woman between the ages of 16-30 years is subject to obligatory service. The length of the service is 4 months; in each following year 10 days. The women are occupied in hospitals, state offices, public kitchens, gardening, and similar undertakings, they receive no salary for this work, not even free lodgings; the only thing which the state is magnanimous enough to grant is—an apron!

Why is it with the general applicability of this law? Does it perhaps apply equally to all female citizens? Not at all! The exceptional regulations prove that here we have a law directed solely against the proletarian women. The paragraphs in question state that: "Girls attending vocational or high schools are exempt from obligatory service until the age of 24; female students are also not required to serve until 28 years of age". And paragraph 27 of this enslavement law states quite openly: "40% of the girls subject to service can be exempted through the payment of 9000-15,000 liva."

This is sufficient proof that the law is directed against the female proletariat, from whom unpaid work is to be pressed. It shows that today, now that the whip of famine no longer suffices, state compulsion steps in to maintain the system of wage slavery.

It is possible that Bulgaria will not long stand alone in the introduction of this law. Similar plans are putting in an appearance in Belgium, and in America systematic efforts are being made towards compulsory training of women for skilled work, so that, as is quite openly admitted, they may be ready

to step into the men's places in case of war. In Germany the women of the Centre Party and of the bourgeois women's movement are also taking every opportunity of working for the introduction of a "year of female obligatory service", and dish up the desired law with a glamour of well-sounding phrases, though its ultimate end is a law of oppression, as in Bulgaria.

The Bulgarian Communist Party is carrying on a violent struggle against this law, in press and at meetings. The law has been in force since the spring of 1922.

The manner in which this law of obligatory work is carried out in Bulgaria is an excellent object lesson for all social and reformist quacks. For it proves that however attractive a principle may appear at the first glance, as in the case of a law for general obligatory service, if it is carried out under the present laws of society, it will succumb to the laws of capitalism, and will be exploited for the benefit of the capitalist class. It is only in a Communist State that a general and equal obligation for all citizens to serve society can exist, for only in such a state does the first premise for this obligation exist: the elimination of classes.

ECONOMICS

Egypt

By P. Lemoine and G. Kayal.

It may be said today, with complete certainty, that the arrest of Zaglul Pasha has, for the time being, virtually held up the nationalist movement.

Sarait, together with all his colleagues, are only pawns to be cleverly and dexterously moved about by Lord Allenby; and it is more certain than ever that the independence promised by England was only a monstrous piece of duplicity planned to delude those who were placing their hopes blindly in English liberalism.

For eight months, the country has been stifled under Sarait's dictatorship. Police measures have been redoubled. Each day there are many arrests. The Zaglulist press is muzzled and suspended. Public meetings are forbidden, and recently the members of the *Wafd el Masri* were arrested, without provoking any protest on the part of the intellectual classes, who should have risen with the greatest indignation in circumstances so decisive, against the uncalled-for proceedings to which Sarait and his colleagues, have recourse. But they did nothing.

Some Egyptian women have attempted to awaken the masses—but in vain. No one moves. The *Egyptian Democratic Party* exercises no influence over the country, and its emasculate protests produce no effect. The *Nationalist Party* no longer shows any signs of life. Its members are dispersed throughout the country.

The people are left to themselves, and this explains the extreme confusion in which they are plunged at present.

And while the Saraitist press continues to praise to the skies the merits of the government officials,—the officers of the Egyptians police, corrupted by English gold, do their best to search out more and more and to arrest suspects, especially those who might prove a hindrance to Sarait and his friends on the eve of the elections. And we see returning from obscurity into notice, *Adly Pasha Yeghen*, who came back shame-facedly from England, at the head of a new party, which has the astounding audacity to wish to renew negotiations with the wily English diplomats. And as the elections approach, it is making attempts to launch a daily paper while Sarait, on his part, removes the functionaries who might be able to disturb him.

The political situation which becomes more complicated from day to day only accentuates the economic crisis which holds the country in its grip. The causes of the economic crisis must be attributed to the inflated imports of the year 1920, which was relatively prosperous. But this prosperity was in truth only fictitious, for it was above all due to the considerable rise in the price of cotton, and the formation of local industries consequent on the lack of foreign products in the Egyptian market.

