

the most important branches of this conflict consists in enlightening the proletarian consciousness by awakening the feeling of human dignity, and of revolutionary protest, amongst the black slaves of American capital. As stated above, this work can only be carried out by self-sacrificing and politically educated revolutionary negroes.

Needless to say, the work is not to be carried on in a spirit of negro chauvinism, which would then merely form a counterpart of white chauvinism,—but in a spirit of solidarity of all exploited without consideration of color.

What forms of organization are most suitable for the movement among the American negroes, it is difficult for me to say, as I am insufficiently informed regarding the concrete conditions and possibilities. But the forms of organization will be found, as soon as there is sufficient will to action.

With communist greetings,

L. Trotsky.

## THE CLASS STRUGGLE

### Jim Larkin the Militant

By Alexander Trachtenberg.

On January 17, Governor Smith of New York, set free by Executive pardon James Larkin, the militant leader of the Irish workers. The Governor's act is considered an astute political move in view of the large Irish electorate in New York, among whom the freeing of Larkin was a popular issue. In addition, the demand for amnesty for political prisoners is constantly growing among the workers of the state and the newly elected Governor, already looking toward the next election, is anxious to appear as a progressive among the workers.

In explaining his pardon of Larkin, the Governor appeased his capitalist supporters, by condemning the views of the Irish labor leader which he thought were "abhorrent to American institutions", and flattered with the liberals and the workers by declaring that Larkin's conviction was "a political case, where a man has been punished for the statement of his beliefs, which were not in violation of any existing laws."

On being freed, Larkin's first thought was of the other imprisoned comrades. He said he was given to understand at the prison "that the Governor was releasing all prisoners under the Criminal Anarchy Law, or I would not have accepted a pardon. It is more important that these men and women be released than that I should be."

Larkin was arrested together with other four Communists—Gitlow, Winitzky, Ferguson and Ruthenberg during the raids in November, 1919 and was tried for publishing the Manifesto of the Left Wing of the Socialist Party. He acted as his own attorney during the trial, using the court as a tribune to reach the workers with the message of the class struggle and revolutionary Socialism. The picked jury of business men, still under the influence of war hysteria and scared by stories in capitalist newspapers about confiscation of property, should Larkin's ideas triumph, found him guilty of being an Anarchist and opposed to organized government. Larkin's insistence that he was a Marxist and that he stood for organized government proved of no avail. The court sentenced him to serve from 5 to 10 years.

The news of Larkin's imprisonment in America, stirred the workers of Ireland in whose behalf he crossed the ocean. The Transport Workers Union, whose secretary he has been, declared a protest strike on July 21, 1920 demanding his immediate release. They wanted their leader freed and called upon American labor to fight for his liberation.

The largest portion of Larkin's active life is bound up with the struggles of the Irish workers. After leading a strike of shipbuilders in Liverpool in 1905, Larkin was appointed organizer of the National Union of Dock laborers. He soon proved a valuable asset to the union, having gotten in 10 months 45,000 workers to join the union. In 1907 Larkin goes to Ireland to lead a strike of Dock workers in Belfast. From that time Larkin devotes himself to the building of a militant labor movement in Ireland. Dissatisfied with the reactionary policies of the British union to which the Irish dock workers belonged, Larkin forms an independent union of Transport workers based on industrial lines. This union soon becomes the most militant labor organization in Ireland, setting an example to the other unions which were branches of the British Organizations. The reactionary labor leaders, fearing Larkin's influence, cause his arrest on framed-up charges in order to discredit him with the workers. During that imprisonment, as on similar occasions in Ireland, the workers secure his release.

Upon the return of James Connolly, who founded the Marxian Socialist movement in Ireland in 1897, Larkin joins him in carrying revolutionary Socialist propaganda to the broad masses of Irish workers, in order to win them away from the

influences of the reactionaries and nationalists. They organize many labor unions and separate others from the conservative British organizations. This period marks the real beginning of the Irish labor movement. Then came the historic struggle in 1913. The Dublin Transport Workers were locked out in an attempt to destroy their militant organization. For 8 months the struggle lasted with Larkin leading the gallant fight of the workers. The strike attracted the attention of the labor movement the world over. The English and Scottish workers poured in over 1,000,000 dollars to aid the brave Dublin strikers. The battle was drawn, but the workers won the right to belong to the industrial union.

After the strike the Transport workers union sent Larkin on a world tour, partly for a rest and partly to tell the story of their struggle to the workers of other lands, and also to collect funds among Irish emigrants for their organization and the Citizen's Army which they organized to fight British Imperialism. The world war caught Larkin in the United States. He tried to go back to Ireland, but the British Secret Service, with which cooperated the American Department of Justice during the war, kept close watch on Larkin and all his attempts to leave the country were frustrated. In America, Larkin joins the Socialist Party and tours the country on behalf of the struggle in Ireland. Then comes the Easter uprising in 1916 and Connolly is shot by the British court martial for participating in the armed struggle. Larkin is anxious to return to his homeland to continue the work of Connolly, but he is now hounded and watched closer than ever.

After the Russian Revolution broke out, Larkin immediately became one of the enthusiastic adherents and supporters of the Bolshevik program. Similarly when the Left movement in the Socialist Party developed in 1919 Larkin joined it. His conviction and imprisonment came as a result of his affiliation with the Left Wing. The British and American governments, long before that, were seeking for an opportunity to wreak their vengeance upon him.

Larkin is now going back to Ireland which he has tried to reach for the last 8 years. During his absence great changes took place there. Ireland became a "free" State. The labor movement has fallen largely under the control of old time conservative leaders. The revolutionary vanguard of the Irish workers represented by the CP. of I., a direct descendant of the movement which he and Connolly organized, and the militants in the labor unions are waiting impatiently for him to lead them against the Irish and British bourgeoisie as he so valiantly led them before. The Transport Workers Union which he founded and which now has a membership of about 80,000, even under the present leadership, has kept open his place as Secretary of the union.

Nearly 300,000 workers are now organized in the Irish labor unions. They need Larkin to clean the Augean stables of their organizations and instill a new spirit in the labor movement.

That he will answer the call of the militants in the labor movement, and lend his indomitable spirit and indefatigable energy to the task of lining up Irish labor with the revolutionary workers of the world, is expected by every one who knew him in Ireland and America. Although he has suffered much while a captive of the American plutocracy, and his large frame may not be physically as strong as before, his revolutionary ardor has not abated.

The militants of Ireland, working under the leadership of the Communist International and under the inspiration of the Russian Revolution for the same thing Larkin always believed in and fought for, will find him reporting for duty as soon as he sets foot on Irish soil.

The Communists of the world join with the revolutionists of Ireland in extending to Jim Larkin, freed from an American Bastille, a hearty welcome and bid him take his place among those who are working for the overthrow of capitalism everywhere and for the establishment of the International Workers Republic.

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Printed by Friedrichstadt-Druckerei G. m. b. H., Berlin SW. 48

# Frankfort International Congress: March 17

English Edition.

Unpublished Manuscripts - Please reprint

# - INTERNATIONAL - PRESS CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 3 No. 26

15th March 1923

Central Bureau: Berlin SW 48, Friedrichstrasse 225, III. — Postal address Franz Dahlem, Berlin SW 48, Friedrichstrasse 225, III for Inprekorr. — Telegraphic address: Inprekorr.

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## The Situation in Germany

### The Frankfort Conference

By Heinrich Brandler.

