

EMIGRATION
and
IMMIGRATION
A REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL
SOCIALIST CONGRESS
IN STUTTGART, 1907

by
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The question of emigration and immigration has long stood on our agenda and urgently demands an answer from international socialism.

In the lands of emigration and especially in the lands of immigration, this question is closely tied to the interests of the working class and in labor politics we often come upon the principles of socialism. Despite this, however, it appears too often that the socialist press does not take very much interest in theories of immigration movement. Neither the socialist parties nor the trade unions of the countries concerned with this problem attempt to institute a distinctive tactic and policy on this matter, and the majority give a one-sided and narrowly pragmatic answer to this question.

The question of emigration—this is one of the most involved and difficult questions of present-day social politics. The phenomenon of emigration is basically a normal one, arising from the peculiarities of capitalist production and from the perpetual migrations of workers in search of employment, but this phenomenon often becomes complicated by side issues and loses its normal character.

It would not have been a question, had the stream of emigration been regulated only by the offers and demands of the labor market, or had the influx of a work force from outside remained in strict proportion to the growth of production in each land, when finally the indigenous work force was truly inadequate to satisfy the needs of production. In such a situation we would recognize immigration as desirable, and it would encounter opposition neither from the workers, nor from the bourgeois governments.

It is obvious that such a regulated and strictly purposive emigration does not exist. A whole series of peripheral circum-

stances deflects the emigration from its normal course, and this deflection, incidentally, calls forth the emigration question.

In order to raise the level of profits through reducing wages, the businessmen strive through their agents to attract workers from less developed countries, workers who demand less, are less organized, and whom hunger, need, and persecution force to make do with little. Such a capitalist tactic benefits not only the money interests directly, but also bourgeois class interests in the broadest sense. Besides the fact that it creates a large reserve work force and by increased competition on the labor-market reduces wages, it achieves another objective, one of no small importance to the bourgeoisie: antagonistic feelings are aroused between native and immigrant workers; the false notion is implanted that there is a clash of interests in the working class itself, [with the result that] their solidarity is broken and thus their opposition to the appetite of the capitalists is weakened.

At other times a false situation arises in which the bourgeoisie appears to be, as it were, more liberal than the workers, since, contrary to the workers, the bourgeoisie demands no restrictive legislation on immigration. On the other hand, when the labor market is full, or when the nation is living through a crisis and the recurrent surplus of foreign labor becomes excessive or even frightening, then the bourgeoisie dons the mask of concern for the workers and passes laws which limit immigration. In all of these situations, the class consciousness of the worker is obscured and in politics concerning immigration the workers often become a pawn in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

In the lands of emigration the problem becomes entangled with political circumstances, national oppression, religious persecution, and other such factors which increase emigration, independent of the general condition of the market and the economic situation at a particular moment. In periods of political crisis or in periods following pogroms, for example, like those which occur so often in Russia or Rumania, a mass

emigration begins, which quickly inundates the job market of the countries to which it is directed.

Laying aside other less important factors which cause an abnormal situation in the emigration process, we will note that in the final analysis this abnormal situation, too, arises from capitalist production, and as much as there is talk of a war against immigration, it must also be a war against the basic causes of undesirable antipathies, but not against the result of these causes, i.e., not against the fact of immigration as such.

I. Bossism and the Transport of Emigrants

Emigration—this is the true child of the bourgeois order. Under normal conditions emigration would play a role as regulator in assuaging the ravages of capitalistic overpopulation, but under abnormal conditions emigration takes on an anarchic character and itself becomes a plague.

The idea that emigration is dependent upon the capitalist economy emerges not only from the investigation of the basic causes of this phenomenon, but also when we do no more than acquaint ourselves with the technique of emigration, with the forces which lead and at each moment direct masses of emigrants from one land to another. These forces stem from the possession of capital and serve its needs. They are the major causes of all abnormal aspects of emigration.

At the end of the eighteenth century, when the morning star of America's freedom and her capitalist career arose, she soon encountered an unavoidable obstruction in the path of her subsequent development. Concerning the deficiency of labor resources, George Washington, in a letter to a commissioner of the Federal District in the year 1792, recommended collecting the needed number of workers in Europe, especially in Germany, concluding contracts with them; right there on the spot, obligating them to serve two or three years and at other times four years, in order to pay back the travel

expenses, and [stipulating] that they should work the whole time for a specified wage agreed upon beforehand.

This advice has served as a guide to the American capitalists in every period, and they have been following it clandestinely up to this day.

Due to the unusually rapid and intensive development of capitalism in the United States there never arose, as there did in Europe, the proletarianization of the farm village. Thanks to the richness in land, the American farm village not only did not provide industrial laborers, but even swallowed a large number of city inhabitants who settled in the countryside. This situation created within the industrial centers of the United States an apparatus which drew in and consumed a considerable number of workers from abroad. The natural surplus of workers attracted by high wages and an easy livelihood, workers driven from where they had lived by crises, unemployment, political persecution, and national oppression—this surplus proved insufficient, and a great machine was created to attract workers and emigrants in general to populate and develop the desolate wilderness regions.

The governments of the various states [of the Union] tried to outdo one another in ways of luring emigrants into settling there, and to this day this is practiced in the Southern states of North America, as well as in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, i.e., the system of privileges and government support for immigrants.

A large army of middlemen was formed, the so-called bosses who brought the “green” emigrants to the capitalist companies and used every opportunity to expand their business. Closely bound up with these bosses were the interests of the agents of the shipping companies; in every corner of Europe they used lies and false promises to induce the poor to emigrate, and in America they “duped” the immigrants into buying “prepaid tickets” for relatives who remained in the Old Country.

Following the Civil War, despite the establishment in

New York of a government emigration bureau, the activity of the ship companies increased markedly. Thanks to the rapid growth of industry, America ceased to be dependent upon imported European goods, and the ships which used to deliver cotton to Europe would either have to return empty or look for passengers. Obviously, the second alternative was more attractive to the shipowners, and the institution of agents began to grow and flourish. The bringing in of “contract laborers” (workers hired for a specified time and whose passage was paid for) created a new slavery of whites and in the 80’s inspired the formation of the House of Representatives’ Select Committee to Inquire into the Importation of Contract Laborers, etc.* This Committee uncovered such an abyss of terror, lies, and exploitation, such shameful practices of the “bosses” and the agents of ship companies in their pursuit of emigrants, that [in 1885] Congress was forced to pass a law prohibiting the importation of contract laborers.

