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

### The German Railway Strike

by Paul Frölich (Berlin).

\*\* The present railway strike is without parallel. The first railway strike in Germany occurred in 1919 when the first stormy period of the German revolution was coming to an end. It was significant that only the lower ranks of railway workers took part in the strike, while only a small number of officials participated. The railways were again paralyzed at the time of the Kapp Putsch. But at that time the strike was approved of by the government, in fact the latter called for a general strike against the counter-revolutionaries. A number of partial-strikes which were declared later, were settled before they developed into mass movements.

This time all the railwaymen in Northern Germany are on strike. Traffic is completely paralyzed. The strike has extended to Baden. In Württemberg the railwaymen are about to decide as to whether they go out on strike or not. Traffic in Bavaria is severely curtailed on account of the scarcity of coal. In the occupied regions the strike has been suppressed by the Allied authorities. Traffic however is limited because those trains which at the beginning of the strike left the occupied regions have not returned. A further curtailment is to be expected when the scarcity of coal makes itself felt.

The strike was commenced by those officials, train conductors and firemen who are organized in the *Reichsgewerkschaft Deutscher Eisenbahner* (National Union of German Railwaymen). These workers were driven into the class struggle by their desperate situation—a struggle which they are carrying on with the greatest energy. The strike was declared in spite of the brutal threats of the government and police oppression. In answer to the trade-union leaders and the *Allgemeine Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund* (General Federation of Labor) who declared that the strike was a crime and brazenly demanded that it be broken off, the strike was intensified. Those workers organized in the *Deutsche Eisenbahner Verband* (German Railwaymen's Union) struck in sympathy with the locomotive engineers against the will of their own leaders. The strike has not only the sympathy of the battle-tried workers but also the active solidarity of the lower government officials. It has been indirectly supported and intensified by a strike of the Berlin municipal workers, who have shut down the electricity, gas and water works and paralyzed the street-car system, and by a number of important strikes in the rest of the country. The strike movement is continually spreading.

The railway strike has been caused by the railwaymen's pitiable wages which are much lower than those of the factory workers and in the government's threats of mass dismissals in order to reestablish the railways on a self-supporting basis. However, the strike is at the same time an answer to the tax compromise recently concluded between the Social Democrats and the bourgeois parties. The standard of living of the workers and officials will be reduced by half should the supposed taxes come into effect. The railway strike is therefore the first warning and the announcement of even more serious struggles in the near future which will shake the state to its very foundations. The tax compromise and together with it the Wirth government are already in danger. The government recognized the peril and acted accordingly. It employed the sharpest measures against the railwaymen before the strike even commenced. All its threats have proven mere empty words up to the present, and it has only one hope—the destruction of the strike front in negotiations with the trade-unions.

The Social Democratic Party is in a very difficult situation. It was compelled by its entire past to oppose such a test of strength between the government and the proletariat. Up to now it has been able to crush almost all the great movements of the German proletariat through the moral influence of its party and the ruthless employment of the White Terror. It is compelled to continue along this path and has recently made an important step in this direction—the alliance with the capitalistic People's Party and the "compromise of the hunger taxes". Burdened with the entire weight of this alliance with Stinnes against the working-class, this party had to stake its last remnants of prestige among the working-class and at the same time its prestige with the government officials which it had won in the course of the past year. It played and lost. Even if these skillful tacticians should again be able to confuse the striking railwaymen and bring about their defeat their party will have lost its prestige and power. And it will have lost these not only with the workers but with the bourgeois parties as well.

The Independent Socialists present a deplorable spectacle. They again attempted their old tactics of waiting for things to develop and then seeing which side would be the stronger. They have even today not yet showed their colors. They have not solidarized with the struggling workers but merely made a beautiful gesture of protest against the extraordinary decrees of President Ebert and the Berlin Chief of Police, Richter. At the same time they tried to weaken the moral strength of the railwaymen and the Berlin municipal workers with all the petty weapons of publicity and political routine. The Independent Socialist Party has been completely eliminated as a factor in this giant struggle. It is satisfied with the despicable role of an intermediary who is suffered, but respected as a force by no one.

This giant strike is the most effective contradiction of the theories of the Hilferdings and Levis on the political development in Germany and their slanderous statements about the tactics of the German Communist Party (K.P.D.). For the K.P.D. has in this struggle proved that it is able to suppress all *putchist* tendencies in its ranks and in the working-class and demonstrated its worth as political leader of the striking workers. Its moral victory is certain. The Communist Party will emerge from this struggle strengthened and with greater political prestige than before.

