**Politics**

On the United Front

by L. Trotsky

**The function of a Communist Party is to lead the proletarian revolution. In order to call upon the proletariat to seize power directly and in order that this may be realized, the Communist Party must be supported by the overwhelming majority of the working-class.**

But as long as it has not such a majority at its command, it must fight to win over the majority.

It can accomplish this only if it is an absolutely independent organization with a definite program and a rigid discipline. For this reason it must sever all ideological and organizational connections with the reformists and the centrists, who are not striving for the proletarian revolution, who either want or are not able to prepare the masses for the revolution, and who through their attitude and action are only hindering such work. Those members of a Communist Party, who in the name of the “United Front” regret its severance from the Centrists, only betray themselves by showing that they have not even as much as mastered the Communist alphabet, and that their presence in the Communist Party is purely accidental.

After the Communist Party has gained its independence and achieved the ideological homogeneity of its membership, it struggles for influence among the majority of the working-class. In this struggle a quicker or slower tempo may be adopted according to the objective circumstances and the expediency of this or that tactical move.

It is self-evident that during this period of preparation the class-struggles of the proletariat do not cease. Various conflicts with the employers, with the bourgeoisie and with the government take place, in which the initiative is a question of mutual relations between the Socialist and the association, and not an organization of mass-action.

Do not comprehend working-class will inevitably split, which in the present epoch are inevitably taking place in struggles for influence.

This is the second letter in the Communist alphabet. Whatever fails to grasp this, does not know the first letter of the Communist alphabet.

Had the Communist Party not followed the path which at every given moment enables it to undertake common action of the Communist and non-Communist masses (Social Democratic workers included), it would only have betrayed its inability to win over the majority of the working-class to the road of mass-action. It would then have degenerated to a Communist propaganda society; it would never have developed into a party of the proletarian revolution.

It does not suffice to gain a weapon; the weapon must be sharp. It does not suffice to whet the sword; we must know how to use it.

It does not at all suffice merely to unite the Communists under organizational discipline, after we have separated them from the reformist chaff. It is necessary that this organization be capable of leading all the united actions of the proletariat on every field of its life-struggle.

This is the second letter in the Communist alphabet. Does the united front apply to the working masses alone or does its also hold for the opportunistic leaders?

This way of putting the question is the result of a misunderstanding.

Of course, it would be better if we could simply rally the working masses about our flag and our practical slogans of the day, without the reformist political, as well as trade-union organizations. But were such the possibility, the problem of the united front would never have come up in all its importance.

The very raison d'être for this problem is that certain, very considerable parts of the working-class belong to and support these reformist organizations. Up to the present it seems that they...
have not had enough experience to justify their withdrawal from these reformist organizations and their joining ours. But judging by the mass-actions that areFacing the proletariat, the circumstances of this important event are eventually change. We are striving to accomplish this. We are on the way but not quite so far. At the present time the organized part of the working-class is divided into three groups.

The Communist group, is striving for the Social Revolution. That is the reason why it supports every movement of the workers against the exploiters and the bourgeoisie, even though it be a mere partial movement.

The Reformist group is knitted to the cloak of reconciliation with the bourgeoisie. But in order not to lose its influence over the workers, it is compelled to support the partial actions of the exploited against the exploiters, against the real wishes of the leaders of this group.

In the third group, the opportunist, is continually vacillating between the two first groups and has no backbone or significance of its own.

It is thus that the existing conditions make possible the uniting of the workers in these three sorts of organizations and of the unorganized masses influenced by these organizations for common action in a number of proletarian life-questions.

We repeat that not only are the Communists not to oppose such common actions, but they are to assume the initiative for such purposes. First of all, the greater the masses drawn into the movement, no matter how limited the initial issues of struggle may be, the greater will their self-consciousness and self-confidence be, and the more determined and ready will these masses be for the struggle. That means the increase of the mass-character of the movement revolutionizes it and in this way created the conditions favorable for the slogans, methods of struggle and the Communist Party's role of leadership.

The reformists dread the potential revolutionary spirit of the mass-movement. Their pet arenas are Parliaments, trade-union councils, arbitration-boards, and ministerial ante-rooms.

But what we are first of all interested in is to drag the reformists out of their holes. Any Communist who doubts or fears such a step is like the "swimmer" who has read and approved the best handbook on the art of swimming, but who does not dare to go into the water.

Hence the united front is a presumptive of our willingness and readiness to be active in practice. The attitude of the reformist organizations, only, in certain definite questions and within certain definite limits, and only insofar as such organizations still express the will of considerable parts of the fighting proletariat.

But have we not severed our connections with them? Yes, because we did not agree in the basic questions of the labor movement.

Are we nevertheless to seek an understanding with them? Yes, in all cases where the working-masses that follow them and those that follow us get together, and where the reformists are more or less compelled to become the instruments of such struggles.

Will they, however, not claim that although we broke away from them, we nevertheless need them? Yes, indeed, their tattlers can say this. In our own case, some common will links us with the reformists. But in such a case it will not be the mere monotonous and barren repetition of one and the same idea in a closed circle; but if our tactics prove right, it will mean the establishment of a new and more popular mass-front.