This practice, however, was too closely bound up with American capitalism to be abrogated so readily with one stroke of the pen. These restrictions did not worry the capitalists except during times of industrial stagnation, but in times of expansion they found all sorts of ways to circumvent the law. We see that the report of the Italian foreign minister in the year 1898 found a burgeoning growth of “bossism,” which had its agencies everywhere, and pointed out the intense activity of the ship companies. We see that the reports of the aforementioned Congressional committee confirmed the fact that contract laborers were being smuggled through Canada.^b The final report deplors the fact that contract laborers are being brought in through Mexico and put to work in the mines. According to this report, 2,314 such workers were successfully “kidnapped,” but in reality their number was ten times greater. The Immigration Bureau brought suit against several industrial firms, but they were acquitted. This

*The notes in the original Yiddish pamphlet are indicated in our translation by lower-case letters of the alphabet—The Editors.

report often notes the feverish activity of the agents of the shipping companies who sought out passengers for their ships.^c

This whole activity, with all its harmful aspects, showed itself in the Jewish area. The agents knew how to make use of all the unfavorable conditions which beset the Jewish emigrant from Russia, and often he was seized bodily and enslaved. In times of pogrom-panic, the agents caught them like fish in a net. Making use of the circumstances that most of the emigrants had no means by which to obtain an emigration passport and, in addition, were more than anxious to avoid all contact with the Russian authorities, the agents smuggled emigrants over the border like contraband, and from that moment on the emigrant found himself in the agent's power and dared not raise a voice against him. Besides, the agent understood very well how to exploit the ignorance and naive trust of the emigrants and how, through devious means and falsehoods, to assemble his many victims.

The mechanism which was thus activated did not cease to operate, regardless of the fact that the conditions which brought it about in the first place had, to a certain extent, disappeared. Furthermore, this mechanism, which became a self-sufficient branch of the capitalist economy, grew and developed; since it was subject to the laws of this economy, there was no halting its growth. The number of shipping companies grew; Russian capitalists could not abide the fact that the entire profit from Russian emigration was falling into the pockets of foreign capitalists, and overnight three shipping companies began to function, opening direct passage to America from [the Baltic ports of] Libau [and] Riga (via London), and [the Black Sea port of] Odessa. It appears that competition increased and the huge number of agents, disregarding all prohibitions, caught the emigrant in their claws, enslaved him with a ship ticket and delivered him in America utterly heedless of the conditions awaiting him.

The mechanism not only fulfilled the function of trans-

porting emigrants, but often distributed them into various lines of work and placed them in areas of the country where various branches of industry had need of them, often as strikebreakers where there were strikes.

Thus, we see, instead of bettering the life of the emigrant, this arrangement is, first and foremost, a source of profit for the capitalists in general and particularly for the shipowners, who look upon the emigrant only as freight that brings in more profit. We see, furthermore, that the employment and dispersal of the emigrant is to a very large extent dependent upon the middleman—the “boss”—who delivers the “greenhorn” to the capitalist. The entire present-day emigration arises because of particular social conditions, such as the relationship of city to village, where small business is pushed out, through the differences in the economic situation in different lands, and the like. As far as the great stream of emigration and all its deviations from the normal process are concerned, such a phenomenon in the lands of emigration is generated by political and religious persecutions and by national oppression; to a certain extent, it is artificially created by the ship companies and the middlemen, i.e., in the final analysis they, too, are dependent on the present conditions of production.

It is self-evident that the fight must really be directed against these basic causes of emigration, and only then can we expect substantive results of any sort.

II. The Attitude of the Bourgeoisie and the Inexperienced Labor Unions to Immigration. Legislation Against Immigration.

Theoretically International Social Democracy agrees with our view of what is the essence of present-day emigration; and often, indeed, in a very confused and unclear form, this is also true of bourgeois theoreticians.

When it comes to practice, however, to politics and

legislation. then the situation is entirely different: here the question of emigration calls forth the most blatant chauvinism. stirs up national and racial antagonisms, and awakens class-egotism in its most naked form. The political and economic bourgeois ruling class is not united and consistent on the question of emigration and immigration.

Nowhere do we come across any serious obstacles in the path of present-day *emigration*: in general, emigration is directly supported regardless of the fact that generally it is the better elements that emigrate, i.e., able-bodied young men.

It is an entirely different case with *immigration*. The tiny streams which trickle out from the many emigration lands come together to form a strong current aimed at a few high-points of immigration, and here there arises the cruel question which concerns us here.

In the foregoing chapter we have already shown with what delight the immigrants are accepted, as long as capital needs them and as long as the entire stream of immigration can be absorbed by industrial growth. Later, when the flood of immigrants in England and the Eastern states of North America ceased to correspond to the needs of capital and the danger arose that immigrants would become a severe burden to the country and cause dissatisfaction among the native workers, then began the period of bourgeois quota laws against immigration.

The bourgeoisie found a fine opportunity to play advocate for nationalistic interests generally, and for the workers especially, and, hiding behind the very same shield, to prattle about the harmony of class interests and, during election campaigns, to win the support of its natural enemies.

For the special laws against immigration we generally find the following justification: we must, so it is said, protect the worker from excessive competition, keep the nation safe from being flooded with ne'er-do-wells, the sick, criminals, anarchists, and other elements which the government considers anti-social—such as prostitutes and the like. They

threaten the public that their livelihood will fail, the nation will deteriorate, culture will collapse, etc., etc. The earlier immigrants who with their energy created the nation and the government are praised to the sky and are compared with current immigrants, who come only for the purpose of stuffing their purses and will remain perpetual strangers in their new fatherland.

True, the entire bourgeoisie does not sing the same song. In those states where the exploitation of immigrants is still necessary for the growth and development of industry—there all of a sudden the immigrants become healthy, strong, welcome guests, refined and no danger to anyone; as though by a miracle the nation is no longer being destroyed by the flood of immigrants and the culture is not dying, but, on the contrary, is thriving.