The effect of the strike will be most profoundly felt by the German trade-unions. Even in their long chain of betrayals the German trade-union leaders have never declared themselves so outright as understrappers of the bourgeois state. They have never before proceeded with such ruthlessness against a group of striking workers.

Never before have the workers overridden the decision of the Federation of Labor with such firmness and determination. In some degree the fact that the strike was commenced by an organization which is not affiliated to the Federation of Labor may have acted as a contributory factor. This however does not affect the working of these facts upon the entire working-class. The German trade-union leaders have for the first time suffered a great moral defeat. For the first time the workers see how a large body of workers go their way paying no attention to the slanders, machinations and orders of the labor leaders. For the first time they see how powerless the state is against the determined will of the working class. And for the first time they have employed the tactics continually advocated by the Communists as the only weapon for the winning of economic victories—the large-scale strike. The authority of the trade-union leaders has suffered a grave blow. It is wavering; it may perhaps fall. The leaders are

still trying to maintain themselves in power by the employment of the most brutal measures. The *Deutsche Eisenbahnverband* believed that it could prevent the spread of the strike by expelling the local organizations which had gone on strike. It failed completely. Its leaders will not even be able to split the union. But the Railwaymen's Union together with the whole German trade-union movement will as a result of this strike make an enormous step forward on the road to the revolutionizing of the trade-unions.

This strike, the outcome of which at the present moment appears to be an eventual victory for the railwaymen, may end either in victory or defeat — the political situation in Germany will have been decisively changed.

## The German Railway Strike and the State Budget

by A. Friedrich (Berlin).

\*\* The German Government rejected the demands of the railway officials, as presented by the National Union of German Railwaymen, on the ground that the budget could not suffer any further overburdening. The government declared that these demands, if granted, would involve the addition of 40,000,000,000 marks to the budget—a sum equal to the "Compulsory Loan", which the German capitalists are to advance to the government in accordance with the recent tax compromise.

The government's rejection of these demands resulted in the outbreak of a general railway strike in the entire Reich on February 2nd. The determination with which the railwaymen are prepared to fight for their demands can be explained by the fact that, according to official statistics, the wages and salaries of railway officials and workers have been increased merely twelve-fold since 1914. The cost of living, however, has in the same period risen at least 2500% and the official index number for wholesale prices in December 1921 was 36 times as large as before the war.

Another cause for the spontaneous character of the railway strike is that this is a fight for the very existence of the railwaymen. However, it is more than that. It is a fight whose outcome is of decisive importance for the interests of Germany's entire proletariat. In order to decrease the federal budget and to increase the efficiency of the railways without having to make further expenditures the government announced that in the course of the coming year it would decrease the railway personnel, which to-day is approximately 1,000,000, by hundreds of thousands and at the same time would abolish the eight-hour day on the railways. This plan is also at stake in this strike.

The government answered the strike threats of the railwaymen with an absolute denial of the right of railway employees to strike. The railwaymen regard this as not only an attempt to deprive them of the right to strike but of the right of organization as well. The entire working-class of Germany immediately realized that this action of the government was a blow at the common interest of all German workers, employees and officials. The measures of the government are for the German proletariat only an indication of the course the German government is prepared to follow against the working masses.

This new policy of the government was rendered apparent in the "tax compromise", which burdens Germany's workers with billions—the indirect taxes alone total 42,000,000,000 marks—while upon German capital is laid merely the notorious "Compulsory Loan", which makes the German capitalists creditors of the government. In this connection the "Compulsory Loan", which only amounts to 1,000,000,000 gold marks, is by no means sufficient to take care of the reparations payments, amounting alone to more than 3,000,000,000 gold marks yearly. Since the government did not dare to tax the German bourgeoisie effectively it had no other alternative but to extort all further sums necessary for the domestic as well as foreign budget from the laboring masses.

All this shows that the present railway strike in Germany which has been supported by the German proletariat with spontaneous unanimity, and whose condemnation by the central organizations of the German trade-union movement has only served to intensify the strike still further and to extend it to other categories of workers and officials, is not only a wage struggle in the usual sense of the word, but to very large degree a political struggle. It is a fight against the tax program of the government, a fight against the manner in which the government is attempting to fulfil its reparations obligations by compelling the working masses to toil and sweat to raise the huge necessary sums.

