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The Political Situation in Russia and the Russian Trade Unions

Speech of Comrade Zinoviev at the V. All-Russian Trade Union Congress

Comrades,

The trade union congresses in our country are the best landmarks of the development of our whole country. I believe that this 5th Congress will also be such a landmark in that it will condense the results of a year and a half's work, and enable us to draw lessons therefrom which are of great importance to our Republic.

In what condition does the 5th Congress find the country? The international position of our Republic is stronger than ever. We can say this without fear of exaggeration. The Soviet Republic has become an independent world power. Even if we look only at the foreign events of the past weeks, we cannot fail to see that the international political position of our country has been strengthened.

A few weeks ago the German Republic, headed by a bourgeois-menshevik coalition government, declared to us that Germany under the oppression of the Treaty of Versailles stood on the verge of an abyss, and requested that we make this known to the Russian people. This as well as other facts proves clearly how greatly our influence has grown in the field of international politics. The present negotiations with Japan and the coming ones with China are of great importance, whatever the final result.

The Versailles Treaty is cracking, and every day deals it fresh blows. The crisis in the East sharpens daily. No one can speak of a World Revolution which will be victorious only in Europe. It will only be a World Revolution when the hundreds of millions of the East rise against their oppressors. And as the revolt grows in the East, so does the importance of our country in the eyes of the Eastern peoples. It is therefore no

exaggeration when we say that the international political position of our country is stronger than ever.

This does not mean that all international difficulties have been overcome. No, we still had to feel the attack of international capital at the Hague Conference. As a result of the refusal of credits our country is still in such an economic condition that international capital still hopes to force its robber conditions upon us.

It is one of the most important tasks of this Congress to declare in the name of the organized working class of Russia, —and I am convinced, Comrades, that you will make this declaration:— However difficult our economic situation may be, however badly we may need a resumption of relations with international capital, the Soviet Republic is already strong enough not to enter into an agreement which purposes her enslavement and her plundering. (Applause.)

Turning to the inner condition, we may say that the crop did not disappoint the hopes of the country. We may hope that the question of bread may soon be put in the background. This does not mean that all the difficulties of nourishing the country are over. You know quite well yourselves that in many important regions, as in the Don Valley, the question of providing food still plays an important rôle. Improvement proceeds but slowly, but nevertheless, may be noted.

During the next year, perhaps even for several years to come, the question of wages will be the most important question of our economic system and of our labor movement.

Some attempts at solution have already been made during the past year. The real wages of our workers have risen on the average 100% during the year. But, as you all well know, Comrades, as a result of the frightful devastation the wages of the workers stood so low that a 100% increase is still far

from being a solution of the problem. In 1921, as a result of the incredibly difficult situation of the working class, many labor conflicts broke out. Their number decreased considerably in 1922. And while the year 1921 brought no real improvement of the wages and the living conditions of the Russian workers, the standard of living was raised considerably in 1922. I believe that the Congress must take account of this and spread the fact to the workers. This fact throws light upon the particularity of our situation. The material situation of the worker in a Workers' Republic is not improved and cannot be improved by labor conflicts, but only by totally different conditions.

The end of the Civil War, the first crop after the war and the adoption of the new economic policy at once had a favorable effect upon the condition of the worker, although no strikes took place, in fact just because there were no strikes. It is, then, one of the most important lessons of the past one-and-a-half or two years that the improvement of the workers' conditions in our country does not depend, as in capitalist countries, upon economic conflicts.

The present situation may be characterized shortly in a sentence: *The capitalist countries are going down slowly into ruin, while the Soviet Republic, slowly, but surely, is returning to health.* I believe that this sentence suffices to characterize the present condition. When we told the workers a year and a half ago that the conditions would improve, many workers remained sceptical. This has changed. The position of the Communists has improved, the confidence of the politically unorganized masses in the Communists is growing. All workers have become convinced that improvement is possible, in fact that improvement has already begun.

