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UNITE!

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WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE !

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

ORGAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

EDITED JOINTLY by G. ZINOVIEV and KARL RADEK

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Organ of Executive Committee of Communist International

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“ COMRADE KER ”

(Some Notes and Personal Reminiscences.)

The death of Comrade Ker on July 21st was a severe loss for the French Communist Party. In him the party loses one of its most intelligent fighting members, a first rate worker, who had already rendered great services, and of whom still greater services were to be expected.

This loss will be felt not by the French Party alone, but by the whole International. Ker belonged to that small group of people, so rare in the French Labour movement, and even in our own Communist Party, whom the activities of the revolutionaries of other countries interested as much as those of their countrymen. He felt quite at home among our fraternal parties and at the centre of the International; at London as well as at Berlin and Moscow. This is an unmistakable sign of superiority. He was above all a man of the international revolutionary movement, and he proved it at a critical moment in the life of his party.

His militant, revolutionary career, the sudden termination of which was so cruel a shock to his friends and relatives and to his many comrades, had been a full one. Before coming into prominence in politics he had already belonged to the Socialist Federation of the Loire. He was then a professor at one of the colleges in that department. During the war he was mobilised and became an officer. It was early in 1919, I believe, that his signature appeared for the first time in “ La Vie Ouvriere,” next to that of Madeleine Ker. Some time afterwards I got acquainted with him at the “ Clarte,” and we rapidly became associated in our revolutionary activities. He joined the Committee of the Third International and was one of the most intimate and most active collaborators of Loriot and of the writer of these lines.

For some time he was so retiring, and his work so secret, that his name was almost unknown in our Labour movement. This did not in any way diminish the value of his unforgettable services. During the imprisonment of the two secretaries of the Committee of the Third International, he was one of our most precious helpers. To him I confided without hesitation the most difficult missions, which he carried out to his own great credit and to the best interest of our revolutionary cause. He became a worthy representative abroad of the Committee of the Third International. It was at that time that he became a contributor to the “ Bulletin Communiste,” his articles bearing the signature of “ Witness.”

Towards the close of 1920 he was chosen by the Committee of the Third International as one of its representatives on the first

Executive Committee of the New Communist Party, formed at the Congress of Tours. His high intelligence and his capacity for work were noted so quickly, that almost on the day following the Congress he was appointed provisional secretary of the party. Shortly afterwards his name became known in the political life of the country, for in January, 1921, he was arrested, almost at the same time as Zalewsky and somewhat earlier than Dunois.

He thus joined our little party at the Santé. His crime consisted of obtaining a cheque from Dunois, belonging to Zalewsky, and cashing it at a bank. What the bourgeoisie and its Socialist hirelings considered to be a crime was, of course, really an honourable testimony to our comrade. If he was entrusted with the keeping of valuables, it meant that people had confidence in his integrity and perfect honesty. The majority of those who then attacked him could not flatter themselves with being worthy of a similar confidence.

During our imprisonment we grew even more intimate in our friendship. His devotion to the party had cost him his material well-being (he had been employed by a large metallurgical concern). Poorer than before, but a freer man, he could now devote himself entirely to the work of our common cause. During his imprisonment he signed his articles: "Kero."

I shall never forget the hours we spent together in the prison, our promenades in the little prison yard, or interminable conversations in my cell, where at times, joined by Dunois, we even managed to organise a little intimate repast. How can I forget them? In our feverish life of fighters for the social revolution we have few such moments of intimacy and quiet intercourse, in which we learn to know each other more closely, and to like each other more profoundly.

Next came the big trial, the acquittal and liberation of the "ten plotters." Ker and Dunois were liberated shortly after us. Ker became the Editor of "L'Humanité." To his last day he contributed many remarkable articles to our paper on economic subjects, which he knew how to present with great lucidity and with a gift for penetrating analysis.

During the year 1921 the party entered a period of grave crisis which found its clearest expression at the Congress of Marseilles. The reactionary elements, the unrepresented Social-Democrats whom we had retained in our ranks after the Congress of Tours, had recovered from their defeat of the preceding year and were now rallying their forces for an offensive. They had made up their minds to detach the French Party from the Communist International, because the latter insisted on imposing revolutionary obligations upon the French section as upon the other sections. A Communist Left wing was formed within the party, rather belatedly and after much groping and hesitation.

This uncertainty, this lack of self-confidence, these illusions with regard to the enemies of Communism, which were characteristic of the attitude of the Left as a whole, were also reflected in Ker's attitude at the period. It was he who got carried unanimously at the Congress of Marseilles a resolution expressing the highest confidence in the writer of these lines that a Communist Party can give, viz.—appointing me as member of the Executive of the International. Yet at the same time, by a contradiction which was characteristic of the disturbed spirit of even the most loyal members of the International at that time, he consented to collaborate with the enemies of the International upon the Executive and became the International secretary of the party.

This was the first discord between us. It was painful to find himself separated from his intimate friends, who had resigned their positions. This is not the place to examine who was right and who was wrong. Our association in the past led us to believe that we ought to be right or wrong together. He had taken a step which separated him from us, the Left wing of the party. For a long time I hoped that it was due to a misunderstanding. After having worked together in many a difficult situation, how could one make up one's own mind that our roads must now separate? I had faith in him and in our friendship. His letters were more than friendly, they were affectionate. In February, 1922, I expected him in Moscow in a hopeful spirit.

The night when he arrived from Riga I spent several hours in the snow-covered station at Vindau. The train was very late. On that frosty night I waited for him until 3 o'clock in the morning. We were both greatly moved when we met. As he arrived late and everybody was asleep at the " Luxe " Hotel, he shared my room with me. We found our friendship unimpaired, and our ideas fell quickly into accord. It had been nothing but a misunderstanding after all!

Ker's brief stay at Moscow will remain one of my most cherished reminiscences of him. He had arrived ahead of the French Delegation, and before the Enlarged Session of the Executive we had time to take a stroll together and admire the beauty of this extraordinary city. We had many tastes in common; he quickly fell under the spell of Russia, and as I was already familiar with the nooks and corners of Moscow, I conducted him to places where I was sure that he would share my admiration. Wading our course through a maze of streets and side streets I would point out to him now a gem-like chapel, now a delicately built belfry, now some tasteful " ossobniak " (private villa). I took him to the museums and to the theatre. He was particularly fond of Rimsky-Korsakov, and I shall never hear again the " Tales of the Czar Sultan " without a poignant and precise recollection of a certain evening I spent

with him. We passed the night until the dawn in discussion around the samovar, in the company of Valetsky, a brilliant conversationalist, and of Comrade Trient. The memory of those nights at Moscow is as beautiful as that of the nights spent in prison.

After we parted, our differences of opinion reappeared, never again to be effaced. Was it due to the dissimilarity of our natures or of our temperaments? Although we persisted in our disagreement, we still remained friends. On the eve of the Congress of Paris, where the conflict within the party was to manifest itself with exceptional acuteness and even extreme violence, our relations were still friendly. With Manuilsky we spent our last pleasant hours together. Yet at the congress he intervened in a manner which at one blow severed all the ties which united us. From that time we considered him an enemy and treated him as such.

Personally, I attacked him with all the vigour I am capable of. The very closeness of our friendship and the painfulness of our separation made the distance which now separated us the greater. I regret nothing, since it was the cause of the revolution which was at stake. Our political enmity was as pure as our friendship had been. There was nothing mean or shabby in our sentiments, and in our passions. One can recollect to-day the recent strife, which seems already so far removed into the past, without discovering anything reflecting morally upon any of those who have remained faithful to their convictions. Ker himself was well aware of the nature of our conflict. He was too intimately associated with our work and with our life to doubt for a single instant the integrity of our intentions, of our purpose and motives. It is the destiny of our young generation to carry revolutionary logic to the extreme in our relations with men and ideas, to destroy every obstacle which blocks the forward march of the movement. There are no ties which we would not be ready to sever should they prove a hindrance to our revolutionary work. The development of Communist action has separated many friends who seemed inseparable, and it is to be presumed that these intimate dramas will recur until such time as we shall have formed a homogeneous and coherent party.

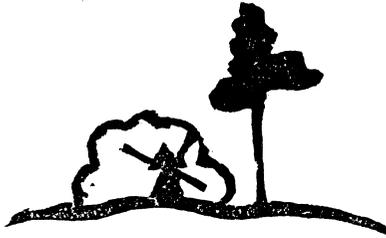
After the Congress of Paris, which split the party into two hostile camps, the time had come for the intervention of the International. We met at Moscow, Ker and myself, but this time as opponents. He was one of those whom the Fourth World Congress declared in the wrong and it was then, that rising above any unworthy considerations, he proved himself to be a true soldier of the revolution. At the decisive moment, when the fate of the French Communist movement was in the balance, he ranged himself on the side of the International, of discipline and for the acceptance of the sovereign decisions of the World Congress. He submitted, without any sense of humiliation, to the political sanctions demanded by the

International for the re-formation of the French Party. He knew that this would not diminish his dignity, but rather the contrary. He left the secretariat of the party and the executive and went back to the ranks, remaining the editor of “l’Humanité.”

By personal example he thus assisted the happy solution of the crisis, from which the party emerged purified and strengthened. More even than by his contributions to our Press, more even than by the excellent pamphlets which he has left us, he rendered the best services to his party and to the International by his attitude on the morrow of the Fourth World Congress. The things which divided us will be forgotten—one already does not think of them—and the memory remaining will be that of a fighter who helped to build a Communist Party in France, who defended the Russian Revolution, and who rendered great services to the Communist International, which we prize above all else.

BORIS SOUVARINE.

Moscow, July 28, 1923.



BEFORE THE GERMAN CAPITULATION

By E. PAVLOVSKY.

The German bourgeoisie is on the eve of surrender. Having gained for itself all that it could from the occupation of the Ruhr, the big bourgeoisie is now ready to surrender; nevertheless, it wants to save its face. For this reason it so manœuvred that the **Social-Democrats will now have to share the responsibility for the surrender.** It is even possible that the bourgeoisie will try to put the entire onus of the capitulation on the Social-Democrats. There are not a few "politicians" in the German Socialist Party who are so afraid of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat that they would rather shoulder the burden of capitulation on behalf of the bourgeoisie than engage in an opposition which, in the present acute situation of Germany, might draw them into a revolutionary movement.

The completion of the surrender is hindered by the obstinacy of Poincaré. The German bourgeoisie would be ready to sacrifice everything, if only it would be given an opportunity to save its face. But Poincaré, anxious to secure a "complete victory" in preparation for the spring elections of 1924, is not content with a virtual surrender; he wants open and formal capitulation. He wants Germany to renounce openly the passive resistance movement, to agree openly to the continuation of the French occupation of the Ruhr, to submit openly to French control. Poincaré is so sure of the imminence of his complete victory, that he has even mustered the courage to forgo the enforcement of the German coal deliveries demanded by the French industrial magnates.*

*In the last of his weekly Sunday speeches, delivered at Damvillers on September 9th, Poincaré made, *inter alia*, the following statement: "At all events, I hear that the new German Chancellor is now offering us other security than the Ruhr and the railways of the occupied territory. *But we prefer the bird in the hand to two in the bush.* The guarantees spoken of would not add anything to the general mortgage on the total wealth of the German states, which was given to the Allies by the Treaty of Versailles (!) We prefer the positive guarantee which we now possess, and will not give them up for general guarantees which may perhaps appear to be excellent on paper, but which will yield nothing in reality. *We insist on reality and will not withdraw until we are paid.* Dr. Stresemann declares emphatically that close co-operation between the kindred industries of Germany and France would be an excellent way for the regulation of the reparations and for a peaceful settlement. Already in December last I was approached by Dr. Cuno, then the Chancellor, through the German ambassador, proposing negotiations for a treaty between the German and French industrials. As a matter of fact, the industries of the two countries will some day find it to their interest to come to a mutual understanding. But the French, who have by far the larger interest in these economic negotiations, have seen that their clear duty is to postpone any further negotiations, thus enabling the French Government sufficient time to demand guarantees for reparations and

The resistance attempted under the leadership of the German bourgeoisie has hopelessly fizzled out. The reasons were manifold. Firstly, as we have already pointed out,† **because the German bourgeoisie did not wage the fight honestly.** Secondly, because the German bourgeoisie was ready to collaborate with the French bourgeoisie, and was only bargaining about material conditions. Finally, as the revolutionary movement was growing strong in Germany, the German bourgeoisie became ever more inclined to seek support for their class domination not from the doubtfully reliable Reichswehr and military police or from the costly and hardly controllable Fascist bands, but from the solid support of French bayonets. The fight in the Ruhr was on the whole a profitable business for the German bourgeoisie; but it wrought terrible damage to the economic life of Germany, leading the country into a situation which has been aptly described by Professor Gruenberg of Vienna as a “Bolshevist situation without Bolshevism.”

Germany has reached the parting of the ways: either she must become a colony or she must establish a **Workers' and Peasants' Government.**

In the article referred to we have described the economic machinery which enabled the German bourgeoisie to profit by the fight in the Ruhr and the consequent drop of the German mark. When the backing of the mark collapsed on April 18th, the State Bank secured credits of billions of paper marks, which were to be repaid only to the extent of a fraction of their value, owing to the continuous depreciation of the paper mark.

At the same time wholesale prices were immediately increased to the full equivalent of foreign gold prices, while the workers were paid their wages in worthless paper money. The taxes were completely sabotaged. The heavy industries specialised in obtaining billions in the shape of credits for the Ruhr, which were immediately converted into securities.* We will now endeavour to show, with the necessary figures, how this machinery worked.

to watch the development of events. The predominant question, the one that should command our chief attention, is indeed the question of the restoration of our ruined provinces. We must first see Germany really determined to settle these questions and to give us other guarantees than mere promises; then it will be the time to talk of economic agreements. But in that case, it is time for Germany to begin to change her attitude and to demonstrate at last her good will!”

† E. Pavlovsky: “The Defeat of Germany in the Ruhr.” *Communist International* §26 and 27.

*In the Stock Exchange reports during the months of August and September it was frequently mentioned that unlimited orders for the purchase of securities were being placed by the Rhine and Ruhr industrialists.

THE FALL OF THE GERMAN MARK.

The first breakdown of the artificial backing of the mark on April 18th was marked by a drop of 30,000 marks to the dollar on the Berlin Exchange. This went on in the following manner:—

May (monthly average)	47,670	Aug. 20th	4,200,000
June	110,000	Sept. 1st	10,000,000
July	353,400	Sept. 8th	50,000,000
Aug. (first half) (approx.)	4,000,000	Sept 12th	80,000,000

This has brought the German mark down to near the level of the Soviet rouble; but the drop was much more rapid than that of the Soviet rouble, or of any currency known to history. As a matter of fact, the Russian financial situation to-day is better stabilised than the German. This is freely admitted even by bourgeois politicians.†

THE CAUSES OF THE DROP OF THE MARK.

The drop of the mark is due to old causes which continue their action without interruption. These are an adverse trade balance; the growing use of foreign currency as a medium of circulation; increased investments of capital in foreign countries owing to fears of social revolution; the total collapse of the State finances in consequence of the complete sabotage of taxes by the bourgeoisie, and the loss of all confidence in the paper mark both within and without the country.

These factors cannot be fully appreciated by paying attention only to the figures. **The chief cause of the general economic breakdown is the complete standstill of the industries of the Ruhr district.** No coal has been delivered for months; the coke factories and the furnaces are idle. The iron industry, after stocking its output for a long time, has now been idle for months: even where the workers are retained it is only an appearance of work. The capitalists are little concerned about production: the Ruhr relief pays for everything.†† The Ruhr district, with its millions of inhabitants, the most industrialised district in the world, where one big city links with the other, on whose goods traffic the German railways relied for their profits in times of peace—the district which furnished 80

In a leading article in the "Boersenkurier" of September 5th, we read:—

"The relative equilibrium of the monetary circulation is acting to the economic advantage of Russia. While in Germany during the last eight months money was printed recklessly, Soviet Russia did everything to restrain the emission of paper money. The emission of Soviet currency is being limited to the actually expected revenues, so that the major part of the expenditures is met by the corresponding items of revenue rather than by the output of the printing press. One thing should be borne in mind: if the Soviet Government should succeed in its efforts to reduce the emission of currency to 15,000,000 gold roubles monthly, it will mean that the total amount of paper roubles will not exceed that of the German marks."

††These circumstances have lasted already for eight months and were bound to be a factor of great demoralisation even to the proletariat, which it will be difficult to overcome.

per cent. of the German coal and 50—60 per cent. of the country's iron and steel, is now being maintained entirely at the expense of the unoccupied parts of Germany. Millions and billions of paper marks are poured into that district by the Reichsbank every week. These are partly paid out to the proletariat in wages, finding their way back to the unoccupied districts by way of payment for means of subsistence, and partly they furnish the capitalists of the Ruhr with the funds for the purchase of valuable securities. It stands to reason that such a state of affairs is bound to injure day by day the economic situation in the unoccupied parts of Germany. The big bourgeoisie has very nearly drained the resources of the middle classes, so that even the appearance of cheap production can no longer be maintained. We have often emphasised the fact that in Germany, speaking objectively and in terms of working-time, production is more costly than in the Western capitalist countries; this was fully borne out in August, when the petty merchants and manufacturers followed suit by adopting the gold mark calculation and when the workers, as a result of the general strike, won an increase of their real wages, even if for a short time only. Below we give some figures showing the situation as it is: diminished exports, standstill in many industries, increased unemployment and rapid decrease of production.

To this must be added the unproductive occupation of dozens of paper factories and hundreds of printing establishments working day and night in turning out the bank notes for the Reichsbank. The army of collectors has to be constantly increased in order to collect the sixty varieties of taxes, of which fifty-five yield by far less than what it costs to collect them. A similarly huge army of officials is employed by the industrials for the sabotage of these taxes! The economic plight of Germany is growing worse day by day: the country is feeding on the remnants of past production.

Data on exports have not been published for months. Raumer declared in his great speech that the country's exports in July amounted only to 105,000,000 gold marks. Exports are quite impossible under the present circumstances when prices in Germany are much higher than abroad. Traders are trying to import foreign wares, selling their marks abroad and thus accelerating the downward course of the mark.

The foreign money realised from exports is not used for the purchase of goods, but is retained in circulation within the country. Germany exports real values, while using foreign currencies as a medium of circulation within the country. It means non-interest-bearing credits to foreign countries, and the real economic impoverishment of the country. The same thing can be said of the sums deposited by German capitalists abroad.

Thus we see that economic conditions in Germany are growing

worse week by week: the bankruptcy of money is merely the reflection of this fundamental fact.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE STATE FINANCES.

The unscrupulous exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the Ruhr relief credits, and their complete sabotage of the taxes, have led to a collapse of the State finances of Germany, which has no equal in history. We give the more important data:—

The income and expenditure of Germany (in millions of marks) was as follows:—

	Income	Expenditure	Percentage of expen. covered by income
Aug. 1—10	1,791,202	61,224,944	3%
Aug. 11—20	7,766,350	250,534,383	0·8%
Aug. 21—31	6,355,735	866,741,133	0·8%
April 1—Aug. 31 of current year	17,498,144	1,237,574,985	1·5%

Thus we see the situation going from bad to worse. The Hilferding régime has done nothing to mitigate it. It is true that the tax revenues have increased threefold during the last ten days of August as compared with the preceding ten days; but the expenditure has increased at the same rate. The bourgeoisie pays just as little to the Hilferding Cabinet as it paid to the Cuno Cabinet.

A still more striking picture is presented by the following table:

THE GROWTH OF INDEBTEDNESS

(in millions of marks).

	Increase	Carried forwd.
April 1—10	602,922	7,204,064
„ 11—20	740,247	7,944,311
„ 21—30	497,792	8,422,103
May 1—10	105,434	8,547,537
„ 11—20	364,794	8,912,331
„ 20—31	1,362,519	10,274,850
June 1—10	1,568,854	11,843,704
„ 11—20	2,514,259	14,357,963
„ 21—30	7,661,659	22,019,623
July 1—10	6,115,976	29,135,597
„ 11—20	11,894,188	40,029,786
„ 21—31	17,818,901	57,848,687
Aug. 1—10	59,433,741	177,282,424
„ 11—20	246,187,031	363,414,574
„ 21—31	832,825,067	1,196,294,527

While the deficit was rather small between April 1st and May 20th, it grew steadily during the months of July and August.

We shall gain an even clearer view of the absolute bankruptcy of the whole system of taxation, caused by the sabotage of the bour-

geoisie, if we examine closely the following data of State revenues in July.*

The total revenues, in terms of the official rate of the dollar, were as follows:—

In million marks	Average rate 353/400 M. per \$1	Gold Mks.
4,075,630	\$11,560,000	50,000,000

These revenues, besides custom duties, were obtained by no less than fifty-six varieties of taxes! Twenty-seven of these fifty-six taxes yielded less than one billion paper marks, or less than 3,000,000 dollars, while seven of these taxes yielded together not more than three dollars per month.† If we bear in mind those taxes which were either entirely or mostly collected from the working people, we obtain a complete picture of the sabotage of taxes by the German bourgeoisie. Thus out of the total of 40,075 billions the major part was obtained as follows:—

Income tax deducted from wages	-	1,186	milliards
Universal tax on turnover	-	964	„
Customs and excise duties	-	1,139	„
		3,289	„
	Total	3,289	„

This means that more than three-fourths of the taxes were extorted either wholly or partly from the working classes.

On the other hand, we find that all the property taxes put together (viz., income tax, corporation tax, taxes on capital, relief contributions, property tax, possession tax and inheritance tax) amounted to not more than 198 billion marks, or 560,000 dollars, or 2,500,000 gold marks. These figures are convincing evidence of the unscrupulous sabotage of taxes by the German bourgeoisie.

DISSIPATION OF THE GOLD RESERVE AND INFLATION OF CURRENCY.

The growth of the State indebtedness was accompanied by a corresponding inflation of the money in circulation. Since the first collapse of the mark in April, the circulation of paper money was as follows (in million marks):—

	Gold Reserve	Notes in circulation	Discounted bills of exch:
April 15	820	5,137,964	2,586,547
Aug. 15	506	116,402,548	49,531,983

* Figures taken from the "Boersenzeitung" on August 23rd, 1923.

† The itemised revenue of these taxes was as follows:—

Tobacco Royalty	14,025	marks	0.05	dol.
Transfer of Land	18,291	„	0.05	„
Lottery Tax	23,492	„	0.07	„
Increment Tax	155,589	„	0.50	„
Clearance Tax (on Brandy)	38,081	„	0.10	„
Stamp and Invoice Duties	349,270	„	1.00	„
Gun Licences	483,471	„	1.20	„

It is easy to imagine the great expenditure involved in maintaining the collectors and in printing the paper for the collection of these taxes, which yielded \$3.00 in July.

The net result for the four months is a loss of 314 million gold marks, a twenty-fold increase of the notes in circulation and of paper credit, which the bourgeoisie obtained from the Reichbank at the expense of the community at large. The "pledging of the gold reserve" of the Reichbank, which has been preached by Hilferding for a whole year as a specific measure for the stabilisation of the mark, has proven to be only a measure calculated simply to enrich the German bourgeoisie without in any way putting the mark on its feet. This was predicted by us long ago.* Recently another means has been found by the German bourgeoisie to take advantage of the depreciation of the mark for the piling up of wealth. Owing to the shortage of paper currency, or some similar pretext, many enterprises, even those of moderate size, began to issue their own notes. Billions of private notes were printed without even asking or notifying the Reichbank. Hundreds and thousands of different kinds of paper money have been put into circulation in this manner: along with the notes of the Reichbank, notes of different kinds are circulated by the banks of the different states and cities. There are also bank drafts and private notes. Many of these notes have a very restricted circulation, being confined to a particular city or to certain shops, which amounts to the old "truck system." Nevertheless, the emission of private notes is an excellent business, because it means not only credits without paying interest, but also that the notes are to be redeemed in marks of lesser value than those in which they are put into circulation.

FLUCTUATION OF PRICES, AND THE PROBLEM OF STABILISATION.

The fact that production in Germany, from the standpoint of labour invested, is much dearer than anything else, has been concealed for a long time by the low rates of wages and by the continued impoverishment of the middle class who, during many years, were unable to buy back on the money realised from sales, the same amount of goods as they sold. These two circumstances have enabled the German manufacturers to compete with their products on the world markets in spite of the objectively higher cost of production.

These circumstances are well illustrated by the wholesale trade index published by "Frankfurter Zeitung," which we reproduce here:—

WHOLESALE TRADE INDEX FOR 98 COMMODITIES.

	Normal rate of exchange marks to one dollar.	Group I. Foodstuffs and other necessities.	Group II. Textiles, leather, etc.	Group III. Minerals.
In 1914	1	1	1	1
1923, Jan.	2,045	1,758	3,206	2,622
Feb.	9,524	5,550	14,137	9,312

*Pavlovsky: "Germany as a Colony."

March	5,381	5,361	9,450	8,298
April	5,024	5,350	8,590	7,822
May	8,869	7,003	14,066	10,186
June	18,155	12,575	27,640	19,259
July	39,524	37,683	61,841	45,301
Aug. 3	261,905	234,828	457,915	405,405
Aug. 16	785,174	801,184	1,250,845	1,228,881
Aug. 31	3,095,238	2,649,457	4,084,431	4,746,174

	Group IV. Miscellaneous.	Group V. Industrial products (finished).	Total index for 98 commodities.
In 1914	1	1	1
1923, Jan.	1,778	1,518	2,054
Feb.	5,347	4,766	7,159
March	6,949	5,514	6,770
April	6,434	5,315	6,425
May	6,844	5,903	8,237
June	10,924	10,367	14,980
July	34,736	29,809	39,898
Aug. 3	212,135	200,806	283,599
Aug. 16	665,291	716,064	894,637
Aug. 31	2,668,272	2,341,706	3,063,358

We see that the price of agricultural produce has closely followed the dollar exchange, while that of minerals and textiles has gone far beyond it (in fact, the price of minerals has become 60 per cent. higher than that of the world market). Industrial products seem to be still somewhat higher than the dollar rate, but a tendency to depression is quite evident.

The same tendency is observed in regard to retail prices.

The general adoption by retail traders of the dollar as the basis of prices has caused a rapid rise of retail prices. This system deprives the industrial bourgeoisie of the possibility of paying their workers low wages at the expense of the retail trade and petty industries.

Retail prices of 12 important* commodities in gold marks, in terms of per cent. to the wholesale prices.	1923	137
	July	84
	August 13	102
	August 20	111

Similarly strong fluctuations are shown by the other index figures. The adoption of the dollar basis in the retail trade has made the situation of the working class unbearable, for it now has to bear the whole of the "Inflation Tax"! Gigantic strikes were fought not without success for "wages of constant value." Some measure of temporary stabilisation was won, and partly also an increase of real wages.

The result was that prices in Germany have generally risen above the pre-war prices* (and even above those of the world market.†) The ability of German commodities to compete with the world market has thus been jeopardised. Since there was no prospect of the situation being improved by a new drop of the mark (for retail prices and wages had to follow close upon the dollar exchange), the industrial bourgeoisie decided on a radical change of their tactics. Stinnes and Helfferich, who had hitherto insisted that the stabilisation of the mark would only be possible **after** the settlement of the question of reparations in connection with a big international loan, have now abruptly changed their standpoint. Since the continued depreciation of the mark does no longer offer them any advantages, they are now advocating a stabilisation of the mark. On the other hand, the offer made on June 7th has brought no reply from England, while a diplomatic game has been played between England and France during several months. This has opened even the eyes of the "English sympathisers" to the fact that England is chiefly concerned in protracting the **solution of the question of reparations, and of the Ruhr, as long as possible**, to gain time for better military preparedness: so that no real help is to be expected from England. Since in the meantime the private negotiations between the German and French industrials (between Stinnes, Schneider, Creuzot, and Loucheur) have made satisfactory progress, the German industrials have begun to "lean towards France." Thus they are now bent on stabilisation of the mark from within, on liquidation of the Ruhr struggle by direct negotiations with France, and on improving the German economic situation by the aid of a "healthy crisis." In the background they cherish the intention to defeat the German proletariat by the aid of the Fascists: yet for the present they dare not start an open attack on the proletariat. They must first attempt to stultify the revolutionary spirit of the working class by peaceful means: such was the sacrifice of the Cuno Cabinet, for instance. Steps had to be taken to find other shoulders than those of the bourgeoisie to bear the blame for the capitulation to Poincaré. The Social-Democracy hastened to the rescue of the bourgeoisie, when the latter

*Already in July a number of important commodities have gone beyond the pre-war price. According to an official calculation by "Wirtschaft und Staat" (No. 10), the prices in gold marks were as follow:—

	Wheat.	Rye-flour.	German wool.	Pigiron.	Hematite iron.	Bituminous coal.	Anthracite coal.
1923	199	20.85	5.25	77.50	81.50	12.50	17.50
July	209	23.52	7.13	106.10	106.10	13.38	20.27

†"Berlinger Boersenzeitung" of August 13th has the following to say about the situation in the industries of Saxony:—

"The German textile industries are being ousted again by their English, Belgian, and Italian rivals, as has been the case in Bulgaria, Turkey, etc. Cloth is furnished much cheaper by England and Belgium. Even exporters at Hamburg are said to have refused orders for cloth in Holland! Offers at 30 per cent. cheaper are made by the Belgians in Argentina. North America supplies rugs at 3.40 dollars, while we ask for 3.50 dollars, and England sells them cheaper still. The Saxon quilt industry has suffered a great deal from the competition

was menaced by the general strike. The big coalition has been attained. Bauer, Hilferding, Sollmann, Radbruch—all the Right Wing elements of the United Socialist Party—have joined the Government.

The Latest Betrayal of the German Proletariat by the Social-Democrats.

In the beginning of this year we wrote*: “The fear of the Social-Democrats of both tendencies of any possibility of revolution, and their appetite for Governmental jobs are so great, that it was the Independent Socialist Party which saved the Wirth Government by their votes and demonstrations in the Reichstag on June 12th, when the latter was endangered by the penetration of the capitalist Volkspartei, represented by Hermes in the Cabinet. And when the ‘Republic was in danger’ as a result of the murder of Rathenau, the Independent Socialist Party in the Reichstag took advantage of the occasion to form a working alliance with the German Socialist Party.

“They were deceived, of course, in their hope of obtaining Governmental posts, the hope that Hilferding, with Breitscheid as Foreign Minister, would save the German bourgeoisie. They got from the bourgeoisie the rebuke which they deserved. Already in November the bourgeoisie had felt itself strong enough to kick out the United Socialist Party and to form a Government without the Social-Democrats.† The United Socialist Party and its ‘social-revolutionary’ leaders Hilferding and Levi are now building their hopes on the eventuality that the bourgeoisie will deem it prudent to have somebody to share with them the responsibility for the exploitation of the masses. They would then find a new excuse for joining the Government on the plea that ‘the country is in danger’.”

The opportunity came in the middle of August. The proletariat was engaged in a big movement; a strike wave was sweeping the country. The German Communist Party was calling the workers to a general strike. There seemed to be grave danger to the bourgeois régime. There was unrest within the ranks of the Social-Democracy itself. The conviction that the Socialists should rather

of Japan, India, Belgium and Holland. German exporters have been compelled to refuse foreign orders. Curtains, laces, embroideries can no longer be sold abroad, being debarred by high customs tariffs. Our laces are already dearer at the factory than the English goods, and to this must be added the cost of freights, duties, export fees, etc. We produce 7 per cent. dearer than England. This is important, if we take into consideration that we were hitherto furnishing 90 per cent. of the whole output of these goods. Felt goods are offered abroad at 10–35 per cent. cheaper. Even those goods which were a distinct German speciality before the war, such as toys, it is difficult to withstand foreign competition, except by sheer superiority of quality. Wind instruments are offered at 50 per cent. cheaper by Denmark and Sweden.”

*F. Pavlovsky: “Germany as a Colony” (page 64).

† Formally the United Socialist Party declared that it would not take part in the Government again; yet it was a “chance majority” which decided upon the withdrawal by 81 votes against 46, with a great many abstentions.

join the Communists in the fight against the bourgeoisie than join the bourgeoisie against the Communists was gaining ground, especially in Central Germany, not only among the masses. There was also fermentation in the "upper" circles: thirty "Opposition" spokesmen at the Weimar Conference were demanding a vigorous policy of opposition. All this made it desirable for the bourgeoisie to secure the aid of those Social-Democrats who are faithful to capitalism. Once again the bourgeoisie appealed for Social-Democratic aid when the masses were engaged in a revolutionary movement.