Only a journalist who thinks he is wading off the reformists by always criticizing them with the same expressions and without, with as much as leaving his editor's desk, only he who actually fears a collision with the reformists in the presence of real masses, will get the working masses to support our policy. Let us compare the Communists with the Reformists under varying conditions of the mass-struggle, only such a journalist can interpret this policy in terms of an approach towards the reformists or reformism. Under this veil of reformism, we find hidden—political passivity. It is passivity that wishes for the continuation of that condition that permits of strictly separated and limited fields of activity, of distinct meeting-audiences and press, both for the Communists and for the reformists.

We have broken with the reformists and with the centrists in order to have unlimited freedom to criticize betrayals, decep-
tions, indecision and division in the labor-movement. For this reason we cannot possibly accept any agreement which in any way limits our freedom of action. If we are to participate in the united front; but not for a moment do we dissolve in it. We take part in it as an independent unit. For it is in the struggle that the broad masses will convince themselves that we stand by them. Only the Communist movement is the determinate, self-consciousness and cleverness. In this manner we accelerate the formation of the united revolutionary front under an undisputed Communist leadership.

The Political Crisis in India.

by Shramendra Karsan.

** Mahatma Gandhi the leaders of the non-cooperation movement in India has been arrested by the British Government at Sabarmati, four miles from Ahmedabad on March 10, 1922. This bit of news given out by the London India Office brings home to us the realization that the curtain for the final climax in the political crisis in India has been lifted. The arrest of Gandhi is a direct and determined challenge of the British government, which desires to test the strength of the Indian people. The conjecture may not be unfounded that the British cabinet after mature deliberations gave the secret order to the British officials in India to curb the freedom of the moving spirit in Indian politics. They argued perhaps that the desire to fight for complete independence of India is confined only to a few. Already the most prominent leaders like the Ali Brothers, Chitta Ranjan Das, Mohi Lal Nehru, Lalaj Lajpat Rai, Abdul Azad Kalan and hundreds of others have been imprisoned by the British government. At the time of the arrest of the Ali Brothers, they were to make a Pact with the British government on the lines of the revolution. It was Gandhi who pleaded with the violent revolutionaries to give him an opportunity of making an experiment in his peaceful revolution. The elimination of Gandhi from the field of active Indian politics then suggests many possibilities.

On the eve of the arrest of Gandhi, Montague, the British Secretary of State has been forced to resign. Montague acted, as intimated, in publishing a despatch of the Viceroy in a manner which defied of the British Cabinet. It is of course an explanation for the consummation of those who play with political phrases. But the significance of Montague's resignation has to be sought elsewhere. The foreign office of the British Government is the most autocratic and centralized department in the world, and its directors 18s usual remains the hand of the British officials trained in the art of aggression and exploitation. There is not a single political party—Labor or Liberal—which has ever questioned the divinity of the British Foreign Office. Montague published the dispatch of Lord Reading not because he had any secret confidence in the efficacy of this way but because he, being at the helm of the government, understands that the British rule in India is in peril. And he wanted to let the world know. Lord George himself declared sometime ago in the British Parliament that British iron hands must be used in India and the Indian people must not question the sovereignty of the parastic king. The difference between Montague and Lloyd George is that the former sees that the passing away of British rule in India is imminent unless some measures are taken immediately that may suit certain inevitable gripes; while the latter aims to become the champion of civilization by crushing the Indian people by force of arms, which have been strengthened at the expense of Germany. Both are enemies of the freedom of India and friends of English imperialism.
The British government has already dispatched several regiments of British troops to India, as they no longer trust the Indian soldiers. How far the Indian people is organized militarily can only be guessed from the various symptoms. Not long ago, the Morolias have fought very bravely, without any assistance from India. Nearly a month after the events in Chauki Thana in the district of Rai Berrily in the United Provinces attacked the police and killed several of them. The heroic Sikhs of the Punjab are well organized and openly known as the Akali Dal. In their official organ, Akali Akad, they have plainly repudiated the sophisticated claim of sovereignty of the British crown. The Sikhs are brave and well-versed in the arts of modern military science.

In the Gujranwala district, Madras, the people are not paying any taxes to the government. Their slogan is no taxation to a government which is not their own. The consequences which follow from the refusal to pay taxes are not understood to them. They are most assuredly prepared to fight the issue out.

The capacity of the Indians to organize their forces has been proven on several occasions. Even English newspapers like the “Statesman”, published in Calcutta for the interests of the English British rule in India, admit the strength of the organized forces which are working for the emancipation of India. It states in its issue of November 18th, 1921: “To be perfectly frank, it must be admitted that the Indian city of Calcutta spent yesterday Nov. 17th, 1921) under the Gandhi-raj. That is the control of the city by the hands of the British is not only by the leadership of Gandhi. It was not only one city or one hamlet, the entire country was under the control of Gandhi and the non-cooperators on the day of arrival of the Prince of Wales.

The real situation in India is this: the movement has passed into the hands of the common people who are the backbone of society. A Congress proclamation pointed out: “Clerks, lawyers and students may attend to their normal business, but the people, the real people of India, who are with the movement will refrain from work” (London “Daily Telegraph”, Dec. 30th, 1921).

It gives a clue to the understanding of the heart of the Indian movement. It is not an exaggeration, to say that the movement in India is directly inspired by the minds of the people by the laboring masses. And the moment the masses take a thing in their own hands, they give it the finishing touch.

