

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Official Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International



PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

The Communist Party of
China

Fenner Brockway against
the Soviet Union

The Rising in Java and
Sumatra

The Problem of the Nor-
wegian Labour Party

15th April, 1927
Vol iv. No. 6.

3d.

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

English Edition Published at 16 King Street, London, WC2

CONTENTS

THE LEAGUE IN TRAVAIL Editorial 90	THE UPRISING IN JAVA AND SUMATRA Kjai Samin 106
THE FIFTH CONGRESS OF THE C.P. OF CHINA AND THE KUOMINTANG 93	
WAR AND THE FIRST OF MAY A. J. Bennet ... 98	
THE LABOUR PARTY PROBLEM IN NORWAY John Pepper 99	.CHAMPIONS OF DEMOCRACY, OR THE IMPRESSIONS OF MR. BROCKWAY A. J. Bennet 110

The League in Travail

An Analysis of the Last Session of the League of Nations

THE March session of the League of Nations has just come to an end. Nothing could be more obvious than that Geneva is not only the official meeting-place of the League. It is also the town where the leading capitalist groups of Europe foregather in order to chatter with one another and to carry on their unofficial bargaining. What appears in the official reports of the League of Nations is no more than a tiny fraction of the plans which are being concocted under cover of the League, behind the scenes.

For instance, while at the official sessions of the League they were discussing such things as the right of German citizens in Polish Upper Silesia to send their children to German schools, or the problems of the French occupation of the Saar district, etc., at the unofficial meetings of the leaders of the foreign policy of contemporary Europe, plans were being made which, should they ever come to be realised in actuality, would involve us in the cataclysm of war.

The capitalist press throughout the world has been unanimous in considering that the question which eclipses all others in importance, the main question to be discussed at Geneva, is "the Russian question." The bourgeois newspapers have been full of the anti-Soviet plans and the anti-Soviet front, which had been under discussion at Geneva. Such schemes were concocted behind the scenes at the League of Nations.

No attempt can be made to quote all the statements to this effect published by the capitalist newspapers throughout the world. Enough to say that, with remarkable unanimity, they declared that Geneva was occupied in "organising" the work necessary for establishing an anti-Soviet front. It is very remarkable to find "Vorwaerts" practically foaming at the mouth in its declarations that "the idea of an anti-Soviet front is an invention of the Communists"—seeing that this very paper has again and again declared that "the tactic of

Great Britain substantially consists in an attempt to marshal the Powers in a united front."

Chamberlain's declaration (impertinent in form and lying in substance) that there were no plans of an anti-Soviet nature being made at Geneva was, literally, drowned in the chorus of the whole European press, which declared the precise opposite. Even less credence can be given to Stresemann, who abjectly crawled to the support of his hypocritical English confrère. In spite of the fact that Germany got absolutely nothing from the session of the League, Stresemann, in the hope of favours to come, declared that "the rumours concerning anti-Soviet plans" were "wild fancies conjured up by the Soviet press." This announcement came at the very time when the whole capitalist press (including the journals of the party to which Stresemann belongs) was agog with these same "wild fancies."

The characteristic hypocrisy of British diplomacy in its work before and during the negotiations in Geneva is shown up in a recently published volume entitled *Soviet versus Civilisation*. The author of this book chooses to write under the pseudonym of "Augur," but his identity is well known. Here is what "Augur" has to say: "The reason why Chicherin and his colleagues are so furious with Britain is that the present British Government is mobilising against them the forces of united Europe." Elsewhere in the same book, Augur discloses the basic idea of Locarno, declaring that "the tendency towards a drawing together on the part of the various countries of Europe, a tendency plainly manifested at Locarno, has been evoked not only by war-weariness, not only by the economic need, but also by a growing consciousness of the fact that there is a common enemy—the detestable and conscienceless abortion which passes by the name of the Russian revolution."

Augur is right. The main activities of the Geneva "peacemakers" were directed against the U.S.S.R.

They considered all diplomatic problems from this angle, and sought solutions from this outlook alone.

The League in Travail—continued

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN is, of course, the stage manager of this anti-Soviet campaign. The Note he sent to the Soviet Government just before the League met at Geneva was designed to intimidate. If, as a result of that Note, the Soviet Government had shown itself ready to enter into conversations with the British Government regarding "limitation of propaganda," British conservative diplomacy would have been able to register a triumph, and would thus have lessened the international influence of the Union of Soviet Republics. Furthermore, such an answer on the part of the Soviet Government would have given the signal for a new onslaught on the working class, a new attack by the capitalists of Britain and of Europe in general. Such an answer would have given the signal for a new governmental campaign against the Communist Parties in various lands.

In like manner, any weakness in this respect shown by Soviet Russia, would have discredited that country in the eyes of the Chinese people, now struggling for freedom. Then Chamberlain, and with him the whole capitalist world, would have scored two victories at once: in Europe against the growing influence of Soviet Russia, and against the working class in capitalist countries; in the Far East, against the Chinese nationalist revolution, and, generally speaking, against the movement for the liberation of the colonial peoples.

The whole bright scheme collapsed like a house of cards when the answering Note of the Soviet Government came to hand. Even "Volonté," a paper voicing the opinions of the Right, declared that the British Note had been "a blow in the air." The attack on Soviet Russia could no longer be pushed along that line; the Die-hards were pressing for decisive action; there was talk of a general election in the near future, and the prospects of the Conservative Party were anything but roseate; the position of Britain in China was growing worse day by day—in view of all these circumstances, Chamberlain realised the desirability of finding a politic exit from the position he had got into in relation to the Union of Soviet Republics.

From this outlook we see that Chamberlain's trip to Geneva was a desperate attempt to cut the Gordian knot by inaugurating a new sort of pressure upon Soviet Russia, a pressure which in his view would be more effective. He would set up a united anti-Soviet capitalist front.

PRIOR to the despatch of the last Note, Britain had already thrust out feelers to Washington, Paris and Rome with regard to the possibility of forming an anti-Soviet front. From numerous indications, we are justified in asserting that in one quarter only (Rome) did these feelers encounter a satisfactory response. But the Geneva meeting of the League of Nations was close at hand, and there was no time left in which to continue the "sounding" process.

Action, prompt action, was needed.

An essential part of Chamberlain's scheme for the formation of a united anti-Soviet front was that Germany and Poland should form parts of it. It was incumbent upon British diplomacy to settle the difficulties which

still stood in the way of the accession of these two Powers. First and foremost, Chamberlain wanted to bring Germany into the combine. But in that case the German bourgeoisie would have to be compensated for the loss of its position in the Russian market, and also for the worsening of its political position in relation to the U.S.S.R. Chamberlain's second problem, the inducing of Poland to enter the united anti-Soviet front, involved the difficult task of reconciling Poland with Germany and of settling the thorny question of Germany's eastern frontier.

The British diplomatists, blinded by their hatred of Soviet Russia much as a bull is infuriated by a red cloth, lowered their heads, shut their eyes and rushed forward in the attempt to solve these two problems. During the opening phase of the attempt, there was a process of crazy and utterly unscrupulous bargaining, when each of the desired participants in the united anti-Soviet front was naming its price, and discussing with the leaders what services it was to render in return. In the different countries in which this chattering was in progress, the bourgeois press now took a hand in the game, weighing the pros and cons, and declaring in each case for how much blood money, for what advantages, the country would be prepared to face up in the required direction. At the time when the sitting of the League of Nations was opened in Geneva, this bargaining process, this shameless commerce, had certainly reached its climax.

The very persons who are declaring with every breath that their one concern was to preserve peace, were playing fast and loose with peace. This is obvious from the cynically frank way in which the capitalist newspapers of various countries were discussing the desirability of taking this side or that in the dispute between Britain and Soviet Russia.

OF course there was another aspect of the matter. The nature of the chaffering revealed very clearly indeed how formidable are the differences, how insuperable are the enmities, between the various countries of Europe. The non-success of the diplomatic negotiations for the formation of a united anti-Soviet front was, however, due to something more than these enmities. Each capitalist Power was faced with the question, not only what it was going to get, but what it would have to do. If it took the side of Britain, it would have to play its part in an anti-Soviet war! Poincaré's watchword had been War! Now, Chamberlain's watchword was War! That was one of the main reasons for the shipwreck of the British plan for the formation of an anti-Soviet coalition.

In order to attract Germany into this coalition, Chamberlain proposed to compensate the German bourgeoisie by arranging for the speedy evacuation of the occupied regions of the Rhine provinces. In bringing forward this scheme, Chamberlain cast himself for the role which Britain had played at Locarno—the role of the arbiter. He made the before-mentioned proposal regardless of the fact that the occupied areas on the Rhine are occupied, not by the British, but by the French, and regardless of the fact that the evacuation has long since been the subject of direct negotiations between France and Germany (being a suitable means of

The League in Travail—continued

bringing influence to bear upon Germany in the conversations for the realisation of the so-called Thoiry programme.) The intervention of an arbiter (such an arbiter as Britain, who wants a *quid pro quo* from both sides), is not to the taste of either French capital or German, and seems particularly inopportune to the representatives of heavy industry. Some of the industrialists of Rhenish Westphalia have already come to an arrangement with the French, have done so by direct bargaining, without British intermediation. Some of the German industrialists, again, have begun to operate on a European scale—the steel magnates for instance. They have no use for British “arbitration.”

On the other hand, the British plan, depriving France (as it would) of the means of exercising direct pressure upon Germany, is absolutely opposed to the interests of French heavy industry, for in this quarter the continued occupation of the Rhine areas is regarded as a means of bringing a non-economic influence to bear upon the settlement of the economic relationships between France and Germany.

Finally, the German bourgeoisie cannot fail to take into account the growing economic supremacy of Germany in the European markets, which leads the Germans to hope that in the near future the Rhine area will be evacuated without their having to pay the price of a rupture with the U.S.S.R.

For these reasons, Germany flatly refused to have anything to do with Chamberlain's scheme, while France showed no enthusiasm whatever for the first part of the British plan.

Such was the primary rebuff which the British scheme for the formation of an anti-Soviet coalition encountered at Geneva.

THE second part of the plan was to secure a friendly agreement between Germany and Poland on the frontier question—as a preliminary to the entry of these two Powers into the proposed anti-Soviet coalition. But here concrete obstacles were encountered. Thanks to the rapid revival of German industrial life, and thanks to the growing importance of Germany in the economic counsels of Europe, German foreign policy grows stronger day by day. At this juncture, therefore German statesmen have no inclination to tie their hands in the matter of Germany's eastern frontier. In this respect they look forward to the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*, the pre-war situation. Of all the items in Chamberlain's extensive programme, which included the settlement of the Danzig question and the Memel question, and the adjustment of frontier difficulties (the eastern frontier of Germany, or, rather the western frontier of Poland)—British diplomacy could achieve nothing more than a reopening of the conversations between Germany and Poland relative to a commercial treaty, conversations that were broken off some time ago.

It is hardly necessary to say that this “success” of British diplomacy, which is the expression of direct economic interest of both the countries concerned, does not make any advance towards effecting a real reconciliation between them, or towards engaging them in joint participation in the proposed anti-Soviet coalition. However much the Polish bourgeoisie would like their

country to participate, “flags flying,” in the campaign against Soviet Russia, there is no chance of that aspiration being realised until Poland ceases to feel anxiety regarding her western frontier. That is why the British diplomatists are so eager to get this frontier question satisfactorily settled. That is why the failure has had so markedly unfavourable an influence upon the working out of the scheme for establishing a united capitalist anti-Soviet front.

Thus upon the two main sectors of this would-be anti-Soviet front, Chamberlain was very thoroughly defeated. The London diplomatic offensive was frustrated by the mutual hostilities of the capitalist countries of Europe. To “save his face” and to avoid having to leave Geneva with empty hands, Chamberlain made up his mind to put the screw on in Rome, and to secure the ratification of the Bessarabian protocol from Mussolini. This “victory” was intended to show to all and sundry that there was complete agreement between conservative Britain and Fascist Italy upon the question of anti-Soviet activities.