The relation between the betterment of the workers' living conditions and the increase of production has never been so apparent as today. All through the Revolution we have preached to the masses the necessity of increased production in a Workers Republic. We insisted upon this under most difficult conditions, under such conditions that the worker, depressed by his excessive burdens, lost his faith in the cause. Today, our propaganda for increased production is finding response in the masses. Why? Not because of abstract propaganda, of abstract presentation of the truth that the workers must increase their production in their country, but because the progressive worker who reads the reports of the economic organs of the trusts, who understands the balance sheets of these trusts, realizes clearly that an increase of wages can only be brought about by an increase of production, and with the help of the trade unions. That is why we must combat the spread of that idea which we find even in trade union circles: "The economists carry the responsibility for the industry; they control the factories and the shops, and therefore the increase of productivity lies in their hands." This is not the case, and it is self-evident that our Congress can adopt no such point of view; it is self-evident that increased production in a Workers' and Peasants' Republic depends upon the trade unions. And I repeat it, never were the trade unions in a better position for that purpose.

Another exaggeration of which many of our comrades active in industry are guilty, is that they refused to reveal to the trade unions all the facts concerning production. This is naturally not the standpoint of our Party. This error must be opposed. The decision of the Party that there can be no business secret for the progressive workers organized in the trade unions, that is, for the responsible organs of the trade unions, must also be well-known to you. The closest cooperation of economic and trade union organs is necessary and all friction must be avoided.

The workers will not be satisfied with the previous increases in wages. They are far from sufficient. Nevertheless, we would run the greatest danger if we acceded now to a desire which is spreading among the workers, including those of our Party, for an immediate and considerable increase of wages. The interests of the working class demand that we do not allow any sudden raises which today, or tomorrow, or within a few months may swallow up the last funds of our economic organs and endanger our industries.

To formulate shortly our wage policy, I will say: Slow but sure, careful, systematic improvement of the living conditions

of the working class in connection with an increase of productivity in our industries. This formula makes no splendid, misleading propaganda, but it is the only honest, true, practicable, revolutionary, truly Communistic formula.

We find ourselves often between the hammer and the anvil. On the one side, the working masses represented by the trade unions exercise a pressure upon the governing organs for a rapid increase of wages. These demands are opposed by those comrades who have charge of protecting the interests of the State; these comrades maintain that a rapid increase of wages would lead to bankruptcy or semi-bankruptcy of the State. We have to take into account your pressure as well as their counter-pressure.

The Workers' Government naturally works hand in hand with the trade unions. But I believe it will be a great mistake if you attempted to strengthen the trade unions by forcing some measures upon us, when this can be achieved only through practical work. It would be a further mistake if today obligatory collective agreements fell from heaven to the trade unions. No, it is necessary that the trade unions develop their strength in that field. These advantages you must conquer for yourselves, with the support of the masses. This does not mean that our Party is against collective agreements or favors the opponents of collective agreements. There are no opponents of collective agreements on principle among us. The question here is of a better organization of the working class. A mere issuance of decrees would be a great mistake. This does not mean that the State will take no stand on the subject. The necessity of the State's intervention is today generally recognized.

It will be the task of this Congress to summarize the results of the new economic policy. The trade unions, with the comradely help of our Party, have undertaken a basic change of their policy. This will be another question for debate. The results of the discussion, however, will prove that our trade union policy was completely right. This is evident from the rebirth of the trade unions, and much better from the feeling of the workers throughout the country.

But temporary difficulties and diseases appear together with the new policy. I mean corruption. It is not usual to speak of such a thing in addresses of greeting, and many of our enemies will rejoice that we still have to mention corruption in the fifth year of our existence. But you, the representatives of the labor movement cannot pass over this manifestation without any comment. Our Party and the Soviet Power have begun a systematic fight against this evil. We must continue this fight with fire and sword. But without the support of the trade unions our Party cannot undertake this fight. We must insist today that our most important problem is the fight against corruption. Corruption is just such an enemy as Koltcak, Denikin and Yudenish. Every trade union must be the watchful eye of the Republic. Every trade union must punish with iron hand bribers and bribed. We must permit no capitulation here. We know that corruption did not fall from heaven, that it has its sources far back in the history of our country. Illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, misery, are the causes of corruption. But we know what mighty power resides in the organized working class, in the trade unions, in the Workers' Government. A systematic fight against corruption must then have serious results.

One of our best economists, Comrade Smilka, published recently the following figures: This year, our agriculture reached on the average 75% of its pre-war production, while our state industry in 1921 reached about 25% of the pre-war production, and rose slowly during 1922 to 28%. What do these figures signify? They signify that agriculture recovered quite rapidly in our country, much more rapidly than industry whose production fell in 1921, then rose somewhat in 1922. Of course, an increase of 2, 5% represents a very small progress. There follows therefrom that all the energy, all the organized capital in the hands of our working class, all the enthusiasm of which our working class is capable, must be brought into action so that these figures no longer sink, but slowly, continually rise. We should not expect any rapid progress.