The appeal had met with success. The Parliamentary group declared that "in view of the sad plight of the people, they were ready to assume part of the responsibility and to do their best to alleviate the situation."

After a "conference which lasted many hours," the following programme was adopted:—

"A Government supported by the Social-Democrats should be formed upon the following principles: A vigorous financial policy; thoroughgoing financial reforms based on mobilisation of industrial capital and guaranteed taxation of real property values; currency reform; immediate cessation of inflation; preparation for gold credits; stabilised wages; stabilisation of 'social rents' and subsidies; separation of the Reichwehr from all the illegal organisations, and a foreign policy which would aim at the solution of the question of reparations while preserving the unity of the nation and the sovereign rights of the German Republic."

Similar declarations were made by the German Federation of Trade Unions. On these principles the representatives of the United Socialist Party—Bauer, Hilferding, Sollmann and Radbruch—joined the Government. A "Bloc of Order" ("Koelnische Zeitung" of August 11) was formed.

Once more the cause of the working class was betrayed by the United Socialist Party, or rather by the leaders' clique. And once again the deceivers have found themselves deceived. As soon as the mass movement was overwhelmed by the aid of the Social-Democratic leaders, the bourgeoisie changed its attitude towards the United Socialist Party and found itself strong enough to show its open hostility to the working class.

We will now see what economic measures were undertaken by the bourgeoisie.

The first measures were calculated to calm the masses. The mark was stabilised for a time by a further dissipation of the gold reserve of the Reichsbank. Furthermore, it was announced that the Government would obtain fifty million gold marks by foreign loans and that the industrial magnates would be "compelled" (as Weks asserted in a speech to a conference of Socialist Party officials at Berlin) to furnish to the State the sum of 200,000,000 gold marks

in foreign bills of exchange. There was also renewed activity in regard to the taxes adopted by the Reichstag during the last days of the Cuno Government. It is not worth while to deal at any length with the new taxing legislation. It was based on the principle of increasing the amount of taxation in accordance with the rise in prices, so as to obtain larger revenues to the State Treasury. It was resolved, for instance, to enforce the income taxes for the year 1923 at the rate of a hundred times higher than the amount paid in 1922, and upon the same principle the Ruhr contributions were doubled.

It was not a question of a new tax, but of immediate payment of the income tax due for the current year. This was to be increased to three hundred times the income tax paid in 1922. But as since the year 1922 the mark has depreciated, not 300 times, but 2,000 times, it stands to reason that the income from this advance payment of taxes will not in any way improve the finances of the State. The income of these taxes (if collected in full) is estimated at somewhere between 40 and 80 milliard marks.

A new emergency tax was introduced by the new Government. Beginning from September, the factories will have to contribute double the amount of the tax on wages and salaries deducted from the workers and employees. (In the agricultural industries this contribution has already been enforced by the Defence Tax of 1923.) The income of these taxes is valued approximately at 800 milliard paper marks. All these taxes (if fully collected) will approximately cover the deficit for twenty days. To this must be added the increase of some of the indirect taxes. To speak of any lasting benefit to the State finance from these measures is really beside the point.

The first financial measure of the new Government was a surrender of foreign currency and bills. The bread levy of June (a property tax for the purpose of reducing the price of bread for the necessitous classes) was to serve as the basis of this measure. It really meant a surrender of foreign currency, not a tax or a levy, as its title suggests. In return for the surrendered currency the owner is given gold loan certificates for an equal amount, or, if he likes, he is given credit in fixed values for the same amount, either on account of taxation or generally. Hilferding hoped in this way to obtain 200 million gold marks by means of this stroke. However, as soon as the bourgeoisie had recovered from its fear of the mass movement in August, a storm of protest against the new taxes were showered upon the Government, declaring that neither agriculture nor industry was able to pay these taxes. Most characteristic of these resolutions was the one presented by the Coalition Party in the Bavarian Landtag. The Bavarian Government declared its readiness to support this demand at Berlin "with all emphasis in the interest of industry at large." Below we quote the salient points of this document:—

1. An immediate test has to be made whether the new taxes are equitably distributed, and if it should be found that any

particular burden was imposed upon certain classes, there should be a corresponding modification or rebate of the taxes.

2. The time limit laid down by the regulations for the payment of taxes should be extended so far as compatible with the proper collection of the taxes.

3. The taxes should be graduated so as to remove any possibility of harsh treatment on the part of the tax-collector.

4. The wire powers of the finance ministry should be curbed to the necessary extent.

5. Finally, in the interest of equity and justice, it must be demanded that all the classes of the population should be made to contribute to the extent of their ability, not merely by property taxes, but by an increase in output both by longer hours and better quality of work.

These demands amount only to this. Owing to the extension of the period of payment, to the fact that no interest is charged on delayed payments, and to the virtual decrease in taxation which results from the decline in the value of the mark, this single modest call on the resources of the possessing classes is nothing but a continuation of the old system of phantom taxation, which, in spite of all property and income taxes, German property owners have enjoyed up till now.

In order to give greater emphasis to their sabotage of the taxes, many factory-owners shut down their factories, and in some cases they ostentatiously asked for permission to close their premises. Since the factory taxes are based on the wages actually paid, the closing of factories obviates the payment of this tax. Similar sabotage was practised in regard to the gold loan subscriptions.*

The political significance of this sabotage is this. The big bourgeoisie and the big landowners do not consider the Stresemann-Hilferding Government as a stable Government, or as **their** Government. They are not inclined to make the least material sacrifice to support it. The Social-Democrats were called in for a time to allay the unrest among the working class; but the bourgeoisie is not inclined to attach any real importance to Hilferding's catchphrase of "brutal taxation." Though the taxes and the regulations may look quite strong on paper, the bourgeoisie has its own slogan: "We won't pay," while the State taxation machinery and the actual power of the Government are far too weak to compel the large landowners, the farmers, and the big bourgeoisie to pay their taxes. This fact is well demonstrated by the actual receipts of the Hilferding Government during the first twenty days of its existence, as we have shown in the foregoing tables.

The developments inside the new Coalition Government show that the Social-Democrats have once again fallen into a trap. Imme-

*Subscription to the gold loan had to be stopped lately. Since the subscriptions were accepted at the official dollar-rate of the previous day, it was an excellent business to purchase the gold bonds with paper marks and sell them at the official rate of the dollar, which increased day by day.

diately the new Government took office, "Vorwaerts" demanded that Havenstein must quit his post within three days! A month has gone by, and Havenstein is still the president of the Reichsbank, because "high finance" has expressed its confidence in him through the mouth of Herr Salomonsohn of the Diskontobank. The War Minister, Gessler, whose removal was demanded by innumerable Social-Democratic organisations throughout the country, is still at the head of the army, from where he is building up his counter-revolutionary organisation. Even in such small matters as the appointment of a former major to the post of chief of the State Press, the protest of the United Socialist Party was of no avail. Made desperate by the bourgeois sabotage of taxation, Hilferding has already once tendered his resignation. It is becoming overwhelmingly obvious that the German bourgeoisie will tolerate the new Government only until the surrender in the Ruhr has been completed. The bourgeoisie will by no means trust to this Government the great task of reforming the national finances. In contradistinction to Hilferding, Stinnes knows only too well that the State finances can only be reformed on a bourgeois basis after a decisive defeat of the working class. Although the Social-Democrats, Sollmann and Severing, may try to show by their persecution of the Communist Party and its Press that they are ready to play the role of Noske in the interests of the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie does not trust them. This mistrust is not based on personal grounds; it is due to the fact that the bourgeoisie knows that Solmann, Severing and Co. do not control the great masses of the Social-Democratic workers. Before the State finances and German industry can be reformed on a bourgeois basis, there must be a sharp conflict, not with Solmann and Severing, but with the masses of the proletariat. This task cannot be carried out by the present mixed Government. Besides the capitulation in the Ruhr, the bourgeoisie intends to use this Government only for some technical reform of the currency

Plans for the Creation of a New Currency.

Since the calculation on the gold basis was adopted by the retail trade and the small industries, since the great strike of August 10-11 forced the adoption of a scale of wages based on the index of values, the further support of the paper mark became superfluous for the large landowners and industrialists. Very little indeed was to be gained from further inflation. The disadvantages of unstable currency began to outweigh the advantages to be derived from a continued depreciation of the mark. Therefore we find towards the end of August plans being devised for the creation of a new stable currency. These plans have the vigorous support of the big capitalists. The task was so urgent that the Government was not even allowed a few weeks for deliberation. Thus we read in a joint address to the Ministry of Economics, presented by the Union of German industry, by the German Retail Dealers' Association and by

the Wholesale Dealers' Union:—

“The undersigned declare unanimously that on the basis of the present system it is absolutely impossible to conduct any normal business intercourse. While thanks are due to the Reichsbank for its readiness to bear the expense, its actions and measures show that it underestimates the economic necessity. The time for cautious treatment of this problem has gone; during the next few days the necessary measures have to be taken, or a complete economic collapse will ensue.”

The creation of a stable currency was further urged by the agrarian interests, who pointed out the danger that the peasants would not be prepared to sell the crops of the new harvest for paper marks.

Before we pass to the examination of the several plans, we must first of all deal briefly with a few questions of principle. In speaking of the creation of a stable standard of values, one must draw a sharp distinction between two possibilities:—

1. Is the new currency to exist alongside of the present paper marks?
2. Is the new currency to put the paper marks out of circulation?

The first solution can, in its turn, be carried out in two different ways, viz.:—

(a) While the Reichsbank continued the emission of paper money, a new private institution would be created, endowed by the State with the right of issuing gold notes.

(b) The State itself in conjunction with the Reichsbank would undertake the emission of gold notes, which would circulate along with the paper notes.

The creation of a private institution for the emission of gold notes offers the least difficulty. All that the capitalists have to do is to get together a sufficient fund of foreign currency, and eventually a gold reserve. On the basis of this gold and foreign currency reserve, gold notes can be issued. They can also be issued for the discounting of bills of exchange payable in gold. The gold notes thus emitted would be covered by the gold and bond reserve of the bank and by the bills of exchange, in the same manner as, for instance, the Austrian National Bank has been founded. These gold notes would form a credit currency created quite independently of the States.

How the exchange rate of such notes would be fixed in regard to foreign currency, and whether the gold parity could be maintained, is difficult to say beforehand. If the gold notes were redeemable and actually redeemed, then the rate would, of course, remain at parity, so long as the gold reserve sufficed for such redemption. If the gold notes were not redeemable in gold, then the rate would depend on the amount of gold notes in circulation. If the gold notes were issued in such large amounts as to drive the old paper marks from circulation, then the parity of the new gold notes—as of

any paper money that is not redeemable in gold—would depend on the condition of the country's budget. If the new gold notes were not directly redeemable in gold, their parity would be maintained only on condition that they should serve as a means of credit for the large industries and wholesale trade, and not as a general and exclusive means of circulation. It stands to reason that the stability of the gold note can be maintained solely on condition that the State deficit should not be covered by these notes, and that the State should enjoy either no credit or a very restricted credit at the new bank of issue, as in the case of all emission banks before the war.

On the other hand, the creation of a stable currency by means of gold notes could also be carried out by the Reichsbank, if the latter were to draw a sharp distinction between granting of credits to private enterprise and to the State. In granting credits to private enterprise the same policy would have to be followed as in the case of the creation of a private institution for the emission of gold notes, i.e., credits to private borrowers would be granted only in gold marks. The exchange of gold notes emitted by the Reichsbank would be determined in the manner indicated above for notes emitted by a private institution.

What we must particularly emphasise is this: the creation of a new stable currency—in the form of gold notes issued by a new institution or by the Reichsbank—has nothing whatever to do with either the stabilisation of the mark or the reform of the country's finances. Stabilisation of the mark, and the solution of the currency problem, can be achieved only by the second solution, i.e., by the gradual replacement of the paper mark by the new currency.

If this solution were attempted, the transition to a gold note currency could easily be effected. The quantity of paper money now in circulation, amounting to many milliards, is only equivalent to about 200 million gold marks, if calculated in terms of the dollar exchange. The gold reserve of the State Bank, which has dwindled to one-half of its former value, would be more than sufficient for the withdrawal of all the paper money and for the introduction of a new system of gold currency. But under the present economic circumstances in Germany, there would be no guarantee that the new gold currency would not depreciate at the same rate as the paper mark. For the causes of the depreciation of the paper mark—the breakdown of the State finances, the adverse trade balance, and so forth—would still be in existence. The only difference would be that there a stop would be put temporarily to another factor of depreciation, which is of less importance—the use of foreign currency as a medium of circulation inside Germany (in order that savings may retain their value); but the other two factors would continue their work of depreciation.

In other words, it is quite possible for the bourgeoisie to create a new stable currency by technical financial means and independently from the State. Yet it is impossible by technical financial means to

create a new currency for the whole of the country without securing either before or simultaneously a balancing of the budget. But this can only be obtained if a balance is first secured between production and consumption. This is not a technical question, but, above all, one of political power.

On these principles, let us examine the new plans for the stabilisation of finance. We will deal only with the most important of them.

Hilferding's plan comes under the category 2 (b). He wants to subdivide the Reichsbank into two departments, for gold marks and paper marks, respectively. The gold department would be given control of the 300 million gold marks which form the gold reserve of the Reichsbank. It would discount in gold marks current bills of exchange and issue gold bank notes, which would be secured one-half by gold and foreign currency, and the other half by the discounted gold mark bills of exchange. The paper mark department would liquidate the existing paper mark credits, but would grant no further paper mark credits to private enterprise. It would, however, continue to discount the expenditures of the State as long as the deficit would not be covered by taxes and loans.

If this plan should be carried out in Germany, it would bring about a situation similar to the one now experienced in Russia. Along with the gold-secured notes of the Reichsbank (corresponding to the Russian chervontsi) the paper mark would continue in circulation. There would be no firm rate of exchange as between the gold-note and the paper mark, since the paper mark would continue to depreciate, and at a much quicker pace than that at which the Russian rouble depreciates in relation to the chervonetz. The gold note would be in the same position to the paper mark as the dollar is to-day. The exchange rate of the gold note would most probably run parallel with that of the dollar. Thus nothing would be done either for the improvement of the State finances or for the condition of the working class. In order to arrive at any solution in this respect, the paper mark would have to be brought into firm relation to the gold mark, i.e., the paper mark would have to be stabilised. And that is the big problem.

The Plan of the Imperial Union of German Industry.

This plan belongs to the 2 (a) category. It proposes to establish a new financial institution with a capital of 500 million gold marks, of which 200 millions are to be contributed by a consortium of founders, i.e., by the big capitalists, while one-third of the stock would be offered abroad, and the Reichsbank would be given a moderate part in the capital and management of the business. The gold funds would be deposited abroad. The new bank of emission would be entirely autonomous. It would have the right to issue gold notes to double the value of the paid-up capital. The notes would be issued only against the discounting of gold bills of exchange or against the

deposit of gold or foreign currency. No State loan certificates or bonds, whether issued by the German Government, the State Governments or the Municipalities, would be accepted as a cover. The gold notes would be issued in gold **thalers** of equal weight to the American dollar. The gold notes would be exchangeable for certificates of gold or foreign currency held in foreign banks. In compensation for the right of emission, the bank would give the State a gold loan without interest, and also a share of the net annual profits. But for its further requirements the State would have to resort to the Reichsbank and to paper currency.

This means nothing else but the creation of a new private emission bank after the model of the Austrian note-bank. Hence this plan would not be of the slightest value for the stabilisation of the paper mark and for the restoration of the State finances. This system has managed to exist in Austria so far because the League of Nations has guaranteed to the Austrian State credits for two years sufficient to cover its deficit without resorting to any emission of paper money. Without assistance of this kind the adoption of this plan would meet the requirements of the bourgeoisie, but would be of no use to the State and to the working classes, since it would probably accelerate the depreciation of the paper mark.

The Helfferich plan belongs in principle to the same category, with the sole difference that the security for the issue would be represented by grain as well as by gold. The creation of the fund of the bank is a somewhat complicated matter. The capital is to be made up of mortgages of fixed value, either in terms of rye or of gold, upon the agricultural and industrial land properties. The land taxes of 1913 are to serve as a guide in the valuation of these properties. These mortgages are to bear a 5 per cent. interest to the bank payable either in gold or in rye. On the strength of the mortgage papers thus held by the bank, it is to issue its rye or gold bonds, which are to serve as a basis for the issue of the new currency which is to be expressed in terms of pounds of rye or in "new marks" (0.179 grams fine gold). The new bank notes are to be exchangeable either for gold or for rye certificates. In regard to the State finances, the State is to get a limited credit in "new marks" or in pounds of rye. The bank is also to pay to the State a contribution under the industrial tax law, which should serve as a means of payment for the treasury notes discounted by the Reichsbank.

This plan meets the special interests of the agriculturalists, who could thus pay the interest of their mortgages in rye, avoiding the effects of the fluctuation of the paper currency. On the other hand the obligations of the industrials would change in accordance with the changing prices of rye. There would be also danger that speculation in rye would deprive the whole currency of its stability.

The fate of the paper mark would remain absolutely uncertain under this plan. Whether or not there would be any improvement of the paper mark would depend on the extent of the credits granted

to the State, and on the level of taxation. Indeed, if the credit given to the State were too big, then the stability of the new gold notes themselves would be jeopardised.

The social tendency of both these plans is clearly towards a further separation of the finances of industry from those of the State; so that the powerful industrial class which has already grown rich on the inflation of the currency can become independent of the fate of the country and of the masses of the workers. After the big land-owners and big industrials have discharged their debts by paying one ten-millionth part of them, after they have drained the resources of the middle classes, they want to have no further financial interest in the fate of the country.

The Stinnes plan, offered by one of his chief collaborators—Minoux—is the only one which proposes to effect an organic union between the new currency and the stabilisation of the mark.* The plan is based on the taxation of values by a 5 per cent. gold tax on property. It estimates the national wealth of Germany at about 200 milliard gold marks, and the 5 per cent. tax at 10 milliard gold marks. This levy should, at the discretion of the Government, be made in the first place on the value of land and buildings of all kinds. It would carry interest of 5 per cent. per annum and a sinking fund of at least 5 per cent. Government bonds to the value of 10 milliard marks, redeemable in twenty years, would be issued (500 million being issued each year). Of these, seven milliard marks would pay interest at 5 per cent. and three milliard interest at 10 per cent. The redemption of the latter would start after fourteen years.

The 10 per cent. State bonds would be deposited in the Reichsbank and the State would thus become a stockholder to that amount. These three milliards, together with the gold reserve of the Reichsbank of about 500 million and the bills of exchange, cheques, etc., would furnish a fund of four milliards, which would serve as basis for the emission of gold notes to the amount of eight milliard marks, with a cover of approximately 50 per cent. The 10 per cent. State bonds would be sold by the Reichsbank for gold, precious stones or stable foreign currency. The plan assumes, on the basis of the currency in circulation before the war (taking into consideration the increased prices of the present time) that a sum of eight milliard gold marks would suffice for the currency requirements of Germany.

Gold notes representing a sum of eight milliard gold marks would be printed at once and would at one stroke be changed within two days for the whole existing paper currency of the country, which would be withdrawn from circulation. This exchange would be made at the current dollar rate, the dollar being reckoned at 4.20 gold marks. Fourteen days later, all remaining paper money in the country would be demonetised. A longer term should be granted for paper currency out of the country. One hundred millions or, at

*"Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," August 8th, 1923.

most, 200 millions of the new gold currency would be needed, at the present rate of the dollar exchange, to redeem the whole amount of the paper money and treasury notes. All debts and obligations, whenever contracted, would be translated at the same rate into gold marks.

"The seven milliard 5 per cent. State bonds would be handed over by the State to the Reichsbank, which would pass its own new gold currency to an equal amount into circulation through the State's account. German industry would have to obtain the currency which it would need by the handing over of foreign currency by the sale of goods and by means of credits. Thus without any Government order the handing over of foreign currency will be made in effect compulsory and equally there will be a compulsion to increase the sale of commodities of all kinds."

"These seven milliard gold marks, which will be passed into circulation by the Reichsbank on behalf of the State, cover the deficit of the State and of the municipalities. Stinnes, or rather Minnow, calculates that this would suffice for one year. During this year the State finances would be restored by the introduction of a simple system of taxation and by the restoration on a capitalist basis of equilibrium between production and consumption. This would include the "elimination of any compulsory production and the reduction of the staffs of officials, retrenchment of the State industries, restoration of the pre-war working hours (which is absolutely indispensable) and no less the abolition of all combines, price cartels, and the like."

Thus it is clear that the financial problem is one of political power. The restoration of German industry on the basis of the stabilisation of the currency can be carried out either by the bourgeoisie at the expense of the proletariat, or by the proletariat at the expense of the bourgeoisie. Either it can be achieved by increased exploitation, and unparalleled unemployment—which presupposes a total defeat of the Labour movement. Or it can be achieved by a reorganisation of production and its liberation from bourgeois anarchy by the introduction of universal obligation to work and the removal of the burden of unemployment—which naturally presupposes a complete victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. The problem will have to be solved very quickly one way or another, for otherwise Germany will go completely under. For this reason we see but a short term of existence for the Stresemann-Hilferding Government. As a Government of the petty bourgeois elements, it is incapable of carrying out either of these solutions.* It must make room either for a Fascist Government of the bourgeois dictatorship or for a workers' and peasants' Government! Its sole task is—to carry out the capitulation!

*It is noteworthy that the Government is unable to reach any decision upon the question of a new currency. It looks as though Helfferich still understands the financial problem better than any other member of the Government.

THE RISE AND FALL OF PILSUDSKY

It was six months ago that Pilsudsky, hitherto the most representative man, and chief of the Polish State, quitted the Presidential residence, the Belvedere Palace. Two months ago he resigned his position as head of the General Staff, thus surrendering his last post of authority. He left with a good deal of noise—hurling unheard of insults into the face of the new Government—and Independent Poland has now, for the first time, a Government without Pilsudsky, and, what is more, a Government that is openly at war with Pilsudsky. The advent to power in May last of the Witos-Glombinski Government, based on an agrarian-capitalist bloc, was a turning point in the history of Poland, as she emerged after the Treaty of Versailles. That is not only due to the retreat of Pilsudsky: it is the first Polish Government which is considered by the overwhelming majority of the bourgeoisie as its **very own** government.

The juxtaposition of these two facts would lead to the conclusion that Pilsudsky was in opposition to the bourgeoisie, and the representative of the struggle against the bourgeoisie. Such a conclusion would seem to be justified by the fact that the Polish Government installed by Pilsudsky in November, 1918, was the "Socialist" Government of Moraczewsky, which was composed of members of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), and of the Peasants' Party ("Wyzwolenie,") which was regarded as Radical; also by the fact that Pilsudsky himself was once upon a time a Socialist, and a leader of the P.P.S.

Yet one has only to take a retrospective glance at the respective policies of Pilsudsky and of the bourgeoisie in recent years to at once dismiss this surmise.

Firstly, the bourgeoisie did not make war upon Pilsudsky for eighteen months; and the first Diet had elected him as President unanimously. Secondly, Pilsudsky at all times endeavoured to act as representative of the whole nation, consistently emphasising his "above-class" position. Thirdly, all the Governments under Pilsudsky's presidency had carried on a policy of suppressing the Labour movement, not only of the Communist Party, but of the large masses of the working class as soon as they took a determined stand against the bourgeoisie e.g., military expeditions against the striking agricultural labourers, militarism of the railway service, numerous cases of bloodshed during the suppression of labour demonstrations). Fourthly, no one was more zealous in the fight against Soviet Russia than Pilsudsky, and after the conclusion of the war

he went on inciting the bands of Petlura, Balachovitch, and the rest, to fight against the Workers' and Peasants' Republic. Finally, part of the bourgeoisie, notably the industrialists of Galicia, and part of the financial magnates, continued to be the stalwart adherents of Pilsudsky.

Since he was not, and did not wish to be, a representative of the proletariat (the only consistent enemy of the bourgeoisie), perhaps Pilsudsky was just a Polish Bonaparte, who relied upon the peasantry for support? Colour is lent to this assumption by certain traits in his political physiognomy, notably by the support rendered to Pilsudsky by the peasant parties, by his military career and revolutionary past, and by the devotion of part of the army, particularly of the officers who have risen from the legions. Yet for a Napoleon there is something fundamentally amiss with Pilsudsky, not to speak of genius. There has been **no** agrarian revolution in Poland, and Pilsudsky, who during his domination could have brought it about, or at least brought about a decisive agrarian reform against the junkers, did not do so, because he was anxious to maintain internal peace in order to engage in foreign wars.

The evolution of the Socialist-Peasant Government of Moraczewsky into the present Peasant-Agrarian Government of Witos-Glombinski was the development of the struggle **to win the peasantry** and part of the petty-bourgeoisie, but not of the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. It was a struggle between the big bourgeoisie and the Radical intellectuals, who had a certain following among the workers and peasants which enabled them to hold out the threat of the revolution—although the circumstances were not ripe for it—and thus to gain power in Poland towards the close of 1918, and to play an independent part for several years. This clique of Pilsudsky's satellites is known in Poland as the Belvedere camp.

The nucleus of the camp is represented by the people who had founded the P.P.S. some thirty years ago for the express purpose of gaining the forces of the working class for the fight against Tsardom on behalf of Polish independence. Thus, the Reformist-Socialist movement in Poland, did not arise from within the Labour movement in the shape of an opportunist wing, but was smuggled into the Labour movement by the petty bourgeoisie intelligentsia under a revolutionary disguise of bombs and assassinations. Its counter-revolutionary and petty-bourgeois nature was unmasked at the very outset by Polish Marxists (Rosa Luxemburg, Warsky), and by Polish Social Democracy (founded in 1893); yet it fully revealed itself in all its glory later on, during the world war, when Socialism concluded an alliance with German Imperialism, and after the war, when it became the most reliable support of bourgeois Poland, and the very soul of the war on Soviet Russia.

Already before the war the Pilsudsky crowd had distributed their respective parts among themselves. Already, in 1905, they had attempted to create artificially a liberal bourgeois party, and for this purpose they enlisted the aid of Sieroszewsky and others. This performance was repeated by them when they attempted to form a pseudo-Radical Peasant Party ("Wyzwolenie"). Later on they sent their emissaries to the National Labour Party, to some bourgeois groups, and to the old peasant party which, before the war, was confined to Galicia, but had since extended its activity throughout Poland, and was under the leadership of Witos. Pilsudsky himself had left the P.P.S. in order to become leader of the whole nation. All these people, although of different parties, are united in a close organisation, which is bound by military discipline, and obeys blindly the dictates of Pilsudsky. It is known as the Polish Military Organisation.

Pilsudsky's programme envisaged the formation of a mighty democratic Poland independent of the Entente, and for this purpose the defeat of Russia, Soviet Russia as well as Tsarist Russia, and formation of a federation with Lithuania, White Russia and the Ukraine. After the defeat of Germany, Pilsudsky and his crowd had seized power in Poland, as the only people who were backed by an organised military force, which consisted largely of remnants of the Kaiser's Polish legions, whose ranks had been reinforced by the infusion of petty-bourgeois youth.

It was truly the hour of triumph for the petty-bourgeoisie and the intellectuals. The destruction of the industries by the forces of occupation had dealt a severe blow to the bourgeoisie, which was now divided into two camps; pro-Ally (the majority of the bourgeoisie in Russian Poland and in Posen), and pro-German (Galicia and part of the junkers in Russian Poland). The destruction of the industries, while weakening the bourgeoisie, had at the same time reduced to a minimum the importance of the proletariat, which had been in 1905, the leading factor in the life of Poland. The Polish proletariat had now become disintegrated by compulsory emigration to Germany and Russia, and demoralised by famine and by contraband traffic. Yet the drafted labourers came back from Germany permeated with bitter hatred against the oppressors, and easily became the prey of Nationalist demagogy.

It is true that the only working class elements whom the war had failed to throw out of the industries—the miners of the region of Dombrovo, and the agricultural labourers—made their appearance upon the scene as a factor of revolution; nevertheless, they were almost the only internal enemy against whom Pilsudsky had to use armed violence. The Workers' Republic of Dombrovo was vanquished, and in similar bloody fashion did Pilsudsky crush the movement of the agricultural labourers in the province of Lublin,

which had already forced the junkers into a precipitate retreat to Warsaw.

An unlimited field had been opened to the petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals. An Independent Poland meant a few hundred jobs in the administration of the army and of the police; it meant an influential Governmental Press obtaining generous subsidies; it meant external propaganda and trade missions, embassies, honours and decorations. Pilsudsky became the idol of this ambitious crowd.

He himself had frankly declared: "I have made a fabulous career." A similar career was made by the intellectuals of his camp; they became generals, ministers, and ambassadors. His clique became essentially a military camarille, whose imperialism, and the cry of "a greater Poland," had only one meaning: "More jobs."

The bourgeoisie had only one trump-card against Pilsudsky; namely, the services which he had rendered to the Kaiser, and the pact concluded with the Entente during the war by the so-called National Committee at Paris through the agency of Dmowski.

Pilsudsky was aware of the fact that without the political and material backing of the Entente he would not be able to carry out his plans for the creation of a big army and of a greater Poland. The country was in a state of complete devastation, lacking the prime necessities. He needed support in order to clothe and feed the population and the army, and to set the industries on their feet. In this the Entente alone could help, and he was forced to seek a compromise.

Pilsudsky ordered the withdrawal of the "Socialist" Government of Moratzewsky, which, during the fateful hour of the revolutionary outbreaks in Austria and Germany, had fulfilled its historic mission of stultifying the revolutionary movement in Poland. At the close of January, 1919, the Coalition Government was formed, under the head of Paderewsky, the pianist, the minion of the Entente, but it also gave a goodly number of portfolios to Pilsudsky's men.

The Entente helped Poland because she was considered useful, and became reconciled to Pilsudsky as soon as he started war on Soviet Russia. But Pilsudsky was unable to restrict his power, and was obliged to retire within a few months, a thoroughly discredited and humiliated man. Loyalty to the Entente did not furnish to the bourgeoisie the force which was lacking within the country.

At all events, the fact that the bourgeoisie had put forward none other than Paderewsky in opposition to Pilsudsky demonstrated the helplessness of the bourgeois camp at that time. For Paderewsky was by no means a classic representative of the bourgeoisie, and a defender of its interests. Like Pilsudsky, he was a romantic hero

of the petty-bourgeoisie, an idol of small shopkeepers and bigoted old women, who had his own clique of American Poles. The only difference between him and Pilsudsky was that he had rendered his services to the cause of Poland's Independence, not among conspiring terrorist groups, but in the drawing rooms of the mighty ones of the world, making noises, not with a revolver, but with a piano keyboard. The clash between the two petty-bourgeois leaders gave an easy victory to Pilsudsky, who was a better politician, a better organiser, and was backed by a strong and old-established organisation.

As long as the war went on, i.e., until the end of 1920, Pilsudsky's sway was unchallenged. The army was in his hand, the political police was permeated by members of his organisation, and he had complete control of foreign policy. The various supply and distribution organisations, the committees to combat profiteering, the export license departments, etc., were full of Pilsudsky's adherents, who were doing good business for themselves.

II.

Yet it was during this period of the heyday of Pilsudsky's power that new forces were arising which were to bring about his overthrow.

Thanks to war orders and State subsidies, industry began to revive. In the winter of 1919-20 the textile industry of the Lodz district was restarted; it grew steadily, and to-day gives work to upwards of 100,000 workers. This was followed, albeit slowly, by a regeneration of the metal industry. Banks, shipping companies, and trading corporations sprang up. Bankers, manufacturers, merchants and large landowners formed their respective associations. In 1920 was formed the Central Union of Industry, Commerce and Banking, which acquired a predominant influence over the legislature, and the Government was led by National-Democratic politicians. The leadership of the large industrial bourgeoisie and the junkers, as well as of the Polish merchants and shopkeepers, returned slowly to the National Democratic Party, which since 1905 understood the position in Russian and Prussian Poland, disposed of a great army of speakers, journalists and politicians, and what is of essential importance in Catholic Poland, enjoyed the support of the clergy.

At the moment of Poland's regeneration the peasantry did not as yet play a leading political part. It is true that in Galicia there had already existed for some time a strong peasant party (with Witos at its head). Nevertheless, the peasants of the principal part of the country—Russian Poland—had not yet evolved any political traditions. It was only the world war, and particularly the revolution in Russia, and in Central Europe, that aroused them from their slumber. The cry for economic independence coming from the impoverished cities, the breath of the Russian Revolution, the

temporary disappearance of all administrative authority in the country side (end of 1918)—all this had set the overcrowded Polish villages into a state of ferment, and the cry of "More Land!" resounded throughout Poland.