The English occupation authorities have forbidden the holding of the International Conference in Cologne. Herr Weissmann, the chief of the detective headquarters of the Ebert Republic has issued orders to raid the conference. M. Poincaré not only holds the participants in the Essen conference as prisoners, but he is organizing the suppression of the French revolutionary trade unions of the CGTU, and of the Communists, who, in spite of persecution are conducting a splendid campaign in preparation for the conference in Frankfort. The rulers are all united in their persecution of the revolutionary working class. The violent quarrels over booty, which are taking place among the international bourgeoisie, threaten to plunge the whole world into a fresh war. But French and German, English and Italian, Czechish and Polish are—in spite of all the differences among themselves, so far as the bourgeoisie of these countries is concerned—united for the persecution of the working class, and in particular—its vanguard, the Communists. The French spy centre works hand in hand with the German political police. That disturbs neither the patriotism of the French nor of the German bourgeoisie.

A better illustration of the class solidarity of the bourgeoisie when dealing with the working class is impossible. This fact must make it clear to the dumbest worker, that the conflicts between the rulers of the various countries, in spite of all patriotic and nationalist phrases, even when the conflict is fought out by military means, are merely concerned with differences arising from capitalist class interests. The French bourgeoisie has more in common with the German bourgeois than with the French worker, and vice versa.

The end for which the French bourgeoisie is fighting is the domination of Europe. The starting point may be the Ruhr occupation which ostensibly is the result of Germany's failure to pay reparations. In France those voices are increasing which desire the policy of expansion—the permanent union of the Rhenish Westphalian coal mines with the French ore mines under French suzerainty. It is in accordance with the nature of capitalism that the German bourgeoisie set itself the same aims in

the world war, and in the event of its victory it would have exercised precisely the same ruthless brutality as does the heavily armed French Imperialism towards the vanquished Germans.

The defensive struggle against French Imperialism can only be victorious if conducted by revolutionary methods, i. e., by the international proletariat, and before all, by the German and French working class. The victory of the French bourgeoisie, like the victory of the German bourgeoisie is equally a victory over the French and German working class. In any case it confirms the rule of the victorious bourgeoisie over the working class of both countries.

This fact renders clear the necessity for revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in France and Germany. Only the victory of the revolutionary working class over the bourgeoisie will put an end to the constant danger of war. Only when the French iron ore areas and the Ruhr coal are taken away from the profit hunting bourgeoisie, and the joint restoration of the devastated areas placed under the care of the Franco-German Soviet Republics, will there be an end to the century long quarrel between the French and German ruling class over the hegemony of Europe.

With this end in view the Frankfort Conference will have the practical task of organizing the forces for realizing these aims. Up to the present, the Amsterdamers, and the Second and 2½ Internationals have not responded to the invitation of the Committee of 23 of the German Shop Stewards. The German social-democratic press has kept up a systematic campaign of silence about this Conference. The reformist ADGB. (General German Trade Union Federation), and the United Social Democracy are pursuing a policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, and are putting up a sham opposition to Stinnes' program. The Cuno government has issued orders not to raise wages—because "prices are falling". During the month of February, the cost of living (absolute necessities) has risen by more than 100%. In spite of the "dollar depreciation", prices are rising constantly. Mass unemployment has already begun.

The trade union leaders are satisfied with "protests"; the social-democratic fraction—with Parliamentary decrees. Both of them fear the organization of the masses for the defensive struggle, as does the devil—holy water.

In the meanwhile, the German bourgeoisie is taking advantage of the Ruhr occupation, to kill two birds with one stone. By means of its nationalistic uproar it hopes to get a larger share in the Franco-German or International Iron and Coal Trust, and within its *Vaterland*, it hopes to be able to crush the rebelling working class, by a combination of National Guard, Military Police, and Fascist bands.

The social-democratic Minister Severing, also confines himself to "protests" against the activities of the National Guard, and his glorious United Social Democratic Party of Germany maintains a sepulchral silence in face of the most far-reaching preparations to enact another blood-bath against the proletariat, as did Noske before the Kapp-putsch (until he and Ebert, together with the entire social-democratic government, had to flee.)

The German Ebert Republic will meet its death in the Ruhr conflict, if it fails to win over the working-class and to displace the present bourgeois government with a *Workers' Government*, capable of shifting the crushing burdens from the proletariat on to the bourgeoisie, of dealing a death blow to the Fascist bands, and of transforming the Bourgeois State of 1918 into a Socialist State.

The sabotage of the social democratic and trade union leaders, retards the process and protracts the misery of the German and the international proletariat. Already we hear the rebellious voice of the social-democratic masses against the policy of their leaders. In Saxony, the social-democratic workers rejected the coalition with the bourgeoisie (which was officially demanded of them), and have pronounced themselves in favor of cooperating with the C. P. In Thuringia and in Berlin, social-democratic workers go hand in hand with the Communists—against the decisions of their own party leaders, and form Defense Units against Fascism.

The French invasion has not yet precipitated the catastrophic collapse. We are still in the midst of a protracted crisis. But the workers are beginning to stir. The intensified activity of the Fascisti is rousing them to a determined defensive struggle.

It will therefore be the task of the *International Conference* at Frankfurt to organize and reinforce the awakened national and international forces. Thanks to the sabotage of the Second and 2½ Internationals, the Frankfurt International Conference may not as yet be in a position to flash the signal for the attack,—but it can none the less accomplish a great deal in mobilizing and developing the fighting forces. This work done, the way will be clear to take up the struggle, *with*, otherwise *without*, and if necessary *against*, the helpers of the bourgeoisie from the Second and 2½ Internationals.

## On to the International Conference on March 17th!

To all organizations affiliated with the Communist and Red Labor Union Internationals!

Dear Comrades,

The shop stewards of Rhenish Westphalia are convening an international conference for March, 18, the anniversary of the Paris Commune. The task of this conference will be to unite all revolutionary and honest elements of the working class to

combat the danger of a fresh war,

and the imperialist war threatened by the mobilization in Poland, and by the war preparations in Czecho-Slovakia. The shameful attack made by the French bourgeoisie on the peaceful population, the greedy and egoistic policy of the German magnates, the savage greed of the industrial and financial sharks of England, the appetite of the American money-bags and of their worthy partners in Japan, are thrusting the working masses of all countries into an abyss of filth and blood. The sole class fighting consciously and consistently against imperialist war is the proletariat. But its final word is yet to be spoken; it must now step forward and stamp out the germ of imperialist greed of the ruling classes:

All labor parties and trade union federations

are invited to this conference, whose task it will be to organize a united front against the new international war. The occupation of the Ruhr, undertaken at the behest of French heavy industry, must be as decisively warded off as every other imperialist action.

The Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions request all organizations to take active part in the coming conference, and to enlighten the working masses of their countries regarding the great significance of the coming international conference.

The conference held in Essen on the eve of the Ruhr occupation was the first practical step towards an international struggle. This first step must be followed by further ones, a practical struggle must be organized against the mutual annihilation of the peoples.

The Second and Amsterdam Internationals,

as well as all the organizations affiliated to them, are invited to this conference. We hope that the masses of workers belonging to these organizations will know how to force their leaders to take part in this international conference, whose task it is to save the working masses from the danger of a fresh war.

Moscow, March 3, 1923.

Committee of Action of the Communist International and of the Red International of Labor Unions.