The tune of the propertied class and farmers is also a bit different from that of the industrial capitalists. For the former and especially for those who own real estate in the city, the growth of population is a boon, for it increases income without requiring any capital. For the farmer the immigrants are good guests, because through them he secures new markets for his produce. Hence he worries little about the qualities and color of the immigrant. The national Congress of Farmers in Richmond (Va.) spoke out strongly in 1905 against [proposed and existing] laws restricting immigration.

But if a few bourgeois voices do not follow the general bourgeois policy in this question, the bourgeoisie has found strong support from the conservative labor unions. In December 1892, the leader of The Knights of Labor, Terence Vincent Powderly,¹ wrote to the congress of labor unions organized in that group: "We can even pass laws in every state to shorten the work day, pass everywhere a minimum wage, pass tariffs which will assure that not one bit of foreign merchandise can enter, but if the flow of immigration is not halted, the shortening of the work day would have no meaning, the minimum wage would not be secure, and American

labor would have no protection . . . The leader of your order is not afraid to say that in his view not one single immigrant should be allowed entry, excepting those who can show a sufficient amount of money to assure their self-support''; and the organization passed a resolution demanding that only those with sufficient means to support themselves for a year be allowed to enter.^d

In December, 1894, the president of the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers,² proposed the following project to the convention of the Federation: In order to assure that workers who were put under contract in the Old Country not be admitted, it would be necessary to hire private detectives to travel about the ocean and spy on third-class passengers, to ascertain under what conditions they were coming to America.^e

The immigration policy of these two strongest American labor organizations has not changed to this day and played no small role in the passage of this year's restrictive laws.³ Especially prominent were the labor unions in San Francisco, which so successfully led the fight to deny entry to Japanese workers.

This very tactic, which stems from shortsightedness and petty self-interest, is also gradually taken over by the immigrant workers, who begin to look askance at those newly arrived and find it in their interest not to protest against the agitation to restrict immigration. For example, when the most recent restrictive law was about to be passed, one whose primary victims are Jewish immigrants, the trade unions of Jewish workers in America, which are composed entirely of immigrants, adhered to the tactic of tacit approval. Particularly characteristic is that every occupation is especially hostile to immigrants of that occupation, i.e., to its direct competitors, and looks more or less with indifference on immigrants of other occupations. In this fashion not only narrow group self-interest of the worst kind is developed, but also a clearly

harmful old-fashioned guild psychology, against which one must struggle with all one's might.

Above all, this hostile tactic shows itself toward immigrants in the closed unions, as they are called, unions from which newly arrived workers are entirely excluded or where only workers of certain races or workers who have lived in the country a rather long time are admitted. There can be no doubt of the evident harmfulness of this tactic to working-class interests.

As it happens, however, there has developed in recent years, both in bourgeois circles and among inexperienced workers, an atmosphere of hostility toward immigration, and as a consequence, the parliaments of the lands towards which immigration flows have constantly on their agenda the question of its restriction.

Let us look briefly at how the limiting of immigration is implemented by legislation in daily life. We will not occupy ourselves with the history of laws restricting immigration and with their content, which pertains to restriction. To demonstrate how much these laws truly reduce immigration, it is sufficient to recall that, in the period 1899-1906, the number of immigrants detained in American ports [of entry] totalled no more than 1 percent of all immigrants, and of these, 7.6 percent were sent back.^f The authorities who blocked the arrivals were criticized. Complaints were lodged against them, charging that they were too soft-hearted. Because of this there also began a demand for more stringent laws. The upshot of these complaints, dissatisfaction, and anti-immigration agitation was the new law, which soon passed both houses of the American Congress.

The principles governing the most recent restrictive immigration [the Act of February 20, 1907] are the same as those of earlier laws. The authors of the law were concerned, first of all, to protect the country against the workers put under contract for a certain term in the Old Country; [they wanted

to] protect it from the beggars, the sick, the immoral, and so forth. We have already seen that the reports of the Immigration Bureau contain a constant complaint that, despite all the prohibitions and restrictions, primarily contract labor was being brought in. The new law set a stiff fine for recruiting and bringing over such workers, but it also contains one section: The law has no jurisdiction in the District of Columbia or the territories, or in those states whose governments call for immigration and themselves determine the conditions of admission and the incentives to settle in particular places. This special condition clearly shows how concerned the bourgeois governments are with the welfare of the workers and how serious are the words in the law that there should be no entry permitted to immigrants who the law states can interfere with the native laborer and worsen the worker's situation in America.

Concern for the workers can be shown only to the extent that it does not interfere with the interest of the capitalists. If in the District of Columbia, or in other states where the prohibitions are not valid, the capitalists bring in workers who can worsen the worker's situation in America, to fight against strikers, to push out more expensive labor, and the like, that will probably be regarded as a perfectly natural thing.

It goes without saying that, when it is necessary, contract labor from these exempted regions can be introduced into the remaining states.

We feel—and the facts prove that our assessment is a correct one—that even if a law were passed completely prohibiting the entry of contract laborers, even this would have no effect, for the capitalistic practice would find a way around the law.

Another aspect of such a paper law is that which punishes ship companies "for attracting emigration" through agents or advertisements.

Only those sections of the law will be really meaningful which are directed against indigent immigrants and those who

turn the immigrants over to the medical personnel examining new arrivals. The shameful medieval head-tax, which the law doubled from two to four dollars, will be a great burden to those from abroad who have come to earn their bread. This may force them to sell their last poor possessions in the Old Country, but will not reduce the number of immigrants, and may accomplish only this: that the immigrant, poorer by two dollars, will enter the New World an even greater pauper than he was in the Old and be still more helpless.

The law gives the Division of Information in the Bureau of Immigration the power to send back those immigrants whom the doctor finds to be diseased, and once the Division makes its decision, it stands and nothing can be done about it. Paragraph II of the law denies admission to those immigrants whom the doctor finds "weak and mentally incapable of earning a living." It is clear that this grants the Division and the doctors broad powers to act as they wish. Such power, against which there is no appeal, is rarely exercised without bias, is too often dependent upon a purely personal interpretation of fairness and usefulness, and thus occasions frequent mistakes. The imprecise designation "weak" can be interpreted by each doctor in his own way, and the attitude of a single doctor to this problem can determine the fate of thousands, who may be sentenced to the dreadful return voyage to the countries from which they have fled.

