

- INTERNATIONAL -

PRESS

CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 2 No. 42

27th May 1922

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Declaration of the Delegation of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in the May 23rd Session of the Commission of Nine

The Berlin Conference of the representatives of the three Internationals stated that the World Labor Congress could not take place before the end of April in view of the attitude of the attitude of the Second International. But at the same time it decided to appoint a Commission of Nine for the immediate convocation of this Congress which is absolutely necessary to repel the attacks of capital against the proletariat in every field of social and political life all over the world. Eight weeks have passed since the Berlin Conference of the three Executives. Not only has this Congress not taken place during this time, but it was not even possible to call a session of the Commission of Nine. The only reason for this state of affairs is to be found in the attitude of the Second International which wanted to prevent by all the means in its power the work of the capitalist diplomats in Genoa from being disturbed by the interference of the proletariat. The attitude of the Second International during the Genoa Conference is the most convincing proof of this statement.

After the Conference of the representatives of the three Executives had made it the duty of all Socialist parties to support Soviet Russia, the chairman of the German Social Democratic Party, who was a member of the Delegation of the Second International to the Berlin Conference, began the campaign with a speech in the meeting of the Berlin functionaries of his party. In this speech he charged that the Communist International was playing the politics of the Russian Soviet Government which was a policy of imperialism. During the entire period of the bitter struggles in Genoa the German Social Democratic Party represented the policy of the Soviet Government as a capitalist policy. The Social Democratic Belgian Labor Party proclaimed its neutrality in the fight of the Belgian Government for the unconditional restoration of the right of private property in Russia. The Swedish Social Democracy, member of the Second International, which is a participant in the Swedish Government, did not utter a word in support of the fight of the Soviet Delegation for the retaining of industry in the hands of the Russian Proletarian State. Eranting, member of the Executive of the Second International, was present in Genoa as chief of the Swedish Delegation. We are sorry to say that also the Vienna Working Union, though it is giving lip-service to the defence of the Russian Revolution, not only refuses in its Press the most elementary support of Soviet Russia's fight against the restoration of capitalism, but at times directly stabs it in the back. The Vienna *Arbeiterzeitung* gave the Russian Memorandum, which was devoted to the defence of the common rights of every revolution, no more than thirty lines. It suffices to point out

that the organ of the French Socialist Party, the *Populaire*, denounced the negotiations of the Soviet Government with France as a conspiracy with Poincaré and at the same time sharply attacked the Treaty of Rapallo. All that took place, although the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, the organ of the German Independent Socialists, had to admit that:—

“The Conference in Genoa which has just come to a close has attained historical importance because here for the first time in history two hostile worlds, Capitalism and Communism, struggled for the palm of victory.” (May 20th, 1922.)

Just as the Second International sabotaged the convocation of the World Labor Congress during the Genoa Conference, it is now trying to sabotage it out of consideration for its policies in various countries. This is not only our view, but is also the opinion of prominent representatives of the Vienna Working Union. Abramovitch, member of the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Party (the Mensheviks), wrote as follows in a letter to his party comrades in Russia:—

“It was clear from the beginning of the Berlin Conference that the Third International very much desired the calling of a general conference and that the Second International, on the contrary, was very sceptical and would be in no way sorry if the whole project fell through. Many sections of the Second International were decidedly opposed to any understanding. The British Labor and the Dutch Social Democracy are preparing for general elections to Parliament and they do not desire to be attacked in the election campaign for having allied themselves with the Bolsheviks.

The German Social Democracy is in its domestic policy so far from thinking of collaboration with the German Communists that it does not want to give the German Communists a moral advantage by even the pretense of a united front.”

The organs of the Second International have merely proved this by their attitude after the Berlin Conference. Because the parties of the Second International feared that the proletarian united front would compel them to renounce their collaboration with the bourgeoisie, they had to try to sabotage the united front and the World Congress.