The first business to engage the attention of the newly constituted Diet which was also called the Peasant's Parliament) was to take up the question of agrarian reform. Decisions were adopted on this question, but they failed to materialise. The clash of interests between the rich and the poor peasants was too great. The former had enough money to purchase land, and wanted only to bring pressure to bear upon the junkers to dispose of part of their estates; whereas the latter wanted to obtain their land either without compensation or on long credits. This clash of interests enabled the junkers and the bourgeoisie to protract, and eventually to squash this reform. The Belvedere parties (P.P.S. and "Wyzwolenie") made no attempt as we have already pointed out), to organise a popular movement in favour of this reform, for the reason that their leaders had staked everything on internal peace and on the war for a greater Poland.

The peasant deputies in the Diet, who in reality were representatives of the rich peasants (because the latter dominate in the village), came immediately under the spell of Parliamentary corruption, dabbling in the formation of land distribution societies, State-aided agrarian banks, and the like, and forgetting entirely their agrarian reform pledges. At the same time they were astute enough to demand that the peasants should pay no taxes and this secured a tremendous success for them. In the economic field the rich peasants soon reached an understanding with the bourgeoisie and the junkers. They united on a policy of free trade, i.e., the abolition of the food levy and the State regulation of distribution, free exports, obliteration of the remnants of the German's war-Socialism, and the pseudo-Socialist measures of the Moraczewsky Government.

While intrenching themselves in power and importance, the rich peasants became a highly attractive organisation for the intellectuals, for they saw a better chance of making a rapid career with the support of the peasant class as a whole, than by following Pilsudsky. A general stampede of the intellectuals into the Witos Party ensued.

The working class, part of which had at first believed in Pilsudsky as a friend of the people and a staunch Socialist, lost all confidence in him after the bloody experiences of the military regime and martial law. This found its expression in the attitude of the P.P.S., who early in 1919 had frequently referred to Pilsudsky as their own man, and sent him congratulatory birthday messages, but now went back on him, at least outwardly, and criticised him frequently, although with due respect. This in spite of the fact that

the party is still being led by people who are allied with him for life and death, and are tools in his hand.

The knock out blow to Pilsudsky's prestige was dealt by the catastrophe of the march on Kiev, in the year 1920, and the catastrophic state of the Polish finances (the direct consequence of that military adventure), because since March, 1920, the Entente refused further aid, and the French withheld their money, and so Pilsudsky had to find his own resources for the prosecution of that war. A great many of the petty-bourgeoisie began to doubt the genius of Pilsudsky, and to lose confidence in him.

Thus came the first attack against the Pilsudsky regime, in 1920. The bourgeoisie had inscribed upon its banners: Down with the policy of unsided military adventures; a firm alliance with France; down with State-craft, and long live free trade and free initiative. This attack failed, after having for a time scored some initial successes. Pilsudsky took up the slogans of the bourgeoisie, and attempted to carry them out without the authoritative representatives of the bourgeoisie. He betook himself to Paris, where he convinced the French that they would find him a no less docile tool than Dmovsky, the head of the so-called "National League," and he thus once more wrested the weapons from the hands of his opponents. The economic programme undertaken by Steczowsky, Minister for Finance in the Witos Cabinet, could hardly meet with the objections of the bourgeoisie. The food levy was abolished, the export ban lifted, and the State distribution of cheap commodities was given up. The policy of oppression against the workers was continued by the Government with full vigour, the railwaymen's strike was severely suppressed, and a high tax was imposed on wages.

Nevertheless, Pilsudsky had no reason to feel triumphant. All these measures did not in any way weaken his bourgeois opponents, but rather strengthened them by strengthening the foundations of their capitalist profit system. Pilsudsky was indispensable to the bourgeoisie as long as unstable social equilibrium existed. The stronger capital became, the less it needed the good offices of this hero of the petty-bourgeoisie. It could not recognise him as its own man and servant, because for that he was too reckless in his lust for power, and too independent. Thus, while carrying out the capitalist programme, Pilsudsky was heading for his own destruction. This soon became clear when the vote was taken on the Constitution. The Witos Party, which was still lending its support to Pilsudsky, nevertheless voted with the Right (the Nationalists) for the separation of the Presidency of the Republic from the office of Chief of Staff, and against the election of the President by plebiscite. This was intended as a safeguard against the possible rise of a Pilsudsky-Bonaparte.

III.

How could Pilsudsky continue to be the head of the State, how could he continue his irresponsible and uncontrolled foreign policies, how could he send invading bands against Soviet Russia in spite of the wishes of the bourgeoisie, when he had very nigh lost his support, even among the wealthy peasantry?

As we have said, the rich peasants wanted to bring pressure to bear upon the junkers to make them part voluntarily with a portion of their estates. The best means of exerting this pressure was to threaten radical agrarian reforms. Another means was to back Pilsudsky. Early in 1921, through the medium of Steczkovsky, negotiations were started between the Witos Party and the Junker Alliance, which resulted in an agreement for the voluntary apportioning of the land. This agreement came into force early in 1923, and it rendered Pilsudsky superfluous to the wealthy peasants.

This development was an illustration of the parasitic role of Pilsudsky and his clique. He was not a representative of the workers, but he allowed himself to be carried away by the revolutionary wave of 1919-20, which prevented the bourgeoisie from throwing off the mask and declaring open war with the proletariat. He was not a representative of the peasants, but he supported himself for another two years by relying on the peasants, whom it suited to use his name for their own purposes.

The denouement was bound to come sooner or later. The restoration of industry and credits and the attraction of the peasants into the domain of financial economy was accompanied by the rapid differentiation of the rural elements, drawing the wealthy peasants into an alliance with the capitalists. This manifested itself, too, in the question of taxation, which had also been a bone of contention between the peasantry and the bourgeoisie. The peasants at first maintained the perfectly militarist attitude of "No taxes!" To this the bourgeoisie, even the "National" and pro-Pilsudsky elements, could not agree. The bourgeoisie wanted a regulated financial system and a stabilised currency, hoping thereby to win the confidence of foreign capital and to lure it into Poland. This caused the resignation of the Finance Minister, Steczkovsky, from the Witos Government, in the middle of 1921, because his proposals for land taxation had fallen upon the deaf ears of Witos. Nevertheless, after two months of purely peasant economics, during which time Pilsudsky had a free hand for military adventures, such as the sending of the Tiutiunik and Balakhovitch bands against Russia, there came such a catastrophic drop of the Polish mark, and such a wave of protests from the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie, accompanied by a wave of economic strikes, that Witos shrank back from his own handiwork, and Pilsudsky was obliged to look for a new Premier. It had gradually dawned on the rich peasants

that eventually it would be in their own interests to pay taxes, as otherwise they would have to pay much more as a result of the emmissions of currency, which depreciated the paper money in their own coffers, while it lined the profiteer's pockets with gold. Accordingly, in this respect also, they came to an understanding with the bourgeoisie.

The eclipse of Pilsudsky's star was best illustrated in the sphere of foreign policy. After a series of Foreign Ministers like Parek and Sapieha, who had been merely his tools, Pilsudsky was compelled to fall in with Skirmunt, who was carrying on a consistent policy of conciliation in the East, and who was endeavouring to counteract the independent Cabinet policy conducted by the head of the State.

The Ponikovsky Government, which came to the helm after the fall of Witos (September, 1921, to June, 1922), with Skirmunt as Foreign Minister, was still a Belvedere Government. The Premier himself and the Minister for War and for Internal Affairs, respectively, were members of the Belvedere clique. In regard to economic policy, an attempt was made to continue the carrying out of the programme inaugurated by the bourgeoisie. The most striking figure in the Cabinet was the Minister of Finance, Michalsky, who vigorously continued the programme initiated by Steczovsky, and who was the first to succeed in imposing any considerable amount of taxation on the peasantry. The mark had become stabilised for a while, and Michalsky was idolised by the entire bourgeoisie as a financial saviour. The Government also distinguished itself by its severe treatment of the working class. A new wave of repression again crowded the prisons which had been emptied somewhat in consequence of the abolition of martial law (May 2nd, 1921).

As a result of this policy of the National-Democrats, carried out by the hands of their opponents, an even better understanding was reached between the rich peasants and the bourgeoisie. A paradoxical situation had arisen. On the one hand, the Cabinet as a whole was opposed by the parties of the Right, because the bourgeoisie was clamouring for full power in the State, and on the other hand it was supported by the more or less "Belvederised" parties (P.P.S., Wyzwolenie, National Labour Party, Witos Party, a bourgeois group in Galicia, and some petty bourgeois groups). Nevertheless, all the important economic measures, such as the abolition of the eight-hour day for shop assistants, the abolition of compulsory sick benefits for agricultural labourers, and certain taxation proposals, were adopted with the support of the bourgeois parties of the Right, and against the votes of the three first-named Belvedere parties.

IV.

Pilsudsky found himself in a difficult position. His intellectual satellites, by the influence of their radicalism upon the workers—the petty bourgeoisie and the poorer peasants—had certainly helped him to seize power in the stormy days of 1918, but they now were too weak to secure for him a lengthy lease of power in an ordered bourgeois State. Since the bourgeoisie as a whole would not accept him as their leader (no longer needing him) and were mistrustful of the old-time conspirator, and since, on the other hand, the rich peasants could not be relied upon, for they were beginning to decamp into the bourgeois fold, he had to win at least the support of part of the bourgeoisie by creating his own bourgeois party.

For this he needed a national programme.

While the war lasted, Pilsudsky could gain for himself and for his legions a considerable portion of the bourgeoisie, particularly in Galicia, because that class happened to be divided on the question of the choice between the Entente and the Central Powers. This cleavage persisted during the war on Russia, although it had taken a different course.

Since the beginning of the world war the National-Democratic Party devoted itself to the Entente. This was due to the economic interests of the industrial bourgeoisie of Russian Poland, to whom Russia was a market and a sphere of expansion, and to whom annexation by industrial Germany would have meant the dashing of all their hopes. This party represented also the interests of the ambitious petty bourgeoisie of Prussian Poland who could not overcome the predominance of German Capital. Even before the war this party had engaged in ultra-loyal politics towards Tsarist Russia, although they met with evil retribution for their pains. It gladly joined the war against Soviet Russia as long as it was backed by the Entente, but when the Council of Four had given up the idea of intervention, it opposed an independent offensive against Russia. It advocated a moderate extension of the eastern frontier, so that it should not clash with the "future Russia," yet at the same time it was in favour of a bare-faced policy of annexation and Polish colonisation of the conquered region. It insisted that the Polish front be directed against Germany, not against Russia. The National-Democrats did not consider the Baltic States as reliable allies, because they had no faith in their durability; on the other hand, they advocated an alliance with Czecho-Slovakia as security against Germany.

Pilsudsky adopted the opposite course. During the world war he had organised volunteer squads against Russia, representing then rather the interests of the intellectuals than those of the industrials, because to the former the Tsarist régime, far from offering markets, deprived them of any possibility of making careers either in politics

or in journalism, in public service or in the Army. He fought on the side of the Central Powers, winning thereby the sympathies of the whole Galician society who were in favour of annexing Russian Poland to Galicia as a way out of the Galician misery. His traditional enemy was Russia as such, not Soviet Russia in particular. He embraced the old democratic programme of the Polish nobility, who, after the eclipse of Poland, had sought salvation in democracy, believing that a free federation of Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine would bring about the downfall of the Russian giant and restore the old Poland upon new foundations. This was the Utopian programme pursued by Pilsudsky in 1920 in his independent march on Kiev, earning the applause of both the P.P.S. as well as of the Polish aristocracy, who hoped to regain their large estates in the Ukraine. But he met with a crushing defeat.

This lesson did not cure him entirely, nevertheless it utterly discredited the federative programme and any policy of adventure of the East in the eyes of the masses of the people; and for the added reason that the Lithuanian, White-Russian and Ukrainian "brothers" would not hear of any federation with the Polish junkers. Pilsudsky was neither able nor willing to prevent his opponents from following the annexationist principles of extermination in the occupied provinces; instead of a federal and democratic régime, the unfortunate inhabitants were to fall under the sway of the Polish landlords and gendarmes.

In his Baltic policy Pilsudsky was scarcely more successful. The Baltic countries, particularly Finland, displayed no great eagerness to form a defensive and offensive alliance with so turbulent a neighbour.

The haughty self-reliant policy of Pilsudsky was defeated by the week-kneed and cowardly flunkeyism of the National-Democrats. But to-day the bourgeois camp is no longer divided upon this question. The manœuvring ground of foreign politics has become somewhat circumscribed. Poland is tied hand and foot to France, and her boundaries are fixed. Everybody has got tired of foreign politics; it can still be used as a diversion, but the fight for power of the State is no longer centred on foreign politics. Pilsudsky was bound to admit this in May, 1922, when he attempted to frustrate the incipient bloc of the Witos Party and the nationalists by his digression into foreign politics (on the question of Wilna). Far from securing any lasting success, he only precipitated an internal crisis which was the prelude to a new drop of the Polish mark.

At the same time he attempted to organise a new party among his bourgeoisie adherents. But he could no longer gather any large numbers around him. He found only a few conservative Galician bureaucrats, professors and counts, who, because of their past friendship for Germany, could make their careers only in the company

of Pilsudsky; there were also the Galician petroleum magnates, a group of German and Jewish large industrialists from Russian Poland, a section of the high financiers and a couple of dozen of well-to-do intellectuals who could not very well defend Pilsudsky's colours in their own radical circles. It ought to be pointed out that the profiteers and speculators are mostly in favour of Pilsudsky, because as parvenus they exercise most influence in the old bourgeois camp, and are naturally eager to support a political parvenu. Yet these elements founded altogether too small a force to challenge the nationalist camp, which was led by the cleverest "heads" of the bourgeoisie and which enjoyed the whole-hearted support of the clergy, the junkers and industrialists, large and small.

The only course left to him was to appeal to the class interests of the workers, of the poorer peasants and the half-starved intellectuals, to come out on to the streets, and in this way to defeat the bourgeoisie. But this is just as impossible for Pilsudsky as it was for Napoleon, in 1815, to turn his back on the big bourgeoisie who had rejected him and to rely upon the people and to rule France through and by the Committee of Public Safety. It is all very well for Pilsudsky to scare his opponents by a threatened appeal to the masses, but he has neither the desire nor the ability to do so.

V.

In the middle of 1922 an open break was effected between Pilsudsky and the Right. The Diet elections were approaching, and it was a question as to who should make the election arrangements. The Ponikovsky Cabinet did not enjoy the full confidence of Pilsudsky, and he in so many words sent it to the devil. But it turned out that the lower bourgeoisie did not dare to support openly the unconstitutional action of Pilsudsky, and for the first time they deserted him. An interregnum of two months ensued, during which time the two Governments carried on a sort of phantom existence. One of these Governments, installed by Pilsudsky himself and led by the pseudo-radical writer Slivinsky, obtained immediately from the Diet a vote of want of confidence; while the other Government, which was appointed by the Diet and led by Korfanty, the nationalist leader from Upper Silesia, was denied confirmation by Pilsudsky. It came to street demonstrations; yet when the P.P.S. organised a demonstration in Warsaw against Korfanty as the embodiment of bourgeois reaction, and in favour of the "Democratic" Government of Slivinsky, they were joined by the Communist workers who went out into the streets with them, in order to demand at the same time the freedom of the Press, the freedom of speech and association, and the liberation of the political prisoners. Such demonstrations in the streets were equally intolerable to Pilsudsky and the bourgeoisie, and a compromise was struck between them once again.

A so-called professional ministry was formed, which was to take care of law and order until the new elections were held; and it did its work so well that several thousand Communists were imprisoned in the course of the election, not one of their election appeals was allowed to be published, and not one of their election meetings was allowed to take place.

The election campaign was excellently conducted by the elements of the Right. They formed a bloc which united the National-Democratic Party, a clerical agrarian party and the Christian Democrats under their lead. A united list of candidates was presented by the bloc. The slogan was: for a strong national majority and against the irresponsible Government of adventure and mismanagement. It was a grateful task to criticise the Pilsudsky régime. All the attempts at sane financial policy (Steczovsky, Michalsky) were set at nought by Pilsudsky's demands for military expenditure, and by the lack of stability and confidence arising from the perpetual ministerial crises. The note circulation had risen from five billions on January 1st, 1920, to 46 billions on January 1st, 1921, 160 billions on January 1st, 1922, and 793 billions on January 1st, 1923, on which day the American dollar was quoted at 20,000 marks. The high cost of living was still mounting, and the standard of living of manual and mental workers, and poor people generally, had sunk very low. The profiteers and speculators were having the time of their lives.

The elections took place on November 5th, 1922, with the following results: out of 444 mandates, the Right obtained 169, the Witos Party 70, the National Labour Party 18, "Wyzolenie" jointly with some small radical peasant groups 55, P.P.S. 41, the Communists 2, the national minorities (Germans, Jews, Ukrainians, White-Russians) 89. The newly-formed bourgeois party of Pilsudsky obtained no mandate at all!

Compared with the composition of the first Diet, these results showed clearly that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois pro-Pilsudsky groups had completely broken with the Centre and had turned mostly in favour of the Right; while the Socialists and the radical-minded peasant parties had gained ground. Yet the most striking feature of these results was the strong representation of the national minorities of the annexed territories, who had declined to give their votes to the "Democratic and Federalist" Parties of Pilsudsky, but preferred rather to send their own representatives to the Diet.

Under these circumstances how could a majority be formed in the Diet. This could be done either by a bloc between the Right and the Witos Party, and such had been the trend of class relations for a long time past; or by a bloc of the peasant and labour parties with the national minorities. Pilsudsky attempted to effect the latter combination, but he dared not himself test the working

ability of this combination, and he sent his friend Narutowicz as candidate for the Presidency. The operation was successful, but the patient died; for Narutowicz was murdered by a fanatical adherent of the Right, a few days after his election to the Presidency.

The murder of Narutowicz did no damage to the Right, so far as public opinion was concerned. On the contrary, the murderer, after his execution, became almost a national saint.

A new duel ensued between Pilsudsky and the nationalist camp, and this time the Right took the offensive all along the line. The election of the President against 169 Polish votes, and with the votes of the "enemies of the country" (as the national minorities were called, and not without reason) afforded a rare opportunity for the unfolding of a Chauvinist campaign.

Polish nationalism, so often used as a party weapon both by the Right and by Belvedere, while each side tried to outdo the other in patriotic fervour, had now turned against Pilsudsky. His adherents dared not openly defend their alliance with the national minorities, and, in fact, did deny it publicly. In this manner they revealed their innermost identity with their professed opponents in the idea of "Poland for the Poles," as against their pretended federalist principles. The Right had found increased support to their campaign in the fact that the Jewish nationalists had been the initiators of the Bloc of Minorities, for Jew-baiting was the old established slogan of the Polish petty-bourgeoisie. Already before the world-war the National-Democrats, with Dmovsky at their head, had gained the leadership of the Polish bourgeoisie by loyalty to Tsarism and by a rabid anti-semitic campaign, which furnished an ideological cloak to the petty jealousy of the Polish shopkeepers, artisans, physicians and lawyers of their Jewish rivals.

The case of the minorities had also afforded to the Witos Party a good excuse to go over openly into the bourgeois and junker camp shouting the patriotic phrase of a "Polish majority." The long drawn out negotiations with the junkers, were now concluded within a couple of months. The peasants of the minorities were to pay the costs. The pact between the Witos and the Right provides instead of the previous land reform which provided for the expropriation of the Polish big land-owners, that the State shall parcel out yearly up to 400,000 hectares of land (at full price), first from the crown estates, and next by the private estates volunteering to parcel part of their land, but that 60 per cent. of the total area to be parcelled shall be situated on the eastern border. Reduced to plain terms, it means that the land hunger of the Polish peasant shall not be fed at the expense of his class enemy, the junkers, but at the cost of his brother peasants of White Russia and the Ukraine, who were to be deprived of their lands.

During the period that has elapsed since the death of Naru-

towicz (December, 1922, to May, 1923) the Pilsudsky camp has fully demonstrated its inability to organise a real fight against the Right. The Government of General Sikorsky, the last Belvedere Government, made a bid for bourgeois confidence and for the votes of the Witos Peasant Party by the following means: firstly, they appointed Grabsky, the junker, as their Minister of Finance, submitting a strictly capitalist policy of finances; secondly, they started a vigorous persecution of Communists, dissolving the few surviving red trade unions and preparing a martial law decree; finally, they called upon the Germans and the Jews ostentatiously to avow their respective national innocence. All this was in vain. The bourgeoisie refused Pilsudsky's application to become their servant. They were out for full power, and they won it on the day when the Witos Peasant Party signed the pact with them.

VI.

Since the middle of May, Poland was governed by a "Polish majority," with Witos as Minister-President. The inauguration of this Government was followed by Pilsudsky's retirement from the position of Chief of Staff, and by a wholesale purging of the army and administration of his adherents. It was not under happy auspices that the new Government began its work. Along with the tumbling of the German mark, the Polish mark had fallen fourfold within a fortnight (60 per cent. of Polish exports are shipped to Germany). The cost of living again rose, and was followed by a wave of strikes. The currency panic and the strikes caused great difficulties to the Government. In the sphere of foreign politics, the new National-Democratic Minister, Seyda, has so far failed to achieve any success. He has fairly given up the Baltic States, while Czecho-Slovakia will not admit Poland into the Little Entente. Towards Russia a friendly tone was taken by Seyda, but he had to beat a prompt retreat when threatened by a nationalist attack of the Belvedere Party. In the Diet itself the Government has already lost an ally; the National Labour Party, which had backed it at first, and subsequently swerved into the opposition camp, voting against the provisional budget. Yet all these difficulties failed to bring the Government to its senses. Following the example set by Pilsudsky, it used guns against the workers on strike. It now seeks to create for itself a stronger majority by preparing an electoral reform on Mussolini's model.

This Government is strong, as far as there can be any strong bourgeois Government in bankrupt Poland at all, because it has a strong class background, and a corresponding class programme, while the opposition relies on classes whose programme they have neither the desire nor the ability to carry out, and are thus reduced to the small interests of their own little clique. One has only to look at the manner in which the Pilsudsky camp is fighting against

the Government, to conceive the helplessness of the former. In the first place, they speak of the great injustice done to the good patriot Pilsudsky and to his legionaries. Then they proceed to petty attacks on foreign policy. The dominant note of their lamentations is regrets for their lost power. As regards the peasant question, the "Wyzwolenie" Party can hardly pretend to radicalism, since during four years it has done nothing to carry into effect the provisions of the agrarian reform law, and now it is even afraid to utter the slogan of "expropriation without compensation." On the other hand, the P.P.S. is afraid of the working class movement, and during the last strike wave it did everything to crush the movement and to deprive it of political colour; it declares openly that the workers must fight only for increased wages.

Thus the Pilsudsky camp has neither a banner nor a programme, under which it could lead troops against the Government of the bourgeoisie and of the rich peasants. It is for this very reason that it is our opportunity and duty, as Communists, to reform the majority of those troops and to lead them in the fight for their own aims. For these troops consist, firstly, of P.P.S. workers and National Labour Party members, who on the whole have nothing in common with Pilsudsky, and whose leaders are allied with Pilsudsky solely for personal interest; secondly, of poor peasants who give their adherence to the radical parties, not because of any political attachment, but because they have no land and hate the junkers; thirdly, of intellectuals who have learned during the four years that neither Poland's independence, nor democracy and Pilsudsky could furnish them with a pair of new trousers or with butter for their bread. The Ukrainians and the White-Russians can no longer be cajoled by the name of Pilsudsky, for they have seen the emptiness of the catch-phrase of federalism. We have now to deal in Poland with peasants deprived of their land, and with intellectuals who are nationally and economically oppressed.

Our answer is the following slogan: A Workers' and Peasants' Government, land to the peasants without compensation, the right of self-determination for the national minorities, withdrawal from the military alliance with France and Roumania, and friendship with Soviet Russia. To the Pilsudsky's parties (little as we believe in their willingness to fight, in consideration of the great masses who are still following them) we offer the united front; not for the sake of Pilsudsky, but for the clear-cut class programme which we have outlined. We need not fear that if our common fight will be victorious, we shall have thereby worked for Pilsudsky. A new Moraczewsky Government, coming to power as a result of a real fight of the workers' and peasants' masses against the bourgeoisie, would not be a second edition of the first. But it would be a step forward in the direction of the Proletarian Dictatorship.

E. BRAND.

SOCIALISM IN THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT

BY R. PALME DUTT.

In the English Parliament a debate has been taking place on Socialism.* For two days (interrupted by an interval of four months), at a time when Europe was plunging more rapidly than at any other time previously since the war into social chaos and revolution, and millions of English workers were unemployed, locked out, cut off relief or otherwise being beaten down by the bourgeoisie, the British Government and the leaders of the Labour Party have been engaged in a polite but amiable discussion on the theoretical merits and demerits of capitalism as a system of production.

What is the meaning of this curious episode which has been acclaimed by the Labour Party as a triumph. Let it be said at once that the debate itself was lifeless and commonplace in the extreme. It was not the virtues of the debate or the debaters that aroused the attention of the world.

§1. The Practice of Free Discussion in England.

Mr. Snowden, the mover of the motion for the Labour Party, claimed for his triumph that:

“It is an evidence of the extraordinary progress which Socialism has made in this country during the last 20 or 30 years. . . . For a long time our platform was confined to street corners and the market place. It is indeed an evidence of the progress in the public mind of the ideals which have been propagated, that to-day the Government of the country so much appreciates the importance of this issue that they are prepared to give Government time to its discussion.”

Yes, the complaisance of the Government in giving up its time to a polite discussion with Mr. Snowden is undoubtedly evidence of something, even though it may not be evidence of the triumph of the persuasive powers of Mr. Snowden. The thirty years which have advanced Mr. Snowden from the street corner and the market

*The motion moved by Mr. Snowden for the Labour Party was as follows:
“That in view of the failure of the capitalist system to adequately utilise and organise natural resources and productive power, or to provide the necessary standard of life for the vast numbers of the population, and believing that the cause of the failure lies in the private ownership and control of the means of production and distribution, this House declares that legislative effort should be directed to the gradual supersession of the capitalist system by an industrial and social order based on the public ownership and democratic control of the instruments of production and distribution.”

place to the Front Opposition Bench and "Government Time," have also witnessed certain other things from which Mr. Snowden may wish to dissociate himself, but which have been the motive power of that advancement—the rising tide, not of "ideal progress in the public mind," but of the workers' revolution.

The whole of this discussion, declared an acute observer of the capitalist Press

"has no more power to allay the class-struggle than have pills to cure an earthquake."

(J. L. Garvin in the "Observer," 25.3.23.)

Nevertheless, continues this same observer,

"The Government was assisted by this academic discussion."

There in those two sentences is contained the whole significance of the debate from the point of view of the Government. For the Government to "allot time" (the time of Parliament, i.e., what it is to discuss and for how long, is completely under the practical control of the Government) in the midst of the congested detail work of a session to a theoretical discussion over two days is certainly a very striking, almost an unprecedented, thing. It is not as if either the British Government or the British Labour leaders were so much enamoured of theoretical discussion as to take it up except for very definite practical reasons. In the bourgeois and Labour Press alike it was proclaimed as a triumph of "English" methods; of free speech, of sweet reasonableness, tolerant discussion of differences; in short, of democracy and parliamentarism—"something which could only happen in England."

Nevertheless, it was not unique in English experience. It has happened before in the days of the famous Coal Commission in 1919. Then, too, was a period of social crisis. Then, too, the challenge of the workers was menacing the land. Then, too, the Government suddenly became open-minded and enamoured of theoretical discussion. And then, too, the English method prevailed, and the leader of the revolutionary miners sat down to exchange Bible texts with the Duke of Northumberland on the ethics of ownership. The Labour and Socialist Press of England and America acclaimed this dramatic confrontation as of surpassing significance and the triumph of English methods of revolution. So it was: the Government carried through its military preparations for the lock-out, and to-day the miner can reflect, as he sits down to his bread and margarine, that the Duke of Northumberland is still ready to discuss his right to the royalties he still continues to receive.

§2. The Object of the Debate.

That this debate should happen therefore at the present time is a significant thing. It is significant, not by virtue of the debate, but by virtue of the situation outside that it implies.

It was, in the words of the sober and disapproving "Economist," a "sham fight": but it was a sham fight that took place because a real fight was gathering outside, and it was a sham fight that was taken up with so much cordial co-operation, enthusiasm and publicity on both sides, because both sides were afraid of the real fight that was gathering outside.

The significance of the debate from the point of view of the Government is thus sufficiently simple. It represented the familiar tactics of the encouragement of every diversion of the struggle to the parliamentary plane and open commitment of the leaders to parliamentary formalism.

But the significance of the debate from the point of view of the Labour Party deserves further examination. Had the Labour Party in Parliament been concerned with the debate mainly from regard for their followers, to satisfy their instincts of struggle by the stage thunder and challenge of a Parliamentary debate—the People's Tribune heroically defying the oppressors—the drama would have been a simple and familiar one. But such was not the case. The main preoccupation of the Labour Party in the debate was quite a different one.

The most striking characteristic of Mr. Snowden's speech, declared the "Manchester Guardian" correspondent (echoed in this by the "Times" and almost all the bourgeois Press) was:

"the stress he laid upon that part of the resolution conveyed by the term 'gradual' . . . the very positive repudiation of Bolshevism. . . . Mr. Snowden's speech declares that the Socialism of the Labour Party is not revolutionary."

("Manchester Guardian," 21/3/23.)

This impression as the principal impression of the speech was widespread,

"Mr. Snowden," declares the "Times," "has mellowed much to-night the one time 'revolutionary' preached constitutional evolution. There was the old flavour of gall when Mr. Snowden indicted capitalism for its failure to make a good world for people to live in; but his general stand was moderate in tone, idealistic in conception and picturesque in conception."

("Times," 21/3/23.)

So, too, the "New Statesman," the organ of Webb, declared with its usual frankness:

"Surely it has been clear enough for many years past that in the purely Pickwickian sense implied by Mr. Snowden's motion, the Labour Party is a Socialist Party. . . .

"Socialism has lost its terrors. These have been transferred to Communism and Bolshevism."

Moderate, Idealistic, Picturesque, Pickwickian!

Poor Mr. Snowden. This is the grand total impression that he creates when he endeavours to arise in the House as the spokesman of the rising workers. But, perhaps, Mr. Snowden was not so un-intelligent as to be unaware of the impression that he was creating. There may be method in his madness. "Positive repudiation of Bolshevism." This sounds like something plain and definite. Let us see what he had to say:

"We propose no revolution. We do not propose and I certainly will always resent any proposal of confiscation. There is no analogy between Socialism and Bolshevism. Socialism and Bolshevism are antitheses."

Here is plain language of a man who has something definite to say. In all the vague, rhetorical, indefiniteness of the rest of the speech, here is the one outstanding positive thing. Here is the kernel of the whole speech.

The main preoccupation of the Labour Party in introducing a resolution on Socialism was not to attack capitalism, but to repudiate Communism.

The fact of the situation arises directly from the inner situation of the Labour Party, and points no less clearly than the positive proposals made by Mr. Snowden to the future lines of its development.

§3. The Labour Party's Approach to Power.

The Labour Party is approaching power. This is the turning point of the English political situation.

But the approach of the Labour Party to power means very different things to the official leaders and to the rank and file workers.

To the rank and file workers, and the small bourgeois voters for the Labour Party, weighed down by the terrific attack of modern capital to a degree of suffering unexampled in living experience in England, the hope of a Labour Government that is slowly spreading is the hope of great and sweeping changes and a relief from their burdens.

But to the official leaders the approach of a Labour Government reveals itself as the approach of the responsibility of Government of the British Empire. They are viewing closely and nervously their future duties and the demands that are going to be made upon them when they are placed in nominal headship of that vast bureaucratic mechanism which is the British Government.* They are adapting

*The definition of the Government of Britain according to Mr. Sidney Webb, the ex-Chairman of the Labour Party and its intellectual leader, is as follows: "The great mass of government to-day is the work of an able and honest, but secretive bureaucracy, tempered by the ever-present apprehension of the revolt of powerful sectional interests and mitigated by the spasmodic interventions of imperfectly comprehending Ministers."—Webb, "A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain," 1920, p.69.

themselves, trying to pick up the tricks of the governing class, to make themselves, in the cant phrase bequeathed to them by Mr. Churchill, "fit to govern."