The English newspaper, the “Statesman”, should therefore not be surprised that “there was little evidence of the existence of large and large hamlets, the Akali Bari, of the Punjab are well organized and openly known as the Akali Dal. The Amritsar Bazar Patrika, an Indian paper, in its issue of Nov. 18th, 1921, truly says: “We do not expect that anything will open the eyes of the bureaucracy or Viceroy. But write large on the harti of Calcutta is—Revolution.”

It goes on to say that the “nation has transferred its willing allegiance from British rule to its truly representative body, the Indian National Congress.”

These are the indications which may help us to see the effect of the arrest of Gandhi on future political developments in India.

The Indian laboring masses are awakened. They realize their potential strength. The revolutionaries who have followed the policy of watchful waiting will be forced to activity. Undoubtedly the British government is inciting other people to bring about a premature revolution, but the Indian people who have to depend on their own resources and strength, will know when to strike. Gandhi may come and Gandhi may go but the revolutionaries are marching on. India is determined not only to make herself free but also to destroy the hegemony of the British Empire so that the millions of toiling masses may breathe freely—economically, politically, and socially. The arrest of Gandhi is thus a signal for coming startling events in the arena of Indian politics.

**THE LABOR MOVEMENT**

Unemployment Processions in Warsaw.

by L. Domski (Warsaw).

It is but natural that the wide-spread unemployment in Poland should embitter the masses. This indignation is all the more natural as neither the government nor the Sejm, where the social jingoism are very noisy, have done much to relieve the
Progress of the Lockout in Denmark.

by Sigvald Heilberg (Copenhagen).

The slogans of the trade-unions given out for the present lockout have been followed by all workers including those employed in industries where a counter-strike was called. Public and trade-union meetings have nearly unanimously expressed themselves in favor of a general strike. A number of provincial organizations have sent delegations to the central body in Copenhagen demanding that a general strike be called.

The central body which represents 280,000 workers does its utmost to sabotage this request. A large minority of labor had declined to participate in the Communist's "workers' demand for "united front for defensive" nearly everywhere met with the approval of the workers. The trade-union Executive in Copenhagen, however, steadfastly refused to bow down to the wishes of labor, but again took up negotiations with the government. On the 10th week on February 10th submitted the following new proposals for a compromise:

1. The extension of working hours in the building trades, contained in the com'mom' of February 3rd which was rejected by labor, is to be postponed for the time being and the eight-hour pro'mm is to be referred to a comm'mom' of representa'tees of both the cm'm-loyees and the em'loyers, that is, that the settlement of the question is to be delayed for a few months.

2. The extra pay for the first two hours of overtime (which far was 50%) is not to be 25%, as stated in the first compromise but higher (very probably 30%).

3. The (according to the index figure) varying wage re'solved upon in the first compromise is to be interpreted that the first 6% in either the increase or the decrease of the standard of living should not be followed up by either an increase nor a reduc'tion of wages.

As early as on the afternoon of February 10th the em'ployers met and decided to decline the new compromise proposal; they are determined to have the first proposal accepted and in this count upon the assistance of the majority in the trade-union executive who had already advised the workers to assert to the first proposal and will now do their utmost to avert a general strike. For these reasons the employers trust that they can compel the workers to accept the first compromise.

Nothing certain is known as to the next steps of the re'sist labor leaders. The employers have already decided upon a new lockout which will affect 100,000 workers. Labor demands that the executive call the general strike.

The passive attitude of the workers will almost certainly result in their defeat. Unemployment doles are only being paid in some industries and there only to those who had been out of work two months previous to the lockout.

The Communists continue to advocate active defensive tactics.

The Struggles of the German Agricultural proletariat.

by H. Rau.

** There is a strong ferment in the German agricultural proletariat. Its standard of living is barely adequate to the needs of the entire proletariat. The wages of farm-hands are extremely low; they range between 8.00 and 12.00 marks yearly. Even the new agreements signed by the German Federation of Agricultural Laborers raise the wages scarcely above this amount. Three months ago wages amounted to 11.00 to 14.00 marks yearly. A contrast with the minimum standard of existence as determined by Dr. Kuczynski shows how insufficient these amounts are. The calculations of Kuczynski are based on the prices prevailing February of this year, in the meantime a new rise in prices has begun.

The dissatisfaction of the agricultural proletariat is not alone due to the question of wages but above all to the miserable housing conditions; to the increasing disciplinary punishments of the "agitators", the long hours of labor (2800-2900 hours a year), the immense amount of over-time work that can be demanded according to the agreements, the toleration of Workers' Committees, the arbitrary rule of the owners of the estates. In its new agreements the German Union of Agricultural Laborers has not done away with these evils, in fact, has not even tried to do away with them.