The Delegation of the Communist International is sorry to see that the Vienna Working Union is trying to explain this sabotage as the result of minor technical difficulties instead of

offering it energetic resistance. Today's declaration of the Second International which sets new conditions as the price of the convocation of the World Labor Congress proves that not the Vienna Working Union, but the Communist International was right when it declared that the Second International was trying to obstruct the World Labor Congress for political reasons. The Delegation of the Communist International declares:—

The Berlin conference refused to put any conditions for the convocation of the World Labor Congress. The statements of the Delegation regarding the trial of the S.R.'s were ratified by the Executive Committee of the Communist International and accepted by the Soviet Government. Although the Delegation of the Communist International only assumed the obligation of working for the admittance of Vandervelde, the Soviet Government agreed to the admission of five more Social Democratic attorneys, among whom there are such notables as Haden Guest, who after his visit to Soviet Russia published a series of articles attacking Soviet Russia in the London *Times*, the chief organ of the British interventionists. All the complaints in the declaration of the Second International about the attacks in the Communist Press against the Social Democratic defending barristers are absolutely irrelevant. The Delegation of the Third International never concealed the fact that it regards the taking over of the defense of the S.R.'s by the Second and 2½ Internationals as a hostile act against the Soviet Government, (See Radek's reply to Vandervelde at the Berlin Conference). Furthermore, the Delegation of the Communist International did not bind itself to modify its opinion of the policy of the Second International during and after the war. As for the Georgian question, the Delegation is ready at any time to lay the promised documents before a commission of the three Executives as soon as the convocation of the World Labor Congress is decided upon.

In view of the attacks of the Second and 2½ Internationals upon the Soviet Government and upon the Communist International as the alleged instrument of Soviet Russia's foreign policy, the Delegation of the Executive Committee of the Communist International takes the liberty of submitting to the Commission of Nine the letter sent by the Russian Communist Party to the Executive Committee of the Comintern in this connection:—

Dear Comrades,

In the Press of the parties adhering to the Second International the tactics of the proletarian united front are represented as a Machiavellian mask for Russian foreign policy erected by the Communist International. While the real aim of the Communist International is the union of the laboring masses of the world in their fight against the bourgeoisie, the representatives of the Second International tell the workers under their banners that the Communists are only insisting upon the united front in order to come to the aid of the Bolshevik Soviet Government. With this propaganda the Second International is trying to justify its sabotage of the tactics of the united front and to evade the charge that it is violating the most elementary Socialist obligation—the consolidation of the positions of the working class against the attacks of Capital, growing severer with every day.

In view of this state of affairs the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia declares its readiness to strike all slogans referring to the defense of the Soviet Power from the joint declaration—if this enough to satisfy the Second International. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia considers the unification of the working class in its struggle against the capitalist reaction as the most urgent need of the hour. For this reason the Central Committee does not want to give the Second International any opportunity to sabotage the establishment of the united front of the proletariat. The Central Committee requests the Executive Committee of the Communist International and to propose to the Second International that it support the united front of the proletariat in for the fight against the offensive of capital not in words but by deeds.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International has recognized that this point of view is fully justified. The working class of the world will support Soviet Russia in its struggle, because it knows and will become more and more convinced that Soviet Russia is one of the most important positions of the international proletariat in its defensive struggle against capitalism. It is the pressure of these working masses that has compelled the leaders of the Second International, and in part the leaders of the Vienna International, to call upon

the proletariat for the defense of Soviet Russia. Even if these leaders and their parties want to tell their followers that they are opposed to the support of Soviet Russia, the Communist International will none the less work for the united front if the parties of the Second and 2½ Internationals are ready to collaborate with the Communist Parties at least for the barest, most urgent needs of the working class in Europe and America. The Communist International is ready to do without the support of Soviet Russia by the Second and 2½ Internationals if these organizations are ready to cease their obstruction of the unification of all the proletarian masses for the struggle against the lengthening of working hours, against the reduction of wages, against the rise of reaction and against new taxation in the countries of western capitalism. We hold the convocation of the World Labor Congress in the immediate future imperative as the starting point for the unification of all proletarian forces against the offensive of capital. This Labor Congress will not be able to establish the united front at once, but it will be able to define the minimum objective and the methods of struggle.

All that the Second International says against the convocation of this Congress is nothing but an evasion. We have already stated our views upon the Russian questions brought up. The statements of the Second International as to the situation in Western Europe either speaks for the convocation of the Congress or is an entirely unreasonable demand which convicts itself through its own naïveté. When the Second International complains that in Sweden, for instance, the Communists loyally support the Social Democratic Government, behind which the majority of the working class still stands, but outside of Parliament carry on vigorous agitation against the Social Democrats, it only proves that the Second International only supports the united front when this united front is interpreted as a security police for the Social Democratic Parties and suicide for the Communist Parties. That sounds particularly good on the lips of the representatives of those parties which charge the Communists with attempting to exploit the united front in order to increase their influence in the masses. The Communists are obliged to aim at this because they are convinced that only Communism can lead the working class out of its poverty and need. They do not deny the Social Democrats the right of fighting within the united front for the leadership of the working class. *The united front does not mean the fusion of the three Labor Internationals, but their forming a bloc for the struggle for the concrete demands of the working class.* From this point of view the Communist Delegation dismisses the complaints of the Delegation of the Second International about Communist propaganda as laughable.