In this task the bourgeoisie is assiduously assisting them. They are accepted and acclaimed as the official Opposition—"His Majesty's Opposition"—in Parliament, in the Press and in society. They are invited to Buckingham Palace and to the social functions of the governing classes. The aristocratic Mrs. Webb establishes a club (known as the "Half Circle Club") for the wives of the Labour leaders in social deportment, and there Mrs. Snowden, Mrs. Henderson, Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Clynes meet in the fashion of the best society. The Countess of Warwick provides a country house with titled guests to afford the necessary facilities for the "week-ending" habit of the English governing class. In every direction, with all the assistance of atmosphere and the trained diplomatic skill in corruption of the English bourgeoisie, the leaders of Labour are being picked out and initiated into the mysteries of government and Empire, until they feel themselves a part of it. "After all," as one of the Labour members of Parliament declared to his protesting followers, indignant at his attendance at some function at Buckingham Palace, "we are all part of the State machine."

Thus a deep social and political chasm is developing between the official leaders and the rank and file. Each successive Annual Conference shows this more clearly in the resolutions and votes of the local Labour Parties, which are becoming more and more completely in opposition to the official lead and are only overwhelmed by the block votes controlled by the officials.

Every step nearer to power of the Labour Party is increasing the internal crisis within its ranks.

On the one hand the economic situation, the progressive break-up and decay of the bourgeois political parties, and the silently growing vote of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie against their intolerable hardships, is making the approach to power more and more clearly inevitable.

On the other hand, every step nearer to power is rendering the leaders more and more nervous of approaching responsibilities, apprehensive of and sensitive to bourgeois criticism, increasingly conservative and constitutional in outlook, suspicious of their own rank and file.

"We are now one of the two parties in the State," says the "Daily Herald" (official organ of the Labour Party) in discussing the recent Labour Party Conference and censuring the resolutions of the local Labour parties, and goes on to warn against "strident and flamboyant phrases" or "accusations of lukewarmness and apathy." "Fire and fury, noise and nonsense are often more to the taste of audiences than wisdom, arrived at by hard thinking. But they make

no lasting impression. The need of to-day is hard thinking, for a firm grasp on realities such as Mr. Sidney Webb's address displayed."

Mr. Webb's address, which is thus held up to commendation, was entitled "Labour Policy on the Threshold," and was mainly devoted to inculcating "increased responsibility . . . they should not lightly commit themselves to new or additional projects it behoved them to weigh their words when they voiced their intuitive objection to the authority of government," etc.

Thus the Labour Party leadership finds itself in a contradictory position. It is being propelled to power by the rising wave of social discontent on a most open and unmistakable class basis. Yet to take up the class issues that are forced on them by the nature of the situation is to enter on a struggle which can only have one issue—the open emergence of direct class struggle and their own disappearance from leadership.

In this situation there is only one salvation for them—alliance with the bourgeoisie. It is not surprising that in the present circumstances they speak and write in all their utterances as men on a razor edge and with an air of open, even direct appeal, to the bourgeoisie for assistance and support. It is not surprising to find the Leader of the Opposition writing in a semi-Government organ of the bourgeoisie appealing for support of the Labour Party on the ground that the Labour Party and the Second International have always stood "in the forefront of the fight against Communism in Europe," or addressing a select luncheon gathering of big financiers and others at the Aldwych Club as an invited guest and appealing to them as "black-coated workers" to form a common front against Bolshevism.

At the present time the principal objective of the leaders of the Labour Party is, not to arouse agitation among the workers, but to conciliate the bourgeoisie. They are ready to face hostile working-class meetings all over the country. But they are not ready to face a hostile bourgeois Press. They count with confidence on their control of the working-class voting machine and the impotence of any opposition to overcome their mechanical control. But their anxiety is to win the approval of the bourgeoisie.

To win this approval they have to establish themselves as part of the bourgeois State machine and allay the fears of the bourgeoisie that they are tied to the insurgent and uncertain force of the working-class movement.

This positive repudiation of the working class and taking of allegiance to the bourgeois State they have been performing during the last few months at an extremely rapid pace by a whole series of deliberate and committal actions. It is only necessary to instance: the public denunciation of strikes in progress; interventions as "impartial" persons between capitalists and workers and settlements in favour of the capitalists' support of the Government's imperial arma-

ments extension programme; propaganda campaign against Soviet Russia on the stock bourgeois basis of religion, tyranny, Georgia, etc., direct and public support of the Government's foreign policy; upholding of General Smuts' murder of strikers in South Africa; and the Government's Indian persecutions, etc., etc.

In this way they have approved themselves as good and loyal future Ministers of the British Empire. But the question still remains: though their personal good will is undoubted, what of their programme? Are they not committed to a programme of Socialism—of the despoliation of Capitalism? The more stupid organs of the bourgeois Press still continue to profess and believe that all their loyalty, constitutionalism, patriotism and class-solidarity is only a blind to hide their fell designs of robbery and spoliation, when once they have achieved power. The good, stout Hendersons and Tom Shaws, the limelight Parliamentarian MacDonald, the mincing professor Webb, become a series of terrible Bolshevik Machiavellis, sharpening their swords beneath their cloaks even as their lips are mumbling oaths of loyalty to their sovereign lord the King.

To dispel this picture, to overcome the last fear of the bourgeoisie, it is necessary to throw overboard in a public fashion the last remaining encumbrance—Socialism. It is necessary to reassure the bourgeoisie that "English Socialism" has nothing to do with ordinary, vulgar or proletarian Socialism, that there is no intention of dispossessing the rich or taking anything without paying for it, that no change at all will be made without the utmost possible slowness, and that in fact the whole programme is not really Socialism at all, except in a manner of speaking, or as the "New Statesman" gaily described it, "in a Pickwickian sense." No more public or conspicuous opportunity could be chosen for the avowal of a theoretical position. And here in this purpose comes out the reason for the holding of such an apparently meaningless theoretical debate in the practical hard-headed English Parliament in the midst of public business, the reason for the extreme publicity given to it in the bourgeois and Labour Press, and the reason for the peculiar character of the publicity, alike in the bourgeois and the Labour Press, laying stress mainly on the gradualness of the proposals and the repudiation of Bolshevism.

§6. Socialism Without Socialisation.

Mr. Snowden at the outset of his speech introducing the motion explained graphically the existing situation in England. Nine-tenths of the existing wealth, he declared, was owned by 2½ per cent. of the population. Five-sixths of the people had not a penny to leave when they died.

This division of wealth and poverty, he added, was growing considerably greater.

What, then, did he propose to do to meet this situation? He showed that it was clearly necessary for the whole population to get possession of this wealth and means of production which was at present held by two and a half per cent. of the population, with the result that the remainder were starved of the simplest necessities. How then were they to get possession? He did not propose confiscation, he was emphatic in opposing that; everything must be paid for. But how were they to pay, since the five-sixths had not money, and the money to pay would clearly have to come from the two and a half per cent. themselves?

On this point Mr. Snowden gave no explanation in his speech, and for enlightenment it is necessary to turn to his book "Socialism and Syndicalism," published shortly before the war. This book is of special value at present for the simple and unabashed attitude of Mr. Snowden that it gives, before the disillusionment of the war had set in—it is notable that in it he pours scorn on Marx for his theory of increasing misery, a notion which Mr. Snowden has since seen fit to adopt in his speech.*

Here he sets out in the simplest terms his answer to the question: How to find the money.

Nothing could be simpler, he declares, and proceeds to initiate his readers into the grand secret of modern finance:—

"It is just as easy to acquire a property worth a thousand millions as one worth ten millions. The London Water Board has a property worth £140,000,000. It was acquired by the Water Board by the amalgamation of the previously existing companies. How did they get the money to do this? **They never did get it.** The money was there before the purchase, invested by the private shareholders. **All that was needed was to transfer the shareholders' stock in the private company to a corresponding amount of stock in the Water Board.** When the Metropolitan Water Board was formed, although the purchase price was about £40,000,000, it was only necessary to raise about £500,000 in cash, as nearly all the old shareholders accepted the new stock."

But will not this mean a tremendous National Debt? Nonsense, says Mr. Snowden; the actual position is completely unchanged. Taking the example of nationalisation of the railways, he says:—

"But what is this railway capital now? It is debt in precisely the same sense as it would be if the nation had borrowed the money to make or buy its railways. **If the rail-**

* "Marx fell into the error of believing that the conditions of the workers would get worse and worse."—Philip Snowden, "Socialism and Syndicalism," p. 76, 1913. "For a decade before the outbreak of the war the condition of the wage-earning classes has not only been getting relatively, but actually, worse."—Philip Snowden in the House of Commons, March 20th, 1923.

ways were nationalised, the people who had lent the money would be the creditors of the nation instead of being the creditors of a railway company."

Precisely, there is no change. The point could not be put more simply.

What, then, is there to complain of? Grand Trunk Railway Stock becomes Grand National Railway Stock. The dividends are a little more secure. "Labour" will be a little more effectively disciplined. The directors and managers are uninjured and assured of their future. Mr. Snowden is at pains to assure Sir Alfred Mond, his opponent in the debate and one of the biggest brigands of imperialist finance, that, "**When the Socialist State comes into being he need have no fear**, because his great abilities, his wonderful mental capacities and his great organising skill will find abundant scope in organising Socialist enterprises."

But, it may be objected, in what sense will the workers be benefited? Even though it is reassuring to know that the future of Sir Alfred Mond is guaranteed, what is to happen to the commonplace workers under him who have lacked sufficient "wonderful mental capacity" to inherit the great business of Brunner, Mond.

Mr. Snowden recognises this objection and is prepared to consider it.

"It may be asked what advantage is going to accrue to the community by the nationalisation of the great monopolies if the full value is to be paid to the expropriated owners. Will not that plan create a huge number of parasites who will be living on incomes paid by the State out of the profits of these services?"

Mr. Snowden is prepared to be philosophic on this point:—

"These objections are in the main true during the transition period."

However, it is only true during the transition period.

"The interest will have to be paid on the bonds until they have been redeemed."

Until they have been redeemed! In other words, until an equivalent amount of capital has been placed in the hands of the "expropriated" bourgeoisie for further exploitation.

No wonder that Sir Alfred Mond is more amused than alarmed at the prospect. In a speech which Mr. Snowden subsequently described as a "piece of magnificent fooling. . . . Sir Alfred Mond is a man of brilliant intellect," he made short work of this idea of paying back his money, provided he does not invade the sphere of nationalised industry.

“ He said he was to compensate the owners of private capital. He said he was to give the owners of industrial capital some form of State Security, but he would not allow them to use it to develop industry in this country. Therefore, the owners of that capital would have to take it abroad. The hon. member said he would pay me a few thousand pounds for what I have, but he would not allow me to use it in industry here. Obviously I must take it to some country where I can use it. **What advantage that is going to be to the British working man passes my comprehension. I can understand confiscation, but I cannot understand what benefit they are going to gain under the scheme provided by the hon. member for Colne Valley.**”

But, indeed, Mr. Snowden's greatest source of satisfaction is the approval accorded to his schemes by the great “captains of industry,” who, as he naively points out, cannot be suspected of any bias in favour of Socialism.

“ Nothing more strikingly proves the soundness of the proposals which Socialists first advocated on theoretic grounds than the fact that these proposals are now being put forward by men who repudiate all sympathy with Socialism, but who see the practical value of these Socialist schemes.”

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that Sir Alfred Mond's comment of tolerant unconcern over the actual proposals of Mr. Snowden was widely echoed by the more intelligent sections of the bourgeois Press. The “Manchester Guardian” declared:—

“ The remedy which the Socialists propose is not, within limits, in the least alarming ”;

and, again, of the actual speech—

“ There is great virtue in that word ‘gradually.’ It might, one hoped it would, mean that if **Mr. Snowden were in power, we should proceed very much as we do now.**”

5. The Final Failure of Mr. Snowden.

In other words Mr. Snowden's policy stands in the eyes of the bourgeois as for practical purposes a policy of no change. In the phrase of his magnificent peroration,

“ The great social forces which for ever move in their might and majesty cannot for more than a moment be impeded or disturbed,”

and he will do nothing to disturb them.

Unfortunately for this policy of waiting for the glacier to roll by, there come moments when the glacier ceases to glide past in “silent majesty,” and begins to rumble, crash and tumble, until it

becomes a vulgar avalanche. These moments find Mr. Snowden and his friends unprepared. The last occasion broke the charming unity of the Labour Party into smithereens, and harnessed the majority as recruiting sergeants to the State machine, while it left Mr. Snowden to wander with much bitterness of heart until he found the congenial company of the aged Tory peer, Lord Lansdowne. And this, which was no accident, but inherent in the nature of the present period, is the final and supreme contradiction of Mr. Snowden's position. For he actually imagines that by his policy of no change or "gradual" change, great things may "some day" be achieved, provided they are not unduly precipitated. But the changes which he is so busy deprecating are happening faster than his eye can follow. Even while he is advocating his policy of gradual change, world-capitalism is whirling human fortunes to destruction at breakneck speed. And it is against this, the actual situation, and not any imaginary dreams of Bolshevist destruction, that he has no policy save to repeat the formulæ of the British Government and bourgeoisie.

Already we have seen that he has had to abandon his pre-war optimism of reform and admit the worsening of conditions. But his conclusion remains the same. The result becomes an incongruous combination. On the one hand he says:—

"For a decade before the outbreak of war the condition of the wage-earning classes has not only been getting relatively, but actually, worse."

On the other hand, in the same speech he goes on to advocate as his remedy:—

"There are three or four ways in which we have been dealing with the capitalist system, and all we suggest is that we should **continue on these lines**, but move much more rapidly."

Thus Mr. Snowden's remedy is to continue along the lines along which the workers have been getting worse and worse off.

This final confession of impotence is not a chance expression, but the inevitable characteristic statement at present of all the British Labour leaders. It occurs again in Sidney Webb's presidential address to the Labour Party Conference this year. He deals first with the existing misery and unrest.

"The root of all our present troubles is the state of warlike tension from one end of Europe to the other,"

and he goes on to say that,

"The whole nation has been imbibing Socialism without knowing it."

If this is Socialism, it is fortunate for Socialism that the majority of people do not know that they have been imbibing it.

The fact is, that the present process which is taking place with

the official leaders of the British Labour movement, a process of increasingly and rapidly sinking into becoming simple echoes of bourgeois policy, is not simply a reflection of the corruption of growing power, but is also a reflection of their own theoretical bankruptcy. On the one hand they are compelled to admit the objective revolutionary situation, on the other hand they refuse to draw the inevitable revolutionary conclusion. In consequence they are compelled to range themselves more and more closely with the policy and outlook of the Government and the bourgeoisie. This reaches such a point that Mr. Snowden is able, immediately after his debate on Socialism, to write a series of articles for the aristocratic imperialist organ, the "Morning Post," on "When Labour Governs," in which there is no level of imperialist bootlicking to which he does not sink. "Socialism" disappears except as a vague aspiration of a beautiful future to be achieved "some day" by the beneficent operation of "Social forces." Socialism in practice becomes the forward interests of Big Capital.

So it results that the only proposals of a positive character for action made in the whole course of the debate on Socialism came from the solitary Communist Member of Parliament. The rôle of the Communists in the Labour Party to day becomes no question of ultimate theoretical or tactical differences, but the simple advocacy of the most elementary Socialist policy against the imperialist and bureaucratic subservience of the existing leaders.

The final comment of the debate is fittingly furnished by a shrewd observer for the bourgeoisie (J. L. Garvin, of the "Observer"):

"The fact is, that the more any section of Socialists—except the Communists—consider the problem, the more they shirk from putting down any plan in detail."



The Federated Farmer-Labour Party of the United States

July 3rd, 1923, will always be accounted a most important date in the history of the Labour movement of America. On that day was convened the conference from which emanated the Federated Farmer-Labour Party of the United States. Born amidst the enthusiasm of delegates representing farmers and workers of thirty-one States of the union, this party is the crystallisation and expression of the will to power of the militant organised workers and farmers of the country.

The Federated Farmer-Labour Party is the product of many years of struggle of the American proletariat and farmers to find a way out of the straits into which they have been driven in the struggle against capitalism. In the 'eighties of the last century, the Knights of Labour attempted to organise a party of the working class. The farmers have also made several attempts to organise parties, such as the People's Party in 1890 and more latterly the Non-Partisan League in 1915. The militant workers and the farmers of the United States, however, have at last realised that they must unite their forces in order effectually to cope with capital in its present concentrated form in the United States.

During the war, when prosperity appeared to be general property, the farmers profited very little. Mortgages increased in number, the amount involved more than doubled from 1910 to 1920, and to-day is above **eight billion dollars**. The farmers have suffered at the hands of the speculators and the railroads. Although the cost of food in the cities is high, the farmer has not received the benefit of the high prices. Unable to obtain decent prices for his produce, he has been forced to pay inflated prices for industrial products. **With more than 40 per cent. of the farms mortgaged and 38 per cent. of the farmers reduced to the status of tenants**, it was quite natural that a veritable exodus of the farming population should take place. In 1922 more than **2,000,000** left the farms for the city, disgusted and hoping to find work in industry.

The farmers have grasped the value of co-operation and have built up tremendous co-operative selling and distributing concerns. But the capitalists have not been slow in attacking their endeavours to help themselves; they have put every obstacle in their way. They have tried to break them economically by boycotts and finally by legislation. The farmers realised that their economic organisations would not suffice and organised politically. The first effective move took place in the State of North Dakota, where the Non-Partisan

League took power. It established State banks and other mutual and State institutions for the benefit of the farmers. Wall Street mobilised against the State: banks were forced to close their doors—the force of the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota was broken and the capitalists again assumed power.

But the idea behind the Non-Partisan League could not be stopped so easily. It has spread to several States of the Middle and Far West, assuming diverse forms. Thus, in the most recent past, the farmers were not the most forward and effective in political action.

The workers have been restrained from political action by the stupid policy of the American Federation of Labour. For more than twenty years the leaders of the A.F. of L. have proclaimed the policy of “rewarding the friends and punishing the enemies of Labour”; and for twenty years Gompers has had to complain that the results of this policy have been negligible. The continual reiteration of the policy indicated that there was an undercurrent of unrest in the organised Labour movement of the United States that sought independent political expression. Pursuing a false policy, the Radicals in the past have left the American Federation of Labour to form Radical and revolutionary independent unions. This fact militated against the coalescence of the political forces within the Labour movement and left the organised workers a prey to their reactionary leaders and to the shrewd politicians of the capitalist parties.

The Socialist movement, isolating itself from the Labour movement and adopting an intransigent attitude in the matter of organisation, could not reach the masses. The result was that the only party that might have offered leadership to the workers and have formed an effective union with the farmers was able to gather less than a million votes. And these votes were merely votes; they did not represent a solid, united body that would fight. They were not a body of men either class-conscious or growing in class-consciousness. They were merely a gathering together of the disgruntled elements, who, on election day, voiced their protest against the existing regime.

The Farmer-Labour Party was formed in 1919 and comprised farmers' and workers' organisations, which affiliated as bodies. This party, too, was a purely electoral party, although it had a small permanent membership. Nevertheless, the Farmer-Labour Party did not make the proper progress. Although it gained in influence in several States, there was lacking an understanding of the struggle against capitalism. It is a party that believes in American “democracy” and trusts to the united forces of the workers and farmers to gain power and finally secure “justice” for the producing classes. The particular feature of this party, however, was that the Labour elements comprising were organised workers. The leaders are men who have fought in the Labour movement for decades, men who have

been in the front line in the violent Labour struggles that regularly shake the fabric of American capitalism. In the elections of November, 1922, the Farmer-Labour Party received the co-operation of the Non-Partisan League and achieved several notable victories, those in the Minnesota being conspicuous among them.

The existence of many groups and small parties seeking to organise the workers and the farmers has been a curse to the American Labour movement. The idea of the United Front caught the fancy of the more far-sighted elements. It was time to unite in a political party all the progressive workers and farmers, in order, with united force to go forward in the struggle against the old capitalist parties, and particularly against the philosophy and ideology created by the slogan of Gompers, of seeking out and supporting the proper capitalist candidates.

In February, 1922, the first conference was called in Chicago, for the purpose of forming a new party to comprise workers and farmers' organisations. The Workers' Party, which to-day is the Communist Party of America—looked somewhat sceptically upon the idea. Was the country ripe for the experiment? Was it the notion of a few men, or were the organised workers and large section of the farmers prepared to join forces in such a party? The Workers' Party did not participate in the conference. It sent a letter stating its position. The conference organised and decided to call another conference in December.

Since 1919, the American Labour movement has passed through severe trials. During the war, the organised workers were able to obtain many concessions from the employers, owing to the scarcity of hands, and the necessity of producing at high speed—which meant tremendous profits for the capitalists. Despite the appeals of President Wilson that they should not take advantage of the war situation to profiteer, the manufacturers indulged in a profiteering orgy such as the country has never witnessed. They could, therefore, very well yield to the demands of the workers—with the reserve that when the war was over, they "would show Labour its place." In the year 1919 began the capitalist offensive. Tremendous strikes broke out. The steel strikes convulsed the country and brought out Federal troops in large numbers in aid of the steel trust. The miners' strikes in 1919 and 1920, with their injunctions, thuggery and troops; the tremendous unemployment of 1921, with the Government indifferent to the sufferings of the 8,000,000 jobless men and women, including about a million ex-service men; the strikes of the railroad shopmen, miners and textile workers in the summer of 1922, with the usual features of repression and violence, gradually taught the workers the necessity of getting together politically as well as industrially. The Daugherty injunction issued in September, 1922, was probably the best instrument in driving the workers together and clearly demon-

strating to them that they must obtain political power in order to beat the employers; that they must secure his power to deprive the capitalists of the might to crush them, even with such edicts as this injunction. For this injunction—which was made permanent in **July of this year**—denied the workers the right to strike; it prohibited the expression of sympathy with the strikers, the offer of financial aid or moral support.

The Supreme Court had rendered decisions so sweeping that the very existence of the Labour movement has been endangered. By one decision, it rendered unions liable for damages in case of strikes; by another it declared the Child Labour Law and the Minimum Wage Law unconstitutional. How combat these facts? Surely the policy of rewarding and punishing cannot help. The workers of America were face to face with the most powerfully concentrated financial power in the world, epitomised in Wall Street; with political power, which revealed itself to the working class in the form of repressive legislation, court injunctions, and decisions, gunmen, militia and Federal troops.

Several of the international unions, such as the miners, railroad workers, needle workers, typographical workers, etc., central Labour bodies and a large mass of the organised workers generally, were on record as favouring the formation of a Labour Party. The American worker was instinctively moving to an expression of class-consciousness, even though it was not yet clear.

The reactionary and pseudo-progressive leaders of the American Federation of Labour realised the danger of this movement, December, 1922, was a menace to their power. The left wing was forming in the trade unions—the workers and the farmers were talking unity in political action. In the capitalist parties, too, there was a sense of impending disaster. The Progressives in the Republican and Democratic Parties comprehended that a realignment of forces was not only essential in American political life, but also imminent. Should the vital Labour and Farmer forces be united in a Farmer-Labour Party, the bourgeois progressives would be deprived of the very support on which they hope to build a new party—with themselves as the leaders. La Follette is a shrewd tactician; he held a conference with the moderate, trade union leaders on December 1. On December 9 these leaders proceeded to the conference for Progressive Political Action at Cleveland called for the purpose of forming a Labour Party, and there, in conjunction with the Socialists, sabotaged the formation of a Labour Party. The Socialists had been loud propagandists for a Labour Party, but when the moment for its formation arrived, they sold out to the leaders who had pledged their word to La Follette.

The Communists had carried on a campaign for the establishment of a Labour Party. The growing demand for a party of the

workers and farmers convinced them that the producing classes of the United States are waking up. But the efforts of the Workers' Party were of no avail. Through the trickery of the Socialist Party and through the inability of the Farmer-Labour Party and the elements co-operating with it, to fight, the delegates of the Workers' Party and of the local unions who represent the militants in the Labour movement, were not seated. The conference was an abortion—the working class of America was again betrayed.

The Farmer-Labour Party, unwilling to accept this treachery, disconnected itself from the conference and called another conference. The Communists realised that the best tactics would be to remain in the conference and fight for control. But the Farmer-Labourites knew with whom they had to deal; they were men whose aim it was and is to keep the farmers and workers unorganised, to keep them from united political action. The Workers' Party accepted the call. It began a militant campaign in behalf of the idea of a Labour Party, the Trade Union Educational League, the organising body of the Left Wing in the trade unions, issued a referendum among the 35,000 local unions of the A.F. of L., the returns of which demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of the rank and file of organised Labour in America is in favour of a Labour Party.

On July 3 there assembled in Chicago 740 delegates, representing more than 600,000 workers and farmers, who had answered the call to form a Federated Farmer-Labour Party. The birth of the new party, however, was not to be one of unmixed joy. Events of great importance had transpired during the month of June, which intimidated the leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party, the convokers of the conference.

The struggle for the recognition of Soviet Russia is assuming vast dimensions in the United States. International Unions, State and local central Labour bodies demand the recognition of Soviet Russia. The Seattle Central Labour Union has long demanded recognition; it stands for most of the progressive measures advocated in the Labour movement of the country. For its militancy, it was threatened by Gompers with expulsion from the American Federation of Labour. The Minnesota State Federation of Labour was threatened with a similar fate. The fight has been waged with the greatest intensity, however, in the United Mine Workers of America. The miners have passed through the hardest struggles, with leaders always ready to negotiate, but afraid to fight. The miners demand militant leadership. They face hunger and danger day by day, a strike for decent conditions signifies a struggle against the most powerful group of capitalists in the country—the United States Steel Corporation, backed by the Government. But the militants are strong and courageous. They organised the Progressive Miners' Committee and proclaimed war on the reactionary clique ruling the

miners' union. They captured the Pennsylvania district, the most powerful in the organisation, and were preparing to capture the national organisation at its next convention. Lewis, the yellow leader of the union, declared the Progressive Miners' Committee a "dual union" and ordered the expulsion of its members. He also expelled a district in Canada because of its militancy. The fight is on in the American Federation of Labour; militant unionism, recognition of Soviet Russia and a Labour Party, against the reactionary bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labour.

The leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party, who are also leaders of the Chicago Federation of Labour, were afraid of the fight.

It means a fight without compromise. It means a fight against not only the reactionary A.F. of L. officialdom, but also the capitalist class. The Farmer-Labour leaders failed; they had called the conference for the formation of a Labour Party, but now declared the time inopportune. They stood alone with a small group of their party delegates. The farmers of the West and Middle West, the organised miners, railroad workers, needle workers, the central labour bodies, the Workers' Party, the Young Workers' League (Young Communists), the important State organisations of the Farmer-Labour Party, the Proletarian Party, the Minnesota organisation of the Socialist Party, which defied the decision of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party and sent delegates to the conference, the World War Veterans, the African Blood Brotherhood (a militant Negro organisation), and numerous fraternal workers' organisations—all of them declared that the time had come for the formation of a Federated Farmer-Labour Party and that delay would be disastrous.

To give up the fight in any of its phases is to slip back into reaction. The Farmer-Labour leaders fell from the militant position they have occupied in the American Labour movement. They have fought for industrial unionism, for recognition of Soviet Russia, they have fought militantly for the relief of Soviet Russia, and defended the Communists after the raid on their convention in Michigan. They issued the call for the formation of the new party. Despite these facts, they fell—and resorted to the methods of denunciation employed by Gompers, the yellow-Socialists and the capitalist Government. They denounced the Communists; and yet their denunciation only had the effect of drawing the farmers and the rank and file of the Labour movement closer to the Communists, the Workers' Party. The names "Communist" and "Bolshevik" have no fears for the farmers and militants. All fighters in the United States are called those names. The propaganda of the Workers' Party had been responsible for the success of the conference; the clear-headed strategy of the Workers' Party leaders alone kept the conference from being wrecked. There is no doubt that the militant workers and the oppressed farmers looked to this conference to create a party and

adopt a programme that would unite the producers in the struggle against the parasites. Despite the sabotage of the Socialists, who declined the invitation to the conference, preferring the company of the officialdom of the American Federation of Labour and La Follette's Liberals; despite the denunciation of the disgruntled, intimidated group of Farmer-Labour leaders, the Federation Farmer-Labour Party was established. **A mass party of the workers and farmers of the United States is a fact.**

The Federated Party has the same organisational form as the British Labour Party, being a party of affiliated organisations and not of individual membership. For the present, it differs from the British party in that it is the result of a movement from below, against the will of the leaders. Its growth will come from below, from the rank and file who will force the leaders to show colour.

Early in the conference it was obvious that something was wrong; a fight was made against seating some of the delegates. The Workers' Party was forced to take the leadership to protect the conference from the disruptive tactics of the Farmer-Labour Party leaders. It was obliged to maintain this leadership throughout—otherwise no party would have resulted. Nevertheless, the new party is not a Communist Party; its programme is not a Communist programme. It is a programme on which the militant workers and farmers in the present stage of the struggle in the United States can unite. It is a programme that all organised workers can accept. Coming from this conference, as a matter of course, it will be called Bolshevik.

With a short introductory analysis of conditions in America, it demands control of the Government by the workers and farmers, public ownership of public utilities with workers' and farmers' control, protection against unemployment and sickness, a maximum eight-hour day, minimum wages, soldiers' bonus to be provided by a tax on excess profits, inheritances and unearned income, payment of war debts by an excess profits tax, creation of a tax system that will "eliminate landlordism and tenancy and secure the land to the users of the land," a moratorium for all working farmers on their farm mortgage debts for a period of five years.

The Communists are aware that conditions and the struggle in America will clarify issues and gradually make the programme of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party more Communistic. The formation of the party was a momentous event, not only for the workers and farmers, but particularly for the Communists. Through the Trade Union Educational League, the left wing has been formed in the trade unions of America. Being the most active spirits in the League, the Communists have secured contact with and leadership among the progressives and radicals of the trade union movement.

The new party will give them political contact not only with the workers but above all with the militant farmers. In a country like America with a large farming population, oppressed and harrassed, sinking into debt and poverty—but a farming population that in many strikes has shown its solidarity with the workers by furnishing them with food, etc.—it was essential not only that contact should be secured with the farmers, but that they should be persuaded of the necessity of intimate co-operation with the industrial workers.

Two significant facts were demonstrated by the conference; the industrial workers, particularly of the Middle and Far West are not to be intimidated by names. “Communist” and “Bolshevik” and “Reds” did not abash them. Secondly, the **Farmers showed more radicalism than many of the industrial workers.** At the Cleveland Conference, in December, a United States Senator from the west declared that even the “bankers of the West are more radical than the workers in the East.” The radicalism of the farmers is most significant, for Wall Street is at present trying to prove to the farmers that the cause of their plight is the high wage demanded by the city worker. A conservative farmers’ organisation—the National Farm Bureau Federation—is carrying on a campaign on behalf of the railroads against the demands of the workers in general and of the railroad workers in particular for higher wages. But increasing mortgages and increasing farm tenancy are more potent arguments in the mind of the farmer than the regular propaganda against the workers issuing from the offices of Wall Street.

What is the outlook of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party? Several facts must be taken into consideration. A realignment of political forces in the United States unquestionably is taking place. The Progressive Bloc in Congress is wielding great power. If the Republican Party nominates a real progressive, it will remain intact and probably win the election next year. A real progressive will attract a large part of the farmer and labour vote, who would still hope for betterment from a “good man.” If, on the other hand, the Republicans nominate a conservative, the party will split, and La Follette will probably be the candidate of a third party. La Follette would concentrate a big section of the labour and farmer vote, thereby detracting from the support of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party.

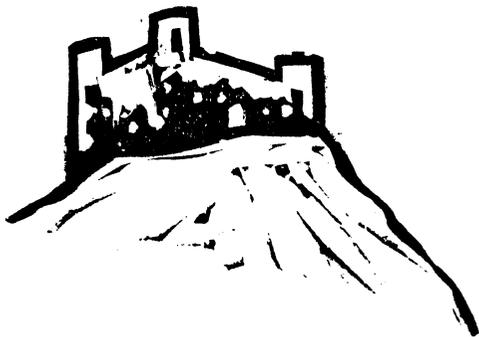
The Socialists have formed a sham party called the American Labour Party as a unit within the Conference, for Progressive Political Action. The split of the few leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party may result in a coalition between these two groups. This would merely create some confusion in the political atmosphere. The Federated Farmer-Labour Party will call another conference in December or January for the purpose of nominating candidates for the elections of 1924. They will invite the conference for Progressive Political

Action and all organised labour to co-operate. It is not improbable that a large number of the bodies affiliated to the conference will answer the call. The trade union leaders will continue to sabotage; the Socialists will refuse to co-operate, fearing the organisational power of the Communists. There will probably be an accretion from the local unions—the rank and file of the organised labour movement.