We have dwelt so long on the details of the law of February 20, [1907],⁴ because this "improved" law shows clearly how much real effect the attempt to stem the evils of immigration through restrictive laws actually has, and how great those evils must be in reality. These very oppressive laws do not hit the target they are aimed at and do not choke off the flow of undesirable elements, but only eliminate those who are weak and helpless. Who is of use to the land and who is not—this is determined only incidentally, by superficial indications; obviously, errors are made at every step.

We will give a concrete example. Tens of thousands of

Jewish immigrants from Russia and Rumania, immigrants who must leave their homeland because of persecution, entrust their fate to the hands of the Immigration Bureau's Information Division, whose decision cannot be appealed. It will be established that they have too little money, there will be a question as to whether they have received outside help to meet their travelling expenses, the doctor will find that most of them suffer from heart trouble, or anemia, or have weak nerves—in a word, following the letter of the law, they must all be sent back. However, can these superficial indications serve as proof that all these immigrants are really harmful, incapable of earning a living, and lacking enough strength to fight for their existence? It is clear that there are no such indications, and the laws concerning immigrants, in contrast to all other laws, give no objective criteria which will assure that only the truly guilty are punished.

The sole result of all these laws is that they provide satisfaction for chauvinistic feelings and create a favorable atmosphere in which to propagandize the "great" principle: "America for Americans," "England for English," etc. They implant nationalistic hatred, and the great benefit of this to the capitalists is not simply that it gives the laborers nothing, but it works to prevent the development of their class-consciousness and breaks their solidarity.

Besides this, we must observe that the law which prohibits ship company agents from encouraging emigrants in fact delivers the emigrants into the hands of these very agents. The restrictive laws serve only to provide the agents with the perfect opportunity to milk their victims: by spreading fear among the emigrants, by exaggerating the dangers, they force the emigrants to turn to the agents for help, which is supposedly necessary to overcome all obstacles.

We are also convinced that the ship companies will manage to use the new law to enlarge their profit on the pretext that they run a severe risk of paying fines, and thus

must raise the price of ship tickets, or perhaps find some other way to exploit the emigrant further.

III. The Tactics of the Socialist Parties in the Lands of Immigration.

To What Extent Immigration Can Be Influenced and the Means of Regulating Immigration.

This, then, is the attitude of the bourgeoisie and of bourgeois workers toward immigration. Such are the laws passed with their agreement and support to regulate immigration; and such are the worthless and at the same time harmful results of these laws.

What sort of position have the socialist parties taken on these important issues, and how does the socialist proletariat react to these matters?

As much as the hard question is debated back and forth, there are essentially two positions among socialists. One tactic is prompted by principles of the solidarity and unity of proletarian interests in all lands; in the belief that the more cultured, aware and secure workers should not reject, much less persecute, their less informed brothers, victims of economic anarchy, political repression, and national hatred. This tactic is primarily dictated by the belief that every restrictive law is powerless against the laws of capitalist economy. At the present time, a second tactic requires agreement of the working masses, and the necessity of yielding to this agreement, not going very much against popular opinion which prevails among workers, etc. As a result, either they take no position at all on this matter or assume a position which from the proletarian standpoint is hardly a consistent one.

Most American socialists adhered to the tactic of non-

involvement during the last campaign, before the new law against immigration was passed through the legislative process. The comrades in San Francisco, however, agitated strongly against admitting Japanese immigrants.

That these two opposing policies, of which we spoke earlier, cannot be reconciled, that they are mutually exclusive—this, too, was evident at the Amsterdam Congress during the discussion of the question of immigration and emigration.⁴ The resolution of the Commission establishes a thoroughly correct principle regarding immigration—but while declaring itself categorically against every restrictive law in this area, it simultaneously calls on socialists in the parliaments to demand that the governments exercise strict control over the admission of workers whose entry would reduce wages. The small discrepancies and flaws which are in the resolution of the Commission are completely evident in the resolution proposed by the American, Dutch, and Australian delegations. This resolution nonchalantly ignores the principal aspect of the question and the harm which socialism suffers through the fight against immigration. It emphasizes only the harm which immigration does the native worker. It pours oil on the fire by dividing humanity into advanced and backward races (“Chinese, Negroes, etc.”). There is not one word against contemporary policies vis-à-vis the immigration problem, and, while coming out against restrictive laws, this resolution calls for a fight “with all means” against the admission of workers from the backward races.⁵ We will recall that Comrade Morris Hillquit⁶ expressed the essence of this resolution as follows: “It is necessary,” he said, “to recognize the difference between workers from civilized countries and workers from uncivilized countries; between workers with a class-consciousness, or those who are at least in the period of the development of their class-consciousness, and between those workers among whom there is not the slightest trace of such a consciousness. This is why every labor union in America has spoken out in favor of forbidding

the admission of Chinese workers. Even if this appears to be reactionary, it is necessary, if we do not want our entire labor movement to be destroyed. Not to admit Chinese coolies and Negroes—this is a question of life and death for our labor movement.”

The resolution offered by the comrades from Argentina had a similar character. Nor was the resolution which the American Socialist Labor Party (SLP) worked out for the present International Socialist Congress entirely free of such defects. In the motivation of the resolution are also unwittingly involved the “international mechanism of production” and “the growing intensity of the international class struggle.” It admits that “justice and common sense call on workers of every land to welcome unfortunate immigrants with the same feeling of solidarity and brotherhood they would extend to native workers.” But at the same time the resolution introduces a muddled notion about natural and unnatural immigration, and recognizes the need for protection from those workers “who can never be organized.” It does not directly condemn the division and unfriendliness which exist between newly arrived and long settled immigrants, on the one hand, and between workers of different nationalities, on the other.

How can one differentiate between those who have come naturally and those who have come unnaturally? Why are those who have come “unnaturally” considered *a priori* to be harmful strikebreakers who will retard the growth of the labor movement, etc.? Who can determine for certain which workers can be organized and which can never be organized?