1921 may be considered as a year of stagnation. In fact for 1921, the imports were £55,507,984 as against £101,880,963 in 1920, a decrease of £46,372,979. But exports suffered an even greater decrease, for in 1921 they amounted to £36,356,062, as against £85,467,061 in 1920—that is a difference of £49,110,999.

But it is likewise necessary to know that at the end of the war, there was a complete break in the market because of the immense accumulation of unsold merchandise. Besides which, the surplus production of cotton took on disquieting proportions and the demand for it becoming less and less, many failures took place, the effect of which was felt immediately throughout the country,

especially at Minet el Bassal (Alexandria) where many strikes of the workers broke out, strikes which were provoked by the lowering of wages.

The following information is taken from reliable sources:

Cotton stocks at Minetel Bassal	1,500,000 cantars
" " " Manchester and Liverpool	700,000 "
" " " of the interior harvest	300,000 "
	Total 2,500,000 "

To these figures may be added about 4,500,000 "
(representing the new harvest)

7,000,000 "

The surplus production is therefore manifest, and as sales are going badly, the fellah is at the mercy of his creditors: (money lenders, mortgage banks, etc.), who reserve the right to sell his cotton at any price and any moment without consulting the grower in any way. But there are likewise other factors besides that of overproduction which help to place the fellah in particularly disastrous conditions: these are the land tax which absorbs one third of the net revenue of the land, and the rent of the land which reaches the almost incredible figures of from 500 to 600 francs per hectare. For the past fifteen years, land organizations have been founded which buy these new lands from the State, make an effort to improve them, then rent them out and finally sell them to the fellah. The mortgage banks have multiplied during this same period, lending the money to the fellah in order that he may acquire the land... But on what conditions and at what a price! The revenue of the land during years of good harvest, is hardly sufficient for the fellah to pay his interest and a slow amortization of his debt. Let but a crisis supervene which lowers the price of cotton, and the expropriation of a crowd of small fellahs by their mortgagees takes place.*

There are 123,700 land owners who each possess less than five feddans (1 feddan = 71 sq. yds.), and who hold hardly more than one feddan per capita. The number of those who own from five to ten feddans is about 76,000, and they have an average of seven feddans per capita. Eleven thousand landowners possess from twenty to thirty feddans; 8000 from thirty to fifty feddans and 1250 more than fifty feddans. Most of the properties in this last category comprise an area of from two hundred to three hundred feddans each. *A hundred rich pashas own from two thousand to four thousand feddans each, and some even have more considerable domains.* Of the large land owners, that is, those possessing more than 50 feddans, 72% are foreigners. Thus with the help of present circumstances, large foreign landed proprietors and concerns that exploit the cotton market, and which are exempt from the payment of taxes, have accumulated fortunes. The profits of the General Sugar Industry Corporation during the past year reached nearly a million pounds. Besides this, the balance sheets of certain cotton export houses have during these last years, shown net profits of a million pounds per year.

The Egyptian government, far from being alarmed at such a state of affairs, on the contrary encourages the presence of these foreign pirates and speculators, who cooperate with the pashas to exploit and despoil the land of its bountiful riches.

When the cotton harvest of this year yields hardly seventeen million pounds, the budget of public expenses is fixed at thirty four millions, of which fourteen millions are for the upkeep of high functionaries.

The foregoing proves once again, that salvation for the fellah, as for all wage earners, lies only in world revolution.

Cairo, October 1922.

* Information gleaned from the interesting book on Egypt written by Le Carpentier.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The French Miners and the Miners' International

By H. Delfosse (General Secretary of the C.G.T.U.).

The French miners in their First National Congress, desiring to depart from the usual method of procedure, and to take a firm revolutionary stand, put off, as a secondary consideration in the discussion, their immediate claims against the employers, and discussed as a principal issue the plan of battle, i. e., to determine their fighting forces, when it becomes necessary to offset the capitalist offensive and to weaken the resistance of the employers.

A glance over the present economic situation proves that we are in a period in which the solidarity of the employers is being stimulated and strengthened by the threatened bankruptcy of various states, and that no ordinary measures will avail against the resistance created by this solidarity.

The French miners are convinced that the employers can not be successfully attacked on the national field alone, but must be fought against collectively on the international field as well.