Why does the Union not dare to solve the problems in the interest of the farm-hands? This can be explained by the union of the Central Committee of the Federation with the Employers' Federations in the "N-Working Alliance of Agricultural and Lumbering Employers and Employees' Associations". In this alliance the Social Democratic Central Committee backs up the demands of the agrarian capitalist, which are stated in the so-called "relief work". The supposed "relief work" for the purposes of the "agitation" of the doubtless will tend to increase economic and financial distress of the German people is however nothing more than an aid to German agrarian capital, for the demands of the same purpose: the removal of all governmental regulation of food industries, tax rating, etc., will result in a decrease of production against interference with the production of food products. For these demands the Social Democrat Georg Schmidt sound the call for a "united front of agricultural employees and employers". In the agreement mentioned above one reads the following:

"By means of its own strength and its own means the entire German workers are fighting on the mighty relief work (1) for the rescue of the German national economy (1) and in a continuous cooperation of employers and employees shall bring about an increase of production sufficient to safeguard the national food supply. The National Working Alliance of Agricultural and Lumbering Employers' and Employees' Unions, too, is filled with this will to help. Its aim is to strengthen and preserve the United front of agricultural economy by means of harmonizing the interests of all employers and employees in the agricultural industry."
It is clear that the Central Committee of the Laborers' Federation by this declaration opposes every struggle of the agricultural laborers for a betterment of their standard of living. In a struggle with workers are its orders to the various provincial and district leaders of the Federation. The agricultural proletariat will however not be able to get higher wages or abolish the evils mentioned above without a struggle against their exploiters, against agrarian capital.

At the same time the agricultural laborers know from the experience of their past struggles, that a struggle on their part can only be successful if they lead it united. This is especially true now that they do not alone have the employers as their enemies but also an enemy in their rear, due to the treachery of the trade union bureaucracy. The inevitable struggle of the agricultural laborers thus will have to be carried on under very trying circumstances.

To overcome the opposing elements is the work of the fractional agricultural conferences that have already taken place and are still taking place in almost all of the large agrarian districts of Germany. Typical of the spirit of the agricultural workers is a statement of a farm-hand organized in the Federation (D.L.V.) at the conference of the functionaries of the "Free Agricultural Workers Union" and the D.L.V. held at Hanover on the 5th of March. He said: "Economic necessities forced us agricultural laborers into an united front!". The united front that the agricultural laborers are creating includes the laborers organized in the Christian Agricultural Workers' Federation as well as in the D.L.V. and also the unorganized. Against the orders of the bureaucracy of the D.L.V. the agricultural workers are forming a united front not with the employers, as Georg Schmidt recommended, but a united front against the employers, an united front for struggle. The leadership of this movement of the coming struggle lies in the hands of committees elected by the agricultural workers at their conferences, which are composed of agricultural workers without regard to party or trade-union affiliation.

The agricultural laborers in the whole are conscious that their struggle does not alone deal with economic questions, but that it is with the utmost political importance. Because it means to ward off the attacks against their right to organize, attacks that are covered in the so-called relief action with the word: "protection against interference with production", i.e. denial of the right to unionize if mass organizations in order to deprive the privileges of agrarian capital, in order not to be burdened to a still greater extent by taxes. The struggle is thus also against the government that suppresses the railroad workers, against the government that robs them of their right of organization. At the same time the struggle is led against the right to organize and the right to form alliances, against the peace policy of the Social Democratic trade-union leaders.

From all this one can conclude that the coming struggle of the agricultural laborers will surpass all the past ones as far as bitterness and determinism are concerned and that they demand the fullest possible support of the agrarian proletariat, common interests bring the agricultural and the industrial proletariat together; the work of the Communists will be to further the common struggle.

The United Front and the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia.

by Alois Neurath (Prague).

** In 1920 the Czech class-conscious workers parted from their social patriotic leaders, in March 1921 the German proletarians followed, and during the end of November of the same year the German and Czech class-conscious proletarians united into the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia. The C.P.C. is now the only body to organize the revolutionary struggle of the working-class without being exposed to the sabotage of the opportunists and social patriotic leaders. Every worker who is only superficially acquainted with the political struggle of the last six years understands very well that the split of the old social-imperialistic political parties forms the most primitive prerequisite for the revolutionary class-struggle.

When we issued the slogan of the proletarian united front, the trade-union and socialist papers, represented the situation as if the Communists were merely interested in forming new watchwords, in order by this method to win the proletariat for its political actions. But our delegates have not let an occasion slip by without showing the workers that all of their so-called social and political gains are in danger, that the capitalists are at work against them, and that the most urgent political task before them is that it will be of great political importance.

And now began (the beginning of February) the great struggle in the mining industry. The problem was now to show in what way the extension of the struggle and the defensive front could be prepared and achieved in practice. As soon as the united front is mentioned, the Socialists of the Right try to shift the basis of discussion. They do not speak of the struggle and its organization but of the bureaucratic prerequisites for a proletarian united front and of the preparation and organization of a "proletarian congress" and the like. The richest of the workers (and in this case not alone of the Communist workers) is immediately aroused when they hear of new bureaucratic institutions. The workers ask: "The capitalists want to diminish our income; that is, lower our standard of living, increase our misery. What can we do against them?" The demand for a proletarian congress is rejected. Our party and our delegates pointed to the last struggles and said to the miners:

"The entire bourgeoisie and the government with all the powers of the state are standing behind the mine owners. If you are defeated, then a decrease in wages will follow in all the other branches. The owners of the other large industries, miners, are forced to remain alone in the struggle. You can only repulse the attack of the capitalists if your front is broadened to include the workers of other vital trades and industries, especially the workers of the transport and trade industries. It is therefore your business to force your leaders to prepare the struggle and so prevent a definite defeat."