It is enough to ask this question to demonstrate that this resolution gives much room to accidental and arbitrary circumstances, and that in its practical aspects it follows closely the policy of the conservative labor unions and shows little regard for the real situation and the principles of socialism.

We recall that by the provisions of the new law Japanese workers are almost entirely excluded from entry into

America, and this at the same time that representatives of the Japanese socialist proletariat sit with us in the International Socialist Congress. Negroes are generally included in the category of "harmful" competitors who are denied membership in labor unions. Yet, when Negroes happen to be admitted to the national unions, or organize their own unions, they are known to become very loyal union members.

In conclusion, we must not forget that the largest contingent of "unnatural" immigrants may come from the persecuted Russian Jews, yet we believe that *no one* would have the temerity to say that the Russian Jewish proletariat will bring harm to the labor movement of any country whatsoever.

It is clear that the areas in which socialist parties need to exert influence in immigration, and the character of such possible influence, are not precisely delineated. The principles of immigration policies are not clearly established, and socialists of all lands, as the Amsterdam Congress demonstrated, are not "prepared" for a solution of the question.

It is impossible to find a fixed position from which to outline what we must do in this field and which should show exactly in what direction to lead the fight against emigration and immigration and to what extent this phenomenon is a real evil.

We believe that the truth should serve as our basic position, that present-day immigration and emigration are both closely bound up with the nature of capitalist economy: with the crises, overpopulation, the elimination of small-scale production from town and village, the system of wage-labor, and the anarchistic condition of production and marketing of goods; that the unnatural and detrimental growth of emigration, although it does not directly stem from these above-mentioned causes, has deep roots nonetheless in the objective circumstances of contemporary economy. To the direct causes of this unnatural growth of emigration belong, in the lands of emigration, first of all, lack of political rights and

nationalistic pressure; and in the lands of immigration an important role is played by the fact that the capitalist and government enterprises entice the workers of foreign lands in order to assure themselves a cheap labor force, which they enslave. There is also the mechanism of recruitment and transportation of emigrants, a mechanism that is closely tied to the growth of emigration and has itself become an independent branch of industry in the capitalist economy.

From this it is clear that every battle against the *fact* of emigration itself is as fruitless and as detrimental to the development of workers' class-consciousness, as was the fight against the machine led by workers at the beginning of the last century. From this point of view, every law against immigration—regardless of how good a purpose it might have—is essentially reactionary, and socialists of all lands must take their stand against such legislation.

Such a position on immigration law does not mean, however, that we are propagandizing for a policy of non-involvement, that we are recommending passivity and abandoning the field entirely to the activities of the bourgeois parties. No, it is only necessary to determine in what area our involvement and our struggle can give us good results, and not merely create harmful fictions.

When we all state that no law can remove machine-production, wage-labor, the army of the unemployed, etc.—it does not mean that we oppose the fight against the various forms of exploitation or that we are against laws concerning factories.

Our influence on the emigration question must go in two directions. We must lead a strong campaign against every attempt to affect the course of emigration through restrictive laws; we must expose the true nature of these laws and, most important, we must combat the feelings of demoralization which anti-immigration agitation breeds in the laboring masses, awakening in them narrow self-interest and chauvinistic passions, weakening their class-consciousness, drawing the

tactics of the workers closer to those of the oppression of weaker races and nationalities by those who are stronger.

But along with this critically important work, we must initiate a more significant legislative program, one which will strive to regulate immigration and render it harmless. Besides introducing through legislation a normal working day in all areas of labor, including domestics, day laborers, and farm workers, and besides taking measures to assure a minimum wage, we must in the first place begin a fight against the middlemen, the bosses, and the shipping companies. In the present situation when the "boss" is the sole intermediary between the newly arrived workers and the capitalists, we cannot do without him and we cannot control his actions. This evil can be largely mitigated not only through laws against the more pernicious forms of bossism, but also through the involvement of the trade unions and immigrant societies [*lantslaytferaynen*]^b in the lands of emigration and immigration and in the port cities. These societies must take upon themselves the duty of protecting the embarking and arriving workers, of helping them to find work, etc.

Regarding the finding of work, one possible medium is that proposed by the Italian foreign minister in 1898—establishing in the lands of emigration labor bureaus financed by the governments of those lands. This would in any event be preferable to the labor bureaus supported by the lands of immigration—for example, the Ohio bureau—because these must live in peace with local capitalists. It is not only necessary that labor union representatives be members of these bureaus. It is also necessary to establish everywhere free information offices for emigrants, also financed by the state and with the participation of trade unions. It is necessary to reach an international agreement for the protection of the interests of emigrants, for the control of the activities of the transport and ship companies, etc.

In order to remove every friction between those newly arrived and the natives, it is necessary that the immigrants

quickly receive all political rights and be admitted into the life of the area—and, therefore, socialists everywhere must demand that the term which the immigrant must wait before receiving full political rights in the new land be shortened.

Finally, it is necessary to reorganize the trade unions, to fight against their closed guild character, to assure that newly arrived workers will have entree to them; and it may be necessary to help the immigrants organize themselves according to nationalities, occupations, "lantslayt" societies, etc.

The revolutionary proletariat must lead a fight against political and national oppression in the lands of emigration; the labor movement, which is beginning gradually to develop in the most backward countries, can for its part help establish normal conditions for the process of emigration.

In this way we see opening before us a broad field for legislative, organizational, and propagandistic activity; and we need not grasp at laws dividing the immigrants arbitrarily into categories of beneficial and harmful, of natural and unnatural, and members of advanced and backward nationalities and races. And this entire program, which will no doubt yield more real results than the stillborn laws against immigration, can be carried out, while we remain on the terrain of the class-struggle, not imitating the bourgeoisie and unaware workers; at the same time working both toward the betterment of the worker's condition at the present moment, and also for the sake of socialism.