The mountain in labour gave birth to a mouse!

THE failure of British diplomacy to bring about the formation of a united anti-Soviet front (for the present at any rate) must not be supposed to have an exclusively European significance. At the time when the British Note to the U.S.S.R. was despatched, the British bourgeoisie had, in political matters, two chief aims. One of them was to form an anti-Soviet coalition; the other was to inflict a crushing blow on the Chinese revolution. Part of Chamberlain's scheme involved the bringing of pressure to bear upon the Union of Soviet Republics in the West, in order to lower the international prestige of Russia, to reduce its influence in the western world (hoping, in case of success, that the governmental monopoly of foreign trade in Soviet Russia would be broken down, that the Russians would be forced to come to terms with France about the Tsarist debts, and so on). He hoped, further, that his success in the West would diminish or annihilate the influence of the U.S.S.R. in the East, and especially in China.

Had this part of the scheme been carried through, the British bourgeoisie would have been able to exercise a maximum pressure against the Chinese revolution.

The failure of the first part of the plan made the British attack on the Chinese revolution far more difficult.

Thus British conservatism has maintained a three-fold defeat at Geneva.

(1) The British have failed to form their anti-Soviet coalition.

(2) They have failed to win the coveted position of arbiter to the European bourgeoisie.

(3) They have failed in their attempt to deliver a crushing blow upon the Chinese revolution by weakening its western outpost—the Soviet Union.

Be it noted that the failure of the British bourgeoisie in these respects involves a failure of the European bourgeoisie's attempt to organise a new onslaught upon the working class by attacking the Communist Parties of Europe.

Information to hand during the last few days leads us to suppose that the failure of the attempt to organise a direct attack on the U.S.S.R. is being followed by an

The League in Travail—continued

endeavour to exercise a new kind of pressure upon the Soviet Union—this taking the specious form of “an approximation to Soviet Russia”!

The cue is to inaugurate another campaign on behalf of the adhesion of the U.S.S.R. to the League of Nations, or at least to secure a drawing together of Soviet Russia and the League. Russia is to be asked to participate in the Disarmament Conference to be held next autumn. Again, the German newspapers are talking of mediation of behalf of the adhesion of the U.S.S.R. to the League of Nations. Simultaneously, Evans, Minister for War, declares in the House of Commons that “Soviet Russia is preparing more poison gas than any other country in Europe,” and that “the U.S.S.R. will not participate in any conference aiming at the limitation of armaments.”

In spite of the apparent contradictions, these movements are part of the same scheme. The working class, the world over, is uneasy on account of the imminent

danger of war. The workers are to be persuaded that the bourgeoisie wants peace, and that Soviet Russia is planning war! They are to be persuaded that the crushing burden of armaments is forced upon them because the U.S.S.R. “refuses” to join in the “disarmament” schemes of the “peacemakers” at Geneva.

The Communist Parties throughout the world, when explaining the reasons for the failure of Chamberlain and Co.’s direct attack on Soviet Russia must do all they can to elucidate the nature of the new flanking movement, which has the same purpose as a frontal attack.

While continuing to emphasise the failure of the British bourgeoisie in Geneva, we must keep vigilant watch upon all possible variants of the anti-Soviet campaign, and must not be misled by any camouflage they may assume.

Only by unceasing vigilance shall we be enabled to repel the triple onslaught of the capitalist world: the attack on Soviet Russia; the attack on the Communist Parties of Central and Western Europe, and the attack on the Chinese revolution.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of China and the Kuomintang

THE Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of China has been fixed for April. The Congress will meet at a momentous time.

The Seventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in its resolution on the Chinese question declared that the Chinese revolution has everything that is objectively needed to skip over the capitalist stage of development. From this point of view the present stage of development of the Chinese revolution must be regarded as critical. The general line of the further development of the Chinese revolution—the question as to whether it will be a capitalist or non-capitalist development—is being decided just at the present moment.

The movement for national freedom has been victorious in half of China. The southern Nationalist government is already the government of a powerful State with a population of 200 millions. The question as to how his State and its government should be organised, on what social forces it should rely, what should be the role of the working class and the Communist Party in the organisation of the State, now confronts us in all its magnitude.

In this journal, in an article on the “Regrouping of Forces in the Chinese Revolution”* it was stated that since the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. class friction in the towns and villages had intensified considerably during the further development of the workers’ and peasants’ movement, particularly in Hunan and Hupeh, owing to the increased pressure of the imperialists and the increasing menace of open intervention. Both these factors drive the Right Wing of the movement along the lines of concessions to and compromise with the imperialists.

* This article was in Vol. iv, No. 4 of the English edition, and will be found in No. 8 of the Russian Weekly edition.

The events in China are developing with a rapidity which is characteristic of a great revolution. In the short period since the publication of the article already mentioned, the events in China have brought forward new facts which bear witness to a further class differentiation within the national movement. The problem of organising the internal forces of the Chinese revolution thus becomes at the present time one of vast importance.

The problem of problems in the Chinese revolution at the present time is the situation in the Kuomintang, the further development of the Kuomintang as a Party at the head of the southern Chinese State.

The development of the Kuomintang reveals certain symptoms from the point of view of the interests of the Chinese revolution.

The Kuomintang is still a party of leaders. At the time of the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. the Kuomintang had 300,000 members. This is a considerable number for a political party. But it must be borne in mind that these 300,000 were not drawn into the everyday organisation activities of the Party. They were heard of only during Congresses and Conferences, at all of which the representatives of the Left tendencies were predominant. The majority of the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang also consists of Left elements, but the predominant importance of the Left elements in the Party is not so clearly expressed in the composition and policy of the Nationalist government. In the Nationalist government power is in the hands of the Centre and the latter in most cases display decisive Right tendencies.

This is even more pronounced in the provincial governments of South China. Prior to the change of government of March 20th, 1926, the Left elements in the Kuomintang predominated in the Nationalist govern-

Fifth Congress of C.P. of China—continued

ment. But in the city of Canton and in Kwantung province, *i.e.*, the territory which was completely in the hands of the Nationalist government, the government was and actually is at the present time in the hands primarily of the Centrist and Right elements of the Kuomintang. The Communists did not participate in the government; they were under the absolutely incorrect impression that they could not participate in a government of the Kuomintang.

The Right Wing

The Right elements in the Kuomintang comprise in their ranks prominent statesmen, representatives of the bourgeoisie of China, etc. According to their past, present and their social and political connections, the Right elements of the Kuomintang are inclined to compromise with the imperialists; they are opposed to serious social reforms and to a further development of the revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement.

In power the Right elements of the Kuomintang hamper the enactment of serious social reforms. It is characteristic that on March 20th, 1926, there was no law in Canton concerning the rights of workers' organisations and the Canton trade unions, from the point of view of actual law, were illegal.

The change in the government on March 20th strengthened still more the positions of the Right Kuomintang. Soon after March 20th they took definite measures against the workers' and peasants' organisations. This called forth a sharp protest from the masses of workers and peasants. Disturbances among the workers and peasants, dissatisfaction in the best sections of the army due to the elimination of the Left Kuomintang and Communist commanding staff created a precarious situation at the front which compelled the new leaders of the Kuomintang to retreat and come to terms with the Left and the Communists.

The May Plenum of the C.C. of the Kuomintang was again dominated by Left elements. It was decided that Wang-Ching-Wei (the Left leader) must return.

The Centrist and Right elements in the Kuomintang are opposed to workers' and peasants' control over the activities of the Nationalist government and against the government's moving to Hankow; they rely for support on certain sections of the army, etc.

A Strike Law

Recent reports from China indicate that the Kuomintang and the Nationalist government are seriously concerned about the growth of the Labour movement. The newspapers report that according to decisions of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang on this question the Canton government promulgated a new law on January 5th, 1927, concerning strikes. According to that law workers have no right to carry arms in demonstrations, or to arrest merchants and manufacturers or to confiscate their goods. The law forbids the existence of the yellow trade unions and other strike-breaking organisations; but at the same time it enforces, to a large extent, arbitration in the solution of conflicts in military, financial and communal enterprises and also in enterprises of so-called primary necessity (the list of which

has not yet been published). This law also prohibits picketing during strikes to some extent.

The dangers of the position are intensified by the international position of the Nationalist government. The struggle against imperialism is now entering on its decisive phase and is becoming exceedingly difficult. The imperialists are doing all in their power to demoralise the Nationalist movement, to find traitors in the camp of the Right elements of the Kuomintang. The immediate question before us is in the first place to convert the Kuomintang into a Left Wing organisation, not only on festive occasions such as Congresses and Conferences, but also in its daily activities, and secondly that the reorganised Kuomintang should acquire a stable leadership (not in resolutions, but in deeds) over the Nationalist government, both at the centre and in the provinces. The adoption of a correct line and the formulation of concrete practical proposals on these two questions is the most important task facing the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of China.

The Communist Party of China will in the first place have to revise its decisions of the June Plenum of its Central Committee in respect to its relations with the Kuomintang.

Incorrect Decisions

The June Plenum of the C.C. of the Communist Party of China decided on the following concerning the inter-relations between the Party and the Kuomintang: (1) to substitute an alliance as separate bodies for the policy of alliance by affiliation; (2) to adopt a definite independent political policy; (3) to endeavour to find a basis for the Kuomintang in the ranks of the urban petty-bourgeois democracy; (4) to suggest that the Kuomintang should not be organised as a centralised party, but that its organisations in the localities should take the form of clubs.

All these decisions must be revised. The first resolution logically pre-supposes the exit of the Communist Party from the Kuomintang, and as such contradicts the decisions of the Seventh Enlarged E.C. of the International which condemned such an action as a gross political error. From this point of view the proposal to organise the Left Kuomintang in fractional groups is

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Fifth Congress of C.P. of China—continued

also wrong. The proposal to organise Left Kuomintang fractions is basically a decision to split the Kuomintang and form two Kuomintangs. The possibility of such a split must be foreseen, but we must bear in mind the decisions of the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. that even if a large section of the capitalist big bourgeoisie is eliminated from the National movement, the driving force in the Chinese revolution "will be a bloc of a still more revolutionary character, the bloc of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeoisie" and that "some sections of the large bourgeoisie can still for a certain length of time march together with the revolution." Our task, therefore, does not consist in the organisation of a new Left Kuomintang, but in directing the entire Kuomintang to the Left and in guaranteeing it a stable Left policy.

Workers and Kuomintang

This cannot be accomplished if we regard the Kuomintang merely as an organisation of the urban petty-bourgeoisie. What about the peasantry and the working class? Only if the workers and peasants gain predominant influence in the Kuomintang will that organisation become a consistent, revolutionary political organisation. That is precisely how the question concerning the Kuomintang must be regarded. The view that the workers must be kept from joining the Kuomintang on the ground that they have their Communist Party is absolutely wrong. If that were correct, then the members of the Communist Party should have left the Kuomintang long ago. The surest way of securing a determined revolutionary policy for the Kuomintang is that of bringing into it revolutionary workers and peasants. It is of special importance to permeate it with workers, as they are the most revolutionary elements.

The decision of the June Plenum of the C.C. of the Communist Party of China about the transformation of the Kuomintang local organisations into free organisations in the form of political clubs is also absolutely wrong. At the present stage in the national struggle it would be a big mistake. All Right elements who constitute the minority in the Kuomintang will undoubtedly be in favour of eliminating internal discipline in the Kuomintang, etc. The interests of the further development of the Chinese revolution demand that the Kuomintang should be reorganised as soon as possible into a party with elected committees in the centre and the localities and with organisational discipline for its members. A determined struggle must be carried on in the Kuomintang against political double-dealing—on the one hand the support of a radical programme in words and on the other the conduct of a compromising policy in practice. Particularly is this true in regard to Kuomintang members who constitute the government.