After the elections of 1924, the growth of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party is assured. The old parties will practice the same deception. Prosperity will be at an end, the capitalist offensive will begin once more and labour and the farmers will be out on the defensive. Their answer will be a counter-offensive under the ægis of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party.

The initial step has been taken. The real political struggle between labour and capital in the United States will now begin.

I. AMTER.



The Meaning of the Events in Bulgaria

The uprising of the Bulgarian workers and peasants last September was crushed. A merciless vengeance followed which has already demanded the lives of thousands of the foremost members of the working class and the peasantry and will demand the lives of thousands more. The meaning of the events of September can be understood only in conjunction with the events of June, 1923.

The state of affairs which prevailed at the time of the White coup d'état of June 9th, 1923, was as follows: The political leadership of the peasantry, grouped around the Stamboliski Government, was just then engaged in a brutal campaign against the working class of the towns headed by the Bulgarian Communist Party. The Executive Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party neither understood the necessity for nor was capable of reforming its ranks so as to act in conjunction with the peasants against the Whites. This was partly owing to the exasperation which had accumulated at the time of Stamboliski's persecution of the Communist Party. Stamboliski himself, and his nearest friends, were blind. When, some days prior to the White uprising, Stamboliski was warned by certain of his most reliable officers that a counter-revolution was in preparation, he replied carelessly and confidently that since he had a majority in Parliament, he had no reason to fear a coup d'état. The peasant masses who had long followed Stamboliski—for he had in the past rendered great services to the peasants—were at the time of the June uprising standing at the cross-roads; they were beginning to lose confidence in the bankrupt party leaders grouped around Stamboliski, but still had not sufficient confidence in the Communist Party, which at that time failed to do what was required in order to win the confidence of the peasants.

The political disintegration of the peasantry, the objective impossibility of their playing an **independent** political role, the political helplessness and demoralisation of the peasant leaders, who believed naively in the unshakableness of "democracy"—these constituted one of the reasons for the success of the White coup d'état of June 9th. The inability of the Communist Party, which had for decades been educated in peaceful propaganda work, to pass over to fighting action, the doctrinaire psychology of the leaders of the Communist Party, who failed at the right moment to understand the necessity for an immediate union with the peasants against the Fascist bourgeoisie of the towns—these constituted the second reason for the success of the White coup d'état led by Tzankov.

The masses were **against** Tzankov; but their disintegration,

their political helplessness, the mistaken tactics of the leaders of the Communist Party, made it possible for a few shock divisions of the Fascist bourgeoisie to seize power.

But only a few months elapsed since June 9th, and a complete change had taken place in the frame of mind of the peasants. The Bulgarian peasantry no longer stands at the cross-roads. It has given its almost undivided sympathy to the Bulgarian Communist Party. The whole of the rural population of Bulgaria, with the exception of the few rich peasants, hates the Tzankov Government (which has taken land from the peasants) with a sincere, unbounded and unshakable hatred. A profound enmity towards the White régime is prevalent throughout the whole of Bulgaria. Every honest peasant, with clenched teeth, awaits the moment when this detested régime can be overthrown. The Bulgarian peasants are assuming a political fixity of purpose, for they have begun to understand that to veer between the bourgeoisie and the peasants, as Stamboliski attempted to do, must lead to inevitable ruin. They have understood that only in alliance with the working class of the towns can they throw off the yoke of the Tzankov régime. Never before, says the Bulgarian Communists, has the Bulgarian Communist Party enjoyed such universal support among the peasants as it does at the present day.

“ We believe in you; we know that you alone are capable of leading us in the struggle,” so say the peasants.

The first reports of the September uprising might have led one to the conclusion that while on June 9th the Bulgarian Communist Party had been too late, in September they were too early. However, it is now clear that it was faced with the dilemma of either perishing without a struggle under the demoniacal persecution of the Tzankov Government, or to run the risk of a serious defeat by not declining the fight when the Fascist Government had made up its mind to annihilate the Communist Party. And as far as one can judge from this distance, it acted correctly. It did not gain a direct victory, it suffered heavy losses, but it did not submit without a struggle. It proved both to the workers and the peasants that it was prepared to lead the revolutionary forces of the country for its emancipation from the power of the bourgeoisie. All the news coming from Bulgaria serves to prove that in spite of the severe defeat, the revolutionary prestige of the Bulgarian Communist Party has been increased immeasurably, especially in the countryside. The September defeat is one of those defeats which bears within itself the certainty of future victory.

The peasants, almost to a man, are prepared to follow the Communist Party. Every peasant clenches his fist at the Tzankov Government. The peasants are blockading the capital, refusing to send foodstuffs there. The peasant youths are burning for a fight.

But they have no weapons. They have to fight almost with naked hands against an enemy who is armed to the teeth. Stamboliski in his simplicity left the peasants without arms, and so, once again, a few shock formations settled the matter. The Russian Wrangelites assumed the task of gendarmerie and spies, and a few White Macedonian divisions played the decisive role.

But a ferment has begun in the ranks of Tzankov's regular army, which consists to a large degree of peasants. And, indeed, it could not be otherwise, for the soldiers are bound by a thousand ties to the villages which cherish an intense and irreconcilable hatred for the Tzankov Government.

By correcting its doctrinaire errors, the Bulgarian Communist Party opened the way to early victory. In a country like Bulgaria no régime can govern against the will of a peasantry which is revolutionary-minded and recognises the necessity for acting with the workers and their Communist Party. A flame of intense party warfare has been started, which will flare up still more violently and will end in the victory of the workers and peasants. The Bulgarian Communist Party gave the correct slogan to the insurrectionaries in the town where the uprising was unsuccessful, when it ordered them to retire to the villages and the hills and there to undertake partisan warfare. The Tzankov Government has not sufficient forces to fill the whole Bulgarian countryside with counter-revolutionary troops. The attempt to occupy the revolutionary Bulgarian villages will more rapidly than anything else drive the peasants to organise themselves into a permanent army on the side of the revolutionary population.

The White Bulgarian Social-Democrats played an unprecedentedly shameful role, which has earned the right of the leaders of the party to a share in the laurels of Noske. Even the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries took up the campaign abroad against the Bulgarian Mensheviks, who had acted as the executioners of the Bulgarian peasants. The yellow Second International is silent as to the villainous part played by its Bulgarian section. The railwaymen and postal and telegraphic servants, who up to the time of the September uprising were still under the influence of the Bulgarian "Socialists," are now beginning to understand the evil role played by the latter hitherto.

The Bulgarian events from June to September, 1923, are full of profound lessons which will be useful in estimating the position of the peasantry not only in Bulgaria but everywhere. **Together with the working class, led by the Communist Party, the peasants are everything. Without the working class, and attempting to occupy an intermediary, "independent" position between the bourgeoisie and the working class, the peasants are nothing.** Every such attempt

ends in the undisguised dictatorship and the naked reaction of the landowners.

Peasants of the world, take to heart the lesson of the events in Bulgaria! The Bulgarian experience deserves the attention of the active sections of the peasantry of every country. On the basis of this experience the Communists must open the eyes of the peasantry, with whom the petty-bourgeois parties are attempting to play a demagogic game.

The Communists must reply to the unscrupulous tampering with the peasantry by class elements which are inimical to it by an intensive propaganda on behalf of the slogan of a Workers' and Peasants' Government, and must make it clear to the active section of the peasantry of the whole world that only in alliance with the working class of the towns will it be able to defend its true interests. This is the meaning of the events of Bulgaria.

The lesson has been purchased at a terrible price. Let the Communist Parties of all countries take it to heart and profit by it.

G. ZINOVIEV.



After the Bulgarian Coup d'Etat

1.—The Attitude of the Communist Party of Bulgaria towards the Coup d'Etat of June 9th.

The Peasant Government seized power in 1919. In this seizure of power it was supported by all the old parties, which were so compromised and so powerless that they themselves could not seize power. The bourgeoisie supported the "left" parties—Peasant League, Radicals, and Social Patriots—in order to keep down the dissatisfaction of the masses after the war, to stifle their struggle, and to restore its own disintegrated class rule. This role of the Peasant League was revealed during the first years of its government. During the great strike of the transport workers (January and February, 1920), the Peasant Government tried with the greatest energy and violence to overpower the transport workers and the Communist Party which supported them. Several thousand strikers were arrested, maltreated, and condemned; the Communist Press was suppressed; the party clubs were closed; several Communist officials and workers were murdered.

This hostile and ruthless policy towards the active workers and the Communist Party was maintained by the Peasant Government to the very end. But the general reactionary policy of the Peasant Government did not prevent the Communist Party, when the interests of the workers and small peasants demanded it, from supporting the Government in its fight against the city bourgeoisie. The Communist Party supported certain laws passed by the Peasant Government, such as the land law, the referendum on the war-guilt of the bourgeois parties, and others. When these were introduced into Parliament, the Communist Party presented alternatives, but as soon as these were rejected, it supported the propositions of the Peasant Government in the hope of improving them later.

During the first half of 1922 the Communist Party worked side by side with the Peasant Government against the efforts of the bourgeois parties to seize power. This was at the time that the bourgeois bloc, with the assistance of the White Guard Wrangel Army in Bulgaria, tried to effect a coup d'état. The Peasant Government, which had itself concluded a treaty to admit Wrangel in Bulgaria, declared itself opposed to them as soon as the bourgeois bloc succeeded in winning them over to its plans, and as soon as France refused the Wrangel troops further financial support. At that time (April, 1922) the Party Council of the Communist Party adopted a resolution which recommended concerted action with the

Peasant League for the overthrow of the bourgeois parties. This concerted action, in case of an overthrow, could even go as far as direct support of the Peasant Government.

Later, in January, 1923, the Council of the Communist Party adopted the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government. But the Peasant League developed more and more into the party of the rural bourgeoisie; it became more ruthless and reactionary in its policy toward the Communist Party; the active masses in city and countryside became more dissatisfied with the Peasant Government; so that finally the Communist Party was forced to adopt new tactics toward the Peasant League in the event of an attack by the bourgeois parties. The Communist Party decided, in case of an overthrow, not to support the Peasant Government, nor to seize power with the Peasant League, but to fight for the seizure of power in conjunction with such of the small and landless peasants of the Peasants' League as would break with the rural bourgeoisie and form a united front with the Communist Party. Following the decisions of the Communist International, the Communist Party adopted the tactic of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, which can and will be achieved not by a coalition of the Communist Party and the Peasant League as would break with the rural bourgeoisie and form the small landless peasant masses who follow the Peasant League.

2.—The Tactic of the United Front and the Workers' and Peasants' Government in Bulgaria.

This tactic was based on the following resolution of the Party Council of January, 1923:—

“ In the application and extension of the tactic of the United Front in the struggles of the working class and the working, small landowning peasant masses, the Communist Party of Bulgaria emphatically demands that as a necessary preliminary condition for the realisation of the united front with other worker and peasant organisations, these organisations break their ties with the city and village bourgeoisie, and undertake a common struggle against it for the defence of the immediate as well as the class interests of the workers and small peasants. The Communist Party adopts the slogan of a Workers' and Peasants' Government promulgated by the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.

“ The Communist Party of Bulgaria explains that the Workers' and Peasants' Government cannot be realised by a coalition of the Communist Party with the Peasant League and the Peasant Government which springs from it.

“ The Peasant League defends the interests and follows the policy of the village bourgeoisie, particularly that bourgeoisie arising from the newly rich middle peasants, which plays the leading role in the Peasant League and which trails after itself the great masses of landless and small peasants by means of demagoguery and

small conciliatory half-way measures, as well as by the power of the Government. The Peasant Government, which has ruled the land for about three years, proved by its acts and by its general policy that it actually defends the interests of the newly rich village bourgeoisie in spite of the demagoguery and the half-way measures by means of which it conciliates the small peasant masses which follow it. It did nothing to check the exploitation to which the workers are subject by the city bourgeoisie; it became a support of monarchism and a blind tool of Entente imperialism; it was untrue to its promises and to its programme, for it increased the burdens of taxation and exploitation and misery not only of the masses of city workers, but of those of the village; it subjected the workers and peasants who are fighting under the banner of the Communist Party to a mad and bloody terror; it did not disarm the bourgeoisie, etc.

“ But while the Communist Party to-day spurns every coalition with the Peasant League and the Peasant Government, and while it continues its independent fight for the uniting of the wide working and small peasant masses under its banner, it calls the working peasants, proletariat, and small landowning peasants who are organised in the village branches of the Peasant League, who follow it, and who constitute its overwhelming majority, to a common struggle in the name of the following demands: (Here follow the slogans for peace, taxes, land, housing, wages, arming of the workers and peasants, etc.).

“ By these demands the Communist Party will unite still greater sections of the working peasants of the Peasant League with the workers and peasants struggling under the Communist banner; it will reveal the antagonisms that exist between the great masses of small peasants in the Peasant League on the one hand, and the village bourgeoisie on the other—a bourgeoisie whose interests and policy are expressed in the Peasant League and the Peasant Government; it will force the working peasant masses of the Peasant League to the left and unite the proletariat of the city and the great working peasant masses in a struggle against the city and village bourgeoisie, in the name of their common, immediate, and political interests.

“ In order to accomplish the above-mentioned demands, the Communist Party is ready to seize power and establish a Workers' and Peasants' Government together with the landless and small peasants, now organised in the Peasant League, as soon as these working peasant masses oppose themselves to the policy of the Peasant Government and break their ties with the village bourgeoisie. The Communist Party will work with all its strength for the acceleration of the coming of this moment.

“ In calling the landless and small peasants of the Peasant League, as well as the entire working peasant masses, to a common

struggle for the realisation of these demands and to establish a Workers' and Peasants' Government for that purpose, the Communist Party openly declares to these workers and peasants, that without a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie, a Workers' and Peasants' Government can neither be gained nor maintained; and that the full realisation of these demands, their maintenance and extension to a universal preservation of the class interests of the workers and peasants, and the final release of labour from the yoke of capital are possible only when the entire power passes into the hands of the Workers' and Peasants' Councils. And to that end the Communist Party will continue with the greatest energy its agitation and its revolutionary struggle for the Soviet power and for the establishment of the Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic."

This resolution expressly states that the Communist Party cannot fight together with the Peasant League as such, that it can form no coalition with it, and that it cannot seize power in coalition with it. The resolution says that the Communist Party will fight in conjunction with the landless and small peasants of the Peasant League who break with the rural bourgeoisie and who oppose the policy of the Peasant Government. This common struggle, this united front with the active peasants of the Peasant League, will be undertaken on behalf of a definite programme and for the seizure of power, and the establishment of a Workers' and Peasants' Government.

This resolution is based on the assumption that the Peasant League is a party in which the interests and the policy of the rural bourgeoisie predominate. After coming into power, the Peasant League underwent an internal change; although formerly and even now the small peasants are in the majority, there was an increase in the number of middle peasants, and especially of the rich peasants, large estate owners, village profiteers, traders and speculators. Under the protection of the Peasant Government, the rural bourgeoisie, which became enriched during the war on account of the high prices of agricultural products, increased its wealth and began to play a more important role in economic and political life. The rural bourgeoisie controlled both the Peasant League and the Peasant Government. The Peasant League and the Peasant Government defend the interests of the rural bourgeoisie and put its policy into practice. The rural bourgeoisie, which dictates the policy of the Peasant League, needs the support of the wide peasant masses in order to rule independently, and to hold power for the purpose of using it exclusively for enriching itself. It was successful in attracting great sections of these masses by skilful demagogy and by half-way "reforms" in favour of the small peasant.

The resolution of the Party Council of January, 1923, on the Workers' and Peasants' Government was laid before the Executive with a special report, and was reprinted with a detailed explanation

in International Press Correspondence No. 57, April 3, 1923. Nothing was said either by the Executive or by the international Communist Press in criticism of the attitude of the Communist Party of Bulgaria toward the Peasant League and the Peasant Government, as stated in this resolution, or of the tactic of the united front and the Workers' and Peasants' Government therein advocated.

Subsequent events showed how correct was the position adopted in the resolution with reference to the Peasant League and the Peasant Government. The Peasant Government continued its brutal reactionary policy towards the active masses in city and countryside, and especially towards the Communist Party. It dissolved a great number of Communist district councils and every day practised new acts of violence and provocation against the Communist Party. This brutal reactionary policy culminated in a bloody terror against the Communist Party during the Parliamentary elections in April, 1923. At this period thousands of supporters of the Communist Party were arrested, hundreds of whom were brutally maltreated and dozens wounded; Communist buildings were demolished; punitive expeditions were sent against communistically inclined villages, etc. During the elections the Peasant Government announced an emergency law against the Communist Party which it was to have passed in the first session of Parliament had it not been overthrown.

Under these conditions a resolution was passed by the Party Council on April 26th, 1923, the essential clauses (3 and 4) of which run as follows:—

3. The Peasant Government, by the rabid terror during the elections, is introducing a still more brutal and reactionary policy against the Communist Party in particular and the active masses of the cities and rural districts in general. It does not disguise the purpose of creating emergency laws against the Communist Party, the first one of which appeared in the shape of the "Regulation against the rural Communes." The ruling peasant group disregards the fact that this law is senseless and unstable from the social standpoint, because its purpose is not to create "village communes," but to threaten and terrorise the small peasants fighting under the banner of the Communist Party, and to rob them of their land and their goods.

The Communist Party declares that this emergency law against the Communists will meet with the determined resistance of the active masses of the city, and that it cannot withstand their pressure.

This act is only the beginning. The Government is preparing other emergency laws. With the help of the bourgeois parties it is applying all the methods of violence of State power, and, with gendarmes and armed bands, is organising its Fascist campaign against the Communist Party and the hundreds of

thousands of workers and small peasants who follow it. In a word, the rural bourgeoisie controlling the Peasant League is introducing a régime of open bourgeois class dictatorship, and the Peasant Government, which justified the events in Tirnovo in September, 1922, by fighting the Fascism of the old bourgeois parties, is itself adopting Fascist methods in its efforts to stifle the revolutionary struggle of the active masses in city and countryside.

The Communist Party calls upon the workers and small peasants of Bulgaria, and all the working population, courageously and determinedly to fight against the aimless, senseless reaction of the rural bourgeois and Peasant Government. It appeals to the landless and small peasants of the Peasant League who are disgusted with the persecutions and violence employed against the Communist Party, and who do not approve of the gendarmes and agents of the Government when they arrest the Communists and attempt to annihilate them; it appeals to the working peasants to sever themselves from the rural bourgeoisie, to abandon the Peasant Government, and to grasp the outstretched hand of the workers and peasants marching under the banner of the Communist Party for a common struggle for the preservation of the interests, rights and freedom of the working peoples.

4. The parties of the National-Liberal and Social-Patriotic blocs suffered a new defeat at the elections. They brought forward no programme, they dealt with no vital questions which concern the masses, and they tried to win over the non-class-conscious workers by economic pressure, bribery, deceit, and promises. After this defeat, which again demonstrates that they cannot rely upon the trust of the people, they will direct all their energies towards the seizure of State power, with the assistance of the illegal Fascist and other organisations. The Communist Party urges the working masses of city and countryside to be watchful and to be ready at the moment in which the old bourgeois parties attempt to seize power and bring civil war upon the country, to pursue the struggle against the city and rural bourgeoisie with greater determination for the seizure of power and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

Thus the party points out that "the Peasant Government, with gendarmes and armed bands, is organising its Fascist campaign against the Communist Party," and that it "is itself adopting Fascist methods." Thus the Party Council calls upon the masses "courageously and determinedly to fight against the aimless, senseless reaction of the rural bourgeoisie and Peasant Government," and again emphasises the necessity for the tactic of the united front with the active peasant masses of the Peasant League, and a Workers' and Peasants' Government.

But Point 4 of the Resolution is of special significance. It sets forth the tactic of the Communist Party as follows:—The Communist Party will fight against the coup d'état, not in order to support the Peasant Government, but to form a united front and a Workers' and Peasants' Government, in common with the working peasant masses struggling against the city and rural bourgeoisie. An armed uprising for the immediate formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, however, is made dependent upon the outbreak of civil war.

This resolution was enclosed in our last report to the meeting of the Enlarged Executive. We have not heard that any objections were made to the position the Communist Party of Bulgaria took in this resolution.

3.—The Events of June 9th and the Tactic of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

The coup d'état of June 9th was prepared by the bourgeois parties. It was accomplished, however, by the Officers' League and the Macedonian Nationalists (Autonomists). The coup d'état of June 9th complied with all the rules of military overthrows. This must be borne in mind in order to understand the import of the events of June 9th and the days following.

The Officers' League had behind it in the coup d'état the great majority of the reserve officers, as well as practically all the officers on active service for the Peasant Government. The Peasant Government had been unable to form its own officer cadres. It used the officers of the old regime, and it was these who betrayed it. Neither did the Peasant Government have soldiers devoted to its cause. Thus the entire army of the Peasant Government—standing army and gendarmes—went over to the insurrectionaries. Even the police offered no resistance; with few exceptions they yielded to the attacking party, and, wherever they appeared to be unreliable, they were immediately dissolved. By this means the coup d'état quickly succeeded, and within a few hours, in all cities, power lay in the hands of the new Government. The civil authorities and the bureaucracy likewise offered no resistance and went over entirely to the side of the new Government. In a word, the Peasant Government was unable to organise any resistance against its overthrow.

But could not the Peasant Government organise resistance out of the peasant masses? This question will be answered in detail in the second part of our report. Here we shall merely touch on this question. The wide peasant masses did not rise to the defence of the Peasant Government. Throughout the 89 rural districts of our country there were formed from 12 to 15 sections of the "Defence Corps" of the Peasant League, consisting mostly of followers of the Peasant League who were dependent on it because of their jobs or other advantages, and which composed small groups of several dozen armed peasants. Only in three districts (Schumen,

Pleven, and, to a less extent, Pazardschik) did the number of armed peasants exceed several hundred; in the first two districts these joined themselves to greater bodies, which numbered several thousand peasants. In these two or three districts the leaders of the Peasant League succeeded in conscripting peasant masses because the Government organs (district Prefectures, etc.) were able to institute a regular mobilisation of the people. In the Schumen district not only were the followers of the Peasant League forcibly mobilised, but followers of the bloc and of the Communists as well.

With the exception of these three districts, the armed collisions between the uprising "Defence Corps" and the troops of the new Government were brief and unimportant. The latter were provided with adequate arms, artillery and machine guns; and this fact quickly decided the issue in favour of the new Government everywhere.

The Peasant Government had stubbornly refused to arm the peasants and workers. It did not even sufficiently trust its own followers and neglected to arm even its own "Defence Corps." It stored weapons at certain places and put them at the disposal of the military commanders, who, as members of the Officers' League, saw to it that just before the coup d'état the weapons were put out of action by removing the locks from the guns and cannon, by hiding the entire supply of weapons in several districts, or by handing them over directly to the new Government. That is why the great majority of peasants who arose on June 9th were unarmed.

The wide working masses of the villages, and especially of the towns, greeted the downfall of the Peasant Government with indifference, and even with a certain amount of relief. We emphasise this fact, which is fully explained by the antagonistic spirit on the part of the masses to the Peasant Government, inspired by the policy and actions of the latter. The working masses in the city and countryside regarded the new Government also with suspicion and enmity. The overthrow of the rural bourgeoisie by the armed action of the city bourgeoisie provoked no mass movement, revolutionary or otherwise.

When the Central Committee of the Party issued the manifesto of June 9th it did not yet have any information concerning the turn of events in the country. But simultaneously with the manifesto it sent a decree through its channels of communication to the whole party, which ran as follows:—

"This evening the Government was overthrown by a military coup d'état. Our party must support neither the old nor the new Government. Our party must not become involved in the military activities and armed conflicts between the city and rural bourgeoisie. If the movement forces the masses into the conflict, and develops into civil war, our party

must determine its stand according to existing conditions. To-day the party has issued a manifesto; take the necessary steps for its widespread distribution. The party takes an independent stand, issues its slogans primarily in favour of a Workers' and Peasants' Government, and is preparing itself for coming events. Maintain connections with the masses and establish intercourse between the organisations in the districts and the centre."

The stand the Central Committee took on June 9th, expressed by its manifesto of the same date, was determined by the incontestable fact that the policy and actions of the Peasant Government antagonised the wide working masses of town and countryside, and therefore its overthrow failed to arouse any indignation or revolutionary sentiment among the masses. In such circumstances, created by the whole policy of the Peasant Government, could the Central Committee issue the call for the armed participation of the party and the working masses for armed resistance against the coup d'état, and should it not have done so from the very first moment?

The Central Committee, at the enlarged session held on the morning of June 9th, unanimously answered this question in the negative, because it believed that the Communist Party would be alone in this armed struggle, and that even those sections of the masses of the city and countryside who were carried along in the first moments of the struggle would not endure to the very end. The wide working masses could not bring themselves to an armed struggle for the restitution of power to the Peasant Government which had betrayed them for fully three years, which had plundered and oppressed them, which gave them nothing, and from which they could expect nothing.

Could not and should not the Central Committee, after having adopted in its manifesto of June 9th the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and after having appealed to the masses to unite and prepare for battle, have issued the call for armed uprising and for the seizure of power by the workers and peasants on the very first day? This question also the Central Committee answered in the negative. The call could have been issued only after some time, depending on the trend of events, and specially on the revolutionary spirit and action displayed by the masses. While issuing the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and in calling the masses to fight for its realisation against the city and rural bourgeoisie, the Central Committee, at the same time, said to the party and the masses who followed it: Prepare for a new watchword. The watchword for an armed uprising can be issued only at some future time, when we find ourselves actually confronted by civil war between the working masses in city and countryside against the bourgeoisie for the

seizure of power. But the events of June 9th did not lead to civil war.

The slogan for a Workers' and Peasants' Government had been announced only about three months before. The masses had not yet fully assimilated it. Moreover, the conditions were not favourable for organising the establishment of the Workers' and Peasants' Government. There was no organisation with which the Communist Party could come to an agreement for joint action and a joint struggle for the Workers' and Peasants' Government. In the Peasant League there existed merely a dissatisfaction on the part of the small and landless peasants with the policy of the Peasant Government. There was no organised Left in the Government which had its own representatives and its own views. On the other hand, the Party Council did not decide until April to undertake propaganda for the formation of joint committees of the working peasants of the countryside and to proceed to form workers' commissions in the workshops and factories (the beginnings of Committees of Poor Peasants and Factory Councils). Under these conditions, the agitational and organisation work for the formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Government having hardly begun, the Central Committee was of the opinion that the slogan for an armed uprising for establishing the Workers' and Peasants' Government would not attract the wide masses, that the party would remain isolated if it adopted such a course, and that it would be doomed to failure.

The development of events did not assist any greater movement for the defence of the Peasant Government; on the contrary, it quickly subsided and dwindled away. By June 10th it was known that all the towns, with the exception of Pleven and Schumen, had fallen without resistance into the hands of the new Government. On June 10th practically all the armed hand-to-hand conflicts were ended. In Pleven and Schumen fighting ended on June 11th. On June 12th isolated groups were still fighting in a few places. The development of events gave the Central Committee no pretext for issuing a new slogan—the slogan for armed action. The complete secession of the army and gendarmes to the new Government; the swift success of the coup d'état in the towns, particularly in the larger cities (Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Russe); the insignificant number of armed peasant groups which the Peasant Government had been able to draft from among its followers; the ease and rapidity with which these peasant groups were dispersed—all this made it evident that we were not confronted with civil war. The two or three exceptions to be noted, which can be traced to special circumstances (and which we consider in greater detail in the second part of this report), do not and could not possibly affect the general situation.

In this situation the Central Committee deemed it necessary

to preserve uniformity of action in the party. If it had allowed each party organisation the freedom and initiative to proceed according to its own point of view, and according to local conditions, the result would have been a division and disorganisation of party action. Any armed interference, or any appeal for an armed uprising, would have to be general throughout the country for the whole party. It would have to be directed in a uniform and centralised way toward a common aim. If the Central Council has made any mistakes it is the stand it adopted on June 9th which is to blame. But once this stand was adopted the party had to abide by it until the Central Committee adopted another stand, and issued another slogan. But the Central Committee is of the opinion that the stand it adopted was the only correct and the only possible one under the circumstances in which the events of June 9th developed, and that the subsequent trend of events demanded no change in the stand first adopted.

4.—The Political Situation and the Tasks of the Communist Party after June 9th.

The position of the new Government is not secure. The antagonisms and rivalries between the various bourgeois parties in possession of power grow daily greater. A struggle is going on between the Officers' League, which wants to play an independent political role in the form of a Government "above all parties," and the bourgeois parties themselves. In order to put an end to this struggle, the bourgeois parties, without much prospect of success, have started negotiations for a complete union and amalgamation. The struggle between the bloc and the National-Liberals has come to a stage where a split in the Cabinet seems imminent. The Social-Patriots, who foresee their expulsion from the Cabinet, are talking of the formation of a "Left Bloc" (Social-Patriots, Radicals, and the Turlakoff followers in the Peasant League), but conditions do not seem favourable. Antagonisms also exist between the Government and the Macedonian Nationalists.

These antagonisms, rivalries, and conflicts are the sources of the Government's weakness. Its weaknesses will increase day by day because of its unpreparedness and inability to cope with a single one of the great questions of the day (increase in the cost of living, wages of workers and State employees, housing, taxes, reparations, land for the small and landless peasants, etc.). And finally, the Government leans for support on the same army and gendarmerie on which the Peasant Government formerly depended—a very insecure support, for the soldiers who effected the coup d'état on June 9th now realise that they have been deceived. The only secure support of the new Government is its "volunteer troops," that is, the Fascist organisations, consisting mainly of reserve officers. But with the exception of Sofia and two or three other large cities, these organisations are not numerous, and constitute no great force. The

Peace Treaty limits the armed strength of Bulgaria (army, gendarmerie, police, and border patrol) to 30,000 men. The actual armed strength is less, because neither the old nor the new Government could find sufficient volunteers or pay their wages (the army is recruited voluntarily).

The present bourgeois Coalition Government gives greater rein to the Fascist organisations, although these organisations existed and fought the Communist Parties under the regime of the Peasant Government which supported them. It is sufficient to mention how the Navodny Dom (People's House) in Sofia was reduced to ashes in May, 1921, by a Fascist band, organised by the Peasant Government itself, and actively supported by its military men. Dozens of instances could be cited of attacks, pogroms and murders directed against the Communist Party. The bourgeois Coalition Government is preparing to attack the Communist Party. But it cannot make up its mind, because it does not feel strong enough and because it realises that an attack would provoke a great movement among the working and peasant masses.

The Communist Party counted several sacrifices in the events of June 9th. Comrade Zwickoff and Comrade Zuzomanoff were murdered by the Fascists in Gorna-Orechovitz; Comrade Trifon Sarailieff and other comrades were murdered during a conflict with White troops in Kilifarevo. The greatest sacrifices the Communist Party suffered were in Pleven, where Comrade Assan Halatscheff was murdered. Dozens of other comrades were brutally maltreated, and hundreds are still in prison charged with inciting rebellion. There are dozens of imprisoned comrades in Tirnovo, Gabrovo, and Plovdiv. Great as these sacrifices are, the spirit of the party has not wavered, and its stand has not weakened. With the exception of a few cities (Pleven, Gabrovo, Tirnovo, and others), where the Fascist reaction dealt our local organisations heavy blows (demolishing the party branch headquarters, and arresting the party members en masse), the party has retained its strength undiminished. Moreover—and this is the main thing—the confidence of the working masses of the cities, and especially of the countryside, in the Communist Party has increased. This can be explained by the profound disillusionment of the working peasant followers of the Peasant League, and by the regime of military dictatorship and the policy of Fascist provocations of the new Government which have again appeared on the surface. The Government cannot and will not satisfy the needs of the masses, but, on the contrary, increases their misery.

The influence of the Communist Party is increasing especially rapidly in the rural districts. The complete bankruptcy of the policy of the Peasant Government—its ignominious collapse, the fact that its regime, which was to have embodied "democracy" and "the will of the people"—transformed itself into a class-dicta-

torship, and a Fascist reaction of the rural bourgeoisie, leaning for support on the bayonets of the army, and therefore easily overthrown as soon as the army betrayed it—all this proved how incapable the Peasant League was of satisfying the needs of the peasant masses, and of creating a strong power capable of warding off the blows of the reactionary bourgeois parties. The events of June 9th again demonstrated that the petty-bourgeoisie in general, and the rural bourgeoisie in particular, is incapable, independently, of establishing a "democratic" regime, of protecting the interests and freedom of the proletariat and the small peasant masses of the town and countryside, or of opposing the growth of the bourgeois reaction. The events of June 9th demonstrated that the Peasant League is incapable of creating a revolutionary movement among the peasants, or of organising and guiding it.