IV. Jewish Emigration from Russia

To clarify and make more precise the major precepts of our report, we will attempt to analyze and establish the causes of Jewish emigration from Russia—an emigration which has all the makings of being included in the category of "unnatural." This is very necessary to do, considering the ceaseless and evergrowing stream of Jewish emigration, its flood-

like character and its strong growth after every slaughter of Jews—a common occurrence in Russia and Rumania. The fear that the ruined, plundered and blood-soaked poor of the Jews will stream to the traditional lands of immigration—America and England—all this calls forth a special attitude towards Jewish immigration. True, in no laws limiting immigration is there mention anywhere of the name “Jew”; no one proposes laws or quotas regarding Jews, like those barring Chinese and Japanese; every opinion stating that the laws restricting immigration are aimed specifically at Jews brings a prompt and indignant denial from the respective government. However, though technically these laws were passed against all those “undesirable” immigrants, without regard to nationality, in reality Jews bear the brunt of their force.

If all the thousands of Jewish families from Rumania were forced to flee during the March [1907] slaughter,⁷ leaving all their possessions to the half-crazed peasants, if all these Jews had arrived in New York harbor, they would no doubt have had no money, the doctor would have found them unhealthy-looking, and it would perhaps have been discovered that one or another philanthropic organization helped them pay their travel expenses, and then they would not have been admitted into the United States.⁸ No wonder that Jews, who are so sensitive to these matters, perceive, not without reason, that all the recent attempts to limit immigration are veiled attempts to restrict Jewish immigration in particular. It is perfectly clear in any case that, with the growth of Jewish immigration, talk of the “Jewish menace” grows stronger, and the anti-semitic virus begins to spread in lands that had previously been free of this plague.

Jewish emigration from Russia assumed a more or less mass character only toward the end of the 70's.¹ By the year 1880, a considerable number of Jewish emigrants had already arrived in America and England. The pogroms of 1882 and especially the ensuing edicts forbidding Jews to live in villages

gave strong impetus to the emigration movement.⁹ Tapering off a bit in the following years—as always happens after the effect of political occurrences has worn off—it began in 1886 to grow without letup and soon came to play the major role in Russian emigration. For the last eight years, Jewish emigration has accounted for 42½ percent of total Russian emigration. If Polish emigration is included; the figure becomes over 60 percent for all emigration from Russia and Poland. Since the end of the 80's, Jews have probably accounted for not less than 90 percent of all Russian emigration, not including the Poles.¹⁰

The rise and fall of Jewish emigration depends above all largely on the general causes of emigration, primarily the condition of the market and of production in the lands of immigration, and also upon special local causes which force Russian Jews to move to other countries.

The pogroms and persecutions enormously increase the Jewish emigration, but they cannot for long affect its growth.

After the pogroms of 1881, the emigration wave began to swell (and Russian emigration at that time was almost exclusively Jewish) from 7,191 persons in 1880 to 10,655 in 1881; following this, when Jews were driven from the villages in 1882, emigration continued to grow even more, and reached a total of 21,590 in 1882. This coincided exactly with the rise of emigration throughout Europe, thanks to the booming economy in the United States, which had rebounded from the crisis of 1873. The total European emigration growth of the early 80's quickly increased and rose from 177,826 to 457,256 in 1880, to 669,431 in 1881 and 788,992 in 1882. In the mid-80's, both total European, Russian, and Russian Jewish emigration fell, due to the industrial stand-still. It picked up again in 1887, in the wake of a new industrial revival. Emigration from Russia began to grow suddenly and strongly in the 90's (1890—35,598 emigrants, 1891—47,426, 1892—81,511). This increase was due to persecution of Jews, especially their being driven from Moscow, and possibly also to the Russia-

wide famine (in the same year, emigration of Poles rose from 27,497 to 40,536).

Finally, paralleling the industrial boom of the year 1896, the wave of Russian Jewish emigration rose mightily. In 1899, when there was a poor harvest throughout South Russia and during the last few years, years of revolution, pogroms and reaction, years of [pogroms at] Kishinev, Gomel, Odessa, Bialystok, and Shedletz [Siedlce], Russian Jewish emigration became unusually large. From 47,689, its level in 1903, it reached 77,544 in 1904, 92,388 in 1905, and in 1906, the unheard-of figure of 125,234.

A similar picture presents itself concerning Jewish immigration to England. It is enough even to acquaint ourselves superficially with the figures for Jewish emigration from Russia, to convince ourselves that this "unnatural" flood of emigration is due not to ill will, which could be kept under control, but to the political, economic, and cultural backwardness of Russia, and to wild nationalistic incitement, national oppression, etc.¹¹ It is clear that, as long as the effect of these causes does not abate, incredibly large numbers of Jews will be pushed out of Russia annually, and no anti-immigration laws will stop them from emigrating.

But these figures which we have presented here do not by themselves give a full picture of Jewish emigration from Russia. The elements of Jewish emigration and, if we can so express it, its tendencies, are so unusual and deviate so markedly from the general rule that it must be examined more carefully, and analyzed in all its details.

Among emigrants of other nationalities, as among Lithuanian, Polish, and Finnish emigrants from Russia, the great majority are, first of all, day-laborers and servants; second, male; third, of the average age between 14 and 45.

During the course of the eight-year period 1899-1906, day-laborers and servants composed on the average 40.9 percent of all emigration, or more than half of all emigrants with an occupation.

Jewish emigration—with regard to sex, age and occupation—is very different.

Jewish emigrants are exclusively city-dwellers. The source of emigration is not from the countryside, but from the city and, in the main, the small towns (*shtetlach*). Instead of the destitute peasant, we are dealing with the destitute artisan and petty shopkeeper, who fall beneath the heavy yoke of capitalist competition and who, in the small *shtetlach*, are ruined by the worsening situation of their main customer, the peasant. Since Jews [in the tsarist empire] are crammed together in one small area—the Pale of Jewish Settlement—live only in cities, and especially in those where industry is little developed, and are restricted by special laws in exercising their power—all of this has led to competition in the various occupations, businesses and all kinds of middleman activities to a point where competitors destroy one another.

Overpopulation in the Pale is growing from year to year, despite the fact that provinces in the Russian interior are underpopulated. The right to live anywhere, which the Jewish artisan supposedly has, is tied to so many conditions that it is really a fiction; and this explains the fact that when in [Hapsburg] Galicia Jewish emigration, as demonstrated by Józef Buzek, was at first directed toward the nearest industrial centers of Austria,¹² the stream of Russian Jewish emigration was aimed across the ocean from the very outset.