Comrade Lenin was right when he insisted at the Congresses and in private talks with our comrades that the ex-

pectation of rapid improvement would bring us nothing but disappointment. The reconstruction of our economic system requires years, demands system, intense work, demands that we judge our situation clearly, as Comrade Lenin justly insists. However, we may say that even if the situation of some of our industries is still very bad, even borders on catastrophe in some cases, we have nevertheless, made a step forward and are on our way to recovery.

Two more words to conclude: When, two years ago, the question of transforming the trade unions into free associations, and the transformation of industry upon a commercial basis were brought up, there was no lack of prophets who predicted the destruction of the trade union movement and with it, of our Party. They said that the transition to the new economic policy would result in an irreparable split in the Communist Party of Russia, in class war within the Party, and in the passage of our Party to the side of the bourgeoisie. Over a year has passed since the introduction of the new economic policy. This is not much. But we know and we see that all the dangers which could arise therefrom have already been overcome. And we have the right and the duty to tell the working class represented by the All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions that the Communist Party of Russia today is a stronger, more united party than two years ago.

The Communist Party of Russia has been able to accomplish a gigantic work of education, organization and discipline. The trade unions have gained a much greater influence than they had before. They have become an organization which maintains the closest connection with the working masses and enjoys a very great sympathy among the non-partisan workers. The trade unions are the schools of Communism and reconstruction of the non-partisan workers. The trade unions have not separated themselves from the masses. The trade unions have not degenerated, nor have they changed their political physiognomy. They are the same red, revolutionary, proletarian trade unions they were many years ago. Therefore, comrades, let our enemies rejoice as they will, let them say what they will, we answer just this: *The most difficult period is already behind us. One or two more good crops and we are saved. International capital is sinking into ruin. We, on the other hand, slowly but surely are going forward. The future belongs to us.*

POLITICS

Russia and the Dardanelles.

By Schiffer.

The fact that Russia is interested in the question of the Straits is treated by the bourgeois press with complete silence, and for a very good reason. Whilst the allied statesmen are preparing a new war over the Straits (there are already battle-ships and cruisers on their way to the coast of Asia Minor, infantry and cavalry battalions are proceeding to the Straits, England is mobilizing her mercenaries from the Colonies and dominions, and her diplomatists are endeavouring—as we recently saw during the war—to stir up the Balkan States against one another in the name of “defence of the Neutral Zone and the freedom of the Straits”), it is considered inopportune to acknowledge openly that the State which proposed the only possible and rational solution of the problem of the Straits is herself immediately and much more closely interested in this question than are all those States which are rattling the sabre.

Though before the war, it was said that the Baltic and the Black Seas were the two lungs with which Russia breathed, Russia is now restricted to but a single lung, and this one lung is in a precarious condition.

A whole number of ports in the Baltic,—Riga, Reval, Libau, have been separated from Russia during the last few years. On the Baltic Sea Russia has at present only one “window towards Europe”—Petrograd. So much the greater importance therefore, has the Black Sea for Russia with its many ports: Odessa, Batum, Nikolayev, Sevastapool; and on the Sea of Azov: Rostov, Mariopol, Taganrog, and others.

These southern ports are of enormous economic importance to Russia. Odessa and Rostov were already of extreme importance in connection with the corn trade, and this importance has immeasurably increased in accordance with the

development of the industries of Southern Russia. Since the time when Russia began to export coal and iron and Manganese ore, her need for the southern ports has increased immensely.

During the last few years the situation in this respect has changed somewhat in the sense that these ports have obtained a yet greater importance for the restoration of the economic strength of the country. It is quite superfluous to point out how necessary the restoration of industry is for Russia. And this restoration demands the exportation of raw materials. The war, the Revolution, the blockade and the famine have entirely destroyed the capacity to pay and the purchasing power of the village people and of the Russian population in general.

The immense, (from the point of view of its extent) and unique Russian market has become extremely reduced in recent years and cannot even suffice for those branches of industry which are already in process of restoration. At present, the central point in the restoration of Russia's economic life lies in foreign trade. Under the present circumstances a brisk trade through the Black Sea ports is one of the means to the rebirth of Russia's economic life.