We went to the Right Socialist trade-union organizations and all the Socialist parties and told them essentially what we had explained to the workers. In order to deprive the demagogues of their power beforehand we declared the beginning that we did not put up a single political demand. We do not speak of the struggle for political power, nor of the Third International, we merely are speaking of those things that are for the workers' immediate benefit. The capitalists called the aim of the bourgeoisie to restore the productive apparatus of the capitalist economic system at the cost of the workers and of law we can prevent this aim. The Social Democrats in the Trade Union Executive and the Socialist parties became extremely embarrassed. The Right Socialists, by far smarter and sharper than the German separatists, answered our letters, after the struggle was nearing its end or ended. The German separatists did not give any answer at all, all the more did they rage in their political newspapers and their trade-union journals.

Have the workers understood us? Completely. They have above all understood—and that was the most important—that we are really serious, that we really want to build up a united front. They have seen and they will feel it still more clearly now, that everything that we have
said about the struggle, about its course, about its end, is entirely
correct and above all they recognize very clearly that this shame-
ful enterprise has been prevented, if the trade-union leaders had
respected our proposals.

A conference of the secretaries and delegates of the miners,
which took place in Prague, accepted the agreement which had
been made by the coal barons and the trade-union leaders. We
have already reported here about this agreement and shown how
the results of the agreement begin to make themselves shown, as
for instance, is the case in the Falkenau district, do the workers
recognize the extent of the defeat.

During the last months the wage earners without regard to
their political affiliations have seen that the C.P. has largely
tried to bring about all the necessary prerequisites for the trade-
union leaders and the Right Socialists to prevent our endeavors.
Before the outbreak of the next struggle the workers will want
to decide in time if and how the front of the wage earners shall
be extended. Whether or not it will suit the trade-union leaders,
they will have to, willingly or unwillingly, sit down together
with us and seriously talk about the organization of the struggle.
The workers will also see to it that such only trade-union leaders
will be elected to the committees as those who recognize that
united proletarian front will gradually develop which will not
alone be able to repulse the attack of the capitalists but itself
begin an attack. A few dozen or a few hundred bureaucrats
cannot build up a united front at proletarian conferences and
cannot use this united front to be better than the fruit of long drawn-out struggles and bitter experiences.

The Communist Movement in the Dutch East Indies.

by Gerard Vaner (Amsterdam).

** The enormous significance of the national revolutionary
movement in British India is further enhanced by the echo which
these events are awakening over the whole of Asia. The situation
in British India itself is such that a reporter of the "Times" is
induced to write as follows:

"No one can look optimistically to the future. It is
impossible to see how difficulties equivalent to a catastrophe are
to be finally avoided.

From a capitalist standpoint this pessimistic view is fully
justified. It is an acknowledged fact that at the moment there is
only one English industry in a really flourishing condition, and
that is the machine manufacturing industry, which is chiefly
resulting from supplying machines to British India for the textile
industry.

The Dutch bourgeoisie, like the English, is anxiously
eagering to suppress by force the slightest revolutionary
stirring among the East Indian proletariat. For years the Dutch
capitalists have been trying by the most impudent and
brutal measures, to destroy the organisations of the Indian
workers, to suppress their newspapers, and to silence their
leaders. All such recourse to force has failed to accomplish its
purpose; on the contrary, the revolutionary movement is spreading
more and more.

At Christmas 1921 the Congress of the P.C.I. (Communist
Party of the Indonesian archipelago) was held at Semarang. The
chairman, Comrade Malaka, after welcoming the 2000 persons
present, expressed his pleasure that the "Sarekat Islam" (the
religiously tinged economic revolutionary Indonesian organisa-
tion) had also declared themselves prepared to join the Com-

"As the enemy of the Communists are the enemies of the Sarekat Islam."
the Indonesian islands the exploited are thus already
forming their united front.

The readiness of the younger generation to take part in
the struggle was shown by the numerous children of the
Sarekat Islam school, who, clad in their red trousers, greeted
the leaders of the congress with an ovation, singing the Interna-
tional with the utmost enthusiasm.

How the movement has spread beyond the boundaries of
the Indonesian archipelago was demonstrated by a telegram
bearing fraternal greetings to the All-India Congress in Delhi.
This telegram was signed by the P.C.I., the Sarekat Islam
(Semarang section), the Executive of the Sarekat Islam, and by
both the trades union executives.

The Indonesian government, as representative of the
Dutch, has however not been at a loss for an answer. One of
the most popular native revolutionists, the teacher Malaka,
who had demonstrated the absurdity and unenableness of
the bourgeois parliamentary system in his pamphlet "Parliament
or Soviet", had to pay for this by being delivered into the hands
of the law. The same fate was shared by our Dutch comrades
Bergsma and Dekker. The former presided over the relations
from the trade union and editor of the journal "Het Vrye Woord"
and "De Volkering". The latter is also on the committee
of the above named organisation. Despite the great popularity
of the two comrades the Dutch government has also not
hesitated to trample underfoot the sense of justice of the broad
masses of the Indonesian people.

The Communist Party of Holland is faced by the difficult
task of showing the Dutch government that the Dutch government
refuses to grant these comrades, as Communists, passports enabling
them to enter the Indonesian archipelago.

The Dutch Communist Party intends, if possible, to set
up a popular Indonesian as candidate in the coming parlia-
mentary election in order to show that the Dutch government
will not be able to repulse the attack of the capitalists but itself
begin an attack.

**RELIEF FOR RUSSIA**

Nansen on the famine in Russia.