In the political report of the C.C. of the Communist Party of China at the Party Conference of December, 1926, one of the Canton comrades declared: "The Kuomintang died on the 20th of March and has been decomposing since the 15th of May. Why should we hold on to the corpse?" That comrade apparently had in mind the fact that the Nationalist government, particularly in the provinces, was taking definite steps directed

against the development of the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants. From this some comrades drew the conclusion at the conference that: "We are on the side of the masses as against the Nationalist government, and in the conflicts between the masses and that government we must see a conflict between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang." This is true in the sense that there is a danger of a split between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. But this danger can be averted if the Kuomintang is not regarded as a corpse. The Kuomintang suffers now from lack of revolutionary worker and peasant blood in its veins. The Communist Party must infuse such blood and thereby radically change the situation.

To Strengthen Nationalism

To revive the Kuomintang and to drive the Nationalist government to the Left, the Communist Party must radically revise its attitude to the Nationalist government. The Communist Party must try to participate in the government and, relying on the worker and peasant masses, compel the government to consider the programme of radical government reforms.

It is about time that the Nationalist government should enact the fundamental democratic laws (on workers' organisations, on the eight-hour working day, etc.), it is about time to abolish the hideous remnants of the old regime which oppress the Chinese peasantry (indentured labour contracts, sale into slavery because of inability to pay debts, high rents, etc.) it is about time to abolish the old corrupt reactionary administration. Communists must endeavour with the greatest energy to get into the provincial government organs. In the villages, based on the peasant organisations, it is about time to raise the question of the creation of revolutionary peasant committees. The decisions of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the supplementary organisational instructions issued since the Plenum give the Communist Party of China exhaustive instructions along these lines. The Congress will have to apply them to the concrete conditions which have arisen at the time. There can be no doubt that the Communist Party of China will map out a path commensurate with the great tasks which confront the Party at the present time. The splendid past of the Communist Party of China and of the heroic Chinese proletariat serves here as a guarantee.



War and the First of May

A. J. Bennet

THE history of the working-class movement from the year 1889 onwards, the treason of the Social Democrats all over the world, are epitomised in the history of the May Day Celebration. At the inaugural Congress of the Second International, when a resolution was passed setting aside May Day as a day of demonstration against imperialist wars and on behalf of the eight-hour working day, the veteran Socialist, Wilhelm Liebknecht had good reason for saying that the Congress was the direct offspring of the First International.

The general trend of the Congress was clearly summarised by Wilhelm Liebknecht in his characterisation of the First International.

He said :

"Just as in ancient times, during a battle or a siege, the men of the vanguard would hurl their spears into the enemy ranks or over the walls of the enemy fortresses, in order to induce the mass of the warriors to follow whither the spears had been thrown, so the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) cast the spear of the international struggle for freedom far ahead into the midst of the hostile army, into the very fortress of capitalism. Thereupon the proletariat rushed forward to recover the spear, to scatter the enemy armies, to occupy the enemy fortresses

"The International is not dead. It has been reincarnated in the working class movement in the different countries throughout the world."

Those words were uttered a great many years ago. The Second International still survives. But long since it proved unfaithful to the heritage of the First International, and deserted the ideals which were built into its own foundations.

Smoke-screen of Phrases

The degeneration of the Second International is extremely conspicuous in the matter of the May Day demonstration. The primary significance of that demonstration was that it was to represent the unity of the proletarians of all lands in the struggle against imperialism and imperialist wars. It is self-evident that the Socialist parties affiliated to the Second International (which cheerfully hauled down the Red Flag upon the outbreak of the imperialist war) can no longer try to realise the aims and principles of the May Day demonstration. May Day 1927 will find the Social Democracy doing its utmost to hide (under a smoke-screen of weak pacifist phrases) the preparations the imperialists are making for new wars—for war in general, and for war against Soviet Russia in particular.

The Second International is not a strongly centralised organisation. Each of its sections is, as a rule, more closely linked to the bourgeoisie of the country to which it belongs than to the working class of other lands. Moreover, it is an interesting fact that in relation to the important problems of its contemporary class struggle,

these different Socialist organisations all cleverly take the same line. Everywhere and always, the Socialist parties run counter to the solidarity which the working masses are instinctively displaying in support of the Chinese revolution; and everywhere and always they do their utmost to traduce and discredit the efforts and achievements of Soviet Russia, the first workers' and peasants' alliance known to history, endeavouring, under enormously difficult conditions, to build up Socialism. Of late the Second International has surpassed itself in the broadcasting of pacifist declarations and manifestoes. The experience of the world war compels us once more to pay close attention to these incidents. We cannot forget that on the eve of the fateful fourth of August, 1914, imposing pacifist demonstrations were held, and that these were promptly followed by the outbreak of the imperialist war. Nor do we forget that the high-flown peace declarations of that "apostle of peace" Woodrow Wilson, were the immediate precursors of the entrance of the United States into the war. Who does not know that only the other day Austen Chamberlain and Ramsay MacDonald were uttering pacifist speeches in order to throw dust in the workers' eyes while a British expeditionary force was being sent to China?

"Little" Wars

For these reasons we cannot but regard the renewed pacifist activities of the Second International as formidable portents of the imminent danger of a new war. We are concerned, in the first place, with the strenuous efforts of the imperialists to prepare for warlike activities against Soviet Russia. Warfare did not come to an end when the "peace treaty" of Versailles was signed. All that happened then was that the great war was replaced by a number of little wars, which various plunderers carried on in various parts of the world. At the present time such little wars are being waged on a small scale in Central America and on a large scale in the East (China). But we have no reason to suppose that the members of the robber band will limit themselves to little wars. They are perfectly ready to join forces against the country which they rightly regard as the champion and defender of all the oppressed throughout the world—to combine their little wars into one great and united campaign against Soviet Russia. The Second International will not find it an easy matter to play the part of lackey to imperialism. The great events in China have aroused an enthusiastic response among the workers of all lands. The Second International will have to pay heed to this, and to accommodate itself to working class sentiment. On the other hand, the hopes of the workers of the world are centred upon the Soviet Republics.

There is no mistaking the fact that within the revolutionary movement in China, the same differentiations are to be observed as those with which we are so familiar in the working-class movement in Europe. An interesting example is provided by the fight now going on within the ranks of the British Labour movement. The Liberal

War and First of May—continued

leaders of the Labour Party, together with the trade union bureaucracy, have formed a united front for the purpose of fighting against the revolutionary elements in the working class movement. Quite recently in the columns of the "Daily Herald," Mr. Bromley published an appeal in favour of clearing the Communists out of the trade unions. The General Council have given serious consideration to the question of the best method of attack against those of the Trades Councils which are taking an active part in the Minority Movement. At the same time the Labour Party Executive disaffiliated a South Wales local which had hitherto been the pride and glory of the British workers' movement. It would seem that we are confronted here with a powerful coalition determined to utilise every means in order to carry out its plans. On the other hand, the parliamentary representatives of Labour have been forced to vote against military estimates which had been specially earmarked for the "army on active service." As a general rule, the question of discipline among the members of the Labour Party only arises when the Communists are to be attacked; on other occasions they can do pretty well what they damn please! But when the military estimates were on the agenda, an urgent whip was sent round and 124 Labour members voted against—almost a record! The amazing inconsistency of Labour Party policy becomes apparent when we remember that, at the very time when the Labour members were thus, under stress of Party discipline, voting against the Army Estimates, certain leaders were endeavouring to show the British workers how necessary it was to send troops to China in order to defend the lives and property of British citizens.

Pressure of Rank and File

It goes almost without saying that this vote in the House by no means betokens the determination of the 124 Labour members to fight against military intervention in China. Nothing of the kind! The parliamentary representatives of British Labour are permeated through and through with Liberalism, and, to a high degree, are infected with imperialist ideas. The vote on the Army Estimates is simply a reflex from the pressure of the rank and file of British workers among whom a feeling of solidarity with the Chinese revolutionists is steadily growing, and among whom the desire to prevent the British imperialists from crushing the Chinese revolution by means of British bayonets is gaining ground from day to day.

The campaign against intervention in China may be regarded from two points of view. Substantially, it is an expression of solidarity with the Union of Soviet Republics. Furthermore, it shows that, not in Britain alone, the Social Democratic parties (among which the British Labour Party may be numbered) no longer represent the aspirations of the proletarian masses. Characteristically enough, not only the Labour Party but likewise the Social Democratic Party of Germany, are trying by every means to cut themselves away from the May Day celebration which continues to live in the minds of the workers as the symbol of international working-class solidarity, and as the day on which the proletariat em-

phatically declares its hatred of imperialist wars. The London Labour Party Executive is endeavouring to scotch the May Day demonstration organised by a committee representative of the proletarian masses living and working in the metropolitan area, by itself organising local demonstrations in various districts. The German Social Democratic Party has refused to take part in any May Day festivals, declaring that such demonstrations should be left to the trade unions. The French Socialist Party is discreetly silent on the subject of May Day, although the French workers have for decades been fighting for the right to hold demonstrations on the first of May.

Slogans for May Day

Such being the case, it behoves us to widen the scope of our May Day demonstrations, and to protest, not only against the imperialist robbers, but likewise against their Social Democratic lickspittles. Foreseeing this, the Social Democrats of the various countries actually want to sabotage the whole demonstration. We, for our part, must see to it that this attempted sabotage by the reformist leaders is frustrated. We must turn the May Day festival into an imposing demonstration of international solidarity, into a protest against imperialist wars in general and against intervention in China and preparations for an assault upon the U.S.S.R. in particular.

Now, a few words on the question of slogans for the 1927 May Day demonstration.

For many years the rallying cries for the First of May celebrations have been: "Down with imperialist wars!" and "Fight for the eight-hour working day!" Both these slogans embody concrete and practical demands. In addition they have to-day acquired a very special meaning. After recent experiences, it will be difficult to find anyone who will assert that the Great War was the last war. Nay more. The workers in every land have come to realise that contemporary imperialistic developments are a constant menace to peace, are bound to bring new wars in their wake. What is now merely a menace will in due time become a fact. There is no doubt whatever that British imperialists, who still play the leading part in European affairs and who have now joined forces with the capitalists of the United States, are anxiously watching the course of events in China, and are using all their influence, are marshalling all their forces, in order to make ready for a war against Soviet Russia. There are other directions in which the danger of war looms upon the horizon. It is therefore the duty of all stalwart proletarians to carry on an active struggle against the threat of wars to come.

A Real Campaign

Of course we have to remember that the uttering of a general slogan against imperialist wars will not carry us very far. The imperialists are not alarmed by such phrases. They themselves are past masters in the art of phrasemongering! Nor do the Social Democrats, the reformists, lag behind in a clever use of catchwords. It therefore behoves all serious proletarians to see that the coming May Day demonstration shall inaugurate an active campaign against war.

War and First of May—continued

The British Labour movement has already put forward concrete demands in its struggle against British intervention in China. These demands have found expression in such slogans as: "Embargo on the sending of troops and war material to China" and "Stop sending munitions to crush the Chinese revolution." These slogans were placed before the Executive of the Second International, but were turned down. It is therefore up to the organisers of the May Day demonstration to see that the slogans shall become the rallying cries of the masses in spite of what treacherous leaders may do to stifle them.

In addition to these anti-war slogans we must rally the workers to the defence of the first Workers' and Peasants' Republic. Wilhelm Liebknecht, in 1889, spoke only of hurling a spear over the walls of the enemy fortresses. But the first Socialist republic is a new stronghold of the working class. Genuine proletarian solidarity is inconceivable in the absence of the closest contact with this stronghold. Who is at this very moment making ready to attack the citadel? Those Socialist traitors who were responsible for the death of Wilhelm Liebknecht's son—truly ideal champions of international working-class solidarity! The May Day demonstration will achieve its full purpose if we can convert it into a mighty threatening movement against Messrs. Chamberlain and Co., who still have the effrontery to imagine that, by force of arms, they can wipe the first workers' republic from off the face of the earth.

