

Notes of an Internationalist

A Workers' and Peasants' Government—with Large Land Owners!

By JOHN PEPPER.

THE great election victory of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has created a fundamentally changed political situation. The coalition parties, which heretofore constituted the government, continue to hold the majority, it is true, but this majority, much reduced, has become shaky. The national opposition of the oppressed national minorities (Germans, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Ukrainians) and the class opposition of the Communists have undermined the foundations of the present-day coalition administration in Czechoslovakia.

The Czech social-democratic party which for years has participated in the bourgeois coalition government, of course "in the interests of the proletariat" and also for "upholding the state," feels itself especially uncomfortable. The bourgeois coalition still retains the majority in the new parliament (it has 153 representatives out of a total of 300) but the Czech social-democratic gentlemen are nevertheless uneasy. They feel the renewed pressure of the proletarian masses, they are gripped by panic at the invincible advance of the Communist Party and now seek to turn the stream by crafty maneuvering.

The tractible Czech social-demo-

crats now try to mimic the methods of the Communist International and cry for a united front. Of course, a united front as they conceive it, of a social-democratic, hence opportunistic and traitorous kind. The Czech social-democrats who are responsible equally for the suppression of the national minorities and for the subjection of the proletariat, have proposed to the Communist Party to combine with the Czech and German social-democrats and the agrarian party of the present minister-president, Svehla, in forming a new government. The slick social-democrats also immediately worked out a complete program. The eight-hour day, tax reform, tenant protection and all the other worthy and fine things that they hitherto betrayed in the bourgeois coalition government, but which they now want to realize under the new coalition. In their proposal they even had the effrontery to call this new coalition a "workers' and peasants' government."

If such a government came into existence it would truly be a most peculiar workers and peasants' government. The representatives of the workers—the various social-democratic, national-socialist and Communist Parties—would be taking part to be sure, but the peasants would be represented in this government by the large landowners. The various work-

ers' parties, the Czech social-democrats, the German social-democrats, the national-socialists and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia have no parliamentary majority hence the artful social-democratic parliamentary combination could only come into existence by coalescing with the Svehla agrarian party.

But this agrarian party of Minister-President Svehla is the party of the Czech large landowners, it is under the direction of the very worst exploiters of the rural proletariat and even tho some small peasants may have voted for this party they play only the role of good-natured, stupid sheep herded by the snappish sheepherd dog.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia of course very energetically rejected this proposal to form a "worker and peasant government" with the large landowners and called upon the social-democrats to form a real united front in the interests of the workers, the real peasants, and the oppressed nations. The principal task of the Czech Communists now is to show, in the examples of the thousands of small economic questions of daily life, that they alone represent the interests of the masses and that the cunning, yes, altogether too cunningly maneuvering social-democrats, are only indulging in maneuvers.