The complete collapse of the Peasant League destroyed one more illusion, the last illusion of the peasant masses, and cleared the way for a swifter increase of strength of the Communist Party in the rural districts. According to information given by comrades in several villages, many former supporters of the Peasant League have joined our village groups since June 9th, and the confidence shown in our party, and its influence over the peasant masses, is steadily increasing.

The most important political tasks of the Communist Party at the present moment, which were discussed at the meeting of the Party Council in Sofia, July 1st—6th, are: (1) To attract to and incorporate into the Communist Party wherever possible the large sections of the betrayed and disillusioned small and landless peasants who have torn themselves away from the Peasant League. (2) To force to the Left the peasant masses remaining in the Peasant League, and to strive for a united front not only with a section of these masses, but with the Peasant League itself, for the purpose of realising the demands set forth by the Communist Party for the seizure of power and for the establishment of the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

The Peasant League cannot be the same party it was before June 9th. The great majority of the old rural bourgeoisie, who had left the old bourgeois parties for the Peasant League in order to share the advantage of government, are now returning to their old place. Most of the new-rich middle peasants, village traders, and speculators will place themselves under the protection of the new Government in order to continue their plundering, speculation, and profiteering. Certain of the leaders of the Peasant League will follow them. The Peasant League, finding itself an opposition party, will be able to hold its influence over the peasant masses only by developing in the direction of a Radical, petty-bourgeois Peasant Party. The Communist Party, by its propaganda and struggle for the united front, and for the Workers' and Peasants'

Government, will impel the Peasant League in this direction, and the determining conditions for the seizure of power by the working masses will undoubtedly pass into the control of the revolutionary, Communist proletariat.

The future of the Communist Party and of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants of Bulgaria depends upon the successful accomplishment of this task. The Communist Party will be able to ward off the attacks of bourgeois reaction only if it unites the strength of the working masses of the city with that of the countryside.

The overthrow of June 9th did not end the great crisis which has been shaking our land to its foundations ever since the two catastrophic wars of 1912 and 1918. On the contrary, the coup d'état of June 9th has intensified the crisis. The bourgeois parties, which stand behind the present régime of military dictatorship and Fascist reaction, find no support in either the masses of the cities or of the countryside. They are attempting to rally their strength, to organise themselves, but they cannot overcome their clique interests, antagonisms, and rivalries. Even if they were able to unite among themselves they would still not be in a position to create a strong power and hold it. The old bourgeois parties will stand powerless and alone against the antagonistic masses in the cities which surround it, and will be incapable of winning the peasant masses which the struggle of the Communist Party for the united front and the Workers' and Peasants' Government has united. It is incapable of mobilising any large forces for its Fascist reaction.

The situation in Bulgaria differs from that of Italy, where the working masses, the numerous oppressed petty-bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, and the numerous unemployed masses who were betrayed and disillusioned by the Socialist Party, form a favourable soil for the development of Fascism and Fascist organisations. In Bulgaria the authority and influence of the Communist Party among the working masses is much greater and has increased since June 9th. The bourgeoisie will not be able to attract many elements from the petty-bourgeoisie and intelligentsia into the Fascist movement. This is proved by the experience of the last two years, during which period the bourgeoisie tried continually to form Fascist organisations. The attempts began with the first surprise attack on the Peoples' House in Sofia, which was successful. All its other attempts proved failures. The only supports of the bourgeois Fascist experiments are their sports clubs and reserve officers organisations. But even among these the Communist Party caused a certain amount of disruption, which will increase in proportion to the brutality and openness with which the bourgeoisie uses these organisations for its Fascist purposes.

We mention this, not in order to minimise the danger of Fascism,

but to draw attention to the fact that the Communist Party, supported by the wide working masses of the city and countryside, will be able to ward off the blows of Fascist reaction.

The Communist Party conducted a campaign against the Fascist reaction also under the régime of the Peasant Government; since June 9th this campaign has been intensified. Its aim is to unite the working masses in city and countryside, the seizure of power, and the establishment of a Workers' and Peasants' Government.

The session of the Party Council which took place in Sofia July 1st—6th, indicated clearly what the tasks of the Communist Party are. The resolution of the party on "the situation after June 9th, and the tasks of the Communist Party," we append as an inseparable part of this report. We shall here mention only the most important points:—

1. . . . "The great and ever-intensifying political crisis created by the coup d'état of June 9th can be overcome only by the establishment of a new workers' and peasants' power, a Workers' and Peasants' Government.

4. . . . "The Party Council declares that the first mission of the Communist Party, of the workers and peasants struggling under its banner, and of all working people, is to wage a determined, self-sacrificing and courageous struggle against the efforts of the ruling bourgeois reaction to outlaw the Communist Party, to organise attacks, pogroms and murders against the party and its organisations and fighters, and to instigate terror and murder against the workers and peasants, in order to stifle in blood the struggle of the working peoples for bread, freedom, and better conditions of life.

5. "In addition, the Party Council declares that the Communist Party will continue the struggle with greater persistence on behalf of the slogans which it adopted immediately after June 9th, and the realisation of which will improve the conditions of the wide working masses. The Communist Party will unite the workers, small peasants and citizens, and lead them in the struggle against the bourgeois parties and their present Coalition Government on behalf of these slogans, viz.: decrease in the cost of living, increase in wages, decrease in working hours, and safeguarding of the rights, freedom and peace of the Bulgarian people, etc."

The relation of the Communist Party to the Peasant Party after June 9th, and the tactics of the Communist Party for the united front and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government are given in the following clause of the same resolution:—

6. "The bankruptcy of the policy of the Peasant Government was completed by its fall, caused by a military coup d'état; by the complete passing over of the army and gendarmes to the new Government; and by the absence of a general deter-

mined defence against the overthrow on the part of the working peasants, led by the Peasant League. Its policy demonstrated the inability of the Peasant League to organise the small peasant masses for a struggle against the bourgeoisie, to serve the interests of these masses, and to create a régime of "democracy," and one "expressing the will of the people." The wide masses of city and countryside did not rise to defend the Peasant Government, because this Government had ignored its promises, had increased the exploitation of the masses, had become the agent of the interests of the rural bourgeoisie, and had antagonised these masses by its senseless reactionary policy.

"The Communist Party undertakes to penetrate into the masses of working peasants which have been betrayed and disillusioned by the Peasant Government, and to use its influence among these masses, which has greatly increased since June 9th, to bring them into its ranks and to organise them.

"The Communist Party, which previously to June 9th had called upon the landless and small peasants of the Peasant League to break with the rural bourgeoisie, and to unite their efforts with those of the workers and peasants marching under the banner of the Communist Party for a joint struggle and for the united front on behalf of its slogans and for establishing a new workers' and peasants' power—the Workers' and Peasants' Government—will, now that the working peasants who have been betrayed and disillusioned by the Peasant Government are beginning to realise what are the results of their alliance with the village bourgeoisie, summon up new energy in the struggle to realise this aim.

"What will become of the Peasant League since the complete bankruptcy on June 9th of the policy of its leaders, the policy of the rural bourgeoisie? The village mayors, the large estate owners, and the rich peasants who, in order to use power, left the bourgeois parties for the Peasant League, are returning to their old haunts. The majority of the new-rich middle peasants of the Peasant League will seek the protection of the new power in order to continue their profiteering, speculation and plundering. The rural bourgeoisie of the Peasant League, as well as the minority of its leaders, whose interests, policies, and actions were closely connected with those of the rural bourgeoisie, will slink away. The opposition, the Peasant League, will either change into a petty-bourgeoisie Radical Peasant Party, leading the struggle for the preservation of the small and landless masses, or disintegrate, and the masses following it who do not enter the ranks of the Communist Party will become the victims of the bourgeois parties. A third possibility is that the Peasant League will continue to be a party of the rural bourgeoisie, in which case its role as opposition to

the bourgeois coteries will decrease in importance, and it will be deserted by the peasant masses.

“ In assuming the task of attracting to its banner the peasants who are separating from the Peasant League, the Communist Party, by its propaganda and its struggle for the united front and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, will, at the same time, force the Peasant League to the Left in the struggle against the city and rural bourgeoisie on behalf of its slogans and for the seizure of power. Under the influence of this propaganda and this struggle of the Communist Party, and under the pressure of the working masses within the Peasant League itself, the remaining leaders will find themselves forced either to change their previous policy, in which case the Communist Party will be ready to fight jointly with it, or the leaders of the Peasant League will continue to be loyal tools of the rural bourgeoisie, in which case a united front of the Communist Party will be formed with the Peasant League against, and without, these leaders.

“ The hopes of the peasant masses in the Peasant Government, which they regarded as their own Government, are shattered. This is the fault of the traitorous leaders of the Peasant League who preferred to go with the rural bourgeoisie against the working people of the city and rural districts, instead of leading a struggle of the working peasants and the workers and small owners in the cities against the bourgeoisie. In revealing and explaining the bitter experience of the peasant masses, the Communist Party will continue its propaganda with greater energy, and its attempts to unite the working masses of city and countryside, for the formation of the united front, and for a joint struggle against the ruling bourgeois coalition, against the ruling régime of reaction and the dictation of the capitalist classes, and for the new workers' and peasants' power—the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

5.—The Complaints against the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

The Executive Committee of the Comintern criticises the tactics of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria with reference to the events of June 9th. The Executive bases its criticism on the following points:—

(a) The Peasant League is a party which is followed by hundreds of thousands of small peasants. The Communist Party should have opposed the overthrow in conjunction with the Peasant League, and even with the Peasant Government (with Stamboliski), by calling upon the masses of city and countryside for this purpose, and by leading them in an armed uprising.

(b) There exist several differences between the city and rural bourgeoisie and their respective policies. The Communist

Party of Bulgaria does not recognise any differences between these bourgeoisies and their parties; it regards all bourgeois parties as equally reactionary masses. Thus the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria recommended the policy of non-interference in the struggle between the city and rural bourgeoisies.

(c) The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, on June 9th, did not issue the slogan for the fight against the coup d'état and against the Fascist Government; it adopted a position of "passivity" and of "neutrality"; it made use of the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government only as a "sop to the conscience," while in reality it proved itself absolutely impotent, and condemned the whole party to inaction.

(d) The tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria toward the struggles between the bourgeois parties are comparable to the sectarian tactics of the Guesdists; but the inability to go beyond mere propaganda action recalls the weakness of the old social democratic parties. Thanks to these and other mistakes, the Communist Party of Bulgaria, on June 9th, suffered a "severe defeat," and was condemned to a "political capitulation."

We shall now proceed to pick each one of these points to pieces.

(a) It is true that the Peasant League is followed by hundreds of small peasants, but it is not only the social make-up of a party that determines its class character and its policy. A great many bourgeois parties, such as the Centrist Party in Germany before the war, the Christian Socialists in Austria, the Republican Party in France, etc., also lead great masses of workers and small owners of city and countryside. But this does not prevent these parties from being bourgeois parties, from performing the work of the bourgeoisie, and from following its policies.

During the three years of its Government the Peasant League underwent development and change. In spite of the fact that even to-day the small peasants are in the majority in the Peasant League, the number of large estate owners speculators has increased in the latter; and at the same time a new class of new-rich middle peasants, new large estate owners, rural traders and speculators—a new rich rural bourgeoisie—developed under the protection of the Peasant Government, which plays the leading role in the Peasant League. Once in possession of power, the Peasant League threw aside its Radical programme and put itself at the service of the rapidly enriched middle peasants and of the large estate owners. We have proved this frequently by citing many facts. The whole policy of the Peasant Government proves that it was a Government of the rural bourgeoisie—its taxation policy, its land

policy, its policy with reference to obligatory labour, trusts and syndicates, State credit, trade, and speculation, etc. In its rapacious and ruthless plundering of the peasant masses, the new-rich rural bourgeoisie are second to none, not even the city bourgeoisie. On the contrary, by greedily piling up within four years riches which the city bourgeoisie needed forty to accumulate, the rural bourgeoisie proved itself to be more ruthless.

It is superfluous to repeat here what the attitude of the Peasant Government was towards the working class. It systematically supported the city bourgeoisie in its attempts to increase the exploitation of the workers, to annul their conquests in industry, and to abolish the eight-hour day; it increased indirect taxes; it subjected the proletariat to a régime of increasing reaction and of terrorism. Towards all working peoples the Peasant Government pursued a policy of provocation, reaction and terror. It did not stand alone in this policy; it was supported by the city bourgeoisie. More than that, from the exchange of Notes between the new Government and the Entente Government, it has been ascertained that the Stamboliski Government had expressly pledged itself to remove the "Communist danger," that is, to annihilate the Communist Party of Bulgaria. And it was prepared to attempt such a course, as we have already demonstrated by facts in another part of this report.

Therefore a hard and stubborn battle was fought between the Peasant Government and the working masses of city and countryside, led by the Communist Party. Thanks to the Peasant League and its leaders, and not to the Communist Party, the formation of a united front between the Peasant League and the Communist Party was impossible. This is the fundamental fact which determined the tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria in favour of the united front and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and which was set forth in the resolution of January, 1923, of the Party Council. This fact also determined the tactics of the Communist Party toward a coup d'état by the bourgeoisie, as is set forth in the resolution of April, 1923, of the Party Council.

The Communist Party decided, in case of a coup d'état by the bourgeoisie, not to support the Peasant Government, but to lead the workers and small peasants in a struggle against the city and rural bourgeoisie to establish a Workers' and Peasants' Government. This political class-struggle could culminate in an armed uprising only if the struggle between the city and rural bourgeoisie provoked civil war in the country.

In the present historical epoch in general, and in our situation in particular, the city and rural bourgeoisie can provoke

civil war only if they are able to draw the proletariat and the small peasant masses into the armed struggle; but this is impossible at present in view of the sharp class antagonisms between the city bourgeoisie and the proletariat, as well as between the rural bourgeoisie and the working peasant masses. At present the proletariat and the working peasant masses have no interest in fighting either on the side of the city bourgeoisie or on that of the rural bourgeoisie. What did the Peasant Government offer to the peasant masses, and what could it have offered? Did it decrease the taxes? did it give land to the masses? did it diminish the exploitation of the masses by the usurers and speculators—did it limit militarism, the police, or the bureaucracy? or did it abolish the monarchy? In a word, what necessities of life did or could the Peasant Government assure the masses so that the latter would be prepared to make sacrifices for it and struggle with it to the end? The struggle between the city and rural bourgeoisie cannot sufficiently touch the interests and life of the working masses of city and countryside, to inspire them to sacrifice themselves in its cause. Therefore the coup d'état of June 9th, which was simply a military overthrow, a pronunciamiento which involved only the city and rural bourgeoisie, did not stir the masses of the people and did not fling them into a civil war.

The Peasant Government was not overthrown by a mass movement. Neither did the downfall of this Government, which was hated by the working masses of city and countryside, arouse any revolutionary movement among the masses.

This is the situation we must bear in mind in deciding the question whether the Communist Party of Bulgaria should on June 9th have issued the slogan for an armed uprising. Under these conditions the Central Committee was of the opinion that in an armed uprising the Communist Party would have been isolated, because the masses it could draw into the struggle would not follow it to the end, i.e., to the establishment and maintenance of a Workers' and Peasants' Government. Even the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government was too new—it was not issued to the masses until the April elections—to arouse a revolutionary uprising among the masses, and other conditions did not arouse them either.

It is incorrect to compare the Stamboliski Government with the Kerensky Government. The differences between them are great. We will enumerate only the following: The Kerensky Government emerged from a revolution, and it defended the achievements of the revolution against Kornilov; while the workers rose against Kornilov, the Kerensky Government defended the Workers' and Peasants' Soviets in which it participated, and the peasants, even in conjunction with the kulaks, fought against the large estate owners; in Petrograd the masses

rose spontaneously against Kornilov, who personified the old Czarist régime which had been overthrown by the revolution.

Not one of these conditions existed under the Stamboliski Government at the time of its overthrow. If it is required of the Bulgarian workers and peasants "to fight even with Stamboliski," the fact is overlooked that Stamboliski did not seize power by a revolution; that he supported the monarchy; that he represented the interests of the rural bourgeoisie; that for three years he had pursued a policy of plunder, of rabid persecution, and of Fascist reaction against the whole working people; that the masses beheld in him an enemy and were not willing to rise in his defence.

(b) The Communist Party of Bulgaria never placed the Peasant League on the same footing with the old bourgeois parties. The differences between them are explained in the daily propaganda and struggle that the Communist Party of Bulgaria pursued; they have been exhaustively exploited. The differences are also expressed in all reports that the Central Committee has laid before the Executive. Just because the Communist Party of Bulgaria had noted these differences, and taken them into account, was it able to set the Peasant League against the bourgeois parties in so many instances. In order fully to explain the reactionary policy of the Stamboliski Government, and why it aroused the profound detestation of the working masses of city and countryside, we must mention the following facts:—The Stamboliski Government had passed a series of reactionary laws that were directed expressly against the Communist Party and the working classes. Some of them were as follows: the law against the freedom of the Press; the law against strikes; the law against Young Communist literature; the law against robbery, according to which the Communist agitators can be charged with robbery and massacred (the Stamboliski Government used this law as a pretext to disarm Communist workers and peasants, and the new Fascist Government is following suit); the law of procedure in the criminal courts (shortened procedure in political cases), etc. We must mention, further, that the Stamboliski Government several times dissolved the whole of the Communist city councils (Varna, Russe, Pleven, Lom, Sliven, Burgas, etc.—25 in all), as well as 47 Communist rural district councils, which it replaced by administrative commissions made up of members of the bourgeois parties and of the Peasant League. In the city and rural districts in general the Peasant Government formed coalitions with the bourgeois bloc against the Communist Party. In Parliament, in its Press, etc., the bourgeois bloc supported not only the financial policy of the Peasant Government, by which the taxes were slipped on the shoulders of the workers (the Government increased the indirect taxes

from 150 million in 1919 to 250 million in 1922), but its whole reactionary policy against the working class, and especially the above-mentioned special laws against the Communist Party. Hence, the Peasant Government was supported by the bourgeois parties in its struggle against the Communist Party, and actually found itself in coalition with them against the Communist Party. Finally, we must add that the Communist Party paid the sacrifice of thirty murdered comrades in its struggle against the bloody reactionary policy of the Stamboliski Government. Moreover, it must be mentioned that the Stamboliski Government furnished arms to the armies of Deniken and Wrangel. The Communist Party published this fact in its Press on the strength of documents in its possession. The Stamboliski Government did not oppose the Wrangel generals until the latter had come to an understanding with the bloc.

We have already referred to such cases as the struggle against the White Army of Wrangel, the referendum on the war guilt of the bourgeois parties, the new land law, etc. Finally, the tactic of the Communist Party of Bulgaria for the united front and the Workers' and Peasants' Government takes the differences between the Peasant League and the bourgeois parties into account, because, outside the Communist Party large masses of small peasants exist only in the Peasant League. The Communist Party of Bulgaria has never held the unfounded and entirely un-Marxian opinion that all bourgeois parties are "a united reactionary mass."

It was not upon such a conception that the Communist Party of Bulgaria acted on June 9th. Differences between the Peasant League and the bourgeois parties undoubtedly exist. But the question must be considered whether these differences are sufficient to warrant the Communist Party going so far as to join with the Peasant League and the Peasant Government in an armed uprising for the maintenance of Stamboliski's power, or for the Workers' and Peasant's Government. That is the question!

In the spring of 1922, when Wrangel's army, composed of twenty thousand White Guards, was harboured in Bulgaria as a foreign army, and jointed with the bourgeois parties in a conspiracy for the coup d'état; when a deep feeling of resentment generally existed against the Wrangelites, and a wide movement was started against them among the people; when even the Peasant Government led a campaign against Wrangel—at that time armed action and common action against the coup d'état was possible even with the Peasant Government. A year later this was no longer possible, for the Peasant Government had done everything in its power to antagonise the wide masses of the people, and there no longer existed that deep resentment and widespread restlessness among the masses

of the people against a foreign army of occupation, which was the case in the spring of 1922. During the second half of 1922, and at the beginning of 1923, the Peasant Government had already passed most of its reactionary laws against the working masses and the Communist Party (we shall mention these laws later); it undertook a campaign to disarm the people (the Communist workers and peasants); it dissolved practically all the Communist district councils of the cities and rural districts, and, during the district elections, and especially during the elections for Parliament in April, 1923, it arrested thousands of Communists and Communist sympathisers in the cities and rural districts, maltreated them, and organised military punitive expeditions against them.

The situation in April, 1923, has changed, and that is why the instructions of the Party Council, meeting in April, 1923, were also changed. In April, 1922, the tactics of the Communist Party in case of a coup d'état were to fight stubbornly, even to the extent of joining in armed action with the Peasant Government. In April, 1923, the tactics of the Communist Party in the event of a coup d'état had also been previously determined, namely, to fight, not with the Peasant League and the Peasant Government, but with the working peasant masses in the Peasant League; to fight, not in defence of the Peasant Government, but to establish a Workers' and Peasants' Government against the city and rural bourgeoisie. This fight could develop into an armed uprising only if the struggles between the city and rural bourgeoisie provoked a civil war in the country.

The difference between the attitude of the Communist Party of Bulgaria toward the Peasant League in 1922, and that in 1923, and the change in tactics decided upon by the Communist Party of Bulgaria in the event of a coup d'état, were determined by the differences in the situations. The Communist Party can be criticised for forming an incorrect estimate of the conditions in 1922 and in 1923, and can be blamed for pursuing incorrect tactics, but it cannot be accused of seeing no differences between the Peasant League and the bourgeois parties; nor can the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria be blamed for being too "cautious" in the determination of its attitude towards the coup d'état of June 9th.

On June 9th the Communist Party engaged in **armed conflict** neither on the side of the city nor the rural bourgeoisie. It issued the slogan for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and called upon the masses to fight for it. This meant that the masses should take advantage of the struggle between the city and rural bourgeoisie, without taking sides with either, to fight independently to establish a new power, the Workers' and Peasants' Government. If this can be called "stereotyped,"

then the struggle of the Communist Party is also "stereotyped" in all cases where the Communist Party seizes the opportunity afforded by a struggle between the bourgeois classes and parties, in order to participate in the struggle not to help one or the other, but to fight independently towards its own goal.

(c) Closely connected with the above-mentioned criticism is the one that the Communist Party of Bulgaria, in its tactics on June 9th, had condemned itself to "absolute passivity" and "neutrality." The criticism implies that since the party failed to participate with arms, and had failed to call upon the masses for an armed uprising, it proved impotent and neutral toward the developing events.

It is true that the Communist Party of Bulgaria, on June 9th, had not participated with arms, and that it had not called upon the masses for armed action. But does this really mean that it had been "passive" and "neutral"? The facts of the case prove the contrary. On June 9th the Communist Party of Bulgaria issued the slogan for the Workers' and Peasants' Government and called upon the masses to struggle for its realisation; in all its manifestos and in the Party organ, "Rabotnitscheski Vestnik" ("Rabotnitscheski Vestnik" is at the disposal of the Executive, and during the days of the coup, and since, to this very day, it stands in contradiction to the contention that the Communist Party remained inactive), it had issued its slogans calling upon the masses to fight; it had ordered the party organisations to prepare to follow a new slogan for the armed participation of the party and the masses as soon as the development of events, and particularly the revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm of the masses, made it possible to issue such a slogan.

We are also asked why the Communist Party of Bulgaria had not called for a political general strike, and especially a strike in conjunction with the transport workers. A political general strike is a strike of the town proletariat. In order to make such a strike possible and successful, the working masses of the towns must be prepared for it, and a definite circumstance must have existed to move them and force them into a fight. Was the overthrow of the Peasant Government such a circumstance? We have said, and again repeat, that the Peasant Government had aroused such hatred in the working masses of the city that it is no wonder that the overthrow of the Peasant Government, as we have said before, was greeted by the working masses with indifference, and even with a certain relief. This was due to the policy of the Peasant Government towards the proletariat of the cities; to the Government's substantial support of the capitalists during strikes; the increase of exploitation; the abrogation of the few existing labour laws; the abolition of the eight-hour day in heavy industry which the

Peasant Government carried through one month previous to June 9th; the increase of indirect taxes, speculation and usury; and, finally and chiefly, to the violent terror instituted against the city proletariat, particularly during the April Parliamentary elections. Under these conditions, how could a political strike be feasible? The Central Committee, which knew exactly what was the spirit of the city proletariat, and which on June 9th was in a position directly to sense the spirit of the proletariat in Sofia, the most important centre of the land, could not issue a slogan for a political general strike.

This is just as true of the transport workers as of the city proletariat. The Peasant Government had suppressed in blood the great transport workers' strike in January and February, 1920; thousands of transport workers had been arrested and brutally treated; three thousand had been sentenced to one, two, three, and five years' imprisonment; the dependents of thousands of transport workers (railwaymen) had been thrown into the streets out of the company houses, in the middle of winter; more than ten of our comrades among the transport workers had been murdered, etc. The Peasant Government, which had dismissed thousands of railwaymen and others, and left them without employment, had not ceased until the very last to persecute the transport workers. It sowed terrible corruption in the railway and other services; it created out of newly employed supporters official transport organisations of the Peasant League, which ignored the workers organised in the Transport Workers' Union, and persecuted them. Under these conditions, the overthrow of such a Government, which had practised such savagery against the transport workers, could not induce this proletariat to take up so determined a struggle as a strike of the State railways, posts and telegraphs. Besides, the experience of 1920 had taught us that in our situation a transport workers strike must be used only as the deciding factor in a struggle for the seizure of power by means of an armed uprising. In our situation it would be a great mistake to utilise the transport strike only as a protest strike, because such a course would expose the transport proletariat and the Transport Workers' Union to new defeats that would weaken them and render them useless in a greater and more decisive action. A strike in the railways, posts, and telegraphs would immediately result in a militarisation of all transport workers; occupation of the railways and the others by the military; subjection of the strikers to military tribunals, etc. Finally, the suspension of traffic has not the same significance in our industrially weak country that it has in the great industrial countries. The experience of 1920 has proved that during a crisis the transport workers will not strike, but will take over the railways, posts, and telegraphs.

Here we must say that the assertion that the entire transport proletariat is organised into the Transport Workers' Union is unfounded. Out of 27,000 railway, post, telegraph and telephone employees, only 3,500 belong to the Transport Workers' Union.

Out of 5,000 miners in the Pernik mines, only 1,000 are organised into the Miners' Union.

To accuse the Communist Party of Bulgaria of "passivity" and "neutrality" merely because it did not participate in an armed struggle is obviously wrong. The activities of the Communist Party find expression not in armed action alone. The Communist Party can resort to armed action only under definite conditions, and when its immediate aim is the seizure of power by its own strength, or together with others (the toiling peasant masses, or a Radical small peasant party). On June 9th, and during the days following, to the present day, the Party engaged in a struggle against the Government of bourgeois reaction and Fascism, a struggle on behalf of its slogans and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

(d) We are accused of committing many errors; many mistakes have been discovered. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria will, as it formerly did, learn from the criticisms of the Comintern. But we must mention one criticism that is totally unfounded.

We want to remind you of the letter the Executive of the Comintern sent on May 4th, 1921, to the Communist Party of Bulgaria. In this letter our party was charged with failing to display sufficient activity; to utilise important events for rendering more acute the struggle of the masses; to prepare itself sufficiently for passing from propaganda and agitation to action. The Party Centre seized the opportunity given it by this letter to strengthen the activity of the party on all sides. The struggles of the Communist Party of Bulgaria since May, 1921, and the uninterrupted strengthening of its influence among the masses, prove that the party, following the advice of the Comintern, had obtained good results. It warded off the attacks of, and successfully checked, the Fascist reaction started in 1921 with the firing of the People's House in Sofia. In spite of repeated dissolutions of the Communist district councils in several dozen cities and hundreds of villages, the Communist Party had stubbornly reconquered them by hard struggles and great sacrifices. Its action against the Wrangelites in the spring of 1922, and the district conferences held in the autumn of the same year, demonstrate the great extension of the fight the Communist Party is pursuing. Finally, at the elections in April of this year, in which the Communist Party was subjected to the most barbaric violence and maltreatment and military punitive expeditions, when thousands of our comrades were

arrested, and when the Stamboliski Government pledged itself to break the power of the Communist Party, the latter issued greatly strengthened from the struggle.

But especially important is the fact that several dozen comrades, called "Iskristis," who in 1921 had become dissatisfied with the Communist Party of Bulgaria, and, as a "Left" Wing in the party, had criticised the Executive of the Comintern, have returned to the party, and have acknowledged the correctness of the tactics of the party.

The Communist Party of Bulgaria also utilised the letter of May 4th, 1921, from the Executive of the Comintern, to strengthen its activity and its influence among the masses.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria is charged with displaying great "indifference" toward the events of the autumn of 1922 in Greece. It is true that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria was not in a position to render much assistance to the Greek comrades during the crisis called forth by the defeat of the Greek Army. But the reasons for this are that the events broke off all communication between us, and the Communist Party of Greece was unable to re-establish them quickly; its Central Committee had been arrested, and its activities curtailed. Under these conditions, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria decided to send a delegate, who, however, could not leave until March of 1923, because of difficulties at the border, and who spent two months in Greece working directly with the Communist Party of Greece to put into effect the orders of the Comintern and of the Communist Balkan Federation. Here we must mention that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria had sent a delegate to Greece one year earlier. It had also frequently sent such delegates to Yugoslavia and to Rumania. It is well known how Comrade N. Peneff, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, had been arrested and badly treated in Yugoslavia.

We shall ignore the reproach that the Communist Party of Bulgaria will one day develop "sectarianism" and eventually "social democracy." A Communist Party which systematically strengthens its influence among the masses, which in the course of four years exhibits only a steady strengthening of its power, and which has developed into the most powerful party in the country, which organises mass action and has struggled as a mass party, such a Communist Party cannot be charged with "sectarianism." A Communist Party which for 25 years has struggled against the opportunism of the old Social Democratic parties, and to-day continues to fight against the Bulgarian Social Democrats; a Communist Party which in three years has published 1,500,000 Communist brochures,

and distributed them in so small a country as Bulgaria which possesses a powerful periodical Communist Press; which fights for the programme of the Comintern and follows its tactics; which, in the struggle for its revolutionary slogans has made great sacrifices in the form of thousands of arrested, maltreated, and imprisoned comrades, not to mention the more than thirty comrades who have fallen in the struggle since 1919; a Communist Party which, after the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, was the first to adopt the slogan for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and issue it to the masses; such a Communist Party cannot be held guilty of "Social Democracy."

The appeal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria to the masses to preserve and increase the political rights and freedom guaranteed by our Constitution is ironically criticised. But we are of the opinion that as soon as the bourgeoisie suppresses such rights and freedom, as soon as it does not adhere to its own Constitution, it is the duty of the Communist Party to expose the hollow "democracy" and "legality" of the bourgeoisie, and wherever possible to utilise these rights for the widening and strengthening of the struggle of the proletariat and the toiling peasants. The Communist Party of Bulgaria has no illusions as to the declarations of the new Government regarding "justice" and "freedom." In its manifesto our party called the Government a Government of open and bloody dictatorship; but, at the same time, it exposed the suppression of the Constitution, and fought the bourgeoisie, not only for the seizure of power and the establishment of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, but also for the preservation of the rights and the freedom guaranteed by the Constitution. There is nothing wrong in this tactic; we accomplish two purposes by it: bourgeois "democracy" and bourgeois "legality" are unmasked and the struggle for the political rights of bourgeois "democracy" (so far as such rights still exist) are utilised wherever possible for the enlargement and strengthening of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. The Communist Party of Bulgaria is not intimidated by the reproach of "moderation," for it is exhausting every legal possibility and constitutional right in the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship and for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasants. At the same time, the party is preparing its illegal apparatus, which it uses even to-day whenever the way of legal struggle is cut off.

The Central Committee is reproached with continually voicing the danger of intervention from neighbouring States in case of revolutionary action by the Communist Party of Bulgaria. Such a danger actually existed before Turkey's victory, and before the crisis in Greece, which was called forth

by her defeat. Even to-day this danger has not entirely disappeared. But the Communist Party of Bulgaria openly declared to its Party Council, which was convened immediately after the letter of May 4, 1921, was received from the Executive, that the revolution can begin only in one of the Balkan countries, hence also in Bulgaria, and that such a revolution would carry with it the rest of the Balkan peoples in a struggle for the Federated Socialist Balkan Soviet Republic. Since then even the consideration of foreign intervention has not checked us. It was not this that influences the Central Committee in taking up its position of June 9th.