Thus the interests of Russia are by the inexorable logic of things bound up with the fate of the Straits which form the key to our Black Sea ports. This of course does not mean that Soviet Russia, following the example of the old Czarist regime, is laying claims to the possession of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. By no means. The Soviet Power proposes in view of the interests of the country, that the decision of the question of a piece of territory or a sheet of water shall be left to the people immediately interested in it, which means: the question of the Straits is above all a question for Turkey, Russia, the Ukraine, Georgia, Bulgaria and Roumania.

The proposal of Soviet Russia (in the note of September 14th) had as its basis, the Russo-Turkish Treaty of March, 1921. It provides for the free passage of all merchant ships of every nation. Hence the economic interests of the Allies can in no way be jeopardized by the carrying out of the Russo-Turkish Treaty. The execution of the treaty merely endangers the robber imperialist projects of the victors “who take advantage of the so-called “Freedom of the Straits” in order to occupy the districts adjoining, including the Turkish capital.

Only the robber interests of the Allies who take advantage of their control over Constantinople and the Straits for the purpose of blockading Russia, for the purpose of intervention and in order to strangle Russia as well as all the peoples of the Near and Middle East and North Africa, can suffer as a result of the adoption of the Russian proposals. From the moment when the Straits are placed at the disposal of the adjoining countries, the English, French, and other great and small pirates will be deprived of the possibility of hindering those peoples who tore up the Treaties of Versailles, Sevres, etc., from freely disposing of their own territory and independence, and further threatening them with starvation and strangling, and plundering them according to their hearts' desire. This simple and just solution of the question was entirely ignored by the Allies.

The decision arrived at on September 20th at the conference between Lord Curzon, Count Sforza and Poincaré over the convening of a conference for the solution of the Eastern question, provides for the participation of England, Italy, France, Japan, Greece, Roumania Jugoslavia and Turkey. (It is not clear whether by Turkey is meant the Turkey of the Sultan or of Kemal).

Apparently there is no thought of the participation of Russia. It is superfluous to remark that the decisions of such a conference will have no binding power on the Soviet Republics, who are interested in the highest degree in the problems evoked by the victorious sword of the Turkish peasantry.

It is characteristic that Messrs. Henderson & Co., terrified at the possibility of a new “defensive” war, turn to the League of Nations, to the humanity of Lloyd George and other soul-saving authorities, but pass over in silence the Soviet Government's note of the 14th September, which contains the sole possible and sole proletarian solution of the Eastern problem.

And this silence indicates that the English “Socialists” of the Second and 2½ Internationals never think of seriously fighting against a new war and that all their protests and all their outcries are of a purely platonic character.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The Revival of the Factory Councils in Germany

By Peter Maslowski (Berlin).

The Factory Council movement in Germany dates from the Revolution of November, 1918. It arose as a development of the system of selecting, in each factory, "trustworthy men" to act as shop-committees. On the day after the November Revolution, power fell without difficulty into the hands of the factory councils, the bourgeoisie at that time being too disorganized to offer the least resistance against the proletariat. It was these factory councils that established the so-called government "of the peoples' representatives". But the policy of the Independent Social Democratic majority of the Right, resolutely hostile to a dictatorship of the workmen's councils, gave the bourgeoisie the confidence it had lacked for a moment, and contributed to shearing the factory councils of authority.

Two congresses of the factory councils were held during the first months of the Revolution. These were, however, under the direction of the Social Democrats, and the voice of the revolutionary masses was hardly heard. After the second and last congress, the Central Committee of the factory councils declared itself dissolved and transferred its powers to the National Assembly "regularly elected".

The agitation for factory councils did not cease, at least among the masses. A long time would have been needed to destroy it. The great general strikes of March, 1919, which, beginning in Berlin, extended to all of Germany, was nothing else than an act in defence of the workmen's councils, determined to make their right respected. It was this movement which provoked the famous promise of socialization of Scheidemann's Government: "Socialization is on its way". The bourgeoisie could do nothing but make seeming concessions to them.

Parliament, to use the fitting expression of an Independent Social Democrat, had "anchored itself in the Constitution". A law was passed regarding the factory councils in which the Democratic Government granted the latter the right to assist the factory owner in capitalist reconstruction, and to act as an instrument of collaboration between the unions and the exploiters.

In the month of January, 1920, the Independent Social Democrats called upon the workers of Berlin to demonstrate before the Reichstag. The Social Democrats of Noske's Party, with whom the Crispiens and Dittmanns have just united, replied by ordering the crowd to be fired upon. It was a blood-bath.