** Having returned from Soviet Russia, the famous
Norwegian recently delivered a lecture on his observations in the
famous world conference at Stockholm in January this year.

the Swedish Red Cross. It was mainly a bourgeois audience, in
part Social Democratic ministers, Riksdag and municipal de-
puties; the meeting was presided by the mayor of the capital
who stated in his introduction, "that experience had proved that
all that had been collected had arrived at its destination in good
order, and that the rulers of Russia keep their promises".

Nansen's words on the ability of the capitalist states to help, on
the superabundance of food products in America as well as his
emphasis on the guiltlessness of the capitalist states to help, on
the catastrophe of nature is a complete confirmation of what we
Communists have so often said. He stated:

"If we look around in the world at present, we see
everywhere misery and unemployment. But that what has
happened to Russia, is much more, something that is terrible
beyond comparison in the history of mankind. Last fall
I stood before the most representative world conference in
Geneva and asked for aid for Russia. I emphasized that
without aid the peasants would not be able to get a sufficient
amount of seeds, grains, and other products, that the
swedes, that it was the duty of the governments to render aid.
It was merely a sum of £5,000,000, but no one would consent.
Months have passed since then and now the calamity in its
entire extent has come upon Russia. The Hungarians and
Russians are without food, so the voice of the down-trodden
revolutionaries for assistance will not be lost.

The peasantry is now the most helpless, that is because
of the fact that the borders of Russia there is a superabundance of grain. In America there
is so much wheat that one does not know what to do with it.
In South America locomotives are being fired with
corn cobs.

"In one respect the situation in Europe is much more
than before: Not alone is the famine raging this year, but
it also rage during the next year, as well as in the
years after. The time at our disposal is very limited. Last September the chances were
much better since at that time the canals of the Volga
could be used for the transport. Now, however, the transport
distinctly is much more, so that millions of human beings are
hopelessly lost, even if we receive money. Instead of a
comparatively small district we have now a large area along
the Volga twice as large as France and with a population
of 33 million human beings. Even if help should be sent, 5-6
millions of human beings will be lost."

"The reasons why the statesmen of Europe did not
want to help were generally that through this aid for Russia
the Soviet government would be strengthened, that no safe
guarantees are given against the seizure of the relief con-
signments by the Bolsheviks and that the conditions and rules
is so desperate that no government could go beyond its borders
to aid other countries. It is unreasonable to let millions of Russians starve to salvation under conditions when the measure is adopted. True, at first news appeared in the press about the wages: wherever possible by all compulsory wage deductions are the best form of assistance. We responding resolution.

the help of the international proletariat we determined that of such importance for the proletariat of the world, the enlarged experiences

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got food. I was prepared to making a final desperate at Geneva about the struggle against the winter and famine done more than one generally imagines. hus

thought. I was prepared for. misery but not for inhabitants which was ahead of Russia. But the famine that is now raging in the Volga valley is much more terrible than I had thought. I was prepared for misery but not for inhabitants of entire villages sitting, waiting for death—too weak to get food. I was prepared to see human beings suffering, but what I saw here cannot be expressed in words. A month ago, corpses were dug out of graves in order to devour them. Now the condition is worse. Terrible things have happened. These terrible things I want to bring before the eyes of the peoples of the world. The peoples must influence their governments. The situation is such that some day we shall have to justify ourselves before our children. The angel of death is passing along the Volga and is raging worse than during the war. Let us act before it is too late."

An Important Question

by Steklov (Moscow).

**The Order of the day of the session of the enlarged executive contained as a separate question the new economic policy of Soviet Russia. That is entirely correct, since the social experiences of Soviet Russia should be used and critically examined by the entire vanguard of the international proletariat. Since the existence and well-being of the Soviet Republic are of such importance for the proletariat of the world, the enlarged executive also tried to emphasize the struggle against the fam're in Russia. The enlarged executive also passed a corresponding resolution.**

As soon as we conceived of the thought of calling upon the help of the international proletariat, we determined that compulsory wage deductions are the best form of assistance. We have recommended the introduction of the donation of a day's wages: wherever possible by all trade-union or politically organized methods. It is explained that in case its realization, the measure would be considered a voluntary one which we could not receive by means of voluntary gifts, etc. Without rejecting this latter means of collection, we pointed out that it would probably be of merely secondary importance. Unfortunately it was just this less purposeful method that was adopted. True, at first news appeared in the press about the decisions of various labor groups and various trade-unions according to which their members were forced to donate a day's wage, or an hour's pay per week. But now one hardly hears anything of such measures. At any rate they were not common occurrences.

We know of no case so far that international or national trade-unions or Socialist Parties, or even red trade-unions or Communist Parties have realized the principle of the obligatory wage contributions for the workers organized of their members. A short time ago, the news appeared that in France, for instance, taking everything together only something over 1,000,000 francs had been collected, that in Germany still less had been collected, etc. If however, the Communist Party of France had imposed upon its members the contribution of one day's wages for the starving in Russia, we would have received at least 3,000,000 francs. If the French red trade-unions had done the same we would have received 45,000,000 francs more. One could see the struggle for 10,000,000 francs by means of a compulsory tax without including the voluntary contributions of the workers organized in the Communist Party or in the Red trade-unions, i.e. the majority of the French workers; about the same thing can be said of Germany, Italy and other countries.