It is for these reasons that at the conference of Essen, the French delegation insisted so much on an immediate international strike, as they felt that even though preparations were only in a very elementary stage, that such an action would at least have succeeded in breaking away from old traditional measures; and this they judged to be preferable to financial help or the usual manifestos of flaming solidarity, which although excellent as a stimulant of the workers' morale, are received with the disdain and contempt which are inspired by threats always thrust forward but never executed. In all the collieries, the power of the union should be subordinated to international action.

The French section insists that such action be prepared for immediately, even if conditions are now improved in certain countries, as in Belgium, where the miners have been able to obtain an increase of 8%, or in France, where the depletion of the American coal reserves and the exchange fluctuations, are creating advantageous fighting conditions.

Therefore, the French section believes that the miners of the world cannot match their power against the power of the employers whatever may be the economic conditions, except by international action.

To launch such action, not to block it,—is of prime importance. Not to attack the root of the evil would be to squander our energies.

At Essen, the delegates have adopted a plan of assisting the comrades in wage-strikes.

They have also formulated demands which aim at the elimination of the discrepancy existing between wages and the cost of living.

If we are not to work in a blind alley, it will be necessary to define the causes of this discrepancy and to attack them.

In my opinion, these causes only exist in the policies of the bourgeois governments, the wars, the treaties established for the benefit of the bourgeoisie only, the Russian blockade,—these are the real causes.

And it is against the policies of governments, and not against Companies alone, that we must direct our fight.

But first of all, a program of action must be adopted, which will allow the workers' delegates to get the support of other organizations, if we are to dictate conditions successfully to the world bourgeoisie.

Have we the right to wait, to waver? No, the precipitation of events does not permit it.

South African Labor Movement.

By M. Lopes.

The ruthless suppression of the Rand strike of last March has had two important results.

The first is that Sir Evelyn Wallers speaking at the Chamber of Mines, Johannesburg, stated that working costs on the mines had come down from 25/4 per ton in August 1921, to 20/6 in August 1922—a reduction of 4/10 per ton. This is due to decreased wages and "increased efficiency". He remarked that this was "very satisfactory".

The crisis in South Africa is accompanied with features that are common to every country—trade unions in steady retreat, wage-cuts and increased hours in most industries, ten thousand unemployed on the Rand alone, the slow and steady spreading of conditions of appalling misery.

The victory gained in the civil war is to be consolidated by the adoption of conciliation machinery. This precious scheme has met with the approval of the trade union leaders of the mining industry who have agreed to recommend it to the mine workers for acceptance. The result of the adoption of this scheme would be to completely cripple the unions, for only unions considered safe and subservient to the mine magnates would be recognized. Amongst the conditions are: that the unions must not include foremen and the so-called officials; union men must not refuse to work with non-union men; there must be provision for a secret ballot. When a substantial section of a particular grade or class is outside the union, will the union not be recognized, and finally the Chamber of Mines will not necessarily recognize a union unless it is satisfied with its rules and that it is non-political. These notes will give the workers abroad a good idea of this scheme of "good-will" and "industrial peace" the acceptance of which by the union leaders only proves that the

combing-out process of the White Terror has to a great extent deprived the movement on the Rand of its honest and courageous leaders.

With dreadful monotony the capitalist courts are daily grinding out savage sentences to workers arrested during the strike movement who have spent months in jail awaiting their trials. Hundreds of men are in the prisons of the Transvaal, either awaiting trial or serving vicious sentences. In August, Carel Christian Stassen and Johannes Brussouw were found guilty of shooting native mine guards and sentenced to death. This sentence was not given for the shooting only, as to kill a native in the Union—especially in the Transvaal Free State—is a venial offence, but because these men were strikers also. Natives were killed at Bullhoch last year and in the mandatory territory of South West Africa this year, strikers were shot while "trying to escape" during the White Terror, but these resulted in no murder charges. The ensuing agitation against the sentence resulted in the reprieve of Brussouw but Stassen was executed on Thursday October 5th. Five more strikers have been sentenced to death but the fierce and increasing agitation and unrest may stay the ferocious action of the government.

The second great result of the strike was the creation of the United Front Movement. Out of the ensuing chaos, out of the despair and doubt that prevailed, out from under the heavy and ruthless blows of a victorious capitalism there has emerged the embryonic unity of South African Labor. Before the thesis of the Comintern was widely known, the idea spread spontaneously along the Rand, and United Front committees were formed in ever-larger center. Gigantic meetings were held mainly dealing with the amnesty demand for the class war prisoners but concerning also unemployment and the overthrow of the government.