During the Summer and Autumn of 1920, when the Red Army was approaching the frontiers of Eastern Prussia, the movement for workers' councils seemed to revive for a time. But when the Red Army retreated, the movement fell back.

In the Autumn of 1920, a National Congress of the factory councils, organized by the unions, was called together. But it neither had nor could have any real influence, for it was composed only of delegates from Social Democratic trade unions.

The law on the factory councils not being sufficient to destroy a movement profoundly revolutionary, the reformist trade unions understood to accomplish that. They established numerous Central Committees in the factory councils. In these committees they made a determined attempt completely to eliminate all revolutionary spirit. The Central Committee of the trade union factory councils of Berlin, for example, declared that the councils had no political or economic role to play, and ought to be only organs of social education.

But as the economic crisis bore down upon the working class, as the real salaries diminished while prices increased; as the capitalists strengthened their offensive against the eight hour day; and as misery continued its pressure, the proletariat began to revolt against the inactivity of their trade union leaders.

They demanded that the promises given them a thousand times be put into action. In every corner of the land they insisted upon the application of the program presented to the Congress at Leipzig by the trade union committee. In every state a violent storm stirred the working class against the treason organized by the trade unions.

The reformist leaders, however, had more to do than hear the voice of the masses. They were quite occupied in imposing additional hours of labor upon the miners to permit the execution of the Stinnes-Lubersac Agreement, in the conclusion of which they themselves participated. They dream of the reconstruction of German capitalism at the expense of the wage-earning class. They seek to discredit the revolutionary factory councils.

The latter, however, continue their path undisturbed. *Workers' Control of Production*—this is the slogan inscribed on their banner. In two striking conferences the factory councils of Berlin decided to convoke on October 2nd, a National Congress of the Councils. And the fact that the unions, despite their frequent threats, have not yet dared to expel the members of the factory councils, confirms the strength and intensity of the movement.

The weeks to come will be filled with agitation, the struggle for workers' control of production. The union of the two Social Democratic Parties will oblige us to undergo a severe struggle. But we have no cause for pessimism. On the contrary! While, at Nuremberg, the suicide of the Independent Social Democratic Party was consummated, while the unified Social Democracy mediated on a new era of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the proletariat in the factories, under the direction of the factory councils, reestablished the united front of a class which must defend its existence against starvation. This movement is yet in its beginnings—but to it belongs the future.

The Revolutionary Syndicalists and the Red International of Labor Unions

By Andrés Nin (Moscow).

Perceiving the unpopularity of their attempts at secession, the organizers of the International Syndicalist Conference of Berlin are now, by a manoeuvre made awkward through delay, trying to throw upon the Red International of Labor Unions the heavy responsibility they themselves assumed. Judge that by the following communication from the Berlin Bureau:

"We learn through the press that the Executive Committee of the R.I.L.U. has deferred the Second Congress of the R.I.L.U., which ought to have taken place on the 23rd of October, to the 20th of November, 1922.

Being informed that one of the reasons for which the International Conference of Berlin had decided to convoke the International Congress of Revolutionary Syndicalists on the 12th of 19th of November, was its profound and conscientious desire not to force the break (sic! with the R.I.L.U.) and to give the Congress of Moscow the opportunity to correct the policy of disruption pursued up to now by the R.I.L.U. in the revolutionary syndicalist movement of the world, the International Bureau of Revolutionary Syndicalists, faithful to the spirit of the mandate given it by the Berlin Conference, and anxious not to close irrevocably the door to all possibility for common action, now convokes the World Congress of Revolutionary and Industrial Syndicalists at Berlin for the 25th of December 1922 and the following days.—The International Bureau: Rudolph Rocker, General Secretary."

Thus those, who at the Berlin Conference, laid down the basis for a new International and repulsed all the adherents or sympathizers of the R.I.L.U., now express the "profound and conscientious desire not to force the break", and declare themselves "anxious not to close the door to all possibility of common action". Well then! The militants of every country do not possess such short memories that they have already forgotten on which side are found the dividers of the proletariat. It is not we, who in December 1920, attempted at Berlin, at the "preliminary" Syndicalist Conference, to sabotage the Constitutional Congress of the R.I.L.U.; it is not we who, despite the decision adopted by the organization, prevented the German Syndicalists from participating in that same Congress; it is not we who, in October 1921, passed a resolution at Dusseldorf to convoke a conference for the purpose of creating a new International!