## The German National Committee of Shop Stewards on the International Conference against the occupation of the Ruhr.

The national committee of the shop stewards of Germany makes an appeal to the shop stewards, and to the workers of Germany organized politically and in trade unions. The following is an extract from the appeal:

The committee of 23 belonging to the Rhenish-Westphalian shop steward council has convened an international conference for the 17th of March 1923, with the object of taking up the fight against the new bloodbath threatened by international capital. All international labor organizations and unions are called upon to take part.

The invitation to take part in the conference has been accepted by the following organizations:

1. The Red International of Labor Unions.
2. III. (Communist) International.
3. The Communist Parties of France, England, Belgium, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and Germany.
4. The Socialist Working Union (2½), the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, the Independent Social Democratic Party of Poland and the Social Democratic parties of the Border States.
5. The Committee of Action of the Communist Parties of France and Germany.
6. The Miners' Trade Unions of Yorkshire (England), the English dockers and engineers, the Red trade unionists of France, the revolutionary trade unions of Czecho-Slovakia, the Polish Trade Union Opposition, the Italian oppositional trade union fractions.
7. The national committee of the German Shop Stewards.

On the other hand, the Amsterdam Trade Union International, the Second International, and the Social Democratic parties and trade unions of France, England, Belgium, and Germany have sent no direct reply as yet. In so far as the notices and articles, conference and other public speeches of the Amsterdam Trade Union International, the United German Social Democratic Party, and the German Trade Union Alliance, are decisive for judging the attitude of these organizations, they do not intend to participate in the conference.

The Amsterdam Trade Union International resolved, before the occupation of the Ruhr, to reply to any warlike measures and threats of war danger, from whatever side they might come, with the general strike. The Amsterdam International, in whose ranks the overwhelming majority of the Western European proletariat is organized, has not even made the slightest attempt to organize or to agitate for a general strike.

Millions of workers and their families may perish; unemployment, want, and misery may drive them to desperation, millions of proletarians may again tear each other to pieces on the battle field in the interests of capital,—this does not concern these labor leaders. For them the main point is, and remains, united front with capital. Workers, class comrades!

Will you tolerate this? Will you continue to look quietly on while your chosen leaders abandon the class interests of the proletariat?

Demand of your leaders:

The united front of the international proletariat.

## POLITICS

### The Patriotism of the German Chemical Industry

By Karl Radek.

The fourth number of the Russian periodical "War and Peace", appearing in Berlin, contains an excellent article on the book written by the English major Victor Lefevre, published simultaneously in English and French under the title of "The Riddle of the Rhine". The book gives a general survey of the rôle played by the chemical industry during the recent world war, and predicts that in the next war a decisive rôle will be played by the manufacture of poisonous gases and explosives. The writer studies the existing relations of power in the sphere of war chemistry, and arrives at the conclusion that the mighty chemical industry of Germany affords her the possibility of restoring a great part of her military power in the future.

The German press has treated this book as a piece of anti-German propaganda. But we find in it the views seriously held in English and French military circles. As a proof of this we may mention the fact that French spies have long been endeavoring to learn the German secrets for the manufacture of synthetic ammonia and nitrogen. The records of the German courts of justice show a large number of cases in which engineers have been brought to trial on the charge of having sold quite unimportant information to French spies, and have been severely punished. The indictment brought against them has generally been that of high treason.

And now, at the very moment when the whole German bourgeoisie, and the whole press, is calling upon the German people, and of course upon the German working masses in particular, to be ready to sacrifice themselves in order to give French imperialism the answer it deserves, at the very moment when the German bourgeoisie demands the absurdest forms of boycott, not only against French capitalism, but against every individual Frenchman living in Germany, at this very moment, the German proletariat learns that one of Germany's greatest chemical works, the Baden Aniline and Soda Factory at Ludwigshafen, has made an agreement with the French government, and has sold to it for 5 million gold francs the secrets which might, under certain circumstances, have represented the mightiest weapon of Germany against French imperialism.

On February 6., the French government demanded the ratification of this agreement from the French Parliament. The reporter of the Chamber, Leboucq, declared that in France there was a shortage of one half the nitrogen required for the manufacture of explosives, about 110,000 tons. He pointed out that as early as 1919 negotiations had been entered into with the Baden Aniline and Soda Factory, and that these works had undertaken to aid France in the building and equipment of a great factory in the environs of Toulouse, for the manufacture of the chemical weapons required by the French republic for the next war. The works at Toulouse were to be superintended by German engineers. The Baden Aniline Factory delivers over all secrets of manufacture to the French government against payment of a sum of 5 millions of francs, and a 2 to 4% share of the profits of the new works. The new factory is to have from the commencement, a daily output of 100 tons of ammonia. The works are to be property of the state, which is to possess 250,000 of the 300,000 shares to be issued. For obvious reasons the bourgeois press of Germany has preserved a strict conspiracy of silence with regard to this matter. When it was dragged forth into the light of day by the communist press, the German patriots of chemical capital hastened to assure the working masses that there was no need for them to excite themselves over the affair, indignation was superfluous, and moreover much too late, for the Fatherland had long since been betrayed and sold, in the year 1919! We are not aware that when the crime of high treason has been proved against anyone, he can save himself from the gallows by pointing out that his crime was committed three years ago. But the fact remains that the agreement in question was not ratified by the French government until February 6., and that the great German patriots of the chemical industry did not annul this contract, not even after the occupation of the Ruhr area.

Stinnes, Thyssen, and Co. call upon the German workers to demonstrate against French imperialism, because the latter claims 51% of the shares of the Franco-German coal and iron trust now being formed. The bourgeois press of Germany preaches an anti-French crusade, and calls upon the starving German workers to fight for 51% for Herr Stinnes. The first consequences arising from the German plutocratic struggle for

predominance within the Franco-German iron and coal syndicate are again to be paid for by the German workers. Between the 10th and 24th of January, the prices for the barest necessities of life rose by 63%; this is admitted by the official statistics, which never give the whole truth. Between January 27. and February 2., that is, within a single week, prices again rose by another 68%. The coal barons doubled the prices of their coal deliveries, and in the period between January 1. and February 1., the price of iron actually rose by 375%. It is scarcely necessary to observe that the workers' wages remained, very far behind these increases.

And this is the moment chosen by the magnates of the German chemical industry to bargain with the deadly enemy of the German people, to strike a bargain for the sale of valuable weapons, and to sell these to the enemy for 5 million gold francs! Thus the German bourgeoisie demonstrates, in the most cynical manner, that when it cries out: The Fatherland is in danger! it is only thinking of the danger threatening its money bags. If it succeeds in coming to an understanding with French imperialism, on favorable or unfavorable conditions, then it shouts with equal enthusiasm: Long live high treason! But if it finds that the "hereditary enemy" is not giving it enough, is only offering it 20 instead of 30 pieces of silver, again it shrieks at the top of its voice: Long live national resistance at the expense of the German working class!

It would be wrong to draw from all this the conclusion that the German workers should abandon their struggle against French imperialism. On the contrary, this struggle is a part of their own class war. But it may be seen from the above that the German bourgeoisie is not the organizer of national defence, but, on the contrary, is prepared to betray its fatherland any moment for a sufficient price. Only Germany's proletariat can save her from the unhappy fate of the colonies, from imperialist exploitation. And for this reason the German proletariat must make a final break with the bourgeoisie, and must act as a class, consciously taking its own fate, and the fate of the whole nation, into its own hands.

## Political Progress in the United States

By Israel Amter.

The political life of the United States is passing through a remarkable development. Although from the very establishment of the republic the capitalists, the big landowners and manufacturers have understood how to guide the affairs of the country—to their own interests, even though they made some superficial concessions to "democracy"—groups are forming representing other interests and made up of men determined to fight.