As for the charge of the splitting of the trade union movement in France and the alleged split of the Norwegian trade unions, the Delegation of the Communist International maintains that the French trade union organizations were split by Joshaux and his adherents, who during the war fought on the side of French capital and now, after having become a minority, have destroyed the unity of the trade unions. In Norway there is no danger of a split of the trade unions. We have seen that the entire Norwegian trade union movement has adopted the trade union principles of the Red Trade Union International. If a split should take place, only those would bear the blame who, differing from the Communists, refuse to bow to the will of the majority in the trade unions in spite of fundamental differences of opinion. The lamentable clashes in Germany, as for instance at the Building Trades Workers' Congress, are the result of the brutal terror of the trade union bureaucracy, which treats the Communist trade union members in violation of all by-laws as outlawed helots and attempts to expell them from the trade unions before they conquer the majority. In the conviction that every split of the trade union means a weakening of the power of the entire working class, we moved at the Berlin conference that a conference of representatives of the Amsterdam and Red Trade Union Internationals be called at once. The Berlin Conference recommended that the Commission of Nine call this conference. We now again propose that this decision be executed at once in order to assure the trade union united front and (wherever possible) the organic unity of the national trade union organizations in spite of the fundamental differences of opinion of the two Trade Union Internationals. The Delegation of the Communist International maintains that the Communist International has carried through all the obligations it assumed at the Berlin Conference and that it is ready to clear out of the way every obstacle to the establishment of the united front by not even breaking up the plan of the World Labor Congress when the parties of the 2nd and 2½ International consider the exclusion of the defence of Soviet Russia compatible with their views as representatives of the

workers' interests. The Delegation of the Communist International is ready to discuss all trade union questions with the Amsterdam International in the presence of the representatives of the Red Trade Union International which has already given its approval. If the representatives of the Second International consider the convocation of the World Labor Congress in the shortest possible time as impossible, the Delegation of the Communist International declares that the Commission of Nine as at present composed has therewith lost all justification for its continued existence.

The Commission of Nine was appointed by the Berlin Conference for the organization of the World Labor Congress. If it evades this task it is only a blind alley behind which the Second International is able to sacrifice the interests of the international working class in a united front with the bourgeoisie and at the same time to evade all responsibility therefor. Although ready to conclude an alliance even with the leaders of the Second International for a fight for the most immediate vital interests of the proletariat, the Communist International must refuse to permit itself to be used as a foil for the policy of the Second International, directed against the interests of the working class. If the Second International refuses to convoke the World Labor Congress in the immediate future the undersigned as the representatives of the Executive Committee of the Communist International withdraw from the Commission of Nine. The Com-

munist International will then work for the idea of the united front in the struggle with redoubled energy and will do all that it can to convince the working masses, even the non-Communist workers, of the necessity of the united front, and to compel their leaders to break their united front with the bourgeoisie and to fight in serried ranks for the common interests of the working class. If the non-Communist working masses should not be able to bring about this change in the attitude of their leaders the Executive Committee of the Communist International will always be ready again to send its representatives to a joint body of the three Executives.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International empowers us in conclusion to declare that in case the Second International succeeds in sabotaging the decision of the Berlin Conference for the immediate convocation of the World Labor Congress, the freedom of defense granted by the Soviet Government for the trial of the Social Revolutionaries will not be curtailed, no attempt will be made to hinder the actions of the defenders of the Social Revolutionaries and the public character of the trial will be maintained.

The Delegation of the Executive Committee
of the Communist International to the Commission of Nine.

Berlin, May 23rd, 1922.

The Commission of Nine broken up by the Second International!

Long live the Fight for the United Front by the Rank and File!
To the Working Men and Women of the World!