Finally, it is necessary to recall the campaign conducted for more than a year in the Syndicalist press against the R.I.L.U. and against the men who are at the head of the Russian Revolution. As they sabotaged us at the Conference in June, who can be made to swallow the statement that their organizers have "the

profound and conscientious desire not to force the break". Pick up the *Bulletin* issued at the time of the Conference, and you will find, on page 12 of the French edition, the following: "To Syndicalists, the international point of view appears as follows: Just as the revolutionary syndicalists have independent organizations in the different countries, so they ought to create an independent Syndicalist International. Union or an international basis with those who have not yet come to an agreement in their own countries, is an absurdity". It is clear, is it not? But continue to turn over the pages of this *Bulletin* and on page 20 you will find this title, which tells enough about the wish to unite of the organizers of the Conference: *Towards a Syndicalist International*. Why? Is, then, a new Revolutionary Syndicalist International necessary?

We could multiply these quotations, but every serious militant knows what they contain. It is in Moscow that they earnestly work for the true unity of the working class and for the Revolution. The revolutionary proletariat has understood very well that the Conference at Berlin was a pitiable failure, and that the pretended Syndicalist International will be merely a skeleton organization without contact with the masses and without revolutionary efficacy.

As for us, we will continue at our task in Moscow, in the capital of the first victorious Proletarian Revolution; we will continue at the Second Congress of the R.I.L.U. We will set up a powerful Red Trade Union organization without regard to those who, in Berlin, under the benevolent watch of the bourgeoisie and the police—well informed are they on which side the real danger lies!—will struggle hard to establish "solemnly", a proletarian International,—nay more!—without "nations" and without the "proletariat"!

The Proletarian Movement in Hungary

By Bela Szanto.

Count Bethlen declared several weeks ago, when it was confirmed that the harvest would be bad in Hungary, that the country would have to face a difficult winter in the course of which "public order might be menaced". The Hungarian crown fell immediately from 0.36 to 0.76 on the Bourse of Zurich, and produced a sudden rise of prices in Hungary.

The value of Hungarian money rose again after several days, but the increased prices remained. On the 12th of August an official communication stated that the harvest would actually be bad. It was estimated, (in terms of wheat), at 11.86 million metrical hundredweights as against 14.34 in the preceding year.

As a result of the bad harvest the condition of agricultural laborers has been aggravated. Their organ, *Földmivesek Lapja* wrote on the 15th of August:

"Unemployment in agriculture has assumed terrifying proportions. There are today in Hungary more than 500,000 day farm workers without land. Before the war they could find a little work in industry. Now the industrial crisis no longer permits this. The foreign policy of the reactionary government prevents them from emigrating. Their situation is hopeless.

"The situation is heart-breaking", exclaims a day-laborer, "and the exasperation, general. Our wages do not permit us to live. And the favored ones who have found work will have it only until January. The policy of the Clerical Government leads us directly to starvation".

So much for agricultural workers. The lot of the city laborers is hardly better. The employer has brutally abolished the eight hour day. Increases in wages, obtained through bitter struggles, always remain behind the cost of living, but the rise in prices continues and the class struggle is accentuated.

Mr. Horthy confirms this officially in a manifesto in which we find these words: "The misery of the country is becoming frightful". After which the head of the White Dictatorship declares himself powerless to remedy unemployment and poverty, and appeals to social beneficence!

In this terrible hour of the Hungarian proletariat, what is the Social Democratic Party doing? The liberal press promises to calm the unrest among the working class. We do not think it will succeed.

The miners of Salgotarjan (Northern Hungary) are at this moment fighting for the abolition of the "supplementary" days

of labor imposed upon them after the downfall of the Soviets. This struggle has been in progress for a long time, but the bourgeois and Social Democratic press did not breathe a word of it until very recently. It was necessary to send troops into the region, to evict the strikers from their homes, to adopt odious measures of reprisal, to arrest the entire strike committee, before *Nepszava*, official organ of the Social Democratic Party, mentioned the events in the mining regions. And then it was only to ask the workers in veiled terms, to give up the continuation of the struggle. The movement continues, nevertheless, and the courage of the Hungarian miners deserves recognition.

In Budapest, 40,000 metal workers are on strike. Other strikes occur which are spoken of only when at an end. Let it be observed that the Social Democratic Party which, at election time, promised to assist in the "reconstruction of the Hungarian fatherland", scrupulously respects instructions as to silence regarding the proletarian movement.