At the first meeting, at which representatives of the Union Labor Party and Communist Party spoke, the movement declared its objectives to be: the consolidation of all political and industrial organizations to secure the defeat of the present government, to take steps to force the exploiters to provide employment for all able to work with adequate maintenance, and general amnesty for all arrested in connection with the strike movement.

The Communist Party with some of the trade unions have invited Comrade Tom Mann to visit the Union on a three months lecturing tour. This is supported by the A.E.U., Building Workers Industrial Union, Iron Moulders, Tailors Association, Cape and Durban Trade Unions, Communist Party and Union of Railwaymen.

This eloquent evangelist of the proletarian revolution opened his tour at Cape Town in the first week of October and has met with a great reception. He has exceeded all expectations in his frank avowal of Communism, (somewhat disconcerting to the trade union leaders) his oratorical abilities, and his revolutionary force and fervour. The soil has been prepared for his teachings by the iron plough of civil war. Class-hatred, deep discontent and desire for vengeance are plainly manifested throughout the Union especially on the Rand. The embers of revolution are here and Tom Mann will certainly do a great deal towards fanning them into a flame that will consume capitalism in South Africa.

THE RACIAL QUESTION

The Racial Issue in the USA.

By Claude McKay.

The Negro population of America is estimated at between 12 and 15 millions. About 20 per cent of this number is distributed throughout the Northern States; the rest live in the South.

Negro workers of the South may be roughly divided into 4 sections. In the cities they are (1) stevedores, (2) small factory workers and artisans. In the country they are (3) small farmers and (4) cotton plantation workers. The Southern Negroes are largely unorganized, although of late years there has sprung up some movement for organization among the land workers. The Southern whites are also unorganized except in the old craft and railroad unions.

The Negro to-day is not loyal to any party. From the end of the Civil War until the period of the Roosevelt Administration he was fairly loyal to the Republican Party as the Party of Lincoln who emancipated the slaves. But he is now disillusioned; he has many great grievances against "white" America, such as Lynching, Disfranchisement and Serfdom in the South and Social and Industrial Discrimination in the North, but in the main he is only race-conscious and rebellious, not revolutionary and class conscious.

It may even be said that Negroes are anti-socialistic, except for a goodly number of young coloured intellectuals who have been forced back into the masses by competition and suppression. Since, however, America entered the European War, the Negroes have been ripe for revolutionary propaganda. The Garvey "Back to Africa" movement has swept American Negroes like a storm. Although the mass of them know that they must remain in America, they responded to the emotional appeal as a relief from their sufferings.

But the future of the American Negro whether they become the pawn of the bourgeoisie in its fight against white labor or whether they become class-conscious, depends on the nature of the propaganda that is conducted among them and the tactics adopted towards their special needs. At present the blacks distrust and hate the whites to such an extent that they, the blacks, are very hostile to the radical propaganda of the whites. They are more partial to the humanitarians.

The blacks are hostile to Communism because they regard it as a "white" working class movement and they consider the white workers their greatest enemy, who draw the colour line against them in factory and office and lynch and burn them at the stake for being coloured. Only the best and broadest-minded Negro leaders who can combine Communist ideas with a deep sympathy for and understanding of the black man's grievances will reach the masses with revolutionary propaganda. There are a few such leaders in America to-day.

IN SOVIET RUSSIA

The Danger Point passed.

By A. Stokhnzky (Moscow).

The positive as well as the negative aspects of the new economic policy find the clearest expression in our trade. All the difficulties and all the maladies which our country passed through were to be seen in our commerce as in a mirror. The fate of industry in the past year was actually determined by trade. This latter was laboring under the most difficult and abnormal conditions and its development was crude and desultory. It must, however, be stated, that trade in Russia, in spite of all difficulties, has shown a considerably more favourable development. At the end of the past year and during the first quarter of the present year there prevailed a great scarcity of markets. The disastrous harvest of the year 1921, made itself strongly felt throughout all branches of economic life. The starvation and the desolation of the Volga district, the continuous impoverishment of the peasants already ruined by the imperialist and civil wars, reduced their purchasing power to the lowest limits. In spite of the fact that our production only reached to one fifteenth of the pre-war standard, there was no market for this diminished production. There remained no alternative than to either limit production for a time or to dispose of goods at the cost of production. Only in May of this year did the market crisis as a result of the prospects of a good harvest begin to abate gradually, although it is not yet overcome in the full sense of the word.