When it is stated that the revolutionists of June 9th did not fear the intervention of Jugoslavia, and succeeded, the detailed facts have not been taken into consideration. The revolutionists of June 9th are the tools of England and Italy, and had the assurance of the support of both these States. We knew this beforehand. England and Italy used the old bourgeois parties, the Macedonian Nationalists and the generals, in order to supplant Stamboliski's Government, which was entirely under the influence of France, and carried out the latter's suggestions for closer relations between Bulgaria and Jugoslavia. For two years, and especially since the Turkish victory, England and France have been wrestling for power in Bulgaria. England finally succeeded in eliminating France by using the bourgeois parties as her tools, just as France used the Peasant League. England and Italy were so involved in the overthrow of June 9th that on June 14th they sent an ultimatum to Jugoslavia forbidding the invasion of Bulgaria by Jugoslavian troops, which had been already concentrated on the Bulgarian border, and were awaiting the command to march upon Sofia. The source of the "courage" of the Fascist Government in Sofia is the support of England and Italy, which use it as their tool. If England and Italy had not intervened, Jugoslavia would certainly have sent its troops to Bulgaria to "maintain order in the country"—that is, to restore the Stamboliski Government, which is allied with Jugoslavia, and is the tool of France.

6.—Final Results.

In laying before the Executive this detailed report, we leave it to the judgment of the Executive, and of the Comintern, whether the tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria were correct or incorrect. But still more important than the question of the tactics of June 9th of the Communist Party of Bulgaria is the question of its tactics subsequent to June 9th, in the struggle confronting it and its immediate tasks. On this question the Central Committee is of the opinion that it is absolutely essential that complete understanding and unanimity must exist between the Communist Party of Bulgaria and the Executive of the Comintern.

The Central Committee is convinced that the Communist Party of Bulgaria will live through the hard struggle into which the events of June 9th have forced it, and will retain and increase its strength. More than that, the Central Committee is convinced that the crisis created in Bulgaria on June 9th opens an epoch of new and greater class struggles in our country; that the fight for power will become more acute and profound; that in the struggle for the conquest of power the Communist Party will gather more forces, and especially win the support of the wide toiling peasant masses.

These were the thoughts and motives that actuated the Party Council at its enlarged session of July 1st to 6th (which was attended by all the district organisations and the secretaries of those provinces which the events of June 9th had affected to any large extent). It was unfortunate that Comrade W. Kolarov, who had been arrested, and who, in spite of the protests of the party, and of the whole country, is still in prison, could not be present at this session.

In the Party Council all the events of June 9th were thoroughly discussed. After exhaustive debates, the Party Council adopted two principle resolutions: one, on the tactic of the Communist Party on June 9th, and the other on the political situation and the tactics to be adopted with reference to the immediate tasks of the party. Both resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Party Council. Among the comrades attending the enlarged session in an advisory capacity, four expressed themselves against the first resolution. All comrades attending in an advisory capacity expressed themselves in favour of the second resolution.

The Communist Party of Bulgaria will not permit the worst of the three predictions that were made at the enlarged session of the Executive with reference to the future of the party to be fulfilled. Neither will it allow any split to occur. A fight on the tactic of June 9th will probably take place in the Communist Party of Bulgaria as well as in the Comintern, for self-criticism of the party is useful. But unanimity within the party is also important, particularly in view of the attacks of the enemy to which it is subjected and the heavy and important tasks which confront it. The Central Committee is convinced that the tactics of the party on June 9th were correct. The Party Council has also unanimously approved these tactics. All party organisations which were concerned in the tactics of June 9th are also unanimously or practically unanimously in agreement. We are convinced that the whole party will approve the tactics of June 9th.

We are convinced that the difference of opinion between the Communist Party of Bulgaria and the Executive can be traced to the fact that the Central Committee was unable to acquaint the Executive immediately with the position of events on June 9th. But if the Executive is still of the same opinion after its discussion of our report, if, in spite of all this, the Comintern still judges the

tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria on June 9th as incorrect, then the Communist Party of Bulgaria, as a true and disciplined soldier of the great army of the revolutionary world proletariat, will adopt the decisions of the Comintern and put them into practice.

The Communist Party will preserve its unity, because that is necessary for the revolutionary movement in Bulgaria and in the Balkans in the near future.

The resolution of the Party Council on "the political situation and the tactics to be adopted with reference to the immediate tasks of the party" does not stand in opposition to the directions of the Executive of the Comintern given since June 9th. The principles of this resolution are: (1) The new Government is to be branded as a Government of bourgeois dictatorship and of Fascist reaction, and it is to be emphasised that the crisis called forth by the events of June 9th can be overcome only by the seizure of power by the Workers' and Peasants' Government; (2) The first task of the Communist Party is a determined struggle to the bitter end against the Government of reaction and Fascism; (3) To realise this task it will be necessary to unite the proletariat with the toiling peasant masses, to form a united front between the workers and the small peasants on behalf of the slogans issued by the Communist Party for this purpose, including the slogan for the Workers' and Peasants' Government; (4) Since the events of June 9th it is possible to form a united front not only with the toiling peasant masses that follow the Peasant League, but also with the Peasant League itself, in view of the complete bankruptcy of the policy of the Peasant Government and in view of the disillusionment of the peasant masses of the Peasant League. The Communist Party will work for the realisation of the united front with the Peasant League; (5) With reference to the leaders of the Peasant League, the resolution declares: "Under the influence of the agitation and the struggle of the Communist Party, and under the pressure of the toiling masses in the Peasant League itself, the leaders remaining with the Peasant League will be forced either to change the policy they formerly pursued, in which case the Communist Party will be ready to fight in conjunction with them, or the leaders will continue to be loyal tools of the rural bourgeoisie, in which case the united front of the Communist Party and the Peasant League will be formed without them and against them."

Since the events of June 9th the conditions are more favourable for a joint struggle, for the united front of the Communist Party with the Peasant League. A large part of the small peasants following the Peasant League are deserting to the Communist Party; those remaining with the rural organisations of the Peasant League declare themselves against their leaders, against the rural bourgeoisie, and themselves want to work with the Communist Party; a large section of the large estate owners, rich peasants and leaders

of the Peasant League is returning to the old bourgeois parties. For over a year the Communist Party has been inviting the toiling peasants of the Peasant League to a common struggle, since the slogan was issued for the Workers' and Peasants' Government (January, 1923), the Communist Party has considered its agitation for a united front with the masses following the Peasant League as its chief task. But the leaders of the Peasant League, by violence and demagoguery, by promises of advantages to be gained from the Peasant Government, succeeded in dividing the common struggle of the toiling masses of the city and countryside against the bourgeoisie. But now, since the complete bankruptcy of the policy of the Peasant Government, since the peasant masses are turning from the rural bourgeoisie and its compromised leaders, the conditions are ripe for this joint struggle. And news from the whole land confirms that many of the rural organisations of the Peasant League are themselves seeking an understanding with the Communist Party. The party considers it its principal task to attract into its ranks the peasant masses leaving the Peasant League, and, on the basis of the platform set up by the Communist Party for a Workers' and Peasants' Government (see the resolution of the Party Council of January, 1923) to form alliances with the rural organisations of the Peasant League and with the Peasant League itself.

The resolution of the last Party Council with reference to the relations of the Communist Party to the leaders of the Peasant League, deals with the position of the Communist Party on June 9th as follows:—

“ With regard to the manifesto of the Executive of the Comintern, which appeals to the toiling masses to join with leaders of the Peasant League, the Party Council is of the opinion that at the present moment, when the toiling peasant masses themselves realise how completely bankrupt the policy of their leaders is—because this policy was the policy of the rural bourgeoisie—when they are turning from the rural bourgeoisie and from the leaders of the Peasant League, when they are already seeking to work with and to ally themselves with the workers and peasants struggling under the banner of the Communist Party, it would be an obvious mistake on the part of the Communist Party to restore the lost influence of the leaders of the Peasant League who have betrayed the interests of the toiling peasant masses. The Communist Party and the workers and peasants following it, will, however, not refuse to go with the Peasant League and its leaders, as soon as the Peasant League and its leaders adopt the united front for a struggle on behalf of the slogans issued by the Communist Party and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government.”

But while the Communist Party cannot undertake to protect:

the compromised leaders of the Peasant League, who are being deserted by the peasant masses and who have committed the worst of crimes (embezzlement of large amounts of State funds, plundering of communal resources, political murder, etc.) it is carrying on an energetic campaign in its Press and its meetings against the wholesale arrests and sentencing of peasants in connection with the events of June 9th and is demanding their release.

We are convinced that the Executive of Comintern will agree that the Communist Party of Bulgaria is carrying out the united front with the Peasant League for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, as far as the actual conditions since June 9th allow and demand it.

The Communist Party is pursuing an energetic and widespread struggle against the rabid military dictatorship and Fascist reaction. "Rabotnitcheski Vestnik" has been subjected to censorship and numerous confiscations. In spite of this, twenty thousand copies of "Rabotnitcheski Vestnik" are distributed daily. The spirit in the party and among the masses is aroused. The events of June 9th prove that in our country a revolutionary movement can be organised and led only by the Communist Party. This increases the influence of the Communist Party among the masses and the confidence of the masses in the Communist Party. The Communist Party is taking advantage of this great confidence and its influence among the masses in handling the problems confronting it. The Communist Party of Bulgaria is confronted by difficult and important tasks. On this subject, the Party Council and the Central Committee made a series of decisions.*

*We had already finished our report when the resolution of the last meeting of the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern on the Workers' and Peasants' Government arrived. In this resolution we find an endorsement of our tactics on behalf of a Workers' and Peasants' Government, particularly in the sections of the resolution quoted below:—

"The Executive Committee of the Communist International draws attention to the appropriate point in the programme resolution of the Second World Congress, which says, 'The large peasantry are composed of the capitalists in agriculture, who, as a rule, worked their estates with the aid of hired workers, and who are connected with the peasantry only by their low cultural level, their method of life, and their personal manual labour on their farms. This very numerous section of the bourgeoisie is a decided enemy of the revolutionary proletariat. In the work of the Communist Parties in the countryside, the chief attention should be directed to the fight with these sections for the emancipation of the labouring and exploited majority of the agricultural population from the intellectual and political influence of these exploiters.'

"The second danger is that insufficiently experienced Communists, from the political point of view, may attempt to replace mass revolutionary work amongst the lower sections of the working peasantry by parliamentary combinations based on no principles, with the so-called "representatives" of the peasantry which often are the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie."

"It will, of course, be understood that the agitation carried on under the slogan Workers' and Peasants' Government must be adapted to the conditions prevailing in each country. . . ."

II.—THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE SITUATION SINCE JUNE 9TH.

Decisions of the Party Council of the Communist Party of Bulgaria Adopted During its Session of July 6th, 1923.

After the detailed reports on the situation in the country and the tasks of the Communist Party had been considered by the enlarged session of delegates of the Communist Party of various districts and the Central Committee held from July 1-6 on the question of the events of June 9th, the Party Council unanimously declared:—

(1) The new Government, created on June 9th by a military uprising, is a great bourgeois coalition, in which all the bourgeois parties, including the social-patriots, participate. The bourgeois parties seized power by means of a coup d'état because they do not enjoy the confidence of the people and cannot count on their support.

But no unity exists between the various forces supporting the new Government. The bourgeois parties want to use the military group for the establishment of military dictatorship and against the attacks of the Communist Party; they will throw all the responsibility for this on the shoulders of the military group. The military groups are aiming at a Government "above all parties" and are under the illusion that such a Government is possible. The parties of the bloc cannot come to an agreement with each other nor with the National-Liberal Party on the division of the spoils. The social patriots, who realise that they will be driven out by the power of the bourgeoisie, now that they have finished playing the role of provocateurs assigned to them, are calling for a "left bloc" for which there is no justification to-day. Finally, disagreements exist between the policy of the Government and that of the Macedonian Nationalists. These antagonisms within the Government prove that the old clique interests predominate, that the only thing that unites the parties participating in the Government is a general desire to annihilate the Communist Party, and that the Government has no support among the wide masses of the people. All this proves that the deep and ever-increasing political crisis created by the coup d'état of June 9 can be overcome only by establishing a new workers' and peasants' power—the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

(2) The new Government, which holds out the promise of "freedom and legality," is in reality replacing the military police dictatorship of the Peasant Government by a military police dictatorship of the city bourgeoisie. The new Government is a still greater danger to the people, because in it are united the economically powerful city bourgeoisie and the old reactionary bourgeois parties, which have oppressed and exploited the working classes and the petty-bourgeoisie for forty years, which had plunged the peoples into two catastrophic wars and which subsequently strove to maintain the shattered power of the capitalist class by a regime the purpose of

which was to stifle the struggle of the working and small peasants and to annihilate their vanguard, the Communist Party.

The new Government not only did not restore the rights and the freedom that were abolished by the dictatorship of the Peasant Government, as it declared in its political demonstrations that it would do, but it limited these rights still farther; it instituted a censorship of the Communist Press; it robbed the workers and peasants of their freedom of assembly; it arrested wholesale, maltreated, and court-martialled the workers and peasants who were involved in the events of June 9; it is actually striving to abolish the political rights of the toiling masses; to outlaw the Communist Party; to conceal a military dictatorship beneath a declaration for "freedom and legality." Under the régime of the new Government, the bourgeoisie is energetically building up its Fascist organisations and is arming itself, at the same time calling in the few arms still remaining in the hands of the toiling masses of the city and countryside.

Finally, the new Government, which is pledged to hold new elections for Parliament at the earliest possible moment, is indefinitely putting off facing the people at an election. This proves that the ruling bourgeois parties merely preach a constitutional and parliamentary Government, but in practice actually suppress constitutional rights and parliamentary Government.

(3) The bourgeois parties and their present coalition Government are indifferent to the great questions of the day that touch most directly upon the vital interests of the whole toiling masses; they do nothing actually to solve these problems. Already during the first few days following June 9th, the Communist Party appeared with a long and detailed programme for satisfying the needs of the workers, the small owners in the cities, and the peasants, who constitute nine-tenths of the population of Bulgaria. But the Government would agree to none of these proposals. Hence the toiling masses in the cities and countryside continue to suffer under the burdens of increased prices, lack of housing facilities, low wages for workers and State employees, unlimited hours of work, heavy indirect taxation, abolition of political rights, etc.

These great interests and needs of the toiling masses demand immediate satisfaction. Instead of concerning themselves with these matters, the ruling bourgeois parties undertook a violent and provocative campaign of slander against the Communist Party. It replied to the demand for bread, housing, wages, the eight-hour day and freedom by open warfare against the toiling masses and their leader, the Communist Party. They want to prepare the way for outlawing the Communist Party, to continue the unlimited exploitation and plundering of the people, and to place on their shoulders the entire financial burdens of the war.

In its reactionary campaign against the Communist Party, the

new Government will pursue the imperialist and counter-revolutionary policies of the States of the Little and Great Entente in the Balkans, and, after outlawing the Communist Party in all the Balkan States, will try to suppress the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

(4) In affirming this, the Party Council declares that the first task of the Communist Party and of the workers and peasants, as well as of the toiling masses fighting under its banner, is to wage an uninterrupted, united, self-sacrificing, keen and determined battle against the efforts of the ruling bourgeois reaction to outlaw the Communist Party; to organise attacks, pogroms and murder against the Communist Party and its organisations and fighters; to instigate terror and murder against the workers and peasants, in order to stifle in blood the struggle of the toiling masses for bread, freedom and better living conditions.

(5) The Party Council declares that the Communist Party will continue with still greater endurance the struggle on behalf of the slogans it issued immediately after June 9, for only by the realisation of these slogans can the misery of the wide toiling masses be lightened. On behalf of these slogans (viz., to limit the increase in prices, decrease of taxations, housing, increase of wages, shortening of the working hours, guarantee of the rights, freedom and peace of the Bulgarian people, etc.), the Communist Party will unite the workers, small peasants and city dwellers, and lead them in a struggle against the bourgeois parties and their present Coalition Government.

(6) The bankruptcy of the policy of the Peasant Government was completed by its overthrow by a military uprising; the complete desertion of its army and its gendarmerie to the new Government, and the lack of a massive and decided counter-attack on the part of the peasants of the Peasant League against the overthrow. This policy demonstrates the inability of the Peasant League to organise by its policy the small peasant masses for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, to satisfy the interests of these masses, and to create a régime of "democracy" and of "the expression of the will of the people." The wide toiling masses of city and countryside did not rise to the defence of the Peasant Government, because the Government had broken its promises, had increased the exploitation of these masses, had become the servants of the rural bourgeoisie, and, by its senseless reactionary policy had antagonised these masses.

The Communist Party has undertaken to penetrate into the wide masses of toiling peasants who have been betrayed and disillusioned by the Peasant Government, and, by means of the increased authority among them since June 9th to unite and organise them within its own ranks.

The Communist Party, which, before June 9th had called upon the landless and small peasants of the Peasant League to break with the rural bourgeoisie and to unite its efforts with those of the workers and peasants marching under the banner of the Communist

Party for a common struggle and for a united front on behalf of the slogans issued by the Communist Party, and to establish a new workers' and peasants' power—the Workers' and Peasants' Government—will continue its fight for its aims with greater energy, now that the toiling peasants who have been betrayed and disillusioned by the Peasant Government are beginning to realise the results of their alliance with the rural bourgeoisie.

What will become of the Peasant League since the complete bankruptcy of the policy of its leaders on June 9th, which was a policy of the rural bourgeoisie? The rural mayors, the large estate holders, and the rich peasants, who had deserted the bourgeois parties for the Peasant League merely to use the latter's power for their own selfish interests, are returning to their old haunts. A large part of the new-rich middle peasants of the Peasant League will seek the protection of this new power in order to continue their profiteering, speculation, and exploitation. Together with the rural bourgeoisie of the Peasant League, will slip away the majority of its leaders, whose interests, policies, and acts are closely connected with the rural bourgeoisie. As the Opposition Party, the Peasant League will either transform itself into a petty bourgeois Radical Party which will lead the struggle for the interest of the small and landless peasants, or will disintegrate, and the peasants who follow it, and who do not enrol themselves in the ranks of the Communist Party, will become the victims of the bourgeois parties. The third possibility is that the Peasant League continues to be a party of the rural bourgeoisie, in which case its role as opposition to the other bourgeois cliques will decrease in importance, and it will be deserted by the peasant masses.

In undertaking to attract the peasants who are leaving the Peasant League to its banner, the Communist Party, by its agitation and its struggle for the united front and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, will force the Peasant League to the left; and on behalf of its slogans and for the seizure of power, it will force the Peasant Government into a struggle against the city and rural bourgeoisie. Under the influence of the propaganda and the struggle of the Communist Party, and under the pressure of the toiling masses within the Peasant League itself, its remaining leaders will be forced either to change its former policy, in which case the Communist Party will be ready to fight together with it, or the leaders of the Peasant League will continue to be loyal tools of the rural bourgeoisie, in which case the united front of the Communist Party and the Peasant League will be accomplished without them and against them.

The hopes the peasant masses had in the Peasant Government, which they regarded as their own Government, are shattered. The responsibility for this lies with the leaders of the Peasant League who betrayed the masses and who preferred to join with the rural bourgeoisie against the toiling masses of the city and countryside,

instead of struggling in common with the toiling peasant masses and the workers and petty owners of the city against the bourgeoisie. While exposing and explaining the bitter experiences the peasant masses had, the Communist Party will continue with greater energy its agitation and its struggle for the unification of the toiling masses of the city and countryside, for the formation of the united front and for a common struggle against the ruling bourgeois coalition, against the ruling Government of reaction and dictatorship of the capitalist class and for the new workers' and peasants' power—for the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

(7) In its foreign policy, the present Government serves the aspirations of England and Italy just as the Peasant Government served the purposes of France. As in former days, the foreign policy of Bulgaria to-day is determined not in the interests of the independence and peace of the Bulgarian peoples, but by the imperialist States. But the present victory of British influence in Bulgaria carries a greater danger to peace with it, for England is organising a new imperialist coalition against revolutionary Russia. England is surrounding Russia with every possible enemy State and is preparing to plunge the people of these States, including the people of the Balkans, into a huge imperialist and counter-revolutionary war against the great Republic of the Russian people.

In pursuing the policy of the Entente, which is striving to transform Bulgaria and the Balkans into its colonies, the present Government cannot preserve the national independence of the Bulgarian people, just as the Peasant Government was unable to do so. The present Government has declared that it will fulfill the conditions laid down by the Convention of Nish. But this means that, like the Peasant Government, it will support the Serbian bourgeoisie in its struggle against the national movement for independence of the Macedonian workers and peasants.

The Communist Party will continue with greater energy its struggle for the maintenance of freedom of the Bulgarian people and of the Balkans. It supports the peoples of Macedonia, Thrace, Dobrudja and the other Balkan territories which are under a foreign yoke in their struggle for national independence. And it will make a decided fight against the efforts of the new power of the nationalist bourgeoisie to exploit the oppressed people of Bulgaria for the purpose of realising its aim of foreign conquest or internal reaction.

(8) The Party Council calls upon the party members to exert every effort to increase the discipline, the power, and the preparations for struggle of the party; to increase the strength of its organisations and groups, as well as of organisations working together with the party; to attract new working and small landowning masses to the party; to strengthen and establish on a firmer footing the professional workers' unions; to expand and strengthen the common struggle of the toiling masses of city and countryside against the

bourgeois reaction and for the preservation of their economic and political interests.

The Position of the Communist Party of Bulgaria since the Events of June 9th.

After receiving the report of the Central Committee on the position of the Party with reference to the events of June 9, and after a discussion on this report, the Party Council in its enlarged session unanimously decided:—

(1) The Party Council entirely approves of the position taken by the Central Committee and its instructions relative to the events of June 9th. The Party Council declares that the position taken by the Party Council in the resolutions adopted in its sessions from January and April, 1923, and the position taken by the Communist Party of Bulgaria during the events of June 9th, was the only right one to take under the conditions existing at the time of these events.

The Communist Party could not allow itself to participate in the armed struggle between the overthrown and the new Governments, because the Peasant Government by its policy had antagonised and estranged the masses. This was demonstrated by the fact that the masses did not rise to the defence of the Peasant Government. Neither could the Communist Party undertake any definite action (armed uprising) for the direct establishment of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, because the overthrow of the Peasant Government did not arouse a revolutionary movement among the wide working and peasant masses, and because the conditions were not ripe for establishing the Workers' and Peasants' Government. The position taken by the Communist Party on June 9th was not, however, one of inactivity and neutrality, but one of independent struggle for the preservation of the interests and rights of the toiling masses, for the realisation of the slogan of the Communist Party and for the establishment of the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

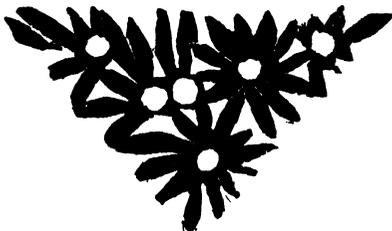
The Party Council further emphasises the fact that the Party unanimously sustained the position taken by the Central Committee on June 9th. The few exceptions occurring at two or three places do not indicate a lack of unanimity, for they are due to the special conditions under which some of our comrades were placed at the time.

(2) The Party Council is of the opinion that the misunderstandings, with reference to the tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria during the overthrow, that existed between the attitude taken by the Communist Party of Bulgaria and that taken by the Executive of the Comintern, which is expressed by Comrade Zinoviev's declaration at the meeting of the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern, and in its manifesto to the Bulgarian workers and peasants, are due to the insufficient and inaccurate information the Executive had on the trend of events on June 9th and the days following. The Central Com-

mittee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, which had no opportunity immediately to explain to the International and the brother parties the events of June 9th and the position of the party, will be obliged to do this immediately after the meeting of the Party Council. The Party Council is convinced that, after the Executive of the Comintern is better informed on the facts of the case, it will acknowledge the correctness of the position of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

(3) With reference to the manifesto of the Executive of the Comintern, in which it appeals to the toiling masses to join with the leaders of the Peasant League, the Party Council is of the opinion that at the present moment—when the toiling peasant masses are beginning to realise how completely bankrupt the policy of their leaders is (because this policy was the policy of the rural bourgeoisie); when they are turning from the rural bourgeoisie and the leaders of the Peasant League; when they are already seeking to work jointly and to ally themselves with the workers and peasants fighting under the banner of the Communist Party—it would be a mistake on the part of the Communist Party to restore the lost influence of the leaders of the Peasant League who betrayed the interests of the toiling peasant masses. But the Communist Party and the workers and peasants following it, will not refuse to join with the Peasant League and its leaders, as soon as the Peasant League and its leaders adopt a united front for the struggle on behalf of the slogans issued by the Communist Party and for the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

K.



CRITICAL COMMENTS

Certain articles have appeared in the foreign Communist Press criticising the position taken up by the Bulgarian Communist Party on June 9th. A general reply to these articles has been given elsewhere. We wish here merely to reply to certain exceptions and accusations against the Bulgarian Communist Party made in these articles.

I.

Comrade Karl Radek, in his report at the meeting of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International on June 23rd, 1923, which was published in the international Communist Press, makes certain criticisms of the position taken up by the Bulgarian Communist Party on June 9th. Our purpose here is to rectify certain omissions in Comrade Radek's report.

Comrade Radek stated in his report that the Bulgarian Communist Party in its tactics paid no attention whatever to the Macedonian question, did not define its attitude towards the nationalist movement, and made no effort to take advantage of this movement for the benefit of the revolution in Bulgaria and in the Balkans.

This statement is absolutely erroneous. The Bulgarian Communist Party has had a programme on the national question for the last 15 years. It has always supported the revolutionary struggle of the subject Balkan peoples for their national liberation, and has fought for the Balkan Socialist Federative Republic. It advocated and carried through this programme at two Balkan conferences before the war (1910 and 1915) and at five conferences since the war, the greater part of which were convened by, and all of them participated in by, the Bulgarian Communist Party.

The attitude of the Bulgarian Communist Party towards the Macedonian nationalists during the last year was characterised by the following facts. The fifth Balkan Communist Conference, which met on December 8th to 12th, 1922, and was attended by all the Balkan Communist Parties (except the Greek Party) adopted a resolution at the motion of Comrade Kabakchiev, from the Bulgarian Communist Party, containing the following propositions:—

“The Balkan Communist Parties declare themselves to be opponents of the aims of conquest of Greece and Bulgaria with regard to Thrace. These parties, especially those of Bulgaria and Greece, support the struggle for autonomy on the part of the nationalities inhabiting Thrace, while insisting that these nationalities will attain complete national emancipation only under a Balkan Socialist Federative Republic.

“This discontent (the discontent of the oppressed nationalities

in Macedonia and other parts of the Balkans as a result of the system of national subjection) gave rise to a nationalist military (Tehox) movement, which the bourgeoisie is using in furtherance of its internal reactionary aims and policy of conquest. While exposing the real aims of conquest pursued by the national policy of the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Greek bourgeoisie in relation to the peoples inhabiting Macedonia, the Balkan Communist Parties declare that they will support with all their strength the struggle of these nations for national independence and autonomy. They will work to rid the national movement of the influences of the bourgeoisie of the neighbouring countries and to direct it along the path of a revolutionary struggle for the establishment in Macedonia of a Soviet Republic, as a component part of the Balkan Socialist Federative Soviet Republic."

This point of view is likewise expounded in the resolution of the Party Council dated January 22nd, 1922, which says: The Bulgarian Communist Party will support with all its strength the struggle for national independence and autonomy on the part of the peoples inhabiting Macedonia, Thrace, Dobruzda and other nationally oppressed parts of the Balkans. The Communist Party, however, will resolutely oppose the designs of the bourgeoisie of the Balkans and other countries, which under the pretext of autonomy, wishes to use the national movement in the interests of its foreign policy of reaction and counter-revolution.

In February and March, 1923, the Bulgarian Communist Party convened two conferences, which were attended by representatives of the "Emigrant's League" (Macedonians, Thracians, and Dobrudzians), organised and led by the Bulgarian Communist Party, as well as comrades from the adjacent districts of Bulgaria, where the national movement is strongest. These conferences adopted a number of concrete measures providing for Communist participation in the revolutionary nationalist movement.

The Bulgarian Communist Party, however, did not merely confine itself to conferences and resolution. For two and a half years it has been publishing a newspaper called the "Liberator," for the special purpose of agitation and propaganda among the Macedonian and other emigrants. During the last few months it has organised the participation of Communist-emigrants in the so-called "Brotherhood" and other organisations of Macedonian, Dobrudzan and other nationalists, as well as in certain demonstrations of the autonomists. In this manner the Bulgarian Communist Party is setting up connections and creating the conditions for a joint struggle with the revolutionary nationalist movement. In this direction it has already achieved certain successes. The sympathy of the emigrant masses towards the Communist Party is growing, as a result of which the bourgeoisie is not able to use them as mercenary tools against the Communist Party.

One must remember, however, that at the head of the so-called "Revolutionary Macedonian Organisation" there still stand persons who were once the faithful assistants of Ferdinand and Radoslavof and who are still adherents of the policy of national conquest of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie (the annexation of Macedonia, Thrace and Dobrudza and the creation of a "Great Bulgaria") and of Tchot tactics, which renders impossible the preparation and organisation of a revolutionary uprising within Macedonia, Thrace and Dobrudza; it merely creates causes for the mass bludgeoning of the population of these countries and of new conflicts and wars among the Balkan States. The Bulgarian Communist Party is opposed to these leaders of the "Revolutionary Macedonian Organisations" and their tactics. But as far as the movement for national liberation itself is concerned, and the popular masses participating therein, the Bulgarian Communist Party gives them entire sympathy and support. Nay, more, it endeavours to come to an understanding with the leaders of this movement who are in favour of a revolutionary struggle for the liberation of the enslaved nations and who conduct this struggle in Macedonia, Thrace and Dobrudza. The Bulgarian Communist Party strives to push this movement to the Left, by explaining to the masses following it that the national independence and liberation of the Balkan peoples can be realised only by a revolution of the workers and the peasants in the Balkans and the setting up of a Balkan Federative Workers' and Peasants' Republic. The Bulgarian Communist Party is aware of the stupendous rôle which the revolutionary nationalist movement in the enslaved Balkan countries (Macedonia, Thrace, Dobrudza, Bessarabia, Khorvatia, etc.), is liable to play in the success of the Balkan revolution, and defines its tactics in relation to this movement accordingly.

II.

Comrade Radek says in his report, "There is no doubt that the Communist Party did not do what was necessary to force Stamboliski's Party into a coalition or alternatively to split it. The party is not working sufficiently among the peasantry. The facts at present confirm this. It was unable to expose Stamboliski's party before the peasant masses, so that if he refused to work with the Bulgarian Communist Party his party could be split."

Whether or not the Bulgarian Communist Party worked sufficiently among the peasantry can be seen from its yearly reports, and these reports show that out of a total of 1,488 party branches the Bulgarian Communist Party has no less than 1,403 in the country, that two-thirds of its membership are in the rural districts and that at the last village council elections the Bulgarian Communist Party received 126,000 votes. Of 3,623 Communist members in rural and urban councils, 3,281 are in the villages; of 113 Com-

munist councils, 104 are village councils and only nine town councils. Besides propaganda, by means of pamphlets for the peasants, the Bulgarian Communist Party publishes a special weekly paper, "The Rural Messenger," for the peasants, with an average circulation of 10,000 copies. Last year (autumn, 1922) the Bulgarian Communist Party arranged large district gatherings (meetings and demonstrations) which were participated in by hundreds of thousands of **propertyless peasants and poor farmers**. On the whole, the party has developed and is now promoting an extensive activity among the peasantry, in which part of its work it has invariably met with the opposition of the Peasant Government, because it ruthlessly exposed its policy of violence, demagogy and plunder.

The Bulgarian Communist Party exposed Stambolski's policy from the very beginning of his administration. It was engaged in fierce warfare during the two parliamentary elections, which were far from "democratic." During these elections the Communist Party lost thousands of men, who were arrested and brutally tortured; scores were wounded; many villages were besieged by the troops and the population driven to the mountains. All this, of course, apart from the countless falsifications and cheatings which went on at the elections, etc. At these elections the Communist Party performed a tremendous work by exposing the Peasant League and its government, as a party and government of the landed bourgeoisie. The Bulgarian Communist Party distributed hundreds of thousands of manifestos among the peasantry during the elections, held thousands of meetings, etc. During the rural council elections, which took place several times under Stambolski's régime, the Bulgarian Communist Party developed a still greater activity among the peasantry.