Of course, I do not intend to disparage the sacrifices that our foreign comrades have made, in spite of the very serious economic crisis under which they are suffering, and that they will probably make in the future. But since we are speaking as comrades, it is only right to mention that the contributions that we would maintain that not everything possible has been done in this field. The cause does not lie in a lack of comradeship, solidarity, etc., but in the incorrect way of gathering the contributions. It is easily understandable that these contributions offered by me cannot be realized for some reason or other. But then there is the question of in order to try to overcome them. At any rate it is easy to carry out the compulsory contributions at least in the Communist party.

It will be of great value if the foreign comrades who have come together from all countries discuss this problem.

**The COUNTER REVOLUTION**

by Victor Serge (Kiev).

**The history of the Russian counter-revolution, infuriated by four years of war against the workers, defeated ten times, resuming the attack ten times with the cooperation of international reaction, is full of material for the militant Communist (and still more for the militant revolutionary whom experience and study have not as yet led to Communism). We are writing this from our field of study and commenting on it in a few pages; and this article will contain a summary of the memoirs published on the Social Revolutionary government of 1918, which began the civil war. The work which I have recently come to possess a copy of, was prepared by the Ufa Conference, V. L. Uygoff. He has come to some interesting conclusions on the inevitability of the dictatorship and the role of the middle classes parties in the revolution. November 1917. After less than one week of struggle in the big cities, the revolution was accentuated, tending to the people of Europe peace, giving to the peasants and workers of Russia, the land, the factories, the shops, liberty and the future. Hardly any bloodshed! No extraordinary disciplinary measures. No death penalty... The army demobilized itself, and the police disappeared. All the power was with the Soviets without even pronouncing the word "dictatorship". That was too good to be true. The class war was preparing and began. The disintegration of the old society did not bring to life a new world; but civil war.

The technicians were on strike or sabotaged. The Allied missions were hot-beds of espionage and conspiracy. There was but one thought—restablishing the old order. The bourgeoisie and the bourgeois parties, in particular the leaders of the middle classes called "Social Revolutionaries" armed itself for reaction. German imperialism asked itself whether it should destroy Red Russia by treahting it underfoot, and while parleying and making peace, occupied the fertile Ukraine, made inroads on Central Russia, and prepared an attack on Petrograd. Assassinations took place; former Social Revolutionaries killed Bolshevik commissars.

The civil war began with the revolt of the Czecho-Slovak troops. This revolt was the work of the Allied missions, and of 1 Appeared in Byloé (The Past) No. 16, Petrograd 1921.
a secret society of royalists and Social Revolutionaries (The Union for the Safety of the Country and of Liberty). M. Noless instigated the insurrection of Yaroslavl. At Samara the members of the Constituent Assembly formed a government, . . . . In order to understand the enormous difficulties which the Russian revolution in its creative work had to encounter each day for some years, in order to call to mind the tragic social disintegration which gave birth to the proletarian state, it is sufficient to recall that at this epoch, White Russia was spread around a Red Russia still without an army and practically without administration.

In September 1918, V. L. Ugoff relates that there were no less than 141 scores of governments in Russia. 1—At the center, the government of the Soviets which was to be overthrown at any price; 2—the government of the Northern regions; 3—the government of the Don; 4—the Kuban government; 5—the Constituent Assembly; 6—the Committee of the Constituents of Kars; 7—the autonomous government of Turkistan; 8—the government of the Caspian regions; 9—the Bashkir government; 10—the Cossack government of the Urals; 11—the government of the Urals (Ekatertaburg); 12—the government of Western Siberia; 13—the corps of Semenoff; 14—the government of the Far East, formed by M. Hovatui; 15—the government of Transbaikal; 16—the government of M. Derber (Far East); 17—the Duma of Vladivostok; 18—the Siberian government in the name of the Northern Council of Czecho-Slovak troops; 20—the Autonomous Council of the region of Yakutsk. And the Turco-Tatars dispersed in Russia also obeyed a National Council, which had great influence.

Six states were formed in the region occupied by German troops: 1—the autonomous government of East Prussia; 2—the Ukraine; 3—the autonomous government of Estonia; 4—the autonomous government of Latvia; 5—Livonia; 6—Estonia. Five states were detached from Russia and enjoyed real independence: 1—Georgia; 2—Armenia; 3—Circassia; 4—Poland; 5—Finland.

The map of feudal Germany around 1300 is scarcely more parcelled out than the map of Russia in 1917. In the first, when the bandits made and remade governments every day, that the Communist republic had to defend its existence, directly threatened in the South by the occupation of the Ukraine (the most important wheat granary), in the East by the White governments of Samara, Ufa and Omsk, who occupied and devasted the country of the Volga, the Urals and Western Siberia (the second wheat granary). With these conditions what did the revolution need in order to exist? An army—but an army which, different from those of the counter-revolutionaries, would be an army of the people, permeated with a new spirit and new customs, formed by one class for the defense of that class—a red army. And in back of this army there had to be a powerful mechanism of administration and organization, centralized and provided with formable means of interior defense, in order to survive the permanent plotting which was going on everywhere—there had to be a proletarian state, the instrument of revolutionary dictatorship.

I submit these thoughts to the militants whose legitimate aversion to an army and the State sometimes renders them unjust to the Russian revolution.

The enemies of the revolution needed the same weapons—an army, a dictatorship. They looked for them. That could be seen from the first attempts that they made to organize themselves in a body, at the Conference of the State of Ufa (opened Sept. 9, 1918).