The cessation of the market crisis rapidly affected trade operations. Comrade Leshava, the chairman of the *Soviet for Work and Defence in Home Trade*, in an article on the general character of trade operations in the past year (*Ekonomicheskaja Schijn* No. 222) quotes many telling figures relating to the rate of increase of our trade. The rate of this increase was expressed on the Moscow exchange by the following figures: In the early part of the year when the market crisis was still very sharply felt, business was concluded on the Moscow exchange to the extent of 531,653 gold roubles. In May, when the market crisis had abated a little, an increase in business transactions was noticeable. The transactions on the exchange for the month of May reached the sum of 668,397 gold roubles. In June the figure reached 1,808,409 gold roubles, almost three times that of May. In July these figures increased to 2 million and in August to 2,300,000 gold roubles. It is characteristic of our trade that, in the centre, as is to be seen from the figures quoted, it increases rapidly. In the provinces this process goes on much more slowly. In the villages our trade only advances at a tortoise pace. In this way the fundamental aim of our new economic policy, the connecting of the town with the village, is only realized by slow but certain steps. This slow process again makes itself greatly felt in the development of our industry.

The harvest of the past year yielded positive results. The food crisis is overcome. This circumstance has brought a new stream of life and energy into the process of the restoration of our national economy. And although the sickness of our national

economy is by far not yet cured, we are entering upon a slow but entirely purposeful phase of reconstruction.

The limits of a short article do not permit us to deal exhaustively with all sides of our economic life. We shall therefore only attempt by a few statements to show the increase in the production of our country.

Let us take the textile industry: In 1921, especially at the end of the year, this industry passed through very severe times as a result of the market crisis. In 1922, we see signs of improvement. In the first half of 1921, our cotton factories produced a total of 589,000 puds of cotton thread and 119 million *arshin* of cotton goods (an *arshin* equals about 31 inches). In the first half of 1922, the production was increased to 1,675,000 puds of cotton thread and 232 million *arshin* of cotton goods.

Our naphtha industry from which we were effectively cut off until May, also shows marked signs of improvement. In the second half of 1920, the naphtha industry passed through very abnormal conditions in consequence of the insufficient food supplies prevailing at that time and the unfavourable condition of the national economy in general.

When in 1921, the situation improved, this improvement was immediately expressed in the output of naphtha.

It is to be seen from the statements as to the production of naphtha in Baku, that in the second half of 1920, 71,642,000 puds of naphtha were produced; in the second half of 1921 76,586,000 puds. As regards the activities of the factories in the Baku district there were in the 2nd half of 1920, 24,252,000 puds of naphtha prepared and in the second half of 1921, 59,435,000 puds. In the second chief centre of the naphtha industry, in *Grosni*, a similar growth is to be perceived. In the second half of 1920, the amount of naphtha extracted amounted to 34,432,000 puds and in the second half of 1921, this increased to 40,420,000 puds. A similar improvement is to be recorded in the *Grosny* district, in the manufacture of prepared naphtha. In the second half of 1920, the quantity prepared amounted to 16,176,000 puds and in the second half of 1921 to 28,889,000 puds.

Our coal industry is also making considerable progress. In the first half of 1920 the gross product amounted to 210 million puds; in the first half of 1921, to 261 millions puds; in the first half of the current year it reached 321 million puds. It is worth while mentioning that in 1920, the number of pit-workers, especially of coal miners continually increased, while in 1921 the number continually declined. The number of coal hewers in 1922, although a little more than in 1921, is still less than in 1920.

On the one hand we see a reduction in the number of workers and on the other hand an increase in the output. That proves in the clearest manner the raising of the productivity of labor, but as in the coal industry so also in the naphtha industry a gradual improvement in the technique of production and in the quality of the product itself is to be recorded. In the Don basin we are already about to introduce coke production.

Although the remaining branches of industry just as those mentioned are still very far from the normal standard of production, we can claim, that the danger point has been passed, that we are on the road to the restoration of our national economy and are advancing steadily.

The position of the proletariat is closely connected with the revival of our industry. Since July of this year, real wages have gradually begun to increase. The wages of the transport workers in relation to the real wages in March, have increased in June by 16.80% and in July by 22%. The real wages of the industrial workers increased during the same period by 12 and 9 per cent respectively. These facts should be taken into consideration by the workers in other countries.