Fascism and Eight-Hour Day

This is not the place to venture upon a concrete formulation of the anti-war slogans. It must be obvious to every one that the anti-war campaign should be carried on under the sign of the great revolution of October, 1917, and the recent splendid victory of the revolutionary armies in Shanghai.

Nor must we forget to include in our May Day demonstration the fight against Fascism, for Fascism is unceasingly enlarging the sphere of its influence. The prisoners of Fascist rule in every land must be made to feel that something is being done to hasten the day of their deliverance. Fascism and imperialism march forward hand in hand. The British cave men call Mussolini the "disinterested friend of England." And Mussolini is ready to jump out of his skin in order to be worthy of this flattering epithet. The logical deduction is that the campaign against imperialism must be carried on simultaneously with the campaign against Fascism.

Special stress must be laid on the anti-war slogan of May Day, for the fight against imperialist wars is the most important of all the tasks confronting the working class, both from the point of view of the decisions arrived at during the International Congress in 1889, and from the point of view of the present day struggle of the international working class movement. On May Day all available proletarian forces must be mustered in order to stop the imperialist blood bath to-day and to frustrate the plans which the imperialist governments are preparing for their future attacks. But it must not be in-

ferred that, because this anti-war agitation heads the list, the other May Day slogans are not likewise of great moment.

We saw at the outset that when the Second International was founded, another of the immediate demands of the working class was given especial prominence, the demand for an eight-hour day. Once more, by the irony of fate, this demand has, for practical purposes, been dropped by the leaders of the Second International. Far from having lost its significance during the lapse of years, this demand is even more urgent and actual than ever before. In "civilised" Britain, the miners have had to submit to an increase in the working day and are paying for it with their life-blood. The other workers in Great Britain are living under the threat of longer hours and lower wages. In Fascist Italy the eight-hour working day has been to all intents and purposes abolished. In Germany and in France it has been done away with in many branches of industry. The campaign on behalf of the eight-hour day is a campaign against the capitalist offensive, which is becoming ever more ruthless throughout Europe.

Strike Anniversary

One of the reasons why the May Day demonstration has proved such a lusty movement is that, though all the countries adopted the general slogans of the international class struggle, this did not hinder the launching of particular slogans responsive to the aspirations of the workers in the different lands. This year, likewise, slogans embodying the general demands of the international proletariat will be launched simultaneously with those concerning local and national needs.

The British workers will not need to be reminded that this First of May is the anniversary of the General Strike. The miners' heroic struggle is still fresh in the memory of the British proletariat. Nor can the workers forget that it was hunger alone which forced the miners into accepting the terms proposed by Baldwin and Thomas.

The French will, likewise, not need to be reminded that Poincaré is endeavouring to sow discord between the French workers and their brethren across the frontiers, and that the currency has been stabilised at the expense of the workers' standard of life.

The German workers will rally to the May Day demonstration, their minds filled with vivid memories of the blood-bath of March 22nd, 1920.

A New Possibility?

The slogans of the class struggle will always coincide with the special conditions in each country, will always arise out of the concrete, the every-day happenings in the lives of the workers. The local slogans must, however, be linked on to the general slogans which embody the workers' protest against imperialist wars and against the capitalist offensive.

This would appear to be an opportune time to introduce a new feature into the May Day celebrations. Imperialist wars are carried on with the aid of troops recruited from among the workers of town and countryside. From among the vast army of labour, certain

(Contd. at foot of p. 99.)

The Labour Party Problem in Norway

John Pepper

AT present the Norwegian Labour movement is experiencing fundamental changes. Its political parties were founded recently, both on the basis of the organisational principles of a Labour Party, based not on individual membership but on the collective affiliation of the trade unions. One of the parties arose from the amalgamation of Tranmael's Norwegian Workers' Party with the Social Democratic Party, the other was formed through the amalgamation of the Left trade unions and the Communist Party. The entire policy and even the very existence of the Communist Party of Norway were involved in the struggle for the establishment of these two parties. It is therefore very important to be absolutely clear about the Labour Party question in Norway.

Of course it is not a matter of chance that in some countries the political Labour movement has developed on the basis of individual membership (Germany, France, Italy), while in other countries the political mass movement of the working class has developed on the basis of affiliated membership of the trade unions (Great Britain, Australia, Canada, tendencies in the United States). Closer investigation shows that the Labour Party form of political development for the Labour movement is primarily connected with the untimely division of the working class into a Labour aristocracy and the real working class. In imperialist countries (or colonies where the white population plays an imperialist role with respect to the natives) trade unions came first in history, and much later, on the initiative of the trade unions, a political party was founded. But development was in the reverse order in countries where imperialist development set in comparatively late, where political parties had already been formed prior to the split in the working class; there the political party took the initiative in the establishment of trade unions.

(Contd. from p. 98.)

contingents are, as it were, "transferred," and it is upon these "transferred divisions" that the capitalists depend for the realisation of some of their plans. Some of these transferred divisions are made up of workers in uniform, of soldiers; some of them are formed by transport workers engaged in carrying soldiers and arms; some of them, again, consist of workers in munition factories, and army supply shops. If May Day is, above all, to be devoted to a protest against imperialist wars, then it is imperative that all these workers who are now being used by the imperialist governments for the prosecution of war should play a special part in the demonstration.

"War still rules mankind even to-day—though under a mask." These words appeared in the manifesto issued by the Fifth Congress of the Communist International on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War. But, dissemble as it may, war is becoming more and more obvious, and it behoves us to utilise the May Day demonstrations in order to deal it a powerful blow.

But there are also a few countries (Sweden, Norway, Hungary) where, in spite of the fact that those countries are not imperialist, the political parties of the workers, insofar as they are mass parties, are based directly on the trade unions. Peculiar historical circumstances, which have not yet been sufficiently investigated, are the explanation of this unusual development.

An Historical Explanation

In these countries the political party was the first to appear in the Labour movement, and founded the trade unions; but the workers did not constitute a real proletariat from the point of view of large-scale industry, they were rather a section of artisans with very strongly developed trade differences and a guild spirit, much stronger than the political class associations. This peculiar transitional stage between the artisans and the proletarians explains the fact that the political mass party is based on the trade unions in these countries.

It would be erroneous and historically untrue if the affiliated membership of the political parties in Norway, Sweden or Hungary were to be treated in the same manner as the affiliated membership of the Labour Party in Great Britain. What is termed the "Anglo-Saxon" type of Labour Party is closely connected with imperialist development, and the Norwegian development—if we mean to get a correct idea of it—must under no circumstances whatever be thrown into the same pot. In spite of outward similarities we cannot call the development of the political party in Norway, which is based on collective membership, a real growth of a Labour Party in the true historical sense of the word. To understand the present development of the Norwegian Labour movement we must take into consideration the following fundamental factors:

1. The Norwegian working class is not yet a working class of big industry in the British, American or German sense of the word. Much of the artisan character still permeates it; it is still to a great extent animated by the old guild spirit.
2. The Norwegian workers constitute a relatively big political force in the country, not at all commensurate either with their numerical strength or their importance in the process of production.
3. The Norwegian workers are relatively very radical, much more radical than the revolutionary development of the country would imply.

Only a complete understanding of the direction of historical development of Norway will give an explanation for the relatively big political power and the radicalism of the Norwegian workers. The Norwegian bourgeoisie is relatively very weak. Capitalist development in Norway set in rather late. Capital in Norway is to great extent foreign. Marx declared that the Norwegian small peasants had already made themselves quite independent of the towns. For a long time Norway was not an independent country, but was tied either to Denmark or Sweden. Not the bourgeoisie, but certain sections of intellectuals dominated in politics. These

Labour Party Problem in Norway—continued

intellectuals, however, did not come from the bourgeoisie, but either from the peasantry or traditional intellectual families. The peasantry was always a relatively big force. Numerically, it is the most important section of the population, and through its intellectuals it had at least an indirect influence on the State. In fact the constitution of Norway contains a clause according to which no less than two-thirds of the members of parliament must always come from rural circles.

The power of the government in Norway was always relatively very weak, and even to-day we find considerable relics of self-government. The long struggle of decades for the national independence of the country led to the further weakening of centralised State power. Many sections of the peasantry, the intellectuals, and particularly of the working class became very much radicalised in the struggle against union with Sweden. Leadership in the struggle for national independence was not in the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the struggle was directed both against the Swedish dynasty and against the State machine. These historical circumstances make it clear why the bourgeoisie in Norway is weaker than it should normally be, and why on the other hand the working class gives evidence of a relative political strength and a relative radicalism greater than the present ripeness of the revolutionary situation in Norway.

4. There is an extremely stubborn and deeply-rooted tradition of the Norwegian Labour movement, according to which the political party is organisationally connected with the trade unions.

An Abnormal Position

5. Up to the establishment of the two political parties mentioned above, Norway presented the spectacle of a remarkable tripartite division of the political Labour movement: on the Right a weak Social Democratic party, on the Left a Communist Party, not very strong, and in the centre the Tranmael party as the only big mass party. Unlike the Tranmael party, which was built up on collective membership, the Social Democratic and the Communist Parties had abandoned the tradition of collective membership, and this was surely one of the reasons why neither of the two parties has become a real mass party.

Thus compared with the general situation in Europe the Norwegian Labour movement presents an "abnormal" picture. Since the fusion of the Two-and-a-Half International with the Second International the "normal" situation in the European Labour movement is a bipartite division of the political movement—a polarisation: on the Right the Social Democratic party, on the Left of the Communist Party. The proportions between these two parties vary considerably in the various countries, but the bipartite division exists everywhere. Norway was the last European country where the "abnormality" of tripartite division of the political Labour movement existed.

Capitalist Attack

6. Another reason is the regime of the conservative government and a vigorous capitalist offensive. The government is trying to restrict the rights of the trade

unions, to secure the "right to work" of strike-breakers by sentences of imprisonment, to force the introduction of secret ballot in the trade unions during strikes. Employers' associations are endeavouring to enforce considerable wage reductions (25 to 50 per cent.) all along the line.

The above-mentioned facts and factors have called forth during the last few years a strong and ever-growing desire for unity among the Norwegian workers. The Communist Party endeavoured to utilise this "rally desire" (to use the Norwegian expression) for various united front campaigns. An attempt was made to give this desire the form of a Labour Party, but without any result worth mentioning. Then the "rally idea" was taken up by Tranmael, and a big "rally congress" was convened by the Tranmaelites, the Social Democrats and the trade union executive. The three organisations formed a so-called Committee of Twelve which was to give a lead in rallying the workers. They talked about a class rally, but what they actually aimed at was of course only a party rally. The Tranmaelites wanted only to unite with the Social Democrats, leaving the Communists out of the rally. The big political stake of the rally campaign was those trade unions which had been hitherto outside the Tranmael party, and organisationally outside any political movement whatsoever.

From the organisational viewpoint the Tranmael party had only captured a minority of the trade union movement. The majority of the trade unions were politically "neutral," in other words, they had no organisational connection with any of the political parties, although some of them were under the influence of the Social Democrats and others again under the influence of the Communists.

A "Rally" Congress

The convocation of the "rally" Congress was enthusiastically greeted by the workers. For a time it really seemed as if the fusion of the Tranmael party with the Social Democrats was looked upon by considerable sections of the proletariat as a real unification of the working class. The desire for political unity among the working class was so strong that not only did it begin to affect the hitherto neutral trade unions, but proved also to be of magnetic attraction to certain sections of the C.P. of Norway. In these sections of the Communist Party, the "rally" idea assumed the form of an idea that the Party should be dissolved. A dangerous liquidation tendency raised its head.