Furthermore the government as well as the bourgeois press says no word of the fact that all these attempts to balance

the budget and to render the government-owned enterprises and above all the railways and the post-office self-supporting by increasing the hours of labor and reducing wages (which are today no longer sufficient for the covering of expenditures necessary for obtaining the necessities of life) can never be realized. These attempts must fail because the root of the evil is not struck and under the present policy of the government can not even be touched. The main difficulty with the German railways is not the expenditures for wage and salaries but the expenditures which the management has to make for the obtaining of necessary material, above all coal and iron. Official statistics prove this latter perfectly. It has already been shown that wages and salaries are today on the average 1200% above the pre-war level. On the other hand, the prices for coal and iron have already reached a level 3200% above the prewar figure, according to the official wholesale index number for December 1921. Although since then wages and salaries have been practically unchanged, the prices of coal and iron have been again enormously increased as from the 1st of February, so that their price is now about 45 times as high as before the war.

This is confirmed by a statement made by the German Ministry of Transport in an official pamphlet entitled "The State Railways":—

The percentage of total expenditures due to wages and salaries has sunk from 61% before the war to 47%, in spite of an increase of about 300,000 in the personnel. This increase of the personnel is due to the introduction of the eight-hour day, lowered efficiency as a result of undernourishment, and, last but not least, to the seriously impaired condition of the roadbed and rolling stock as against 1914. On the other hand, the percentage of expenditures laid out for the supply of materials, principally for coal, coke, iron and steel, rose from 39% to 53% in spite of the great decrease in railway traffic in Germany as against the pre-war period. The expenditures for coal alone, which before the war amounted to 9% of the total running expenses, have jumped to 18%, i. e., exactly twofold. In this connection it must not be forgotten that the quality of coal today cannot be compared with that of the pre-war period and that coke is being used instead of coal to a much greater degree than before.

These figures of the Ministry of Transport demonstrate that the profiteering of German large industry alone prevents the restoration of the German railways. The German railways would first have to be freed from this parasitic burden before they could be made self-supporting. Thus, it would be necessary for the government to expropriate the coal and iron mines, blast furnaces, steel works and locomotive and car factories of the coal and iron magnates and put them under its own control. Such a step would of course be directed against "Big Business", and the German government, which today is completely dependent upon the latter, dares not take this step. If it should desire to do so, it would have to rely upon the aid of the German proletariat and principally upon the railway workers and officials. It would have to lead these workers and officials in the fight against "Big Business".

But it is just this assistance that the German government cannot employ because "Big Business" forbids it, and the existence of the Wirth government is based on the existence of German finance capital.

In the present struggle between the government and workers and officials the German bourgeoisie has only one recommendation—that the government should remain firm against all demands and it should not deviate one inch from the policy of protection for capital and exploitation of labor. The German bourgeoisie knows that it will find a warm response for these arguments among the bourgeoisie of all countries. For instance, in the French periodical, "L'Économiste Européen", of the 13th of January, a short note pointed out the influence of the railway strike which occurred in the last days of December 1921 upon the tax and reparations plans of the government. Although the increase in expenditures caused by the concessions of the government at that time amounted to less than 150,000,000 marks, the French periodical did not hesitate to reprint without further ado the statements of the German bourgeois press that these concessions would cause an increase of 10,000,000,000 marks in the budget. It then accused the German government of being too yielding against the German workers and officials and of not being interested in the reparations payments.

However the German strike may end, it has clearly proved to the German workers, employees and officials how closely connected the success of an economic struggle is connected with the formation of the necessary political premises. It has also been instructive in very large degree, for it said in effect to the workers and officials:—

"The only government in Germany which will give you what you demand and what you need will be the government that you yourselves establish—a government which will be prepared to take up a ruthless fight against the might of capital."

Furthermore, the spontaneous mobilization of all the workers on the side of the strikers is a sign of the intensity of the need of the masses in Germany today — a need which is caused by the incessant depreciation of German money and the increasing taxburden. If the present struggle ends merely with a compromise and not with a victory for labor, the political nature of the struggle as we have described it will in the very near future undoubtedly bring about economic and social conflicts of even greater extent.

## The German Trade Union Bureaucracy and the Railway Strike

by Fritz Ruck (Berlin).

\*\* In this days one is forcibly reminded of the words of Rosa Luxemburg at the Charter Convention of the German Communist Party.

"It can be safely said that the German Socialists and trade-union leaders are the most infamous and dastardly blackguards that ever lived on earth."