The country has been trained to an understanding of the "necessity" of politicians and statesmen changing their position—"according to circumstances". From Wilson's "keeping us out of war" to his getting us in up to our necks; from his visit to Versailles where he intended to put the United States into the League of Nations; from his defeat by the Republicans who despised American interference in European affairs, to the gradual relinquishing of this position by staunch Republicans who are demanding American intervention because "conditions have changed etc., etc."—through these stages of shifting, of duplicity and capitalist manoeuvring, the American people has got used to any position that the government happens to take.

But as already stated, there are groups forming that look to their own self-interests. The most remarkable of these groups is the Farmer group. The position of the American farmer is very bad. In the decade from 1910 to 1920, the farm mortgage debt increased from about \$720,000,000 to more than \$4,000,000,000. During this period the World War took place, which brought prosperity to the country, but left the farmer out in the cold. During the war, prices presumably were regulated, but the farmer received little of the higher prices that the people had to pay. The speculators made tremendous profits, while the farmers' debts piled up.

During and since the war, the railroads have demanded higher freight rates. This put a further obstacle in the way of the farmers. The war demanded high production—and the farmers did their share. After the war when "deflation" set in, when Europe was unable to buy and when a general state of uncertainty arose, the production dropped to less than half of that of the war period. The unemployment of 1921 almost drove the farmers to bankruptcy. Industrial production reached one of the lowest levels in the modern history of America. The farmers were hard hit. Their sons left the farms to seek some occupation in the city. The crop of 1921 could not be disposed of even in 1922.

During this period when the farmers were making frantic efforts to maintain themselves, the government declared itself in no position to help them. There was plenty of money for the emergency fleet, which cost the government more than three billion dollars and which it sold last year for a little more than \$300,000,000! There was \$500,000,000 for the railroads; there was promise of a substantial subsidy for the shipping interests. But the government could not help the farmers, although they were advising the unemployed and the returned soldiers to "go back to the land".

In 1915 there was organized the *Non-Partisan League*, an organization of farmers, looking to the protection of their interests. They recognized that by pooling their interests, in marketing, storing, banking, they would be able to better their condition and exert pressure on the railroads and on the market. Immediately, Wall Street began a violent campaign against them. Their first stronghold was the state of North Dakota, which they captured and in which they established their own granaries, their own banks and marketing facilities. But Wall Street was mightier. One bank after the other had to close. An insidious campaign of slander was conducted against them, so that they lost political control and only succeeded this year in electing a United States senator.

But the thought of the organization could not be throttled so easily. The *Non-Partisan League* has spread. Today it has tremendous influence among the farmers in Montana, Colorado, Oklahoma, Washington, Iowa. There is a group of men in the Senate and House who were elected by farmers and act as their representatives. There is another group who were elected by farmers and workers. They belong to both the Republican and Democratic Party, one to the Farmer Labor Party. This group is composed of about 12 men, among the most resolute and intelligent in the Senate—fighters who will go the limit and obstruct if they cannot attain their ends any other way.

Wilson's defeat in 1920 was the most overwhelming that America has witnessed. Harding's plurality of more than 7,000,000, declared beyond any suspicion that the country wanted no more of Wilson. His policy and double-dealing were condemned, and Harding, "honest" Harding, who would not take us into Europe, was put into office. (Not that that made any difference to Wall Street, which keeps up this marionette show for the delight of the stupid populace.) But Wilson, the man of the "New Freedom", who pretended to realize the viciousness of the system and wanted to see "fair play", had proved to be a tyrant. At the behest of Wall Street, he sent troops against the striking steel workers in 1919, he threatened the coal miners in 1920. Harding, the overwhelming choice of the "people" could do no such thing. In 1921, Harding utterly disregarded the eight to ten millions unemployed, offering no help, but merely appealing to the employers to aid them. In 1922, when more than a million coal miners, railroad workers and textile workers went out on strike, he found no better method of satisfying their demands than that employed by his predecessor—at the behest of Wall Street. Lead and prison was their reward. The brutality of Attorney General Daugherty, who threatened the life of organized labor by his infamous injunction, put the cap on the ability of the Harding administration.

Floundering in international policy; open sponsorship of big capital (ship subsidy); contempt for the needs of the ex-soldiers, who demanded a bonus; disregard for the demands of the farmers; a threat to destroy organized labor. In 1922, the Republican Party lost the 7,000,000 votes that it gained in 1920.

But most of all has been the lesson taught to the working-class and to the farmers of America. Namely, that there is no difference between the representation of the Republican and the Democratic parties. The candidates are selected by Wall Street and must carry out Wall Street's orders. For no politician can live in America unless he is backed by Wall Street or by conscious, organized groups representing certain class interests.

The next Congress offers a more friendly appearance. Yet no revolutionary is blinded by such appearances. He knows very well that although the voters manifested a natural reaction to the brutality and disregard that the Harding administration has shown to the needs of the workers and farmers, the repudiation of Harding does not mean a conscious political expression of a new direction in American affairs. For the moment, greater liberalism is being manifested. A number of well-meaning progressives have been elected to the Senate and House. A number of progressive or liberal governors of both parties have been elected in several States. There will be a pause in the violent terrorization of the working class. By the passage of several Farmers' Subsidy bills, the administration will endeavour to regain the favor and support of the

farmers. *American capitalism sits firmly in the saddle and can afford this luxury!*

It is quite natural that in 1921 the farmers should have been inclined to support intervention in Europe; and again in 1922. They could not dispose of their products and realized that, until Europe was rehabilitated, there would be no stable market for American agricultural produce. The high cost of American industrial products and the prices which were raised still more by the enactment of the new tariff bill, aroused the antagonism of the farmers. Hence they looked to intervention in the broken-down affairs of Europe. They were especially interested in a revival of the buying power of Germany—one of their biggest customers for wheat and cotton. In return they would expect German industrial products at the lower price at which Germany could produce them.

American manufacturers, on the other hand, were against intervention. They fear the competition of Germany. They have constantly pointed out that American workers must agree to work longer hours and accept lower wages, if America is successfully to compete with Germany. But the American workman is not ready to accept any such terms. There has arisen a so-called scarcity of labor. The "normalcy" of 1,500,000 unemployed has been attained, and several industries are in want of more "hands", particularly the steel and automobile industries. The former wants cheap, unskilled labor, willing to toil 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 25 cents an hour—a pauper's wage in the United States!

American bankers, again, did not take a definite stand for some time. It was hard to say whether French Imperialism would gain the upper hand in Europe or not. The trip of Clémenceau to America did not help to win sympathy. The leading press did its best to support his enthusiastic sabre-rattling speeches; but all to no avail. France had not ratified the Washington Disarmament Conference decisions. France was conducting an extensive military crusade. She was expending a large part of her budget for military purposes and, in addition, was helping to equip the Polish army. Furthermore, France was engaging in every kind of military adventure, which would prevent her from paying her debt and, at the same time, possibly lead to a collision with American Imperialism.

Perhaps one of the most emphatic indications of American capitalist opposition to France was due to the conduct of France in the Angora matter. American imperialists are extremely interested in the oil fields of Mosul and of Mesopotamia. It is bad enough to have to negotiate with one government—Great Britain—without having the extra task of dickering with another far more militant government. France was disturbing enough, without interfering with the direct interests of America!

Hence there gradually evolved a tendency among American financiers to intervene in European affairs—on the side of Germany. Not that there was any excess of love for Germany, but there was a need of checkmating France and French ambitions.