Several leaders of the Communist Party developed approximately the following views: "The Communist Party has a right to exist in countries with a revolutionary situation, but not in Norway. We do not of course want to go against the Communist International; we are against the Second International; but we must say that the tactics of the Comintern, no matter how appropriate in other countries, are not appropriate in Norway. The Communist Party in Norway is nothing but an artificial formation; its further continuance would be a policy of face-saving pure and simple. In the present situation the Communist Party of Norway must remain a hopeless sect. The only correct tactics would be for the Communists, in the interests of the working class, to unite with the "rally" party of Tranmaelites and Social Democrats, perhaps to organise there a Left

Labour Party Problem in Norway—continued

fraction and probably in the course of many years to capture this new powerful mass party for the ideas of Communism and for the Third International." These liquidatory ideas crystallised in all consciousness only in the heads of certain not unimportant leaders of the Communist Party. But the liquidatory mood went much deeper and dominated, although unconsciously, many sections of the Party membership. It assumed the form of a dangerous passivity and apathy. Some Communists said: "Why struggle? It is really not worth while; the enemy is all powerful; the unification of the Tranmaels with the Social Democrats will prevent any successful Communist work." To use for once the silly terminology of Freudism: a remarkable "inferiority complex" made itself felt in many sections of the Party.

At the same time a reaction of another kind to the "rally" idea made its appearance in the Communist Party: an ultra-Left resistance which met the desire for unity of the masses with a curt refusal. The liquidators, throwing their principles to the winds, wanted to jump right into the mighty stream of the desire for unity of the masses; but the ultra-Left wanted to remain on the bank of the stream of unity, fearing to wet the Sunday clothes of their principles. The Communist International endeavoured to divert the desire for unity of the masses into the channels of a Labour Party, in other words, it wanted to give it the form of a united front organisation which would make possible the participation of Communists without giving up the identity of the Communist Party. But the ultra-Left declared themselves on principle against the Labour Party policy

which—as they said—was perhaps good in countries such as Great Britain and America, where the Labour movement is backward, but would be incorrect in Norway where the working class has a revolutionary tradition. The ultra-Left favoured a boycott pure and simple of the "rally" congress, as it saw in this the only salvation for the independence of the Communist Party; and it wanted to give the trade unions the advice to remain neutral.

Fatal Proposals.

Both policies would have been fatal to the Communist Party. The liquidatory policy would have led the Party to direct dissolution, whereas the ultra-Left policy would have caused the dissolution and disintegration of the Party in an indirect way, as it could not have prevented through its negative attitude the adherence of large sections of the Party membership to the new Tranmaelite Social Democratic party.

On the strength of thorough deliberations with the Executive of the Communist International, the Executive of the Communist Party of Norway was able to adopt correct tactical lines in this dangerous situation, when the fate of the Party was at stake. These tactics were as follows: No boycott of the "rally" congress, but active participation in it. The Communist Party and the Left trade unions to elect everywhere delegates to the "rally" congress, but on a special political platform. The "rally" congress is to be denounced as a Social Democratic undertaking, which instead of a class rally is to be made an opportunist party rally. The Communist Party is on no account to be liquidated, nor must it sever connection with the Third International under any circumstances whatever. Therefore the backbone of the special political platform must be rejection of the con-

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Labour Party Problem in Norway—continued

ditions of the "Committee of Twelve." Delegates are to be elected on a "free" basis.

Correct Tactics

This policy meant the adoption of correct tactics by the Party. The great task consisted of welding together the Party, which had been weakened by prolonged fractional struggles and by liquidatory and ultra-Left tendencies, in a manner to enable it to carry out those correct tactics with the necessary energy. The first task was to make the Party active. This was done through a conference of the Party Committee, through district conferences and through putting into motion the entire Party apparatus for the campaign. The second step was the mobilisation of the trade unions. The question whether delegates were to be elected on the basis of the conditions of the Committee of Twelve, or on a "free" basis was to be raised in all trade unions—and this was done, for the question was placed before every local trade union and every trades council. The campaign assumed such dimensions, the interest of the masses in the "rally question" was so enormous, that the contentious questions were thoroughly and passionately discussed even in the most remote parts of the country, in all Labour organisations and in all trade unions. The arguments used in the Communist campaign were:

"No Party rally, but a real class rally, which cannot be complete without the participation of the Left Wing and without the Communists.

"For proletarian democracy; for the right of workers' and Labour organisations to self-determination—against the dictatorship of the 'Committee of Twelve.'

"Not every 'class rally' serves the interests of the proletariat—only a rally which leads to struggle against the bourgeoisie and not to capitulation to it (setting the example of the class rally in November, 1917, in Russia against the example of the class rally in August, 1914, in Germany)."

Not a Manœuvre

The Communist Party of Norway did not want—as the Social Democrats accused it—the establishment of a Labour Party only as a "manœuvre," it wanted its establishment honestly and sincerely. In other words it wanted a political unification of all workers' parties and trade unions, provided the liquidation of the Communist Party was not to be a condition of this. But there was no possibility of forming a big all-embracing Labour party, as the Social Democrats would on no account work together with the Communists, and also because the "Left Wing" of the Tranmael party made such formation conditional on Communists accepting the "sovereignty" of the "rally" congress—in other words that Communists must submit to a majority decision demanding the dissolution of the Communist Party and the severance of its connections with the Third International.

The Communist Party found itself in a difficult position. Its campaign made progress every day and produced unexpectedly favourable results. No less than

four hundred delegates were elected on a "free" basis: 200 delegates from 160 trade unions, 60 delegates from labour organisations, agricultural labourers and foresters' unions, sport organisations and proletarian women's leagues, and 140 delegates from the Communist Party and the Young Communist League. Through the election of these 400 delegates, participation in the "rally" congress became a central tactical question. It was impossible to say anything against participation, as the 400 delegates had been elected on the basis of the platform of active participation in the Congress, although this was accompanied by the rejection of the dictatorial conditions of the "Committee of Twelve." But participation in the Congress was fraught with great perils. If a majority decision of the Congress—and a big opportunist majority existed, as Tranmaelites and Social Democrats and the trade unions influenced by them had elected 870 delegates—had decreed the dissolution of the Communist Party, the latter would have been compelled to advise the "free" delegates to infringe the "sovereignty" of the Congress and to leave it. Then the whole odium of a dramatic breach with the majority, of an open split, would have rested on the Communists. There was also the risk of part of the "free" delegates refusing to have anything to do with such a split.

A Difficult Problem

The situation was difficult: on the one hand it was impossible for Communists to recognise the "sovereignty" of a Congress dominated by opportunists, and on the other hand it was impossible to take upon themselves the odium of an open breach. On the one hand they had to carry out the election of the "free" delegates with the slogan of participation in the Congress, but on the other hand it was impossible to bring about this participation unconditionally. On the one hand they had to avoid a split before the Congress, under any circumstances whatever, whereas on the other hand it was essential somehow or other to co-ordinate organisationally the four hundred delegates.

The Party found the right solution of this dilemma by co-ordinating the four hundred delegates precisely on the platform of "Joint and organised struggle" for admission to the "rally" Congress, for recognition of the "free" mandates as such. The Party did not oppose on principle, nor did it take up a non-possimus attitude to the "sovereignty" of the "rally" Congress. It declared: We will recognise the "sovereignty" of a Congress of the entire working class provided the conditions of proletarian democracy are observed in connection with the convocation organisation, preparation and conduct of the Congress. The present "rally" Congress, however, is the outcome of gross infringements of proletarian democracy, and therefore cannot claim to make final and binding decisions on behalf of the working class.

These correct tactics of the Communist Party of Norway were thereupon rapidly put into practice by means of the following measures:

An invitation committee was formed consisting of well-known trade unionists, which invited the four hundred delegates elected on a "free" basis to a conference in Oslo.

On the eve of the opening of the "rally" Congress, the big conference of the 400 took place.

Labour Party Problem in Norway— continued

The conference elected a deputation and addressed a letter to the "rally" Congress asking it to recognise the "free" mandates.

The "rally" Congress received the deputation of the 400 and listened to it, perfectly perfidiously, however, only after the voting had taken place which rejected the recognition of the "free" mandates (800 votes against 19).

Thereupon the Conference of the four hundred adopted a declaration in which it protested against the splitting of the forces of the working class, laying the responsibility for it at the door of the leaders of the "United Social Democratic party" and constituting itself a "class rally congress."

Two New Parties

The Congress of the four hundred sat three days and adopted the resolutions on a general programme of action, on unemployment, the peasant question, the military question, international trade union unity and international relations of the Norwegian trade unions (Russo-Norwegian-Finnish trade union committee), the building up of Socialism in Soviet Russia and the struggle against the intervention peril, a declaration of solidarity with the Chinese revolution, and on youth and sport questions.

After the Social Democratic-Tranmaelite "rally" Congress had constituted the new "united" party, the Congress of the four hundred decided also on the establishment of a new party "The Rallying Party of the Working Class."

An organisational campaign on broad lines was initiated after the Congress which began to organise the new "Rallying Party of the Working Class" locally and regionally.

Thus the result of the big "rally" campaign, which lasted several months, was the establishment of two new parties: on the one hand the fusion of the Tranmaelites with the Social Democrats and the establishment of the "United Workers' Party" and on the other hand the formation of the "Rallying Party of the Working Class" with Communist participation. Both parties belong organisationally to the Labour Party type; they have no individual membership, but are built up throughout on the collective membership of the trade unions.

Spiritual hegemony in the first party rests with the Social Democrats; the second party is under Communist ideological leadership. The formation of these two parties has put an end to the political tripartite division of the Norwegian Labour movement and has thereby established the present "normal" European bipartite division of the political Labour movement.

The establishment of the "Rallying Party of the Working Class," or in other words, the formation of a "Left" Labour Party, of a Minority Labour Party is an innovation in the international Labour movement (in the United States of America we had in some respect similar tendencies in 1923), an innovation which certainly deserves careful study on our part and raises justifiably

the question whether this new tactic is correct and successful and to what extent.

Support for the "Left"

Naturally the establishment of the new "Left" Labour Party was only justifiable if there was sufficient mass support on the part of the trade unions. Facts show that among the 400 delegates there were no less than 200 trade union delegates, and 60 others sent by non-Communist Labour organisations. The majority of the hitherto "neutral" trade unions, not connected organisationally with any political party, were represented at the Congress of the "free" delegates and participated in the establishment of the new party. Although the Tranmaelites succeeded at Oslo in bringing over to their side a considerable part of the hitherto "neutral" trade unions the contrary is the case in all the other parts of the country. The Communist campaign met with unqualified success in most of the hitherto "neutral" trade unions.

The "Left" Labour Party is in fact nothing but a peculiar and original form of the united front between the Communist Party and non-political Labour organisations. It is only through the establishment of this Labour Party that Communists were able to attract the Left trade unions to themselves, for one should bear in mind that the new united Social Democratic Party is also built up on a trade union basis. The "rally" of all Labour organisations in one party has and still possesses great powers of attraction. That was the reason the liquidation danger made its appearance in the Communist Party. For this reason Communists could not issue the slogan of a boycott of the "rally" Congress. The "free" delegates were elected not on the platform of boycott, but of participation in the "rally." The Left trade unions were won for joint action with the Communists precisely as a basis for active political unification of the forces of the working class. After a campaign for participation in a political rally Communists could not possibly say to the delegates of the Left trade unions: "Now you can go home; we have not been admitted to the "rally" Congress; we are now unable to do anything."

Risk of Isolation

The retort could be made against this: the Left trade unions could have been linked up with us through the formation of ordinary united front committees. This argument is not correct, it does not take into account the actual situation and the deeply-rooted tradition of the Norwegian Labour movement. This was a question of political rally of trade unions in the form of a political party, according to the traditions of the Norwegian Labour movement.

If the Communist Party had not attached to itself the Left trade unions through the new "Rallying Party" it would have run the risk of the united Social Democratic Party detaching these trade unions slowly and one by one from us and incorporating them into its ranks. Against the powerful idea of rallying the workers—for this was the only political capital of the United Social Democrats—Communists could only set

Labour Party Problem in Norway—continued

the sterile slogan of political neutrality in the trade unions, and this would certainly have led to defeat.