Besides, its attitude is the same regarding the frequent peasant revolts, always pitilessly crushed, and of which almost nothing is ever known. Questioned by a Social Democratic deputy who demanded the release of several imprisoned agricultural day-laborers, the Minister of the Interior replied cynically: "I shall never tolerate organization among agricultural workers. Your Party has pledged itself to the government to undertake no agitation in the country districts."

At the end of last year we could note a strengthening of the Free Unions to the detriment of the Clerical Unions. At that time, the latter had only several thousand members, while the Free Unions had about 200,000. But when the strike wave rose unexpectedly, the Clerical Unions, whose directors are often more energetic than the leaders of the free organizations, regained ground. That happened notably at the time of the strike of the electricians in Budapest, during which the clericals justly accused the Social Democrats of betraying the cause of labor. The Clerical Unions demanded that wages be paid on the basis of gold parity. The Social Democrats, however, did not support this just demand.

From the Polish Trade Union Movement

By Macievski (Warsaw).

The second trade union congress which took place in Cracow at the end of May, occupied for weeks the minds of the organized Polish working class. The final judgment which was passed upon this session by the revolutionary trade unions is well summarized by the organ of the Warsaw Trade Union Council, *Trade Union News* (Wiadomosci Zwiazkowe). This magazine pointed out on July 5th:

"The Second Trade Union Congress developed against the will of the Central Commission into a manifestation for unity of the trade union movement—however, not for that fictitious unity which is based upon "discipline" and advocated by the P.P.S., but for the true unity of the working class in its fight against capital. The deluded workers of the P.P.S. have realized that a further split of the trade union organization would bring about the complete destruction of the trade union movement in Poland. All class-conscious workers, stood against the attempts at splitting, and for unity of the trade union organization, upon the solid basis of liberty of opinion. The P.P.S. must renounce the methods of ruthless destruction of the organization. It will again be the task of the class-conscious workers to permit in future no negative attitude towards the principle of unity and to make the given promises the true, wholesome basis of the trade union movement in Poland".

From this outline of the leading organ of the trade union opposition can already be seen the significant role the problem of split or unity is playing in our movement. The life of all individual trade unions practically centers about this question, as is proved by recent events within the organizations.

On July 15th to 17th, a session of the leather workers' union took place. It was a unity congress at which the two unions hitherto existing in this industry, the Jewish and the non-

confessional union, amalgamated into one organization. A long fight was going on at the congress between the opportunist leaders of the former Jewish union, and the representatives of the idea of class-struggle. Fortunately, the latter formed the majority, and in the most important votes 123 delegates of the Left united against 33 representatives of Jewish nationalism.

There are direct splitting tendencies within the railwaymen union. Five colleagues have been expelled from this union by the Executive Committee without the trial prescribed by the Constitution. Two of them being "punished" because they had accused the Executive Committee of cooperation with the "Okhrana" (Polish political secret police) and the remaining three because they contributed to an organ issued by the two oppositional districts of the union, the Warsaw and Radome districts. It is true that this shameful act is nothing new for our German comrades, as they are accustomed to similar decisions of the Amsterdamers. In the Polish trade union movement, however, the traditions of which are still very young, such dictatorship of the trade union autocrats causes bad feeling and brings about the danger of splits.

In the agricultural workers' union—the largest of all Polish trade unions (at the end of 1921 over 110,000 members) the reformist P.P.S. Executive Committee has adopted direct splitting measures against the revolutionary opposition. After a fight lasting for months against the Kutno local union, which stands for consequent class struggle, while the Executive always sacrifices the class struggle to the "higher" interests of the "country", the Executive Committee in the middle of June finally dissolved this "insubordinate" union, appointed a "commissioner" for administration and formed another union out of true followers of the P.P.S., amongst them even workers of such "parent" industries as the metal industry! All this is done with the active support of the police, and of the former leader of the P.P.S., the present head of the State, *Marshall Pilsudski*.

Our comrades abroad know the nature of the political crisis which Poland underwent in the middle of June, as a consequence of the struggle between the bourgeoisie, whose standard-bearer at that time was Korfanty, and the Left wing of the bourgeoisie, the bulk of which is the peasantry and the leader and hero of which is still Pilsudski. I will mention here only the attitude of the *Communist workers*. This was expressed in the resolution adopted by the Warsaw Trade Union Council on July 17th, with the participation of 13 unions, and which exposed the shameless utilization of the labor organizations by the P.P.S. in favor of Pilsudski. In this resolution the Trade Union Council called on the working class for a defensive struggle against the attacks of the reaction.