But all of this challenged the stand of the Republican Party, which was against any interference in European affairs. Life, however, is stronger than all resolutions. Borah, who wanted nothing to do with Europe, introduced a motion calling on the president to convene an international economic conference, to settle the huge financial difficulties burdening the governments of Europe. President Harding declared that the time was not yet ripe, and that other steps were being taken to arrange matters. Since that time, the British debt matter has been arranged. Great Britain and the United States may now work hand in hand, although it is difficult to determine how the British government is going to raise the interest on the debt! Time has passed, and the Ruhr question has become the most urgent in the world. Again Borah calls on the President to convene an international economic conference. Report now has it that two American interests are intervening most effectively in the Ruhr affair, one on either side of the question. Harriman, Kuhn, Loeb and Co.—i.e., Standard Oil—are helping to "stabilize" the German mark by advancing \$100,000,000 to the Reichsbank; while J. P. Morgan, Schneider-Creusot and the Credit Lyonnais are supporting the French government in an effort to "stabilize" the franc. The prize is, of course, the Ruhr industrial district.

American financial interests are settling the Ruhr question among themselves—and the U.S. Government will merely have the privilege of confirming their decision. This is as should be in a Class State!

So America will come out of its benign state of "beautiful isolation", as Wilson wished—and for which he was decisively defeated; as Harding did not wish it—and for which he was decisively elected.

The American worker has been little interested in European politics. Despite the fact that 38 million Americans (or one third of the population), are of foreign stock—the American worker has had troubles enough of his own without bothering about Europe. Distance and remoteness from international relations have fostered this indifference. The war woke him up—and he was glad to take an oath that America would have to stay out of European affairs. Europe meant war for him—and it means war to him today.

He will now have to get used to the idea of war, for American finance has decided to invest in Europe. Out of this internationalism of capitalism, the American worker will imbibe an international solidarity of the working-class which is still to be created, to be sure, but of which he is completely ignorant. Until he has learned this, he will not see the snare of the capitalist "democracy" with which America is blessed; nor will he perceive the might of the international proletariat in putting an end to this game of International Imperialism.

## FASCISM

### To the Executive Committees of all Sections of the Communist International!

Dear Comrades.

The Executives of the Communist International, the Red International of Labor Unions and the Communist Youth International have decided, to launch an extensive international campaign against Fascism.

An *International Fighting Fund* must be created in every country, for the purpose of combatting Fascism by word, pen and deed. In the first place, efficient support should be given to the Italian labor organizations.

The statute for the collection and administration of the *International Fighting Fund* against Fascism, has already been published in No. 16 of the *English International Press Correspondence*, (Feb. 15, 1923).

The International Committee for the administration of the *Fighting Fund* and for the organization of the international campaign against Fascism, has been provisionally established in Berlin. Comrade *Klara Zetkin* is chairman of said committee.

The Provisional International Committee has addressed an open letter to the Executives of all the international proletarian organizations, with the request that they join in the struggle against Fascism. We recommend that you request every proletarian organization in your respective country to participate in the creation of National Committees. In any case, you must at once create Provisional National Committees (according to the decisions of the Comintern and R.I.L.U.) which are to organize the necessary money collections.

Needless to say, the anti-Fascist campaign is not to confine itself to collections. The National Committees should at once take up the fight against Fascism,—in the press, in meetings, in the factories and trade unions. They are to be in constant touch with the International Committee and report to it on their activities.

As soon as the Provisional International Committee will have overcome the first technical difficulties, it will send detailed instructions and plans to the various National Committees, on the organization of the fight against Fascism.

We request you to get to work without delay.

With Communist greetings,

The Provisional International Committee for Combatting Fascism.

Klara Zetkin (Chairman).

### Circular of the Communist Party of Italy

To the Communist Parties of all Countries!  
To the Italian Communist groups abroad!  
To all Italian Communist refugees!

The latest wave of persecution by the Italian Fascist government which has caused many thousands of communists and also the greater portion of the local party leaders to be thrust into prison, has evoked a noticeable response from the masses of the international proletariat. We hereby wish to notify all our comrades abroad and the Italian political refugees that our party has preserved its central organizations uninjured and is thereby enabled to order its ranks.

We appeal to the Executives of our European and American brother parties to support our political refugees, in so far as they are shown to be not "professional refugees", to

supervise as well as to control their communist activity and to induce them to enter the respective section of the communist international, where they are residing.

The Communist Party of Italy also desires that among its members who, in consequence of the severe political persecution, are compelled to leave the country, no spying or *agent provocateur* elements creep in who abuse the solidarity of labor with the help of the name of the party or of the Communist International.

The Executive of the Communist Party of Italy wishes to state, that it decidedly condemns all individual initiative on the part of Italian or other comrades for the support of refugee Italian workers, or of those who are still in the trenches of the class war in Italy. It is of the opinion that the whole initiative for relief should be in the hands of the Executives of the brother parties; over the monies they collect as well as their distribution for the support of the refugees, the fight of the Communist Party of Italy against Fascism and of the victims of Fascism in Italy itself. The Executive of the Communist Party of Italy has made arrangements with the Executive of the Communist Party of Germany for the latter to gather in the monies remitted by the brother parties in Europe and America, therefore requests all communist parties to get into touch with the Communist Party of Germany which will receive all the funds collected for the use of the Communist Party of Italy.

The Executive of the Communist Party of Italy requests all brother parties to publish this appeal in their press and to make the appropriate comments thereon.

March 1923.

The Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Italy.

### The great Fascist Offensive against the Italian proletariat

By U. T. (Rome).

The great anti-communist offensive has passed its apex; the mass arrests have not yet ceased, but the average number of daily arrests no longer amounts to thousands. The prisons are so crowded that they cannot accommodate another guest. On the other hand, despite three weeks of continuous arrests, house searches, and deeds of violence, the government has not yet succeeded in discovering the very slightest proof of "the great Bolshevik conspiracy", and even in the bourgeois camp sceptic voices may be discerned as to the existence of a plot. Here and there it is already being pointed out that the arrest of over 8000 citizens, not for any demonstrable offence or at the behest of the legal authorities, but at the commands of the police, is quite disproportionate to the charges brought up against them. Even bourgeois circles are beginning to observe the very slight respect in which the life, property, and liberty of the individual are held, especially on the part of the new "National Militia", which are but an ill disguised replica of the former bands of black shirt robbers. And much surprise is expressed that, after two years of murder of workers and destruction of the labor movement, and after four months of "active work" on the part of the dictatorship, there still exist thousands of communists conspiring against the state.

The legal authorities have now taken up the matter; for the "Fascist revolution" has not yet altered the legislative apparatus to such an extent that political opponents can be sentenced by the police (but we expect that this will be the case presently). In the hands of the legal authorities it became immediately apparent that Mussolini has acted with incredible irresponsibility; many hundreds of communists have had to be set free again.

But no comrade occupying any office in the Party, of however slight importance, has been set free; this reveals the goal of the government; having recognized that it is impossible to exterminate the class consciousness so firmly rooted in the workers, it is now applying every imaginable means to prevent the workers from uniting and organizing a powerful fighting instrument, a Communist Party.

When the arrested communists are released, the authorities demand their signature to a promise never again to take active part in party politics or trade union work.

The Fascist government is accompanying this great anti-communist offensive with another action, not so conspicuous, but more despicable; it deprives the workers and employees who are hostile to it of their means of livelihood. Thus the railway authorities discharged fifty communist, socialist, and anarchist railwaymen, without notice or compensation, with the official declaration that these were leaders of the Red railwaymen's union.