The Left trade unions and most of the hitherto "neutral" trade unions made common cause with the Communist Party in this campaign, and expressed themselves in favour of political activity. If no permanent political form had been given to this new and powerful desire for political activity through the establishment of the new Party, the result would have been not only a permanent but also an increased process of detachment, whenever the political situation took a favourable turn. Increased political activity on the part of the workers does certainly not lead the trade unions to political neutrality, but rather to participation in politics. Thus an improved political situation would not have benefited the Communists, but the Tranmaelites.

The establishment of the "Left" Labour Party created a favourable atmosphere for Communist work as a whole. The Tranmaelite Party has always been built up on the collective membership of the trade unions, whereas the Communist Party was based on individual membership. If the Communist Party wanted to prevent organisational connection between the trade unions and the Tranmael Party it had only the slogan of neutrality at its disposal. But now it is possible to raise in every trade union the question: "Which way are you going: to the Second International and Amsterdam, to coalition with the bourgeoisie, or to relentless class

struggle, to opposition to reformism, to alliance with the Russian trade unions?" We can now place the choice before every trade union of "Affiliation to the Social Democratic Rallying Party or to the Class Struggle Rallying Party?"

Communist Gains

The formation of a "Left" Labour Party in Norway was necessary and correct.

The correct application of the tactic of active participation in the rally campaign on the basis of a special political platform has had important and favourable results for the Communist Party of Norway.

It is only through the application of these tactics that the Party was able to liquidate the liquidators, to carry out the unification with the "Mot Dag" group, to fight against the ultra-Left peril in Oslo, and to weld together the Party for energetic activity.

In spite of the great desire for political unity the Tranmaelites and Social Democrats were unable to liquidate the Communist Party or to sap its mass influence; on the contrary, the mass influence of the Communists has grown, it is now firmly established and co-ordinated organisationally.

The disappearance of the Tranmaelite Party as an independent party has removed the greatest obstacle in the way of the growth of the Communist Party. The Tranmaelite Party as a real demagogic centrist party advocating the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviets and armed rising, and opposed—at least in words—the

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Labour Party Problem in Norway —continued

Second International and Amsterdam. Tranmael has now dropped all these old items from his programme and is on the road to the Second International and Amsterdam.

The slogan of unity is now incontestably in the hands of the Communist Party. For the first time in the history of the Communist movement of Norway our comrades are able successfully to place the odium of the split at the door of the opponents.

The deflation crisis, the growing unemployment, the brutal capitalist offensive and at the same time the complete legality of the Communist Party create a favourable atmosphere for the progress of our movement.

Complicated Position

Of course, the establishment of a "Left" Labour Party rather complicates the position of the Communist Party in many respects. Only careful study and experience will teach the Norwegian comrades to establish in every respect correct relations between the Communist Party and the "Left" Labour Party. In spite of the slanderous assertions of the German ultra-Left, one thing is already perfectly clear: the Communist Party preserves its full organisational and ideological identity and will on no account become merged in the new Party.

The new party must primarily become the party of the trade unions, but Communist leadership must be secured in it. The "Left" Labour Party will not become a rival of the Communist Party, being built up on collective membership, whereas the basis of the Communist Party is individual membership. Our slogan is: "Every worker should join the Communist Party and every worker should induce his trade union to affiliate to the 'Rallying Party of the Working Class.'"

The programme of the Rallying Party is not a Communist programme, but it is on our lines, and can at the same time serve as the programme of action of the Communist Party. The new party has no press of its own—merely a bulletin, but the Communist Party places every week a whole page at the disposal of the Rallying party in its press organs, and this page is under the control of independent editorial boards of the committees of the Rallying Party. Communists who at parliamentary elections appear on the candidates' lists of the new Rallying Party must, of course, base their entire propaganda on the Communist programme and cannot limit themselves to the programme of action.

The establishment of the "Left" Labour Party in Norway has also its international sides and lessons. Norway is by no means the first country where the Communist Party is organisationally connected with another political party. Prior to its expulsion, the Communist Party of Great Britain belonged to the Labour Party.* The British situation, however, was in many respects different from the Norwegian situation. The British Labour Party existed before the establishment of the Communist Party; no Minority or "Left" Labour

* The Communist Party of Great Britain was never affiliated, as a Party, to the Labour Party. It has therefore never been "expelled."—Editor, English edition.

Party has been formed in Great Britain through Communist participation.

It is the Finnish and American experiences which must be compared with the Norwegian experiences, but at the same time the big differences should be taken into consideration. In America and Finland the illegal Communist Parties were connected with another legal Labour Party. But the legal party was only a camouflage party of the illegal; it was not built up on the collective membership of the trade unions, neither was it a united front organisation which linked up the Communist Party with the trade unions. It was only an instrument which enabled Communists to work legally.

The Norwegian "Left" Labour Party is in many respects analogous to the formation of a Left Labour Party (Federated Farmer Labour Party) in America 1923, where this Party was also the organisational-political link between the Communists and some of the trade unions. But the then American situation differed from the present Norwegian situation mainly in that no majority Labour Party existed in America, merely three minority Labour Parties competing with one another, which constituted the united front link between the three rival political groups (Social Democratic Party, Fitzpatrick group and Communist Party) and corresponding parts of the trade unions.

Now it will be necessary to take stock of the Norwegian practical experiences with the "Left" Labour Party, to watch and generalise them. It would be a mistake if we were to attempt to transplant the Norwegian scheme as it stands to all other countries, but on the basis of the Norwegian experiment one should endeavour to evolve new and suitable organisational and political forms of the united front in other countries also.

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The Uprising in Java and Sumatra

Kjai Samin

THE uprising in Java last November, and in Sumatra at the beginning of this year, came as a surprise to many, even though it had long been awaited. A long time ago when the policy of suppressing the revolutionary peoples' movement was intensified our enemies sensed that this must soon lead to an uprising. "Het Volk," organ of the Social Democrats in Holland, which in the beginning wrote that the uprising was "Communist lunacy," two weeks after the outbreak of the uprising had to admit that for a long time it had been anxiously awaiting for when it would finally break out. The late priest Van Lith, who was well-known in both Holland and Indonesia and for many years worked as a Catholic missionary among the population of Java, wrote in his book (which appeared in 1924), that no adequate native resistance was to be looked for in the coming Indonesian Parliament but that outside of Parliament the clash was being prepared for. This conflict is not a clash of leaders but of masses, which in the end cannot terminate otherwise than by the driving of the alien Dutch out of Indonesia.

This priest showed better comprehension of the sharpening of antagonism between the Dutch exploiters and the oppressed and exploited Indonesian masses of people than do the few Dutch Social Democrats to be found in Indonesia. Up to now, even after the uprising they are striving to smooth out these contradictions in a "lawful" manner. While the churchman stated that the fight against Dutch imperialism would be carried on outside of Parliament by the masses themselves, our peaceable Social Democrats are doing everything possible in order to hamper this extra-Parliamentary struggle; they seek to win over influential native leaders for collaboration with the Dutch Government in order thereby to water down the popular movement.

A Christian's Report

Another Christian missionary, Dr. Kramer, who is so much of an authority on the field of the political tendencies among the natives that the government sought his services as a counsellor, states as his judgment of the native popular movement that, in all its shadings, it is an expression of protest, of resistance, of anger and criticism, either sharp and revolutionary or else working in secret. The situation was so serious at the time that this missionary added a warning: that the atmosphere was so charged as to threaten an explosion, and that its discharge had to be effected primarily by steps on the part of the powers that be.

Thus for a long time a revolutionary situation has prevailed in Indonesia. And the government was well-informed of it. Proof of this is seen in the fact that the State Attorney-General of Indonesia, who is at the same time Chief of Police, in April of last year issued a circular to the local authorities commanding them to hold the police and army in readiness because, in May, the Communists intended to organise strikes and disturbances of the peace. The arming of the European plantation employees was considered advisable. Doctor de Graeff, newly appointed Governor-General of Indonesia

since September of last year, recognised the seriousness of the situation, the dangers which threatened Dutch rule. In his speech on taking office, he appealed for the confidence of all strata of the population. He could not bear any suspicions—he said—suspicions paralysed his strength. The Nationalist intelligentsia, which at the time advocated a policy of non-co-operation, were regaled with the sweetest flattery so as to win over at least a section of the natives hostilely inclined towards the government, and thereby separate them from the mass movement.

The situation just before the outbreak of the uprising was a revolutionary one, and so it still remains although the uprising has been suppressed. The many lengthy reports in the Dutch-Indonesian newspapers prove that Dutch imperialist circles still view the development of affairs with apprehension. The increasing of the police and army, the equipment of policemen with rifles, the drilling of a section of the police to use hand grenades, the guarding of police stations with machine guns, the furnishing of white plantation employees with government firearms, the formation of Citizen's Defence Rifle Societies—all these are signs that despite the increased terror which was instituted immediately after the uprising the revolutionary movement has not as yet been completely suppressed, that, on the contrary, its uprising is to be expected in a very short time. The class antagonisms in Indonesia have become so sharpened that the outbreak of a whole series of uprisings is inevitable, uprisings which will fuse into a broad insurrectory movement ending in the overthrow of the alien Dutch rule.

Influence of China

We must not forget another circumstance that has an extraordinary influence on the development of the revolutionary peoples' movement in Indonesia. That is the Chinese revolution. Just as the Russian revolution of 1917 led to the creation of labour organisations in Indonesia and finally to predominant influence by the Communist movement there, so, beyond doubt, the victory of the Chinese Revolution will tremendously strengthen the movement for emancipation in Indonesia as well as in other colonies.

We believe that it is no exaggeration to say that the November uprising in Java and the January uprising in Sumatra will have the same significance as the revolution of 1905 had for Russia. Furthermore, in consideration of the present international situation, we may hope that the overthrow of Dutch imperialism will not be so very far off. Once we get this far, then the further development to the proletarian revolution will follow comparatively quickly.

It has already been established that the leadership of the insurrection movement in Java and Sumatra has been in the hands of the Communists. It may seem strange to many comrades in Western Europe that, in a colonial country like Indonesia, not the Nationalist but the Communist tendency has given its impress to the peoples' movement. The Dutch Social Democrats also had to recognise the predominant influence of the Communist ten-

Uprising in Java and Sumatra—continued

dency. They hope, however, that this Communist "adventure," as they call the uprising, will prove a turning point for the popular movement. "Het Indische Volk," organ of the Dutch Social Democrats in Indonesia, writes (January 10, 1923) :

"The fact that a political importation such as Bolshevism can develop here an independent party power greater than in any of the Asiatic countries proves that the native peoples' movement here is in a juvenile stage, that it is split up and uncertain. Thereby it proves also its internal weakness. Moscow has also permeated British India and China, where it constitutes the inspiration for native, strictly limited, firmly-rooted movements. There we know nothing of independent Communist organisations with their crafty parallel organisations in the form of nuclei and disguises. There the Peoples' Parties stand firm, they maintain their national peculiarity and expression. There Moscow is being used as a whetstone for their own forces, which for the most part are not displaced by a Communism imported from abroad. Only a lack of native Indonesian intellectual forces for an independent struggle for our national ideal could lead to a condition in which the masses finally fell into Communist hands, so that Moscow was able so easily to inflame the organisations of the thinking section of the nation."

Right Wing Admissions

When, in 1918, the Left Wing of the Social Democracy in Indonesia wanted to proceed with the formation of proletarian fighting organisations, the Right Wing maintained that organisations of this kind could not be formed because the working class of Indonesia, and especially that of Java, was still too undeveloped. In 1920 the Left Wing of the Social Democracy formed the Communist Party, which has shown the Social Democratic gentleman clearly that there certainly is room in Indonesia for a vigorous proletarian party. Shortly before the uprising the Social Democrats also recognised this. In reply to an article by a writer who stands close to the Social Democracy and who maintained that in Indonesia Socialism could not be introduced without passing through the period of West European capitalism, and consequently that in Indonesia at present a national struggle rather than a class struggle is possible, the editors of the "Indian People," the organ of the Dutch Social Democrats, wrote the following :

"Modern capitalism was born and bred in countries in which industry could and did become the chief and natural source of existence of the people. Agrarian states produced a different capitalism and Socialism of their own. Now if Mr. W. will recognise that here the more-than-rich soil, with its barely touched potentialities, furnishes an agrarian basis for the economic life of the great masses of people, upon what basis then rests the cocksure statement that passage through a western capitalist period is inevitable?"