There is a mass flight from the brutal competition; but more than this, people flee from the lack of rights, from political oppression. They flee in families, with wives and children; they want to save themselves not only from hunger, but also from pogroms and persecution. They leave not for temporary employment, but for permanent settlement. The unusual character of Jewish emigration is to be explained by these special circumstances.¹³

The fact that Jewish emigrants are primarily city-folk determines in advance that farm workers and day-laborers will be least significant, and that skilled workers will play a

great role, in this emigration. And in truth, when one investigates the composition of Jewish emigration according to occupations, it becomes evident that a great percentage of the workers are skilled. In the period 1899-1906,^j when such workers were 15.5 percent of all emigrants, out of 680,062 Jews, 252,972 or over 37 percent, or 66 percent of all who had occupations (379,083), were skilled workers. Of the remaining 126,111 emigrants (those who had not learned a skill), there were only 30,585 day-laborers and servants, i.e., 23.5 percent of all who had an occupation.¹⁴

Along with this relatively high number of qualified workers in Jewish emigration, there was also a high percentage of emigrants counted in the statistics as having "no occupation." The explanation is that this class of emigrants "without an occupation" includes the majority of women and children under 14, and thanks to the family character of Jewish emigration, the category of women and children is very high. So, for instance, the percentage of adult males in Jewish emigration in the period 1899-1906, was 57.8 percent (70 percent among all nationalities); children under 14 were 166,807, or 24.5 percent. This circumstance makes it hard for Jewish emigrants to travel from one place to another, and inclines them to settle down in the first place they come to.

The fact that the Jewish migrant comes to America for good and seldom returns is confirmed by the datum that the number who visit America more than once is barely 2 percent of all Jewish emigrants. We can arrive at the same result by comparing the total number of Jewish emigrants who have ever come to the United States with the present Jewish population there. By the reckoning of Joseph Jacobs,^k the Jewish population of New York is over 600,000; this at the time when the total number of Jewish immigrants who had settled in New York had reached 609,958^l (including the factor of natural growth). This situation, however, forces the Jewish immigrant to adapt to local living conditions, to live with the local population, not to lower the wage level, and to make

sure it stays at a level high enough to enable him to support himself and his family.

These are the reasons that account for the unique way in which the Jewish immigrants, cut off as they are from farm work, settle in their new environment. They are concentrated in the big cities, primarily New York and London. In these industrial centers they have greater hope of finding work and of being able to use their special skills.

Besides the subjective tendency, when settling in a strange country, to find a city where there are many of the same nationality and language, and often even actual relatives and people from the same town, there are objective forces which act to force the Jewish immigrant to engage in the same trade by which he earned a living in his previous home. This is why skilled manual labor grows and develops especially in the centers of Jewish immigration, as it also experienced significant growth in the Pale in Russia.

For the time period 1899 to 1906, out of 252,972 skilled workers who had immigrated to America, 89,197 were tailors, 22,393 seamstresses and dressmakers, 15,852 shoemakers, 24,405 carpenters—i.e., in all, 60 percent of the skilled laborers.

The distribution of Jewish emigration, according to professions and the proportion of skilled workers in overall immigration, leaves no doubt that Jewish immigration is an immigration of handicraft artisans.¹⁵ It is certain that the figures of the statistics grouped according to the statement of immigrants at the moment they arrive would not coincide with the figures of the inquiry had it been made when the workers had already settled down at their destinations; but the overall picture would remain the same.

We have already shown that normally the immigrant looks for work where he finds himself presented with fewer impediments and tries, first of all, to find work that he already knows and which he can work at with members of his own nationality and language. The changeover to other trades

would occur only if there is a large surplus of workers in a particular occupation and where competition becomes too keen.

This change of occupation can ordinarily occur only when the worker has oriented himself in his new surroundings, has learned the local customs and language, has ceased to feel foreign, and is sure he will incur no hostility from the local population. As long as such conditions do not exist, conservatism in the new immigrant's occupation and behavior, his feeling of strangeness and isolation in his new surroundings outweigh even the fear of hunger; and the immigrant, especially the harassed and downtrodden Jewish immigrant from Russia and Rumania, will not risk stepping into a strange new world where he may again meet with hostility and hatred. For this reason, Jewish immigration will for a long time probably have the same appearance it had in the lands from which it flows.

From the fact that the major element in Jewish immigration is the *artisan* comes the results which are very characteristic for such immigration. First of all, it is naturally concentrated in the large cities, where it is hoped that finished products can be sold, and where it is possible to find a kindly capitalist who will be willing to exploit the labor of the artisan and find a market for his products, while not tearing him away from the environment with which he is familiar. The Jewish immigrants in America and England have, thanks to the aforementioned circumstances, created a new industry—production of ready-made clothes, which enriches the capitalists and creates special conditions for the unbelievable exploitation of the workers. At the same time, however, it is adapted to the unique character of Jewish immigration, because it bears a seasonal character and expands just so much at appointed times, to absorb all who look for such work.

Further, the concentration of Jewish immigrants in skilled manual labor eliminates almost completely competition with the local working population. Competition, however,

asserts itself with redoubled vigor among the immigrants themselves. At any rate, with regard to Jewish immigrants, the worries of native workers over competition have very little basis.

To the overall picture of Russian Jewish immigration, we must add the figures for those immigrants who can read and write and for the financial resources they have on arriving in America.

Being emigrants who leave to settle elsewhere permanently, Jews always bring with them a sum of money to help them get settled, something that cannot be said of emigrants who travel to a certain place only to find temporary work (Italians, Hungarians, and the like). On the average, Jewish emigrants have brought with them on their arrival in America, for the period 1899-1905, \$23.70 each, and in 1906, an average of about \$40.00.^m True, on the part of each emigrant of all the other nationalities the average for 1899-1905 was \$26.60, but included in this figure is the upper-class category of immigrants—Englishmen and some Germans. On the average, the Jewish immigrant brings with him more money than immigrants of the remaining nationalities, let alone the fact that the Jewish immigrant from Russia must spend more for his journey.