What the Communist International feared has happened! The leaders of the Second International have hindered the bringing about of the World Labor Congress, the convening of which had been decided at the Berlin Conference of the representatives of the three Executives. At the first session of the Commissions of Nine which met together in order to carry out the decisions of the Berlin Conference in accordance with their mandate, they pronounced against the immediate convening of the World Labor Congress. According to them such a Congress can only be considered when the Communist Parties renounce all criticism of the policy of the Social Democratic leaders and the trade union bureaucracy, and when at the same time the Soviet Government allows the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries to organize rebellions with impunity. These conditions which the Second International laid down for the convening of the World Labor Congress are plainly expressed in the resolutions of the Executive Committee of the Second International, which dares to complain that the Communists in Sweden criticize the Social Democratic government although they loyally support it; they are bold enough to put forward as something unheard of the fact that the Soviet Government suppressed the Menshevik revolt in Georgia. It suffices to name these reasons for the non-convening of the World Labor Congress for every worker to see that it is a case of pure pretense and nothing but deception on the part of the leaders of the Second International. If the Second International gives as a reason for the non-convening of the World Labor Congress our past, present and future criticism of the Social Democratic Parties, it means that the Second International demands of the Communists that they resign themselves to the rule of the Social Democratic trade union and party leaders, that they renounce every struggle for their own ideals, for the ideals for which Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and hundreds of thousands of workers in Russia and Germany have fallen, and for which millions of workers in the whole world are fighting. If the Second International makes the Congress contingent upon the Soviet Government giving the Mensheviks liberty to organize revolts, this absurd demand implies that the Soviet Government abdicate in favor of French Imperialism which has now come forward as the champion of the Mensheviks.

These demands which are preposterous to a sane understanding are set up in clear contravention of the resolutions of the Berlin Conference which had decided on the unconditional convocation of the World Labor Congress. It is a matter of course that the Delegation of the Communist International immediately rejected these unreasonable demands. The Communist International has not only fulfilled the obligations which its

representatives undertook in Berlin, but the Russian Soviet Government has also made concessions which go far beyond it. While the Delegation of the Communist International to the Berlin Conference pledged itself to obtain permission for the former Royal Belgian Minister Vandervelde, to attend the trial of the Social Revolutionaries as defending counsel and the Soviet Government at the request of the Communist International granted permission to five other foreign Social Democratic lawyers to attend the trial, the Prussian Social Democratic Minister of the Interior, Severing, at the very same moment organized a hunt of the representative of the Communist International by police spies, in order to make it impossible for him to make a report to the German Communist Workers upon the proceedings of the Berlin Conference and the question of the united front. In the face of the demagogic assertions by the representatives of the Second International that the Communist International only demands the World Labor Congress in order to harness the world proletariat to the chariot of Soviet Russia's foreign policy, the Communist International on the suggestion of the Communist Party of Russia, declared itself prepared to forego having the question of the defence of Soviet Russia placed on the agenda for the World Labor Congress. Defend at least the bare existence, the morsel of bread of the workers of Western Europe and then the Communist International will also cooperate and organize this defence in common!

All this was preached to deaf ears. The Second International did not desire a World Labor Congress under any circumstances. Germany is on the eve of great struggles over the apportionment of new taxation burdens. The increasing cost of all necessities threatens to lead to grave economic conflicts.

The Social Democracy wants to maintain in this situation its alliance with the bourgeoisie, cost what it may, and it is afraid that — in the event of its appearance at a Workers' Congress — it would be compelled by the united movement of the proletariat to break the united front with the bourgeoisie. The English Labour Party is confronted with an election, during and after which it will in some form or other collaborate with the Liberals. These friendly relations with the bourgeoisie would naturally be hindered by an approach to the Communist workers. And the same holds true in other countries. The Second International desired to render impossible the coming together of the World Labor Congress in any event. But it had no objection to the Commission remaining in existence, in order to hinder the Communist struggle against the Social Democracy. The Communist International could not allow the Social Democrats of all countries and the trade union bureaucracy to prevent any united front of the

proletariat and at the same time evade responsibility for this criminal policy. For this reason the Communist International submitted an ultimatum to the Second International, that either it discontinue its sabotage of the World Labor Congress, or the Communist International would withdraw its representatives from the Commission of Nine.