Similar measures are being taken by all public authorities with regard to those of their employees who have been victims

of the mass arrests of the last few days, and this, before the legal authorities have given any verdict regarding actual guilt. As there are a considerable number of followers of the Communist Party among the Civil Service employees, hundreds of workers have thus been thrown on the streets during the last few days. And some women teachers, who have been counted among the most active Party members for years, have been obliged to give up their positions.

The Fascist dictatorship is doing its utmost to break the resistance of the Italian proletariat by means of prison and starvation, and to destroy the Communist Party down to the very roots. But it will never attain this object. It is true that the Communist Party was condemned to a few days of inactivity, after the severe blows dealt it in the first days of February, but now it has so far recovered that it has been able to resume its political and organizational activities. And the masses of workers let no opportunity pass of showing upon what ideals they set their hopes. The behavior of the Trieste workers is especially worthy of admiration; they have succeeded in publishing the *Lavoratore* daily for three weeks, although all the editors had been arrested. Here plain workmen have suddenly sprung into the places of editors and newspaper administrators. Two episodes of the last few days show how entirely erroneous is the idea—especially prevalent abroad—that the Fascisti have the general sympathy of the population on their side.

On the 18. February, eleven of those arrested in Venice were released again. Among them were four railwaymen. From the prison they proceeded all together straight to the station; on their arrival they were received by a warm demonstration of sympathy, by workers of all parties, and by many non-partisans.

Last week, in Turin, the factory commission was elected for the Scat undertaking. The Fascisti prevented other lists than their own from being sent in, and the Red trade unions therefore took no part in the election. The result was as follows: 800 electors out of 1200 took part in the election; 500 gave in blanks, 103 gave in Fascist ballots scribbled with accusations against the Fascisti, and only 200 really voted for the Fascisti.

The Italian workers are thus offering resistance against the offensive taken up by their enemies. Robbed of freedom to hold meetings, of free press and speech, bleeding from fresh wounds every day, abandoned as spoil to its hereditary enemies, the Italian proletariat groans beneath the heavy yoke, but it clings to its faith, and does not permit itself to be robbed of its class consciousness. Whenever the workers have an opportunity of expressing their true sentiments, they demonstrate unequivocally that they feel nothing but hatred and contempt for Fascism.

The Italian workers are offering an admirable resistance in the waiting position into which they have been pressed back; if they are to be enabled to take their places in the foremost ranks again, they need the active solidarity of the international proletariat.

## Italian Fascisti in Germany

By Heinz Neumann (Berlin).

It has been known for a long time that the Italian Fascisti maintain close relations, not only with Russian monarchists and Hungarian White Guards, but also with German counter-revolutionists. In 1922 Mussolini made a personal journey to Berlin in order to consult with Wulle and others of the German Nationalists.

Now it turns out that the connections between German and Italian reaction extend far beyond a mere "community of ideas". The Italian Fascisti have formed regular fighting organizations in the German republic.

As early as the end of September 1922, a "Fascist union" was officially founded at a secret session in Berlin; this is affiliated to the Fascist party of Italy, and was entrusted with special missions in Germany. Its object is the organization of Italians residing in Germany ("tradespeople, manufacturers, nationally minded workers, students, newspaper correspondents, etc."). It receives the active help of the diplomatic representatives of Italy, and of the arch-reactionary Italian officers attached to the various Entente missions in Germany. A confidential circular calls upon all "reliable Italians" to found Italian Fascist unions and Fascist groups in every part of Germany.

After Mussolini's *coup d'état*, the Italian Fascisti in Germany extended their sphere of operations. They now receive ample funds from the Italian government. On the evening of January 19, 1923, a further secret meeting of the Fascist society took place. This session was participated in, amongst others, by the following Italian murderers of workmen: captain Corrado Gustosa, captain Chiaffredo Mastrella, Alessandro Mosca, Engineer Luigi Sordi, Dr. Giuseppe Zeni. Gustosa

was elected political secretary of the Fascist Union in Germany, and Zeni as organizational secretary. At this meeting mentioned a circular from Mussolini addressed: "To the Italians abroad", was read amidst enthusiastic applause. This circular, which is highly interesting as showing the plans of international counter-revolution, contains the following words:

"Italy does not cease to exist at her frontiers. (1) Italy is everywhere where there are Italians. The Fascist national party appeals to the Italians scattered all over the world, and steadfastly loving their native country, to assemble their forces for the greatness of Italy, and immediately to establish fighting unions everywhere."

In this circular the "tasks of the Fascisti abroad" are further explained. The affairs of foreign countries are not to be interfered with: "Every country deals with its communists as it thinks best." The Fascisti would only make themselves unpopular if they "carried civil war into the countries granting us their hospitality". But at the same time every band of Fascisti is called upon to "combat communism and all other harmful phenomena".

Further information on Fascist plans is offered by another circular issued by the Berlin Fascist society. This circular is in our possession. It lays down the following main lines:

"To add to the greatness of Italy."  
"To gather all Italians together, to form them into a bloc."

"To correct the ideas being spread abroad with regard to Fascism. To carry on Italian propaganda."

"To take interest in all economic, financial, and political (!) phenomena in the land of residence."

In order to carry out this program, the last point of which is of special importance, various service bureaux are formed on precisely the same pattern as the German secret societies—unlimited funds being at their disposal; these are as follows:

**Service Bureau I: Support service.** This department works with the great corruption funds, finances the founding of further unions, induces a friendly attitude by the German bourgeois press towards Italian Fascism, and spreads its influence.

**Service Bureau II: Propaganda.** The propaganda service of the Italian Fascisti consists of the closest co-operation with German counter-revolution. They are for instance well connected with the Berlin *Lokal-Anzeiger*. Their working program also intends to include: "denial of false news, enlightenment, publication of appeals and pamphlets, meetings, exhibitions, etc." The Fascist Professor Lombardo is shortly giving a series of lectures to German students, on the "new era in Italy".

### The "Technical Department".

**Service Bureau III: Technical department.** Service bureau III of the Italian Fascist society in Berlin occupies itself mainly with political spying. It "ascertains" the whereabouts of the revolutionary refugees living in Germany, and delivers them over to the murderous Italian "justice" with the aid of the German police. The Berlin political police ought to make a domiciliary visit to this wonderful "technical department", and ascertain in how far traffic in arms is being carried on, and what relations the department maintains with the prohibited German secret societies.

### The ambassadors of the conspirators.

A few weeks ago a Fascist meeting was held in the Rheingold hotel, under the cloak of the "Italian Philanthropic Society", and attended by the Italian ambassador in Berlin. This gentleman, Count Bosdari, a confidant of Mussolini's, is involved in more than one obscure transaction. On February 9, he sent the Berlin Fascist society a letter expressing his "great joy" at the founding of the society, and went on to say: "I am convinced of your keen patriotism, and shall be happy to grant your enterprise the very greatest possible support." Thus the Italian ambassador in Germany abuses his diplomatic immunity for organizing Italian murderers in the German republic. What has the government of the German republic to say to this? Will it put a stop to Count Bosdari's proceedings?