With regard to the percentage of emigrants who can read and write, out of the 513,255 Jewish emigrants (over 14 years old) arriving in America during this seven-year period, there were 124,315 or 24.2 percent who were illiterate. This percentage is quite high, although it is significantly less than among Southern Italians (more than 50 percent), Lithuanians (also more than 50 percent), and Poles (about 38 percent). The high percentage of illiterates among Jewish emigrants is due to the fact that among Jewish immigrants there is a large proportion of women, many of whom cannot read or write.ⁿ

The number of Jews who can read and write grows larger just as soon as Jewish emigrants settle in a new place. We can see this partly from the number of persons from Russia

estimated by the census to be among those who cannot speak English. According to the 1900 census, there are 1,282,288 foreigners older than 14 who cannot speak English. Among Russian immigrants, there are 97,873, or 7.6 percent of the total (Italians 15.3 percent). The percentage of emigrants from Russia who know no English is slightly greater than the percentage for all foreign-born (about 6 percent).^o

Among immigrants from Russia in New York State only 40,157 knew no English. If we keep it in mind that there are more than half a million Jews in New York City alone, we may conclude that Jewish immigrants learn English quickly and thus can soon take part in the political life of the country.

Finally, a few words concerning the attitude of Jewish immigrants to the socialist parties and trade unions.

Together with the growth of the Social Democratic movement among the Jewish proletariat in Russia, there was an increase in the number of immigrants recruited from the ranks of the fighting proletariat. Besides their working strength, these immigrants bring with them their dedication to socialism, their class-consciousness, a hatred of all oppression, and the readiness to continue to fight for the liberation of the working class. In the last few years thousands of Bundists¹⁶ have spread all over Europe, have crossed the ocean, and have created everywhere the atmosphere of strong unity and organization. Torn from their home organizations, they do their best abroad for them in every way they can, and incidentally also serve them by spreading socialist ideas everywhere.

As much as these workers organize themselves in new places into various groups^o to help the Bund, everywhere they put into their regulations the duty of their members to join the local trade unions, and everywhere they recommend taking an active role in the political affairs of the country.

True, the local Jewish trade unions have complained more than once that the Bundist organizations draw away

strength from local work, but this contention, insofar as it is correct, is thoroughly natural as long as events in Russia force Russian emigrant revolutionaries to feel very sharply that they have left the battlefield and force them to be totally permeated with thoughts about the life of the fatherland which they left. The hour when the Russian revolution is victorious will undoubtedly be the hour when the Jewish Social Democrats, who will then still be living in America, will give their strength to the local socialist movement.

We have no accurate statistics on the number of organized Jewish workers as compared with the number of other immigrants, but even from the statistics^o which show the proportion of organized workers to unorganized according to occupation, we see that in the year 1904, out of 6,450,000 workers, 1,965,000 were organized, i.e., about 30 percent. In the jobs involving ready-made clothes, 25 percent were organized; in the shoe trade, 50 percent. These figures are in any case characteristic, and relying on them, we can calculate that the percentage of the organized among Jewish workers is not lower than the average for all workers. And if we keep it in mind that Jews encounter obstacles in entering the general unions, we can see especially clearly the internal tendency for Jews to organize themselves.¹⁷

In this way, disregarding the fact that the size of Jewish emigration from Russia depends for the most part not on the demand of the labor market in the lands of immigration, nor on the surplus of labor in the lands of emigration, it is impossible and irrational to fight it in a mechanical way with restrictive laws. This is impossible because restrictive laws have, it is understood, no relation to the circumstances which have caused the emigration; it is not rational because the example of Jewish emigration shows that the character of emigration does not determine what elements it consists of, how harmful it is for the land of immigration, etc. Jewish immigration shows, too, how dangerous it is to divide immigrants into categories of advanced and backward according to

superficial indications, and how often the immigrant can on this account suffer consequences which the legislators themselves may not have had in mind.

Considering all this, we put before the Socialist Congress for adoption the following resolution on emigration and immigration:

The Congress recognizes:

1. That present-day emigration is a result of the prevailing capitalist production system and is caused by circumstances which are closely linked to the entire contemporary economic order;
2. That its growth, which is sometimes abnormal, stems on the one hand from political, religious and national oppression in the lands of emigration, and on the other hand from the fact that the governments and capitalists in lands of immigration deceitfully attract immigrants in order to facilitate exploitation of workers by creating a labor surplus, and to make of the transport of the emigrants an independent capitalistic enterprise;
3. That because of such a close connection between emigration and the conditions of the present economic order, every attempt to limit immigration artificially through quota laws is fruitless and, in essence, reactionary;
4. That the legislation of the bourgeois governments against immigration does not improve the plight of the workers, does not limit capitalist exploitation, and has the most harmful effects on the fate of the proletariat in other lands, who look to emigration to save them from starvation, persecution, and pogroms. Unable by this means to reach its immediate goal, this legislation obscures the class-consciousness of the workers, draws the proletariat away from the class struggle, introduces dissension among the workers, and creates an atmosphere for the development of national and racial enmities.

Taking all this into consideration, the Congress declares itself opposed to every kind of law which forbids or limits immigration or emigration, and recommends that all socialist parties fight energetically against all such proposed laws and expose the true nature of these laws to the proletariat.

II

Because of the struggle against the undesirable results that might arise through an unduly large increase of workers in the lands of immigration, the Congress recommends that all socialist parties and labor unions lead a vigorous campaign for the establishment of a normal working day in all branches of labor and, as far as possible, for the regulation of wages; that they oppose every form of deception of emigrants practiced by the governments and the capitalists, and demand that immigrants be granted, in the shortest time possible, all citizenship rights in the lands where they settle.

At the same time the socialist parties, in both the lands of emigration and those of immigration, demand that, at the expense of the government and with the participation of the labor unions, emigration information bureaus and labor exchanges be established. In addition, [they demand] an international agreement to protect the interests of emigrants and to control the activities of shipping companies and agencies involved in emigration transport.¹⁸

Further, being fully certain that the proletariat of all lands and nationalities is capable of learning the lesson of solidarity and the identity of working-class interests, the Congress absolutely condemns the short-sighted policies of certain labor unions which refuse admission to immigrants and discriminate between different races and nationalities. The Congress considers it the duty of all socialist parties and other labor organizations in the lands of emigration and immigration to do

everything possible to facilitate the admission of newly-arrived workers into these organizations and to carry on among them, as much as possible, a broad effort on behalf of the principles of socialism.