While real wages in all the rich bourgeois countries have continually fallen, with us, the first steps in economic reconstruction have already brought about an improvement in the position of the working population. But in order to be impartial in estimating the results of our reconstruction we must observe that the process of reconstruction is chiefly carried on at the expense of the originally existing capital of the country. And for the time being there is no other source available. Foreign capital holds back from Russian operations. We have not succeeded up to the present in obtaining large credits. The restoration of our national economy which has been destroyed by the imperialist and civil wars, must therefore be solely carried out by means of our own powers and our own capital.

Comrade *Rykov* in his report to the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party of Russia, and in his article on the economic position of the country (*Ekonomicheskaya Shizn* No. 221 and 222) quotes some very plain figures concerning the diminution of our capital in connection with reconstruction.

Comrade *Rykov* states that our stock of steel which on the 1st of January 1921 amounted to 22 million puds had up to the 1st January 1922, gone down to 8,263,000 puds. The same thing applies to our cotton reserves. On the 1st of January 1920, they amounted to 8,576,257 puds, but on the 1st of August 1922, to only 4,500,000 puds. Our store of rubber amounted on the 1st of January 1922, to 71,821 puds; on the 15th of September to only 60,000 puds, etc., etc. These are plain figures. But there was no other course; we have no other sources. Industry must, however, be restored at any price. This reconstruction is only possible at the expense of capital. It is true it is a dangerous phenomenon. In the event of the stocks not being replaced in the future we shall be threatened with the collapse of various branches of industry. It is a matter of course that in view of this, the Soviet government is doing everything in order to restore those branches of our economy which in the future will be able to replace these shortages in our capital. This task is by no means an easy one and demands the exertion of all our powers, the output of much energy, unceasing labor and a careful frugality with all our resources. Slowly but surely, this process is going on, slowly but surely we are marching ever forwards.

Three Industrial Victories

By L. V. (Moscow).

The Utkina Electric Works.

Petrograd—which a number of foreign communists probably remember as a dead city—is being restored rapidly. The central telephone station, burned down last year, (probably by malevolent hands), is nearly rebuilt. Nearly all the bridges of the capital, which had been furrowed with deep ruts, have been put into good condition again,—and there are more than two hundred of them. And now a new electric plant has just been installed, the construction of which was begun in 1914, interrupted in 1916, and finally resumed in 1920 by the Supreme Economic Council under untold difficulties. It was necessary to gather together most expensive materials, and to call on the Army of Labor. Later there was a scarcity of skilled labor, which however trained itself right on the spot. Certain dock-yard workers became valuable technical aids to the engineers. Each day they had to invent and find more simple ways of doing things, for with the lack of materials and lack of knowledge, there were many mistakes made.

The plant has been functioning since the 8th of October. At the present time it is producing 4,500 kilowatts of electrical energy per day. It will use up about twelve million puds of peat per year, with which it will be furnished by the rich turf in the neighborhood of the city.

The construction of the Oukina Electric Works is a victory for the Petrograd workers and a step towards the reconstruction and electrification of the region.

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The first automobile leaves the socialized factories.

Another economic victory: The large automobile construction factory of the State, situated at Fili (8 kilometers from Moscow), the construction of which was begun in 1916, and only completed this year by the Supreme Economic Council, likewise celebrated on the 8th of October, the completion of the first automobile entirely constructed in its workshops. This vehicle has been offered by the factory to Comrade *Kalinine*, president of the All-Russian Executive of Soviets, who is still called more democratically the *starosta* (*The Elder*). The car in question built by Russian workers, with only Russian materials, is a magnificent 40 HP seven-seater.

The factory at Fili expects to build twenty more automobiles in 1922. Its program of construction is much greater for the following years. In 1923 it hopes to produce two thousand cars and another thousand in 1924.

And the first aeroplane.

On the 13th of October, at the aerodrome of *Khodynka*, the first aeroplane of Russian construction, especially built for passenger transportation, made its first flight And accomplished the third victory of Soviet industry.

The aeroplane, which weighs 98 puds (one pud = 16 kilograms) can carry a load of sixty puds, and accomplish a continuous flight of five hours at an average speed of 140 kilometers per hour. It was built according to the plans, and under the direction of the inventor, the pilot *V. N. Khioni*.