The Fascisti have also founded their first organizations outside of Berlin. In Hamburg, the general consul Giacchi is working in co-operation with the Hamburg German Nationalists. His assistant is the Fascist Jesuit priest Don Mozzicarella, who was living in Germany already before the war. These people held a meeting in Hamburg a short time ago. In Cologne the Fascist confidence man is a certain Dr. Pertille, "Royal Italian Emigration Councillor". He spies among the Italian workers in the Ruhr area. The Italian general consul Mayoni stationed in Munich is closely connected with the Bavarian government, and these relations have only been somewhat troubled by the Ruhr events. Mayoni has held frequent consultations with Hitler and other leading national socialists.

The Fascisti are now quite openly publishing a newspaper in Berlin, with government money. This paper is called the "Gagliardetto" (The Banner). It is published by the "Leonardo Publishing Co., 49 Lützow St., Berlin W 35". This periodical which bears on its front page the symbol of the Fascisti, an axe with rods, conducts the wildest nationalist reactionary propaganda. It lauds the part played by Italy in the great war, and extols the anti-German irredentists. The persecutions of communists in Italy are described in detail under the headline: "Energetic suppressive action on the part of the government, against the underground agitation of the Bolsheviki in Italy". Besides this, the decisions of the "Great Council" of the Fascisti are published regularly and their execution recommended. The paper reports on a "Meeting of Italian patriots" which took place in the Teachers' Club House under the chairmanship of a Signor Biagi.

These few facts suffice to show how closely the network of international reaction is woven. The thousandfold murderers and executioners of the Italian proletariat dare, active and organized, to put in an appearance in Berlin. They form "German service bureaux" in the German republic. The ambassador Bosdari participates in this organization of conspirators. Consular officials co-operate with the German national unions endeavoring to overthrow the republic.

What has Herr Severing to say to this? When does he intend to prohibit Fascist unions in Germany? When does he intend to confiscate their reptile newspaper? When does he intend to arrest those spies and murderers working with Entente money, Corrado, Gustosa, Zeni, and their companions, and to expel them from the country?

The German workers will have to interfere in this matter. They will reply to the meetings and demonstrations of the Italian Fascisti as they reply to the provocations of Wulle and of Cudgel-Kunze. They will not tolerate the appearance in their midst of the murderers of their Italian brothers.

## A letter from Comrade Serrati to his wife

With reference to the arrest of comrade Serrati, the *Avanti!* publishes the appended letter, written by comrade Serrati from Lugano on February 7, 1923, to his wife. Now that every one knows that he—after carefully preparing for his journey, as was his duty—crossed the frontier shortly after writing this letter, for the purpose of fulfilling his revolutionary duties at home, it is unnecessary to comment on those parts of the letter (which might have fallen into the hands of Mussolini's myrmidons) in which he speaks of it being more "advantageous" for him to remain abroad at present.

The letter follows:

"My dearest Rina,  
I arrived here two days ago, and after having visited the old friends, I was just about to start for Italy when I saw what had been the fate of those comrades who were naive enough to cross the frontier without further thought. I believe it will be more advantageous for me to wait a while. The balloon of the magnificently arranged "plot" may burst presently, and it is possible that we may be able to breathe more freely again in Italy—perhaps sooner than we hope. In that case I should return. For the moment it appears to me more advisable to remain a "free bird", particularly because there is no need to give the one who is so anxious to see me behind locks and bars again, (Mussolini. Ed.) that satisfaction.

From abroad I shall be able to work better for the party and for the paper than from "inside";—it seems to me that the shadow of S. Vittore (S. Vittore is the name of the prison in Milan. Ed.) does not promise much to one who has already passed his fiftieth year.

The old friends received me most heartily. Even in these bitter days we had to smile at the irony of history. We remembered the days of 1898, when the exiles of the reactionary Bava Beccaris and Pelloux assembled here in Lugano, as now the exiles of Fascism. We thought of the episodes of our exile of 20 and less than 20 years ago, when the present leader of our persecutors was among the exiles . . .

How conditions change in the course of time! The present-day leaders of counter-revolution were at that time the most zealous Reds! I was nothing to them. Here on the shores of the lake, beneath the chestnut trees, we held long consultations with Mussolini, with Rossi, with Rossoni, and other "patriots", on the revolution which was to come some day. And it was certainly not the Fascist revolution which we talked about at that time . . .

I walk again, along the shores of the same lake, unchanged and unchangeable in my convictions and loyalty. But these

others have become privy councillors and ministers of the king, and persecute those who were once their comrades. I am carrying on the fight, to-day as yesterday, for my ideals, even in exile. They have reached the lowest depths. But I am borne up by such a profound feeling of inner satisfaction, of exultant pride, that the power which they have attained, and the ambition which they have stilled, cannot hope to compare with it . . .

Within a few days I shall write you what I intend to do. I only ask you to feel quite at ease about me, take care of yourself, and do not be troubled. You will see that the day of our justification will come, you will see that the proletariat will be exalted . . .

Kindest remembrances to all who take an interest in me.  
Menotti".

## APPEALS

### Open Letter To the International Secretariat of Printers at Berne and to the Printers' Unions of Germany and Italy

Fellow Workers!

At the International Congress of Printers held in 1921, at Vienna, you considered the question of the *freedom of press*, passing a resolution which in part read as follows: "*Freedom of press must not be used as a means for the oppression, enslavement and persecution of workers*", and, further on, that the Printers' Unions will fight such abuse of the freedom of press "*by all means at their disposal*".

We did not take part in the discussion of this question at the Congress, but we were always ready to support this part of the Vienna resolution in deed as well as in word. The moment has arrived when this decision has to be carried out in practice. In Italy the Fascist reaction ruthlessly attacked the labor organizations, suppressing every free revolutionary voice with frantic cruelty. The hands of the Italian printers help to spread slander, calumnies and insinuations against the working class and to call upon the scum of society to destroy the labor organizations and turn them over to the mercy of the Italian reactionaries. We see the same picture in Bavaria. In the "free" German Republic, the Bavarian National Socialists are closing down the revolutionary labor press, and again, by the hand of the German printers, in the columns of their newspapers and through hundreds of thousands of leaflets, carry on propaganda for the destruction of the labor organizations, for wage reductions and increased exploitation of the working masses. The frenzy of the reaction in these and in a number of other countries has gone beyond all limits and, it would seem, the moment for energetic resistance, the time for carrying out the Vienna resolution, is ripe. Still, we have as yet heard of no protest on the part either of the International Secretariat, or the Italian or German Printers' Unions. We have as yet heard of no calls on the part of the leaders of these organizations, for resistance. Not only did the Executive, of these organizations not call upon the printers to refuse printing the Fascist reactionary white guard newspapers and pamphlets, but their voice has never been raised in the defence of the persecuted labor press . . .

We therefore ask you, when you intend to commence executing your resolution? And if you have not the courage to carry it out, to say so openly. Millions of persecuted workers, hundreds of suppressed labor papers wait for your answer. We, the undersigned unions and minorities of printers, are ready at any time to take up the struggle for the freedom of the labor press together with you, and to prevent our class enemies from using our own hands for our enslavement. We demand an immediate reply to this letter. The eyes of millions of workers throughout the world are turned towards us, printers, who are in possession of the mighty weapon against reckless Fascism. The Printers' Unions of Italy and Germany must demand that their members refuse to set type and print obviously white guard literature and to publish the literature of the reactionaries, until that time when the revolutionary labor papers will again be enabled to appear freely.

We are awaiting determined, organized, revolutionary action, and not rhetorical polemics.

The French Federation of Printers (C. G. T. U.).

The All-Russian Union of Printers.

The Bulgarian Union of Printers.

The Opposition of the German Printers' Union.

"The Graphic Bloc".