After months of waiting and endless negotiations, the *Reichsgewerkschaft deutscher Eisenbahner* (German National Union of Railwaymen) finally declared a strike. This union of railwaymen has 270,000 members and comprises the majority of the railway-officials while the shop and roadbed workers are in large degree organized in the *Deutscher Eisenbahnerverband* (German Railwaymen's Union). The *Reichsgewerkschaft* is affiliated to the German Federation of Officials and is one of the few organisations of officials in Germany which adopted the strike weapon in its program after the November revolution.

At present it is principally the lower ranks of the personnel who are on strike. The first to go on strike was the important group of locomotive engineers. This class of officials is not only in a very poor economic situation but is threatened in its very existence by the new government policy. The profitability of the government-owned enterprises, promised by Rathenau to the Entente, is to be brought about by the lengthening of the railwaymen's hours of labor and by dismissals en masse. Thus at the same time the strike had both its economical and political aspects. Alongside the demands for the raising of salary and reclassification of the employees, since at present the classification is very unfavourable for the lower officials, the railwaymen's strike is a defensive move against the abolition of the eight-hour day and the threatened mass-dismissals.

In the struggle the government found a willing aide and standard-bearer of the interests of Capital in the German trade-union bureaucracy. From day to day the strike spreads, one group of railwaymen after another goes on strike and in the large cities the workers affiliated to the *Deutscher Eisenbahnerverband* go out on strike in sympathy with the striking railwaymen against the outspoken commands of their union executive. In such a situation, when every German worker is convinced by his own misery of the justice of the railwaymen's demands, the Executive of the *Allgemeine Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund* (General Federation of Labor) could find no other alternative but to attack the striking railwaymen from the rear. It issued a proclamation branding the strike as a "wild" one, i.e., not sanctioned by the trade-union bureaucracy, and calling upon the railwaymen immediately to resume work.

With this last act of betrayal, the German trade-union bureaucracy added a new leaf to its history during the last seven years — years which have marked nothing but an unending chain of service to capital and treason to the proletariat. The A.D.G.B. is moved in this action by grounds of a political nature. The hullabaloo about a "wild strike" is only raised to conceal this latter fact. In one of the sentences of its proclamation the A.D.G.B. openly admits that it is principally influenced by Germany's foreign policy in its campaign against the strike. The German trade-union bureaucracy together with the leaders of the Social Democrat Party have accepted the Stinnes policy, which plans to prolong the existence of German Capital and to free it from the reparations burden at the cost of the further impoverishment of the German proletariat.

But the command of the bureaucrats did not frighten the railwaymen into going back to work. The struggle, so long drawn out in fruitless negotiations, must be fought to a finish. The *Reichsgewerkschaft* has decided to continue the strike which has in the meantime turned into a general railway strike. The leaders of the A.D.G.B. are now seeking other means of killing

the strike. The government, which has refused to negotiate with the strikers, has for three days been negotiating with representatives of the A.D.G.B. but has not yet made an offer which the strikers are prepared to accept.

This strike, however it may turn out, will bring about profound changes in the German trade-union movement. The *Deutscher Eisenbahnerverband*, affiliated to the A.D.G.B., is now going through a grave crisis. A number of the largest local organizations of the *Deutscher Eisenbahnerverband* have gone on sympathy strike and very sharply condemned the attitude of the union executive, which, under the influence of the trade-union bureaucracy, is sabotaging the strike. What the course of the railway strike will be is hard to foretell. The struggle is continuing unwaveringly. The bourgeois press is attempting to influence the strikers by writing that the Communists are trying to exploit the struggle for their own political ends. When the ideology of a large percentage of the striking officials is taken into consideration it is not wholly impossible that this agitation against the Communists may have a certain modicum of success. They will none the less at the same time realize that the government is employing all the forces at its disposal against them, because they have dared to resort to the strike weapon for the improvement of their miserable conditions of living.

The living standard of the German workers and officials is already so low that the present strike of the railwaymen must be fought through to a victorious conclusion.

## The Railwaymen's Right to Strike as an International Problem

by W. Lada.

\*\* It seems likely that the present German railway strike will fill an important page in the chronicle of the international labor movement. At the same time it brings up many old and new problems of this movement. One of these problems is the railwaymen's right to strike.

The entire history of the labor movement is full of struggles for the right to organize. However, after this right had been legally recognized the struggle in no way disappeared. For as soon as the proletariat began to employ the freedom of organization to such a degree that it threatened the very continuance of capitalist profits, the bourgeoisie immediately attempted to deprive it of the weapon of organization. But the struggles for the railwaymen's right to strike have always been especially difficult and hard-fought.