The Second International immediately sought the assistance of the so-called Vienna International. Instead of reminding the Second International that the Berlin Conference decided on the immediate convening of the World Labor Congress, subject to no conditions, and that therefore the setting up of any conditions on the part of the Second International was a clear breach of the duly signed agreement, the Vienna International forthwith declared that owing to the attitude of the Second and Third Internationals, the Congress had been rendered impossible. It was not sufficient that in this way Adler placed the struggle of the Communist Delegation for the carrying out of the Berlin decisions on the same footing as the struggle of the Second International against the Berlin decisions. He justifies his attitude by the statement that "differences within the Executive of the Communist International render difficult the convening of the Congress". And this although he must have known that the Executive of the Communist International unanimously ratified the agreement come to in Berlin. At the close of the sitting he even went so far as to insinuate, that the Communists were now opposed to the World Labor Congress because the Soviet Government was about to enter into a compromise with the Entente, and did not wish to be hindered by a Workers' Congress. This shameful imputation is an absolute contradiction of all the facts, which are known to every reader, and which must inform every reader that Soviet Russia is now in one of the most difficult stages of the fight against the capitalist world. This imputation was only a watchword for the cover offensive by the Press of the 2½ International. But one day after the breaking up of the Committee of Nine the Berlin Independent Socialist *Freiheit* had the bare face to write:

"The Communists are no longer interested in the World Labor Congress since the conclusion of the truce pact between Bolshevik Russia and the Entente States."

The campaign of lying thus begun serves to cover up the fact that on May 21st an agreement was come to in Brussels between the French Socialist Party, which belongs to the 2½ International and the English Labour Party, as well as the Belgian Labour Party, two of the leading parties of the Second International, for the purpose of jointly convening a World Congress of the reformist and semi-reformist parties at the Hague. This pact means that the characterless 2½ International which is unable to decide between revolution and counter-revolution, between bourgeois pseudo-democracy and proletarian dictatorship, in accordance with its shilly-shallying policy has now again decided upon collaboration with the most open reformists. In view of this fact, there remained nothing else for the representatives of the Communist International than to withdraw from the Commission of Nine, which from an instrument for the struggle for the united front of the proletariat would become a mere haggling market of the open and disguised reformists, in which the Communists would merely act as a screen.

Working men and women! The representatives of the Communist International have not lightheartedly undertaken this step. They knew what hopes the working masses had bound up in the existence of the Commission of Nine, for they knew that the

Commission of Nine had awakened in you the hope that it would organize your struggle against the growing need. The representatives of the Communist International have withdrawn from the Commission of Nine in the conviction that any illusion with regard to such work by the Commission of Nine would only hinder your struggle for the establishment of the united front. Only the naked truth, the calm recognition of the situation, will help to inspire the fight. And this truth is: the leaders of the Social Democratic parties and the trade union bureaucracy are opposed to the real fight against the capitalist offensive. And for this reason they are *against* the united front and the World Labor Congress.

Comrades! The Communist International felt it to be no easy matter to sit at the same table with those who are politically responsible for the murder of Rosa Luxemburg, Liebknecht and Connolly, with the representatives of the parties which have helped world capital to keep the proletariat four years in the service of imperialism, in order after the war to hold it back from revolution. We understood this sacrifice in order to prove to the workers who are not Communists how earnestly we desire the united front of the proletariat. We do not regret this sacrifice. The proletariat without distinction of party has been given the possibility of convincing itself as to who is for and who is against the united front. The attempt to organize the proletarian united front from above downwards has been wrecked against the resistance of the leaders of the Second International. This makes it our bounden duty to assemble all our forces in order, in defiance of the leaders of the Second International, to organize the proletariat for the common struggle.

Communist Workers! You have the duty of carrying the lessons of the first attempt at establishing the united front of the proletariat, to the broadest masses of the working class!

Workers of the parties of the Second and 2½ Internationals! It is your duty after these experiences with your leaders to undertake everything, to neglect nothing, in order to show your leaders who have forgotten their duty that you have no mind to permit the further sabotage of the united front, that you are determined to unite with the Communist workers in the struggle against the assaults of capital!

The slogan of the World Labor Congress will be the slogan of the coming fight! But the experiences of this first attempt to convene the World Labor Congress have proved that in order for it to be possible, it is necessary to break down the first line of resistance of the leaders of the Social Democratic parties in Germany and England, that it is necessary in these countries, in practical daily struggle, to consolidate the working masses without regard to what party they belong into one united front which will then spread all over the world.

On to the struggle for the proletarian united front and the World Labor Congress!

Down with the united front of the Social Democrats and the bourgeoisie!

On to the fight against the leaders of the Second International, the splitters of the working class!

Create the united front from below upwards!

The Delegation of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

Berlin, May 24th, 1922.