## THE LABOR MOVEMENT

### The Lessons of the Last Miners, Strike.

By Fritz Heckert (Berlin).

The strike of the French miners which ended on February 21. raises the question of how far the struggles of the miners have any possibility of success when conducted on national lines. All great strike movements among the miners during the last few years have in the main failed. Either the strike collapsed as a result of betrayal on the part of the reformist leaders, or it has been defeated by the forces at the disposal of the capitalist state. The workers have only in a very few cases attained a partial success. And only then when the circumstances were particularly favorable. This latter was the case in the American miners' strike, and in the strike of the French miners. But all other fights have been lost, and were bound to be lost under the circumstance in which they took place.

Two currents are struggling against one another in the trade union movement: the one in favor of working unity with the bourgeoisie, and the other opposed to this—the revolutionary current. Nearly all the miners' unions are in the hands of leaders who support working unity. These leaders are of the opinion that the class interests of the proletariat should be subordinated to the general interests of the state, that is, to the needs of the capitalist state. Since the revolution, every strike undertaken by the German miners has been systematically wrecked by the trade union bureaucracy, and this trade union bureaucracy has invariably explained to the workers that state necessity demanded the abandonment of the strike. This was the case in Czecho-Slovakia, and in Poland. We can still clearly remember the utterance of J. H. Thomas, the chairman of the Amsterdam Trade Union International and leader of the English railwaymen's union: it was thanks to the command issued by him to break off the last miners' strike in England, that the fall of the English governing power, was prevented. The Frenchman Bartuel was one of the most zealous advocates of the dictates of the Spa agreement, which forces the German miners not only to toil for the German capitalist, but to permit himself to be robbed at the same time for the benefit of French imperialists. The revolutionary section of the workers however, is of the opinion that every endeavor must be directed to defend the interests of the workers as a class. The interests of the workers unlike the interests of the bourgeoisie, do not clash on any national frontier. The workers of all countries have one common interest, the bourgeoisies have opposing interests. When revolutionary workers stand for a ruthless struggle for the defence of workers' interests, they, at the same time, stand for the international action of the proletariat against capitalism and its attendant dangers.

The coal agreement made at Spa threw great numbers of English miners out of work, and rendered the French and Belgian miners incapable of defending their wages and working conditions with any prospect of success. The low wages of the German miners are to blame for the low wages and misery of the miners in all other countries. The reformist miners leaders know this very well. It can scarcely be assumed that they are too stupid to see it. But their relations with their national bourgeoisie are much closer than their relations with the international proletariat, and with the collective interests of the working class.

This is again plainly illustrated by the miners' strike in France. In the first place the French capitalists had created adverse conditions for obtaining coal supplies, in both areas, by the occupation of the Ruhr. Germany is cut off from the Ruhr coal. Transport to France is prevented by the counter-action of the German railwaymen, who have stopped work on the railroads of the occupied territory. For the first time for many years the French miners had the opportunity of utilizing the embarrassment of the French capitalists for the purpose of gaining better wages and working conditions. The revolutionary miners utilized the situation, but the reformist leaders demanded blackleg service from their followers. They could not permit a wage strike of the miners to hinder the imperialist adventure of the French capitalists. Thus Bartuel and his friends have deprived the French workers of the success of their wage struggle, and have sided with Poincaré.

The case was exactly the same in Czecho-Slovakia. The miners, long suffering from capitalist attacks, during the last few weeks, attempted to fight for better wages. But as Czecho-Slovakia has friendly relations with France, the reformist leaders of the Czecho-Slovakian miners thought fit to oppose the fight of the Czech miners. In England the miners' leaders also seized the opportunity of rendering their ruling class a service. The

struggle in the Ruhr area and the strike of the French miners gave the English colliery owners the chance of doing good business. Now they were able to sell coal to the Germans and French. This favorable state of their market was utilized by the English bourgeoisie, who doubled the price of coal. The English colliery owners triumphantly announced that, thanks to this state of affairs, the number of English unemployed had sunk by 125,000. The English reformist leaders share the joys of their bourgeoisie so fully, that Mr Hodges replied to the demand made by the revolutionary miners of various countries, for the organization of a joint action against Poincaré's imperialist policy, with the answer that the situation was not suitable for starting such a movement. And indeed, why should the chairman of the miners' international trouble about proletarian measures for international fighting, so long as the English bourgeoisie is doing good business, and few crumbs from its full table fall to its lackeys.

In England the rise in the the price of coal is accompanied by a rise in food prices, and it will not be long before the English miners will have to fight to have their wages adjusted to the higher prices. If Poincaré is victorious in the Ruhr, enormous quantities of cheap German coal will speedily appear on the French market, and it will be impossible for the French miners to defend their working conditions against the capitalists. Should the Ruhr conflict end with the victory of Poincaré, the Czech miners will also be forced into a precarious position. Should the German bourgeoisie come to an understanding with the French in the Ruhr, it will not be long before the English miners will be again, out of work. The German bourgeoisie utilizes the Ruhr conflict to lengthen the working hours of the German miners. When once these worsened working conditions have been introduced, then it is a matter of indifference whether Poincaré or Cuno is the victor, for the bad working conditions imposed on the German miners will have a decisive influence on the working conditions of the miners in other parts of the world. Instead of the miners of Europe mutually supporting each other by joint action for the defence of their class interests, and thus striking a severe blow at their class enemy, they have, under their reformist leaders, done precisely the contrary. The most favorable moment for joint action is again missed. The hand outstretched by the revolutionary worker for the formation of a united front is scornfully rejected. Hodges refuses any alliance, that is, with the working class, but not with the English bourgeoisie. Bartuel, who organized the blackleg action of the reformists in France, has not only thereby helped French mining capital out of a critical situation, he has at the same time weakened the labor organizations, and rendered hundreds and thousands of workers incapable of fighting.

But the behaviour of the German reformists during this period has been the most idiotic of all. They are desirous that the English and French labor leaders, especially the miners' leaders, help them to ward off the attack of French imperialism. At the same time they are in such a state of senseless rage against workers holding communist views, that they attack the fighting communists in the most despicable manner and do not desire the victory of the revolutionary miners of France, but the victory of the reformist Bartuel, the ally of Poincaré. Is it to be wondered, under such circumstances, that the workers are reduced to impotency and the Stianes of every country triumph?

The French miners' strike has once more demonstrated the complete bankruptcy of reformism. The cowardly and bourgeois-coalition attitude of the reformist leaders can serve nobody but the capitalists, nobody but the national bourgeoisie of each country. The breakdown of economics, and of the labor movement, is bound to become continually worse under such circumstances, unless the revolutionary workers succeed in completely overthrowing the whole wretched reformist policy. The mining strike in France has opened the eyes of many thousands of pit slaves. They have recognized the dangers of reformism, and are turning to the revolutionary trade union organizations of the C.G.T.U. The example set by the French combatants has had a stimulating effect upon the Belgian miners. The resistance of the Belgian coal miners against their employers is growing; these miners are no longer listening to the hoarse shouting of the Belgian reformists, who maintain that the unrest among the Belgian miners is solely the result of communist agitation. The revolutionary miners must utilize the unrest obtaining among the miners of every country. They must show their fellow-miners that only by joint action can they hope for success, that they must no longer permit themselves to be exploited by their reformist leaders for the benefit of their national bourgeoisie, but they must all stand together in one common front for the ruthless defence of their class interests. Fresh conflicts are arising all round; it must be our work to prepare ourselves thoroughly for the fight, that it may end in a victory over the capitalists and reformists.