The cause is not hard to find. The railways are the arteries of the capitalist organism. Whoever lays his hands upon them "has his hand at the throat of the state". And therefore even the most advanced strata of the bourgeoisie, who supported the workers' right to organize, maintain that there is and can be no right to strike on the part of officials and railwaymen.

The battles for the railwaymen's right to strike was first fought out in France. Briand, former apostle of the general strike and at that time agent of the French "Republican Democratic" bourgeoisie, employed all the power at the command of the class state in order to break the railway strike and to teach the railwaymen that for them there exists no right to strike. The insufficient might of the French labor movement enabled him at that time to win a victory. But the French bourgeoisie was not able to compel the officials to renounce their right to strike. And in 1919, under Clemenceau's dictatorship, the railwaymen again laid claim to this right to strike and also maintained it. Although they were also beaten in this struggle, their organization resisted all the attacks of the enemy. And in this organization the fighting spirit still lives and at any moment the battle may again commence.

In Italy the railwaymen maintained their right to strike even before the war. Even though the interests at stake were not important enough to require the employment of this extreme weapon, the Italian railwaymen employ the method of passive resistance. But they were also not afraid to strike. And only a short time ago in order to oppose the criminal Fascisti, the Roman proletariat, with the railwaymen at their head, resorted to the general strike. It thus proved that the proletariat, contrary to the opinion of the paralytic reformists, has at its command more efficient weapons than collaboration with bourgeoisie in a government.

In the same way the railwaymen in England had to win the recognition of their right to strike in battle. When in 1919, provoked by the government of Lloyd George, they prepared for the strike, the government turned the entire country into an armed camp. Till then the railwaymen belonged to the group in English working-class which was usually protected against

a reduction in wages. Although at the present time an even worse form of the impairment of their conditions of labor through the lengthening of the hours of work awaits them, they will perhaps prove that in the struggle for their rights they do not shrink back from a resort to the strike weapon. Under any circumstances the Irish railwaymen have recently demonstrated that. And the newly established Irish "Free" State has had an opportunity of showing our class brothers in Ireland that national "liberation" can bring good business for the capitalists but under no circumstances bring liberation to the proletariat.

Thus, all over the world—the fight for the railwaymen's right to strike. All over the world the bourgeoisie declares that it can not permit the railwaymen to grasp the state by the throat, but they themselves hold the railwaymen in an iron grip. However, the railwaymen everywhere show that they have the right to strike by *simply striking*.

In Germany the bourgeoisie had to concede the introduction of the freest sounding formulas in the constitution of the newly established democratic republic to the Social Democracy, arrived at power as a result of the revolutionary wave after the half-revolution of 1918, and which had as agents of the bourgeoisie taken over the protection of the bourgeois system. According to Article 159 of the Weimar Constitution, "the right of union for the defense and obtaining of better conditions of labor is guaranteed to everybody and for all trades". But as soon as a struggle arises the bourgeoisie shows that the alleged "right" to strike is no right, but merely a question of force. Here it remained for the Social Democrats of both wings to earn for themselves the notoriety of denying the railwaymen's right to strike. Today on one side of the Rhine the "democratic" French bourgeoisie and on the other side the German "democratic" bourgeois-Social Democratic government are employing all the weapons of the most naked class dictatorship against the railwaymen.

The problem has also another very interesting aspect. It must not be forgotten that entire capitalist Europe stands on a volcano. The shadow of war hangs over the Europe of the Versailles "Peace". Because of this danger of war the miners, metal and transport workers recently decided in Amsterdam that they would spring into the breach in order to oppose the militarist designs of imperialism. *These decisions must be followed by deeds in order not to remain mere empty words!* If the Amsterdam leaders of the transport workers desire to prevent war in case of necessity by a general strike, then they must today prove that the closest solidarity binds them to the fighting German railwaymen! For the question of the German railwaymen's right to strike is a question in dispute not only between the German bourgeoisie and the German proletariat, but between the proletariat of the whole world and the imperialist bourgeoisie of all countries. For the cause of the German railwaymen right to strike is at the present moment, when the railwaymen of all countries are preparing to employ this weapon against the danger of imperialist war, their cause. It is also their cause because the entire miserable situation of the German railwaymen has been brought about by international imperialist reaction!

*Therefore, if the strike of the German railwaymen should be prolonged, the railwaymen and transport workers of all countries—above all the workers of the "victorious" Entente countries—must seek ways and means of coming to their aid.*

And that is probably the most important lesson which—from the international standpoint—we can learn from the German railway strike.