The Bulgarian Communist Party did not wait for the elections in order to go into the villages. It worked there continuously. Precisely because of its uninterrupted agitation and struggle in the villages, because of its merciless exposure of the demagogy, violence and robbery of the Peasant Government, because of the large and ever-increasing influence of the Communist Party in the villages—did Stambolski hurl himself with such ferocity and organised such savage persecutions and outrages against the Communist Party.

The Bulgarian Communist Party had never set itself the task of entering into a coalition with the Stambolski Government. This was impossible, because the Government of the rural bourgeoisie on the very first day of its administration declared war on the Communist Party (the terror directed against the Bulgarian Communist Party during the transport strike, etc.) and waged it unceasingly. The Bulgarian Communist Party, however, worked with all its might among the peasant masses following the Peasant League in order to urge them to the Left and create a Left tendency within the League which would split, if not capture it. The Bulgarian

Communist Party pursued these tactics for two whole years. In January, 1923, when the party advanced the watchword of a Workers' and Peasants' Government, these tactics were defined still more clearly and exactly. (See resolution on Workers' and Peasants' Government adopted by the Party Council in January, 1923, and the pamphlet by Kabakchiev on the same question.)

Consequently, there was only one way open for the Bulgarian Communist Party, namely, not to enter into a coalition with the Stamboliski's, but to assist and accelerate the creation of a Left wing in the Peasant League, with which the Bulgarian Communist Party could have entered into an agreement. The Bulgarian Communist party worked hard in this direction. To assert the contrary is to contradict facts which are known to the whole party.

That in spite of this no such Left wing was formed in the Peasant League, is not due to the inactivity of the Bulgarian Communist Party, but to the fact that the small-peasant following of the Peasant League is slow in finding its bearings, tardy in breaking relations with the rural bourgeoisie and entering the movement. All the intelligent and active elements among the labouring peasantry are joining the Communist Party, but the wide peasant masses remaining within the League only gradually yielded to our influence.

Since June 9th the position of the Peasant League has changed. The large part of the rural bourgeoisie is abandoning it and returning to the bourgeois parties, where it held membership for many years; as an opposition party and the Peasant League will be forced to reckon with the interests and demands of the propertyless and small-propertied peasant masses, and the best conditions will be created in the Peasant League for a united front with the Communist Party. The resolutions of the last Party Council (July, 1923) clearly and definitely put the question of the party working for a united front not only among the left wing of the Peasant League, as was the case before June 9th, but in the whole of the Peasant League—naturally on the basis of the slogan of a united front, including the watchword of a Workers' and Peasants' Government (see resolution of Party Council in January, 1923).

Comrade Radek already last year, in his speech at the Programme Commission of the Communist International (May, 1922) said something to the effect that a coalition was possible in Bulgaria between the Government of Stamboliski and the Communist Party. He still maintains this idea. It is, however, false. Such a coalition was impossible; there cannot be a coalition between the **Government** of the rural bourgeoisie and the Communist Party.

In its struggle against the party of the workers and poor peasants, against the Communist Party, the Stamboliski Government gave its active and complete support to the whole bourgeoisie—not only the rural, but also the city bourgeoisie and all its parties

The Stamboliski Government waged war against the Communist Party for three years. No step was taken against the Communist Party without its being supported by the bourgeois parties; the greater part of these acts were even directly instigated by the old reactionary bourgeois parties.

In fact, the historical rôle of this Government consisted in its serving as a tool of the bourgeoisie, which was placed in power after the war in order to deceive the masses, stifle their discontent and strengthen the shaken supremacy of the bourgeoisie. When the city bourgeoisie realised that Stamboliski wanted to seize all the power for the rural bourgeoisie and that he did not succeed in destroying the Communist Party, it considered him inconvenient, and harmful, and deposed him as easily as it had installed him.

Comrade Radek in his report quoted a telegram of the Executive Committee, dated May 4th, 1923, to the Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party. We reply to this point of Comrade Radek's criticism and emphasise the most important fact, namely, that a great portion of the so-called "Iskristis," who in May, 1921, criticised the Bulgarian Communist Party before the Executive Committee with the same arguments as were used in the telegram of May 4th, 1923, afterwards admitted the tactics of the party to be correct, and returned to the party which they had quitted for a brief period. We consider it necessary here to quote some excerpts from the manifesto of the Bulgarian Communist Party published in connection with this telegram, which furnishes the best reply to the criticisms advanced in the above-mentioned telegram.

" The Executive Committee of the Comintern considers that the reaction of to-day makes it incumbent on our party to increase its activities in certain directions and fight more energetically for the destruction of bourgeois domination and the success of the proletarian revolution.

" The Party Council has unanimously adopted the views expressed by the Comintern and calls upon you to grasp their importance, give full assistance to the Central Committee and to do your utmost to carry them out in the party's organisation and activities.

" The Communist Party is a mass party, but at its last congress it has noted that the number of organised workers in its ranks, in comparison with the half a million of urban and rural workers in our country, is entirely insufficient and that party organisations and groups must exert all efforts to draw still larger masses of workers into the party. The bourgeoisie, however, is making ever more audacious and truculent inroads into the liberties of the working class; it has subjected the Communist Press to a censorship and is annihilating it; it prohibits meetings and demonstrations, closes down working-men's clubs, perpetrates arrests, and persecutes and bludgeons the fighting workers; it tramples its own laws under foot,

turns all legality, organises its White Guard, and is making ready to outlaw the Communist Party. Both during the transport strike in Bulgaria (December, 1919, and January and February, 1922) and now in Jugoslavia and Roumania the bourgeoisie is making attempts on the existence of the Communist Party. Under these conditions the Communist Party, in order to be able to exist and carry out its aims, must seek other forms, ways and means to organise . . . and to fight. Legal organisations therefore do not suffice. There must also be illegal organisations.

“ . . . The Bulgarian Communist Party has always pointed out that its representatives in Parliament and in the communal councils should make use of these bourgeois representative institutions, not for petty reformist activities, but for agitation and the revolutionisation of the masses. But in practice the party was not always able to make adequate application of its true interpretation of the decisions and exhaustive instructions passed by its congresses in connection with activities in representative government institutions. To-day, when the bourgeoisie is making Parliament a blind instrument and screen for its reckless dictatorship, when it daily tramples the autonomy of the councils underfoot, transforms them into organs of the Central Government and uses force to paralyse the efforts of the Communist communal councils to alleviate the situation of the masses—the party organisations and our representatives in the electoral institutions should become more imbued with the revolutionary aims of the party in these institutions. The campaign for the carrying out of our programme in the councils is growing; the conflicts between the councils and the Central Government are becoming more frequent and more acute. It is our duty to extend and intensify them into a mass revolutionary struggle and to advocate the necessity for taking possession of the Central Government.

“ . . . The accentuated internal and international crisis in the Balkans has confronted the Communist Parties of the Balkan countries with the problem of increasing their offensive revolutionary campaign. This crisis may at any moment cause the masses to arise and provoke a revolution in any of the Balkan countries. The task of the Bulgarian Communist Party is to spur the movement onwards, to take advantage of all social conflicts, called forth by the discontent of the masses, for the purpose of extending and intensifying the mass revolutionary struggle and preparing and accelerating the proletarian revolution. The mass campaigns of the Communist Party, however, should always be well organised and prepared. They should be supervised by the party and the party organisations; and this can only be attained by more intensive centralisation and an iron discipline within the party.

“ Comrades, the Bulgarian proletariat is not alone. At its side, shoulder to shoulder, fight the proletariat of the neighbouring Balkan countries. The Communist Parties in the Balkans are united

in a Balkan Confederation, whose aim is to unite, co-ordinate and lead the general revolutionary struggle of the Balkan workers. The revolution may break out in one of the Balkan countries sooner than in another, but in order to insure the complete success of the revolution in the Balkans there must be mutual help, unity of action, and a common leadership of the revolutionary struggle in all the Balkan countries both during the period of preparation of the advent of the revolution and after it has broken out."

A number of articles have appeared in the German Communist Press dealing with the position occupied by the Bulgarian Communist Party on June 9th. We consider it unnecessary to reply to these articles separately: the present article replies to all the principal arguments directed against the tactics of the party contained in the aforementioned articles. In some of these articles, however, there are false and even tendentious accusations. For instance, Comrade H.W., in the "Rote Fahne," did not quote exactly and fully the manifestos of the Central Committee after June 9th, and the resolutions of the Party Council, July 6th.

Comrade Rakosi, in an article entitled "The New Position of the Bulgarian Communist Party," printed in the "International Press Correspondence," likewise fails to quote the manifesto of the Central Committee in full. He left out the appeal to the labouring masses in the cities and villages to fight for a workers' and peasants' Government, which the Central Committee had already dispatched on June 9th. He speaks of the reduction of votes of the Communist Party at the last Parliamentary elections, but he fails to mention the outrages under which this took place and that the votes of the party increased in 1923 by thirty thousand (from 180,000 in 1920 to 210,000 in 1923) in comparison with the previous Parliamentary elections. He tries to scoff at the party for having turned down the proposal of the Broad Socialists for a "Left Bloc," at the same time that it was speaking of the blood ties of the popular masses with the reserve officers and non-commissioned officers. Comrade Rakosi apparently does not know what Left Bloc the Broad Socialists meant: they meant a Bloc with the Turlak farmers (i.e., with the Right Wing of the Peasant League) and with the Radicals (who have already united with the Democrats and Popularists). Had Comrade Rakosi known what Left Bloc was meant he would probably not have recommended it to the Bulgarian Communist Party; and since he was not aware of the precise facts, we think that Comrade Rakosi should not have been in a hurry with his criticism. As to the reserve officers and non-commissioned officers, Comrade Rakosi does not know that a large section of them belong to the small-propertied and small middle classes; that this section is related to the popular masses and with those who suffered at the front during the war; that it is neglected by the State, gets a pauper's pension

and is unemployed; that there is outside the bourgeois organisations of reserve officers a National Reserve Officers' Union with a membership of three thousand, the majority of whom sympathise with the Communist Party and the Peasant League; that the Communist Party cannot leave this mass of officers to be used by the bourgeoisie against it, against the workers and the peasants, but must exert all efforts to draw one section of them to its own side and neutralise the other, thereby introducing a division and breach in the militant organisations of the bourgeoisie; that the Communist Party in this way is considerably weakening the position of the bourgeoisie, which is seeking for a nucleus for its "volunteer detachments" (Fascist organisations), precisely among these reserve officers and non-commissioned officers; and that the party is strengthening its own positions in the fight against the **Fascist Reaction**. Comrade Rakosi apparently does not know all this; and since there are so many things he does not know, why does he come forward with his criticisms in the Press? These criticisms obviously can only serve to mislead the comrades.

K.



THE ETA MOVEMENT

A Strong Revolutionary Factor in the Coming Struggle for Proletarian Emancipation in Japan.

INTRODUCTION.

The Eta Class has become a great revolutionary factor in Japan. The public became aware of this during the rice riots of 1918, for the Eta took a prominent part in this uprising in all the large cities. They proved themselves capable of leading unorganised mobs and guiding mass action. In fact, they were the most determined and able of the revolutionary fighters. The Rioters, led by the Eta, took possession of and controlled entire cities, such as Kobe, Osaka, and Kyoto, during the rice riots. From these experiences the Eta became aware that they were in possession of great potential power among the masses. Since then, they have openly declared to the public that they intend to emancipate themselves by their own efforts.

The Eta have formed the lowest class in Japan for over a thousand years. It is estimated that there are about three million Eta at present. During the ten centuries of its existence, the growth and development of this class fluctuated considerably. But the most conspicuous characteristic of the Eta Class through all these ages is the fact that it is proletarian in make-up—it consists entirely of workers. The Eta belong to the Japanese race and it is impossible to distinguish an Eta from any other Japanese.

Why has the Eta become an outcast, hated and buffeted by all other classes? The Eta are confined to certain undesirable trades. They are butchers, leather workers, slaughtering, and undertakers. Buddhism prohibits the eating of flesh and the killing of live creatures. Thus, according to the Buddhist faith, the Eta are unclean persons and have been commonly accepted as such by the people.

During the feudal period (1606-1868) the occupational restrictions of the Eta Class became very definitely defined by custom. Their chief occupation is leather work such as making saddles and other horse equipment, drums of all kinds, leather sandals, etc.; and they dispose of these goods as pedlars among the common people, either making a house-to-house canvass, or selling on the streets. The Hinen, also outcasts, did the cheaper sort of entertaining, such as playing various kinds of instruments, singing, and dancing. The Eta Gashira-Dan Zaemon, during the feudal régime, had control of all the actors and actresses, as well as of the houses of prostitution, bath houses, fortune tellers, witch or female fortune tellers, and monkey performances; and of certain trades, such as pen maker (Fudeyui), ink maker (Sumishi), bow and arrow maker, maker of

strings for musical instruments, paper screen maker, paper hanger (Fusumashi), maker of unglazed earthenware (Kawarake shi), earthenware baker, maker of hats of bamboo bark or sedge, maker of straw rain coats, stone mason, plasterer, comb maker, etc. Dan Zaemon was himself an Eta, but he was recognised by the Tokugawa Government and received a salary from it.

The prison warders and hangmen and those who care for executed bodies were Eta—everything that was considered as undesirable work by the ordinary person was given to the Eta to do.

In 1708 the chief of the Eta died in Kyoto and there was no successor. After that each Eta village was put under the control of an elder Eta. Thus the outcast class obtained complete self-government.

Long before the revolution of 1868 the Hinin (cheap performers and entertainers) were emancipated and became part of the class of commoners. Some of the professional Eta people were also freed, but the Eta who pursued the old trade of butchery and leather work, and who lived in the Eta villages, were ostracised more than ever, and were thoroughly despised by the common people.

The Eta are not allowed to live outside certain restricted areas—either fixed districts within the city, or entire Eta villages in the countryside. The Eta population increases extraordinarily fast, but it is given no space for expansion. The Eta, like all other people, wish to raise their standards of living, and their efforts to live a freer and more expansive life brought them into conflict with their non-Eta neighbours. The Government stepped in and passed repressive measures against the Eta. Other outcasts have long since been absorbed by the people of Japan, and all ostracism against them has ceased. But the Eta alone, because of their despised occupations and because of their seclusion, have been oppressed more and more both socially and politically. Finally even the Government itself placed legal restrictions upon them, governing their relations with the rest of the Japanese population.

In 1872 the population of Japan was estimated at 33,110,000 and in 1916 at 55,640,000. Thus the yearly increase was from seven to eight hundred thousand. According to this average increase, the present population of Japan must be about 60,000,000. The Eta population in 1872 was about 380,000, making the proportion of Eta to the rest of the population about 1 to 92. The official census gives the Eta population at about 1,500,000, but it is popularly claimed that the Eta Class comprises about 3,000,000 to-day. Thus the present proportion of Eta to the rest of the population is about 1 to 20. This increased proportion may have been an important factor in the change of conditions among the Eta and in their present awakening. Those Eta who had been living incognito among the people and had mingled with them in disguise, have come out openly. The Eta to-day estimate their own number at about three million.

The growth in the population was one of the chief reasons why maltreatment and oppressions against them at the hands of society increased. In December, 1870, for instance, Wakayama, a feudal lord, said that as he had noticed that in recent years the Eta had developed bad manners and were insolent in their conduct, they must note the following regulations and obey them:—

1. All Eta must walk along one side of the street only, in order not to obstruct other passers-by.

2. No Eta may appear on the streets after sunset or before sunrise, not even in the suburbs of the cities. In the country he must not loaf about at night.

3. No Eta may enter restaurants or other eating places.

4. Except when it rains, no Eta may wear a hat or use a parasol.

5. The only footwear an Eta may use is the sandal. (There are various kinds of footwear in Japan, such as geta, omotetsuki, setta asaura, and kutsu.)

There were numerous other restrictions generally practised against the Eta. For instance, an Eta was not allowed to enter the house of a commoner; if the latter had a gate, the Eta was compelled to take off his shoes and enter the premises barefooted. There is an anecdote illustrating the fact that the life of an Eta, according to the laws of the feudal Government, was considered to be worth one-seventh of the value of the life of a commoner. A commoner once killed an Eta. Dan Zaemon appealed to the Mayor of Yedo (Tokio) for redress and was told by the latter that the status of the Eta was one-seventh that of a commoner; therefore, when the murderer had killed six more Eta, he was to be punished. Dan Zaemon was compelled to submit to this verdict.

Most of the oppressive measures against the Eta were inaugurated during the Tokugawa régime. It was at the beginning of this era that the Eta were placed under the rule of the Dan Zaemon. In 1669 the Government prescribed what clothing the Eta were to wear—their clothing was to be of inferior quality compared with that of the commoners. All registrations of vital statistics concerning the Eta were to be made separately from those of the commoners. Inter-marriage between the Eta and commoners was strictly prohibited. The Eta were not allowed to live among the commoners. This regulation, however, was secretly disobeyed. The Eta have always endeavoured to mingle with the other Japanese, often secretly becoming servants in the families of commoners, in spite of the increasing harshness of the Government's regulations against co-mingling.

The Revolution of 1868—The Eta and the new Era.

The revolution of 1868 abolished all class distinctions and legally established freedom of occupation and of movement. All feudal rights and privileges and all religious and social restrictions were abolished. All people within the country were absolutely equal, and there were no police regulations discriminating against any groups of former classes. A Government decree forbade the use of the terms Eta and Hinin, all people became "commoners" and were "equal before the laws of the country." Thus, the Eta officially became the equal of any citizens in Japan. They were admitted to the schools, universities and other institutions of learning, served in the army, and performed all public duties together with the other citizens.

But the customs and habits of centuries cannot be so easily changed by a mere Government decree. The attitude of the other people could not change overnight, especially since the Government, instead of refraining from using any special class name, adopted the word "Shinheimin" (new commoner) to designate the former Eta. Thus the Eta still remained in a class by themselves, shunned as before. They felt this social discrimination more keenly than the former legal discrimination, for they felt equality to be their right and were determined to get it. This defiant attitude made the Eta more unpopular than ever.

The social status of the Eta, therefore, did not improve after the revolution. On the contrary, it has been getting worse and worse. The insistence of the Eta on social equality, in the face of the deep and unshakable social prejudice against them, has made the other Japanese people more determined than ever in ostracising them. For centuries they have considered him to be unclean, due to his profession of slaughtering animals. An even though all of Japan eats flesh and does not consider as unclean to do so since the revolution and since Western influence has increased, the prejudice towards the Eta has not been overcome. In the eyes of the Japanese he was born unclean and he must not come in contact with those who are pure. The Eta still cannot inter-marry with the others. Even in business circles he is made to feel the stigma of his birth. Legally he cannot be denied his part in business transactions, but an Eta has no chance of promotion in a Japanese business house, unless it is controlled by Eta. As he is compelled to serve in the army and navy (he has shown marked abilities in some instances in these fields) it is impossible to deny him the advantages of higher education. But even in these enlightened spheres, social ostracism is felt keenly by him, especially since he is theoretically and legally the equal of all.

The economic conditions of the Eta has become decidedly worse

than it was during the feudal régime. Although the Eta during that time had been restricted to certain occupations, he had had the advantage of a monopoly in those trades. With the introduction of capitalist methods of production, the slaughtering of animals began to be done by large slaughter-houses companies. Tanning of hides and the making of harness and other leather goods began to be done on a large scale. The less "unclean" of the minor trades, such as policeman, undertaker, and prison warder, became respectable trades and were adopted by commoners. Thus the trades of the Eta have slipped from them, but their social ostracism is more distinct than ever. As a class the Eta became poorer, their standard of living became lower, more and more they deserved to be called filthy—economically and socially they were being crushed.

To escape social stigma and economic discrimination, hundreds of Eta secretly mingle with the commoners and pursue various trades among them. But theirs is a precarious position, for they are in constant danger of being discovered.

The children of the Eta also suffer. In the larger Eta village, there is usually an elementary school especially for Eta children, but the Eta children in the smaller villages and from scattered Eta families are compelled to attend the ordinary schools. These children are persecuted by the other children in the school and are discriminated against by the school authorities. Some time ago in Nara Prefecture there was a serious riot of Eta inhabitants because some Eta children had been maltreated by the school authorities and had been insulted by their schoolmates.

In the army barracks and in the universities and higher institutions of learning, Eta soldiers and students are discriminated against by the others. This coming generation of youthful Eta find such social ostracism unbearable.

The Eta Movement for Emancipation.

But the Eta have shown themselves capable of throwing off these social and economic burdens. In the rice riots of 1918 came the first test of strength, and ever since then they have been asserting their rights at every opportunity. Naturally, this results in greater suspicion on the part of the privileged classes than ever before, and frequently the Eta are openly insulted.

Encouraged by their successes in the rice riots, the Eta have begun an organised movement for emancipation. The organisation they have formed is called "Suiheisha."

Suiheisha and its Activities.

"Suihei" means horizon and "sha" means society. The intentions of the Eta to rise from their present submerged condition to

the level of other classes are indicated in this name. Their movement is meant to bring about a general water-level of all classes. Comrade Sano, the leader of the Japanese Communist movement, writing in "La Emancipo," a radical monthly, explained the ideals of the members of Suiheisha as follows:—

"The new society that the members of Suiheisha are depicting for the future is 'Suihei no Shakai,' or a water-level society. Suiheishakai is the promised land for the members of Suiheisha, a society in which all men stand on the same level line; it is a non-class, non-exploitation society, where all men work equally and all men enjoy equally. In this society will blossom forth in modern garb the beautiful ideals of Shinran, the revolutionary religious leader; through this society the 'Kingdom of Liberty' will be realised, which, according to Karl Marx and Engels, will follow the destruction of capitalist society."

The name Suiheisha has come to be of great revolutionary significance in present-day Japan. The association was organised in March, 1921, in Wabara, Nara Prefecture, by Selichiro Sakamoto, Mankichi Nishimitsu, Kisaku Komai, Tomiichi Yoneda and others, after the Youth Comrades' Association was dissolved. At the very beginning the Suiheisha refused to campaign for the abolition of discriminations by appealing to the sympathies of the non-Eta population; it launched a spontaneous movement among the Eta people themselves, endeavouring to awaken them and draw their attention to the necessity of a mass movement on their own behalf. They issued a call for organising the Suiheisha throughout the 6,000 Eta villages in the country. There was a ready response to the call from many villages, and numerous branches have been organised. The work was so successful that it was decided to hold a national congress of Suiheisha.

The first national Congress of Suiheisha was opened on March 3, 1922, in Okasaki Public Hall, Kyoto. Four thousand delegates were present and the following platform and resolutions were passed:—

Platform.

1. The Eta people shall achieve their liberation through their own acts.
2. We, the people of the Special Community, demand full liberty to choose occupations as well as complete economic freedom, and are determined to obtain them.
3. We, who now understand the laws of life, shall march to the final goal of human perfection.

Resolutions.

1. Those who offer us insult and act contemptuously towards us shall be reprimanded in the most thoroughgoing manner.

2. At the National Headquarters of Suiheisha at Kyoto, a monthly organ, "Suihei," shall be published.
3. Having submitted our case to East and West Honganji (Buddhist Sects), in the ranks of which the Eta constitute an overwhelming majority, we await an answer as to the attitude of the sect toward our movement for emancipation, and shall determine our own attitude in future in accordance with the reply given.

The national Suiheisha was organised, a constitution and by-laws were adopted, and the following lines of activity were laid down:—

1. Diffusion of education among the masses.
2. Housing reform.
3. Establishment of consumers' co-operative unions.
4. Settlement of conflicts by arbitration.
5. Road repairing.
6. Improvement of conditions in slaughter houses.

During the first year of its existence, the influence of the Suiheisha steadily increased throughout the country. On March 3, 1923, the Second National Congress was called.

The Second National Congress of the Suiheisha.

The Second National Congress was attended by 5,000 delegates who had full voting power, and about 5,000 in an advisory capacity. These, together with interested non-official visitors, brought the attendance to over thirty thousand. There were several women, young girls and youths among the delegates. Three urban prefectures—Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto, and 26 rural prefectures, in fact, almost all sections of the country, were represented.

The Enlarged Executive held their conference on March 2, and various field reports were made. The most impressive report and proposal was that of the boys' and girls' organisation of Suiheisha.

The Second Congress passed many important measures to be carried out during the ensuing year. With reference to discrimination in the army and navy, the Congress voted a strong protest to be sent to the Ministers of the Army and Navy. One of the branches of Suiheisha proposed that an appeal be sent to the Government asking it to pass a law to punish those guilty of insulting the Eta; this proposal was unanimously voted down, for the Eta have resolved not to depend upon present laws for redress, by which they mean that they do not trust the laws passed by the present Parliament. With reference to ostracism, they voted to continue direct action in retaliation for insults as long as there are no effective legal guarantees against such discrimination.

The resolution which will have the most far-reaching effect is the one with reference to religion. The Shinshu Sect was the only

Buddhist Sect which admitted the Eta people to worship. For 700 years the Honganji, or Shinshu Sect, has been taking advantage of its monopoly privileges over the Eta, and exploiting them in the most thorough-going manner. At the Congress the Eta passed a resolution not to support the Shinshu either financially or morally for 20 years, thus breaking with the only religious sect that will admit them.

Other important resolutions were passed, some of which are as follows:—

1. To establish producing and consumers' co-operative unions.
2. To establish a Suiheisha Library, as well as circulating or travelling libraries.
3. To reconstruct the Youths' Association and Saigo Gunjinka (Association of Reservists).
4. To establish a peasant union.
5. To establish a women's branch of Suiheisha.
6. To establish a propaganda school to train youths for fighting.
7. To establish a Suiheisha printing house.
8. To publish a weekly organ (a monthly organ is already in existence).
9. To internationalise the Suiheisha movement.

The third resolution requires explanation. There already exist Youths and Reservists Associations which are semi-official in character, and, of course, are decidedly reactionary. They were organised for the purpose of checking any radical ideas or movements. In many places to-day they are working in conjunction with the Fascists. The Suiheisha intends to reconstruct them into associations that are more in accord with its purposes.

A street parade through the City of Kyoto preceded the opening of the Second Congress on March 3. The Press estimated that over thirty thousand people took part in the parade. The sessions were conducted entirely by Eta, and no regular policemen were present during the proceedings, as there had been on the previous day. Their own committee kept perfect order.

All the resolutions and manifestos adopted by the Congress were unanimously passed, although some of them evoked heated discussions.

The tone and spirit of many of the speeches delivered at the Congress clearly indicated its revolutionary and decidedly proletarian character. The Government found it difficult to interfere directly with such a strong mass movement; it was compelled to resort to indirect action through the barbarous Fascist movement to counteract the influence of the Eta and to fight against its increasing development.

Open fights have occurred between Fascist bands and Eta groups, some of them taking the shape of armed conflicts and developing into

riots and bloody battles. I shall give an account later of such a battle which recently took place between the Eta and the Fascisti in Nara Prefecture.

The Eta Movement and Fascist Organisations.

On March 18 a pitched battle was fought between the members of Suiheisha in Shimo Mizu and the members of Kokusuikai (the Japanese Fascist organisation), in Isogi County, Nara Prefecture. The battle lasted for two days, from four to five hundred persons were engaged on each side, armed with various weapons, such as pitch-forks, bamboo lances, and rifles. It was the most bloody battle that had ever taken place in the experience of the district police. Several people on each side were seriously wounded, and many were injured. Several hundred police were called upon to suppress the fight; the army at Osaka was asked to send a battalion, but the fighting had ceased before it arrived. According to the Press reports, over 5,000 persons were involved during the two days' fighting.

The immediate cause of this bloody conflict was the insult offered to Katsujiro Minamitso, a member of the Suiheisha, by Kumakichi Morita, a member of the Kokusuikai, at the former's wedding procession. The local Executive of the Suiheisha demanded that the insult be retracted and that proper apologies be made. Morita, backed by the Kokusuikai organisation, flatly refused. The Suiheisha responded with mass action, several hundred armed men invading the village where the perpetrator lived. The Kokusuikai immediately prepared for battle, calling upon its members from all the neighbouring towns, and arming them. The members of the Suiheisha throughout the adjoining prefectures read of the fight in the Press or heard of it by direct communication, and ten thousand Eta were soon ready to come to the assistance of their comrades.

The Government authorities did not immediately suppress the riot by force; but sent in the police inspector to attempt mediation. Comrade Takahashi, writing in the "Emancipation," a monthly, described the event as follows: "In Shimo Mizu an important event took place that frightened and terrorised the public. A conflict between Suiheisha and Kokusuikai, arising from the 'four-finger' insult,* has assumed the proportions of a bloody battle fought on both sides of the river. Troops were called upon to suppress the fighting. From beginning to end the members of the Suiheisha conducted themselves with dignity. They fought against the united front of Kokusuikai, police, and gamblers' organisations and demonstrated by their acts how close the bonds are that tie the members of the Suiheisha into one great brotherhood."

*Before the bourgeois revolution of 1868, there were three recognised classes in Japan. The Eta were not included in any of these classes. Hence, holding up four fingers to an Eta is a popular form of insult.

After a great deal of discussion and persuasion, Kumakishi was at last prevailed upon to write an apology. The members of the Suiheisha gained their point, but at the price of imprisonment of many of their members. Nearly 20 are now being tried. The determined fight of the Suiheisha terrorised the ruling class and gained the admiration and sympathy of the workers and peasants of the country. The Government, in consequence, began to persecute the members of the Suiheisha and tried to suppress the movement, but in vain. The movement has been growing in intensity and scope, and the members have become more class-conscious and revolutionary in spirit.

The Press frequently reports conflicts between the Suiheisha members and the Fascist organisations. In Fukuoka several of the Suiheisha members have been imprisoned on charges of rioting. The Mayor of one of the villages insulted a member of the Suiheisha and was threatened with force by the organisation. As a consequence he resigned his position, but over 200 members were arrested on a charge of sedition.

Since the Second Congress held in March, the Suiheisha has been growing steadily throughout the country. Many new branches have been organised, new members have been pouring in, and the youths' and women's organisations have taken definite shape. A good deal of work has been done along the lines laid down by the Congress, in spite of repressive and brutal interference by the Government. On April 3 the Suiheisha of Hyogo Prefecture held a prefectural conference, and on April 30 one was held in Kyushu under the banner of the class struggle. In Gumma Prefecture one thousand members were present at a prefectural conference held recently.

The Suiheisha movement has a great mission to perform, not only in emancipating the Eta, but in reconstructing all of society in common with the workers and peasants. It has become more and more proletarian in character, its leaders are closely identified with the labour and peasant movements, and its tendencies are veering definitely toward social revolution. Efforts are being made to make the movement an international one. It is in close communication with the Japanese immigrants in America and Canada, and its propaganda has recently been extended to Korea, where there is a similarly submerged class. The editor of "La Emancipo," reviewing the work of the Second Congress of the Suiheisha, makes the following predictions with regard to the future of the Suiheisha movement: "It is my firm conviction that the Suiheisha is one of the greatest factors in the coming radical reconstruction in Japan."

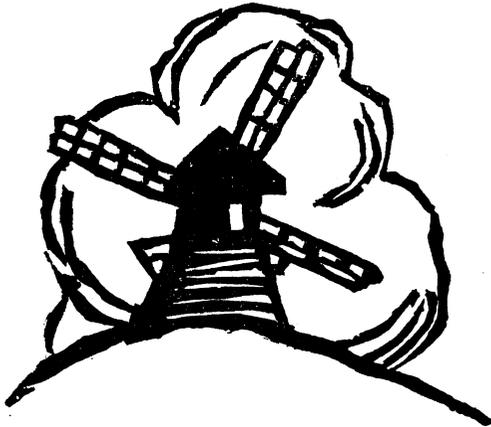
Conclusion.

The Suiheisha, the organisation representing the movement for

emancipation of the Eta in Japan, will, as the editor of "La Emancipo" predicted, play an important role in the social revolution in the Far East. At the Second Congress, two youths who spoke made a great impression on those present—Masuda Hisao, a girl delegate, and Konojiro Yamada, a boy delegate, 15 years of age. Their speeches inspired their listeners with the profoundest sympathy for the youth movement. Since then, the movement among the youths and the women has been progressing rapidly throughout the country. Thus the movement for the emancipation of the Eta will surely play a great role in the coming struggle of the proletariat of Japan.

SEN KATAYAMA,

Kislovodsk, 1923.



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