"We ourselves must differ, not expecting Orientals to become Socialists according to the western 'models'; we must teach them the essence and

power of capitalism together with that of Socialism. It is up to them what use they will be able to make of the lessons under colonial conditions, how they will work up what they have learned, in order to build up a Socialism that corresponds to their own society and their own social life. What is to grow out of it cannot be dictated by any European."

This recognition by the Social Democrats came only after we had brought proof that in Indonesia a proletarian movement is not only possible but necessary for the successful combatting of imperialism.

Let us look more closely at the factors which make it possible for the Communist tendency in Indonesia to march at the head of the whole peoples' movement.

The Economic Factors

The Indonesian Islands contain various stages of economic development. Yes, there are even areas in which there can be no talk of any economy whatever, as e.g., in New Guinea, where the natives still live a nomadic life, and where cannibalism still prevails. One can hardly conceive of a country in which such variegated stages of development are to be recorded as in Indonesia.

Economically the most advanced part of Indonesia is the Island of Java, which in 1920 had a population of 35 million. According to latest estimates, Java has now about 40 million inhabitants. The Islands of Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes and the other smaller islands and a part of New Guinea, which are usually collectively called the "Outer Possessions," in 1920 had 14 million inhabitants altogether. It is the extremely dense population of Java which drives this island rapidly forward economically. The economic start that Java has over all the remaining islands together, is clearly shown in the following figures taken from the annual report of the Java Bank. These figures give the export of agricultural production from big capitalist enterprises, such as sugar, rubber, quinine, coffee, tea, tobacco, cocoa, etc.

	Java million gulden	Outer Possession million gulden
1913	231	70
1921	516	113
1922	400	121
1923	651	166
1924	695	205

The big capitalist agricultural enterprises in Java, which constitutes only one-thirteenth part of Indonesia, therefore exported in 1924 more than three times as much as all the other islands put together.

Agricultural exports of the natives, in comparison with the total agricultural exports, amounted to:

	Java	All other islands
1913	15.7%	44%
1921	12.6%	47%
1922	10.3%	49%
1923	11.8%	46%
1924	12%	51%

These figures show clearly that in Java native producers have been largely crowded out by the big capitalists, which are more and more taking first place. Whereas the figures for Java show this tendency to crowd out still further the native producers, the "Outer Posses-

Uprising in Java and Sumatra—continued

sions," especially Sumatra, up to 1924 still show a tendency towards the further development of native economics. At present, however, there are many signs that the native producers in Sumatra also are being pushed to one side by the advance of foreign capital.

Agricultural industries are now the most important in Indonesia; their exports in 1924 amounted to more than 70 per cent. of the total exports. Of these industries sugar production is the most important, its exports in 1923 amounted to 36.5 per cent. and in 1924 to 32.1 per cent. of the total exports. This sugar industry is located only in Java and is carried on scientifically. The sugar yield per bouw (7,200 sq. metres) in Java is more than double that in Cuba.

Peasantry Hard Hit

How rapidly the Javanese peasantry is disintegrating, due to the advance of foreign capital, is shown by the following figures:

	No. of Villages with purely individual landownership	No. of Villages with purely communal landownership	No. of Villages with mixed landownership
1882	5,605	13,546	10,081
1892	6,240	11,136	12,337
1902	6,711	7,885	12,337
1907	6,889	7,228	11,656
1912	7,500	6,043	11,315
1917	7,526	4,739	11,112
1922	8,016	3,005	10,393

The number of villages in Java sank from 29,518 in 1882, to 21,539 in 1922; in these forty years the amalgamation of the smaller villages into larger has been in process. Notwithstanding this we see, alongside a reduction in the number of villages with purely communal landownership, an increase in the number of villages with purely individual landownership; this proves that rapid changes are taking place in the conditions of the villages. The increase in the number of villages with purely individual landownership takes place only at the expense of those with purely communal ownership. These changes have, of course, been accompanied by a disintegration of a part of the peasantry.

In 1923, there appeared an official report on the "Results of the Investigation on the Tax Burdens upon the Population of Java." According to the figures contained therein the 1924 population of Java—a population figure of 35 millions in 1920 is taken as a basis for the estimate—had an income of about 1,500,000,000 gulden annually, that is, 52.86 gulden annually per capita. A family of five would, therefore, have an annual average income of 214.30 gulden or 4.12 gulden per week (about seven shillings).

But even these figures seem to be somewhat too rosy. "Hamburger Nachrichten," a paper interested in imports into Indonesia, wrote as follows, in connection with the report of van Ginkel, who was authorised by the lower chamber in Holland to investigate the economic situation of the population:

"The van Ginkel Commission, which was officially authorised to conduct an investigation into the economic situation of the Javanese population, has made a report that amounts to nothing less

than an indictment against the government of the Dutch Indies. The efforts of the report to make everything appear in a better light are rendered futile by the statistical data on the income of the population. According to these figures the average income of a Javanese family of five in the wealthiest districts is 225 gulden per year, on which the government levies 10 per cent. in taxes. Even taking into consideration the fact that the Javanese require very little clothing, very simple household utensils and furniture, this income is nevertheless miserably low. In Sarang (West Java, where the uprising broke out) this average income amounted to 185 gulden, and in Djokdja (Central Java) 21.16 gulden per capita annually (less than three shillings per month). From this the taxes, rent, food and clothing must be deducted. In the densely populated district of Surakarta, where two million people live, the annual average income per capita amounts to 39 gulden (45 shillings)."

Another representative of the importers, H. L. Haighton, in the "Handelsberichten," expressed himself as follows on the poverty of the masses of the Javanese people:*

Heavy Taxation

"In order to reckon with the circumstances unfavourable to imports one must bear in mind the very small purchasing power of the natives, who receive a daily wage on the plantations equal to an hour's pay for a worker here (in Holland). The capital owned by the natives in Java, with very few exceptions, is insignificant. The existence level of the Javanese can be characterised as follows: 'To live from day to day—and even this very badly.'"

"De Courant," a liberal Dutch newspaper in Java, had to admit in an article "Unrest and Well-being" that although the so-called head-tax which is considered very unjust by the population had been repealed, the other taxes still weigh very heavily upon the Javanese peasants. According to the statements of this newspaper the peasant must often pay out 25 per cent. or more of his income in taxes. The paper then continues:

"But from the exact figures on these cases we may unreservedly draw the following conclusion:

"A part of the village population of Java (we hope that it is only a small part) is so reprehensively taxed and must, therefore, live on such a very minimum income, that it has nothing to lose in an uprising against the State except its life, and this a life full of misery, care and penury, a life to which most of us would attach little or no value.

"It is, therefore, no wonder that the Communist leaders, especially in the villages, could win thousands of supporters who were ready to wage an armed struggle against the representatives of the State.

"The repeal of the poll-tax in 1927 undoubtedly brings a certain relief to many, but figures to be found in this connection in even the latest official

* From the Dutch paper "Java Bode."

Uprising in Java and Sumatra—continued

reports show clearly enough that the repeal of this poll-tax means only a very slight improvement in the living conditions of the village population."

This is how the importers' agents in Indonesia size up the position of the broad masses of the people, a judgment which we may appraise as a devastating condemnation of Dutch imperialist maladministration of Indonesia.

Cheap Labour

The incessant impoverishment of the broad masses of the Javanese people makes this island a catch-basin for cheap labour power, as is the case in South China. To a certain degree one may say that, in Indonesia, Java is the country of wage-labour and the remaining islands of the peasantry.

The impoverishment of the masses of the people has only proceeded with great rapidity since the outbreak of the war. The tremendous increase in prices of foodstuffs forced many to dispose of their last remaining inheritance. The impoverishment of the native petty traders began in 1920 when the crisis broke out. The mass discharges and wage reductions of workers and employees cut down the potential market of the tradesmen who were wont to satisfy the needs of the masses. The government dealt a very severe blow to these petty trading elements by introducing new taxes and by extraordinarily increasing the existing ones. These hit not only the petty traders but also the remaining peasant strata. The pauperisation more and more included all the population. This favoured the sprouting of an anarchistic tendency in the Indonesian peoples' movement which expressed itself in assassinations. In 1923 the first political bombs were thrown at the Governor-General of Indonesia, who was viewed as the prime mover of all this misery. Since then bomb attacks and other attempts have been the order of the day.

The disintegration of the petty bourgeois strata in Java finds its expression in the marked decline in 1923 of the once powerful mass society, Sarekat Islam. The decline in membership resulted, in 1923, in the dissolution of the serious popular revolutionary National Indian Party, the party of the revolutionary intelligentsia, which at that time represented the most revolutionary tendency in the peoples' movement. The leadership of the Communist Party, since the end of 1923, is simply the expression of the proletarianisation of the broad masses of the people and the further sharpening of contradictions between Dutch imperialism and the pauperised masses.

Communist Leadership

The leadership of the movement which the Communist Party of Java has won for itself, was the reason why the suppressed peasants of Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes and the other islands also saw in the Communist Party the only party able to lead them successfully in the struggle against the Dutch oppressors.

In Sumatra, which is 3.6 times as big as Java, and in 1920 had 6 million inhabitants, our Party had considerable support. Sumatra occupies second place in In-

donesia; and for capitalism it is the land of the immediate future. Peasant economics and small enterprises still predominate here. In South-western Sumatra in 1925 a small section of the population got rich quickly, due to the very high prices of rubber. Plenty of plantation sites are still to be had here; only labour power is not sufficiently abundant. The capitalists import this from China and Java. At present about 300,000 indentured workers are forced to labour under the worst imaginable working conditions.

In addition to plantations there are in Sumatra coal and gold mines and a modern oil industry. In order to accelerate the economic development of the island, the government is proceeding to build railways and roads at a rapid rate. The quick progress of economic development in Sumatra can be seen from the fact that, in a period of 12 years, capital invested in Eastern Sumatra has more than doubled; it has increased from 207 million gulden in 1913 to 440 million in the beginning of 1925. Of this 52 per cent. is Dutch and 48 per cent. foreign, particularly British (which holds first place in rubber production).

The Backward Isles

Dutch Borneo, which is four times as big as Java, in 1920 had a population of two million, and is, therefore, economically still very backward despite the large modern oil industry. As in Sumatra, a small portion of the population has enriched itself in the rubber trade.

Celebes, one and a half times as big as Java, in 1920 had a population of three million. As in Borneo, capital has not yet penetrated very far. Production for own needs still plays a very important role here. Since 1923 a short stretch of railway has been in operation.

The other Indonesian islands, with a few exceptions such as Bali and Lombok, are even more backward than Sumatra because of the sparse population, small size and slight fertility of the soil.

The advance of capitalism in Sumatra, Celebes, Borneo, etc., and a shortage of labour power, necessitate special ways and means by which the peasants can be dragged into work. It frequently happens that because of this forced labour the peasants are not able to cultivate their own fields, with the result that harvests fail and famine is the consequence.

The uprisings which have repeatedly broken out in the "Outer Possessions" find their explanation in this unpaid forced labour.

Such is the economic picture of the most important Indonesian Islands.

(To be concluded.)