## The Strike of the Berlin Municipal Workers

by Wilhelm Koenen (Berlin).

\*\* In spite of the extremely acute and critical social and political situation, the Berlin authorities—although with a "Socialist" majority in control—have attempted to compel the municipal workers and employees to accept a number of propositions as to conditions of labor. They went so far as to propose the lengthening of the hours of labor, shortening of vacations, abolition of vacation pay and pay in advance in event of dismissal, abolition of payment for holidays and sick benefits as well as of the participating voice of the shop councils, especially in regard to the employment and dismissal of labor.

After the authorities under the leadership of a Social Democratic City Councillor had made this unheard-of anti-social *démarche*, they drew out the negotiations concerning a new wage scale for months, so that the decision of the workers on the long-

awaited award of the Greater Berlin Arbitration Board occurred together with the general strike of the railwaymen. The intervention of the Labor Ministry was of no success on account of the feeling prevalent in the ranks of the workers, intensified as it was by the long weeks of negotiations. This award furthermore gave the municipal workers no concession worthy the name. The Ministry proposed that the strike decision should be postponed until the coming summer, at which time the municipal workers would find a strike in defense of their interest very difficult. Therefore, in a referendum by a majority of 94% of the total vote cast the municipal workers decided to commence an immediate strike against their further impoverishment. This strike is the third within the last year.

In the present strike the workers demand nothing more than the extension of their labor agreement for another year and a moderate equalization of their wages to allow for the increase of prices of all foodstuffs and necessities of life. Thus, it is nothing but a defensive struggle. The local trade-union authorities, realizing the nature of this movement, have decided to recognize the strike as justified and to support it with all their power.

It is therefore all the more scandalous that the national presidents of trade-unions participating in the strike and the Executive of the General German Trade Union Federation only a few days after the outbreak and without any noticeable concession on the part of the city fathers, publicly come out against this strike, brand it as a "wild strike" and call upon the workers to resume work under threat of the withdrawal of their strike benefit. The presidents of the unions, all crafty Social Democrats, desire no struggle with their comrades in the Berlin government. They consciencelessly sacrifice the interests of their working brothers to the interests of their bureaucracy and their party egoism. The Social Democrats thus act as the protectors of their colleagues in the government who awaited the coming of the great railway strike with brazen equanimity. The dilemma in which the governing Socialists have been put through the coincidence of the railway general strike with the strike of the Berlin municipal workers is to be solved by the trade-union bureaucrats at the expense of the most elementary interests of the proletariat.

However, the municipal workers realize just as the railwaymen do that there must be no vacillation nor retreat in spite of all the restraining and pacifying efforts of the trade-union bureaucracy and in spite of the shameless threats of the Social Democratic Ministers and Chief of Police. The striking workers know that the coincidence of the two strikes is no accidental occurrence. They clearly perceive that their struggles arose from the same actual need and distress. They know that the federal government, which refused the railwaymen the most moderate existence minimum wage, disputes their right to strike and proposes to abolish the eight-hour day, is also partly to blame because of its inefficient tax system for the fact that the municipal workers have a miserably low rate of wages. Furthermore, this government now proposes by means of law to deprive the municipal workers of their right to organize and of the eight-hour day. Therefore, the Berlin municipal strike represents an energetic support of the railwaymen against the new hours of labor and railway finance laws and arbitration in industrial disputes.

Today in Berlin 70,000 municipal workers and employees are on strike. All municipal bureaus, the street-cars, the gas, electricity and water works are paralyzed. Only the most absolutely necessary emergency service for the supply of water to the hospitals is being maintained. The governmental strike-breaker organization, the so-called "Technische Nothilfe", organized by the Social Democrats in the Noske period, has only been able up to the present, with the totally insufficient forces at its command, to start the water works going to a limited degree. In the more complicated works, such as the electricity and gas works, these incompetent and irresponsible strike-breaker groups, when they really get to work, do more damage than their work in the interest of the bourgeoisie is worth.

The inhabitants, with the exception of the bourgeoisie are naturally neutral toward the municipal as well as the railway strike in spite of an internal press campaign against the strikers, and all the trade-union leaders. Even the "Schutzpolizei", organized on military lines, has manifested a certain benevolent neutrality. As a matter of course, the workers of the large factories openly sympathize with the strikers. They demand the calling of a general strike by the trade-unions and the Socialist parties. They want to demonstrate their solidarity for they know that this struggle is being carried on for their own interests, the fundamental rights of the proletariat and the last remnants of the gains of the November revolution.