The majority of the Russian governments were represented there. A large number of Social Revolutionaries (Volsky, Vedeniaip, Fortunatov, Rakitnikov, Minor, Avksentiev, Breshko-Breshkovskaya) met with Mensheviks (Lepski, Maysky, Kibrik), Cadets (Vzgoda, Haupt), and representatives of all classes and of all sorts. This was indeed the united front of reaction. In opposition to the Social Revolutionaries representing the petty bourgeoisie and who, still haunted by their dream of a Parliamentary Democracy, wished the formation of a Constituent government, there was the Party of the Right, led by A. Krat

“A power strong, impervious, personal, uncontrollable and irresponsible.”

“For”, he said, “great tasks demand great resolutions”. In other words, safety for the bourgeoisie lies only in a military dictatorship.

The Conference of Ufa did not accept this proposal from the very first. The Social Revolutionaries, intellectual and already Parliamentary elements, coming from the middle class, whose interests can scarcely be adapted to the reign of the sabre and sword, were unable to carry their views. When their White Army drove the White forces back to the crest of the Urahs, took Simbirsk (Sept. 8th), Kazan, even Samara (Sept. 18th—25th), the Ufa Conference formed a Directory composed of one Cadet (N. I. Astrvo), one Liberal general (Boldrey), one S. R. (Avksen-
tiev), the old Populist-Socialist Tchaikovsky and a representative of the Siberian government, Vologodsk. In reality the Social Revolutionaries had the decisive influence. Among their ministers there was an almost unanimous party of Social Revolutionaries.

This Directory was not destined to have a long life. Admiral Kolchak was soon to go it stop, and In proclaiming himself “Supreme Ruler”, to realize the inevitable military dictatorship. The reaction had triumphed.

The influence of the Social Revolutionaries rested partly on the temporary support of the Czecho-Slovak troops who had a “democratic” state of mind. In fact the Directory relied upon these proletarians and when they failed, it fell. The Social Revolutionaries had no men. Their inability in matters of organization was such that as Ministers they had to resort to the services of the most inferior and unsound specialists in order to maintain a semblance of order in their departments.

This was also the reward of the reaction. But the enemy of the reaction is the revolution: “The bourgeoisie is the enemy of the revolution,” stated in the Manifesto of 1917. The decisive influence which the Social Revolutionaries exercised was significant. It was an addition to their weakness of character; they had no more energetic leaders than administrators. In the atmosphere of conspiracy, of intrigue, of violence which prevailed there, which the Ufa and in counter-revolutionary Siberia, the S. R. leaders needed above all, good will and energy.

The secret societies of officers sapped their influence; Bolshevik propaganda spread among the poorer classes; the atomization of the population into small groups exaggerated the peasants.

The Directory was strangely passive. However, its Minister of Justice elaborated a law, creating special tribunals consisting of three judges appointed to office, who, namely, are to judge, assess and sentence themselves. At the same time General Kolchak was charged with the fight against revolutionary propaganda and the internal enemy, with the right to sentence to death.

Thus the Social Revolutionary Directory instituted the terror. As he did not have the license to apply it. More energetic reactionaries wrested the power from its hands, and caused torrents of blood to flow in the whole of Siberia.

When Kolchak had accomplished his coup de force V. L. Ugoff met a high S. R. officer who presented the situation in these words: “We could arrest Kolchak and his friends. But who will take over the power then? The same Volksky, the same Tcherenovs who are so utterly incapable of holding it?” Incapable and weak, what did the Social Revolutionaries think of their government? “There is no government any more. The bourgeoisie at any price.” For them the national question surpassed all others. They maintained that the economic and political reconstruction of Russia was impossible without the cooperation of the bourgeoisie. In their eyes “historic necessity would restore the bourgeoisie to power” as one of the Constituents wrote. The “grandmother of the revolution”, Breshko-Breshkovskaya, allied herself to this lamentable ideology. For this cause the “Social Revolutionaries” would have carried on, if they had any energy, a systematic regime of terror against the workers.

In 1918, parcelled-out Russia, where civil war broke out in all parts, desired by international reaction, was between two dictatorships. Reaction and revolution cannot conquer except by strength of arms: since 1914, the allies of reaction, the White Armies, are the bourgeoisie. In the summer of 1918 Red Russia was in chaos surrounded by a world of enemies. It will live, it will conquer because it has the sympathy of the large masses of the workers and peasants, because it has—as is usual in history with the classes which progress—a elite body of men conscious of their task, intelligent, erudite, inexorable.

The Ufa Conference marked first attempt to oppose the revolution through the reactionary state, the united front of all the forces of the reaction, and the attempt enlightened upon the role of the party of the middle classes in the counter-revolution. This party appeared as the vanguard of reaction, for which its redundant phraseology, its famous ideology (Republicanism, Pardextratism, Democracy, Socialist and municipal councils) particularly decisive in an epoch of social disorders, prepared the way. It was poor in men, weak, incapable of holding a power which it succeeded in taking through the prestige of democratic illusion. This party will be ground between two forces: the revolution through the reactionary state, the united front of all the middle classes in the counter-revolution, the petty proletariat and the ancient military caste, the last rampart of the bourgeoisie. And since 1918 it has become evident that the fate of the revolution will be decided exclusively by the war between these two forces—an organized, methodical, merciless war, such as modern states wage.