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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Champions of Democracy, or the Impressions of Mr. Brockway

A. J. Bennet

AMIDST the rabid campaign now being conducted from various centres against the Soviet Republics a minor historical incident is worthy of profound attention. Chamberlain's threatening Note was handed to the Soviet representatives on February 25th, approximately ten days before the peace-loving democrats of the "Labour and Socialist International" hastened to inform the world that in order to defend the principles of democracy they were compelled to hurl their forces against the only workers' republic in the world. As a result, a natural and extremely pathetic "united front" was formed. Chamberlain, who wields the baton in the concert organised against the U.S.S.R., is organising all the reactionary forces in Europe and America for the purpose of isolation and subsequently for carrying out an armed attack against the Soviet Union. Mr. Leslie Urquhart is mobilising all the ex-owners of the enterprises in Russia nationalised after the October Revolution, for the purpose of establishing a property-owners' international to combat Socialism. The heroes of the Second International naturally join this disreputable company, but unlike all the other participants in the anti-Soviet crusade drape their hostility in the toga of Socialism and democracy.

In this new offensive conducted by the Second International, we are interested least of all, of course, in the democratic mask which it adopts in the resolutions that it passes. After all is said and done, the Second International did not devise this mask. Only quite recently Mr. Baldwin began an organised attack on the miners with the cry of "Peace in our time, O Lord!" on his lips. Subsequently his comrade-in-arms, Sir Austen Chamberlain, drew up a memorandum containing a number of pious wishes as an introduction to the despatch of the now famous "Shanghai Defence Corps." Needless to say the lackeys of the imperialists are loyal to their masters in the sphere of tactics.

Brockway's Resolution

Nevertheless, the meeting of the Second International which took place on February 12th and 13th deserves profound attention. We have long ago grown accustomed to the anti-Soviet resolutions that are passed by the Second International. What is new in the recent meeting is that the authors of one of the proposals, with which Abramovitch and Tseretelli hastened to associate themselves, was none other than Mr. Fenner Brockway. We remind the reader that it is the very Mr. Brockway who only a year ago, moved by the prosecution of the Communists in England, undertook the task of acting as mediator between the Second and Third Internationals. It was rather strange therefore to find him on this occasion under the influence of the most bitter enemies of the Soviet Union and of the proletarian movement generally.

The resolution proposed by Mr. Brockway reads:

"That the Labour and Socialist International set up a committee to investigate the conditions of those detained in prisons for political offences in various countries. This committee must demand exhaustive reports from the Socialist Parties affiliated to the L.S.I. With regard to the Soviet Union and Georgia, the committee must strive, in addition to the above, to obtain direct personal information on the spot." (Retranslated from the Russian.)

Every word is a pearl. Political prisoners in all countries are all flung in a single heap. Apparently, it is a matter of indifference to Mr. Brockway as to whether the workers and peasants have been flung into jail for fighting against capitalism and imperialism, or the bitterest enemies of the working class who have been striving to undermine the first Labour Republic in the world. To the impressionable Mr. Brockway there is no difference in these categories whatever. He is moved by human suffering, and believes that the assassins of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, those who bear enormous responsibility for intervention in Russia and those who are openly acting as the agents of imperialism in all its base undertakings, are the best of the "partisans" and the most loyal saviours of suffering humanity.

"Special Measures"

With regard to the Soviet Union, he makes the reservation that special measures are necessary. No direct information on the spot is required from Hungary or Italy. He only demands it from the Soviet Union and Georgia, and even here, it must be observed, Mr. Brockway employs the terminology of his friend Tseretelli, who to this day dreams of restoring the nationalised property to the Urquharts and a ministerial portfolio to himself.

Mr. Brockway did not confine himself merely to moving the resolution. In the columns of the "New Leader" he hospitably gives place to the most slanderous attacks made by Dan, Tseretelli, Abramovitch and others, and adds his own comments to the effect that these slanderous declarations emphasised the necessity for the Second International sending a commission to investigate these "Soviet horrors" on the spot.

Mr. Fenner Brockway's conduct is a symptom of the change that has taken place in the attitude of a section of the so-called Left Wing Socialists in the British Labour movement.

For a long time these Left Wing Socialists not only abstained from taking part in the anti-Soviet campaign, but were extremely hostile to it. At the end of 1925, when the Mensheviks tried to drag the British Labour movement into the anti-Soviet campaign, the Left Wing leaders of the Labour Party and of the trade

Champions of Democracy—continued

union movement strongly attacked them. Concerning the investigators recently selected by Mr. Brockway to investigate conditions in the U.S.S.R., A. A. Purcell remarked that "the Second International is, in some of its parts, an appendix to various Continental capitalist governments." ("Labour Monthly," September, 1925.) "Lansbury's Weekly" expressed itself even more strongly. In its issue of August 29th, 1925, it wrote:

"It would be interesting to know who provides the funds of this anti-Soviet propaganda inside the Labour and Socialist International . . . they [Parties of the Second International] have no time left for the study of the position of the workers in the modern State which is ruled by finance and highly-concentrated industrial capital. This tends to put them about on a level with the Liberals in this country."

But this was in August and September, 1925. Much water has gone under the bridges since then. The struggle within the British Labour movement has become more intensified. Those who supported Baldwin during the miners' heroic struggle naturally now support Chamberlain in the light against the Soviet Union.

Still a "Left Winger"

We do not wish to suggest that Mr. Brockway has completely gone over to the camp of Albert Thomas and Tseretelli. He still continues to employ Left Wing resolutions. At the last meeting of the Second International he moved a resolution to combat intervention in China by declaring an embargo on the transport of arms and by a strike in munition factories. Sentimental Mr. Brockway failed to observe, however, that his resolution on the prisoners was ultimately directed against the U.S.S.R. and as such was passed with enthusiasm. But the resolution calling for aid to the Chinese revolution was sent travelling from country to country, only to return after the real masters of the Second International have managed to crush the revolutionary movement in China.

Mr. Fenner Brockway is not alone in the role of comrade-in-arms of Tseretelli. The "Daily Herald" of March 10th published an article from the pen of Mr. Brailsford, the former editor of the "New Leader," who cannot in the least be suspected of being partial towards Communists. In this article, Mr. Brailsford describes enthusiastically the ordinary election meetings in Moscow at which he was present, and at which he saw for himself the real significance of proletarian democracy as distinct from the deceptive and illusory democracy in capitalist countries. The editor of the "Daily Herald" could not, of course, decline to publish an article contributed by so prominent a member of the British Labour movement as Mr. Brailsford. But in order to minimise the impression that Mr. Brailsford's article may have made upon his readers, the "Daily Herald" editor published in the same number another of the lengthy declarations by the Russian and Georgian Mensheviks concerning the alleged horrors of Soviet prisons.

We do not propose here to enter into polemics with Messrs. Tseretelli and Abramovitch. On more than one occasion Soviet prisons have been visited by Labour

delegations, including representatives of the British Labour movement, who have been able to see for themselves what truth there is in the declarations, proclamations and statements made by these recognised agents of imperialism. After careful investigation these workers' delegates arrived at the conclusion that people are punished in the Soviet Republic, not for opinions or convictions, but for crimes committed against the product of our Great October, committed for the benefit of world capitalism. But those who have committed these crimes are detained in prison under conditions of which the captives of capital in "democratic" England, let alone countries like Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria, would hardly dare to dream.

Questions to Brockway

We could settle this controversy by simply asking Mr. Brockway why he prefers to place his confidence in the Second International, to which are affiliated organisations which have carried out and are carrying out the dictatorship of capital over the working class, and refuses to believe his own colleagues in the British Labour movement, like for example Purcell, Bromley, Smith and others who formed the Trade Union Delegation to the U.S.S.R.

We could put other questions to Mr. Brockway. Only recently for example, he and his friends refused to join the Communists in combatting intervention in China on the grounds that his methods differed from those of the Communists. But Mr. Brockway himself some time ago wrote a long article in which he explained in considerable detail what these differences and methods were. In this article he explained that Socialists could not fight side by side with Communists for the simple reason that Socialists believed in bringing about Socialism by democratic methods, while the Communists believed in civil war. Involuntarily the question that arises in one's mind is: How can Mr. Brockway belong to the same International as Abramovitch and Tseretelli, and draw up resolutions jointly with them when he knows perfectly well that his friends who support his resolutions not only do not repudiate civil war, but have actively organised it? The conclusion that one must arrive at is that one may sit side by side with people who organise armed rebellion against the proletarian State, but that it is impossible, even in moments of danger, to work side by side with those who believe that civil war against the dictatorship of capitalism is inevitable.

Wheatley's Mood

It will be difficult, of course, for Mr. Brockway to reply to these questions, nor indeed do we ask him to do so. The arguments which Mr. Brockway may advance, after the event, in justification of his personal participation in an anti-Soviet coalition are not in the least important. What is important is to establish how it was that Mr. Brockway fell into this disreputable company and what conclusions must be drawn from the fact that he is in it.

In this connection we must consider an article written in the Scottish "Forward" of March 5th, by Mr. Wheatley, an ex-member of the MacDonald Cabinet. Mr. Wheatley is in an extremely melancholy mood. He recalls the time when the determined policy

Champions of Democracy—continued

adopted by the British Labour movement averted the danger of war between Britain and Russia. He looks to the future with horror and pictures the terrible tragedy that will occur if the weakness of the working class enables the militarists to involve the British workers in war against the U.S.S.R. He emphasises the fact that recently certain Labour leaders (with the exception of Lansbury and MacDonald) cannot find a good word to say about Russia, and that the leaders have forgotten that Russia is a country in which, in spite of all difficulties, a Socialist State is being built up.

Going to the Right

The ideas expressed by Mr. Wheatley apply also to a large number of the reformist leaders, who prior to the General Strike flaunted revolutionary phrases. At present we are witnessing in England the concentration of the Labour bureaucracy, under the leadership of the greatest reactionaries of the Thomas school. This concentrated bureaucracy is turning for intellectual guidance to the Second International, which embodies in itself the experience of active struggle against the proletarian movement on a world scale. It is precisely for this reason that the British Labour leaders, including the so-called Lefts, dare not now speak ironically of this "appendage" of capitalist governments, and even try to picture the Second International as an organisation fighting for democracy. The consolidation of the reactionary bureaucracy signifies the strengthening of the influence of the Second International in the British Labour movement. This in its turn will lead to the bureaucracy taking a more or less active part in the anti-Soviet coalition.

This bureaucracy does not, however, express the temper of the masses of the proletariat. On the contrary, its attitude is a reaction against the obvious growth of the influence of the Left Wing elements in the trade union movement and in the Labour Party. The machine which the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy command, powerful as it is, is inadequate to restrain the revolutionary strivings of the British workers. The British Labour Party long ago began to head for a split.

It is expelling large Labour organisations because they refuse to follow the Liberal leadership of Mr. MacDonald. Now the tactics of expelling Communists and Left Wing workers is being adopted by the trade unions and has been carried out already by one trade union.

Defend the Soviets!

The fact that these tactics are being adopted is not an indication of the strength but of the weakness of the leaders. But it is true to say that we do not always display sufficient activity in combating these "champions of democracy" who are deliberately pointing their shafts against the only country in the world in which the workers have been victorious. The "champions of democracy" understand perfectly well that this country, by the very fact of its existence and by the success of its work of Socialist construction, represents a greater power and influence than the machine controlled by the Second International. The Second International is straining every effort to slander the Soviet Republic. We, of course, cannot stand by indifferently, while this disgusting campaign is being carried on. We must expose untiringly the lies and slander which the Abramovitches, through the Second International, are spreading broadcast—in company with Chamberlain and Mussolini.

The lies circulated by these people must be refuted by the concrete truth concerning the situation in the U.S.S.R. If Mr. Brockway's friend and colleague, Mr. Brailsford, could sense the spirit of genuine proletarian creativeness in the Workers' Republic, then without a doubt the victims of Fascist terror in Italy, the British miners who are now paying the price of Baldwin's victory, the French proletariat, who are now being thrown on the streets in thousands in the interests of capitalist stabilisation, and the oppressed masses of the workers of the whole world will sense it much more strongly.

In one respect we have something to learn from the leaders of the Second International. They appreciate the place of the Soviet Union in the world class struggle, and with astonishing stubbornness and amazing persistence they are fighting against it. We must display the same stubbornness and persistence in our fight on behalf of the First Union of Socialist Republics in the world.