At the head of the demands which were put up by the proletariat on July 18th, the day work was struck, was placed that for a peaceful policy and limitation of armaments, a demand which was directed against Pilsudski; another one was that for the liberation of all political prisoners—beginning with the member of parliament, *Dombal*.

In spite of all political "successes" and "victories" of which the people are being told, "independent" Poland will apparently suffer the fate of Austria. In any case, the financial and the economic crisis becomes more intense every day. It suffices to point to two facts which I take from a statement in the last (July) issue of the Polish scientific magazine *Ekonomista*. According to this statement the cost of living has increased from July 1914 to April 1922: In Germany from 100 to 3,175 (cost of food to 4,356), in Austria to 87,200 (104,000 for food), in Poland to 52,358 (81,269 for food). These figures refer to March 1922. The second fact is the depreciation of money. The depreciation of the German mark, of the Austrian crown and of the Polish mark compared with the dollar are expressed by the following proportions: 1.427 : 100 (Germany), 0.049 : 100 (Austria), 0.169 : 100 (Poland).

I have intentionally compared Poland with the two "defeated" countries, the misery of which occupies the first place. One can see from these figures that Poland takes the place of honor between Austria and Germany.

With the increasing misery grows the intensity of the class struggle. Every few days new strikes are breaking out here and there. In most cases the result is negative. Even a move-

ment as large as the last textile workers' strike brings about only a partial success (20 % increase in wages instead of 50 %). The workers lose every belief in the possibility of gaining any successes by means of partial actions and demand a general offensive of the proletariat against the general offensive of capital. But the two "Labor Parties" are standing in the way. It is their task to make the working class the true servant of the bourgeoisie and to keep them in bourgeois ideology. These parties are the National Labor Party and the Polish Socialist Party with the trade unions under their leadership. We Communists are unfortunately still a minority and are only in some places and trades a decisive factor among the workers. But though we work under the most difficult conditions we are not discouraged, and shall fight on to victory.

Resolution Passed by the All-Russian Trade Union Congress

To the Workers of South Africa!

The All-Russian Trade Union Congress conveys its heartfelt greetings to the workers of South Africa, upon whom has fallen the revenge of the English capitalists for their rising against their exploiters. The Congress protests against the death sentences passed upon the leaders of the strike in South Africa, and joins in the protest of the international proletariat against the outrageous execution of bourgeois justice.

The Presidium of the Fifth All-Russian Trade Union Congress.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

Letter From Uruguay

By *Martinez Catalina* (Montevideo).

The 7th Congress of the Communist Party of Uruguay took place in July. This was the first meeting since that memorable day of April, 1921, when the Socialist Party accented by a vote of nine tenths of its members the 21 conditions of the Communist International.

In the short time of over a year our Party has done a great deal of work. The expulsion of the reformists had brought about a serious crisis which has today been totally overcome. The reorganization of the Party is almost completed. Our Party includes sixteen sections in Montevideo and eight sections in the cities of the interior, with a membership of 1000 members.

We had to make the greatest effort to save our daily, *Justicia*, which the reformists tried to make away from us. In April, 1921, our central organ was greatly indebted due to the purchase of a printing plant. That our daily might not disappear or fall into the hands of the reformists, the Party had to assume an excessive debt. We appealed to the devotion of our comrades and friends. The result was successful; the debts of the *Justicia* have now been half-paid. The plant has been improved, new machinery has been added. Our daily is saved and we need no longer have any fear as to its future. It has the support of the working class. Besides *Justicia* we also possess two weeklies,—*Accion Comunista* and *Nuevos Horizontes*, and one monthly, *Claridad*.

The extraordinary congress of the Party has approved the new statutes proposed by the Central Committee. The discussion was often very animated. The question which raised the greatest debates was the proposition of one section that no one be admitted into the Party who employs workers. This proposition, borne of the formal radicalism of a few comrades was defeated by a large majority.

The propaganda of our comrades in the trade unions is highly successful. The work of the new Central Committee will be to meet the questions arising from the formation of a united proletarian front.

The Communist Party of Uruguay maintains constant connection with its brother parties in Brazil and Argentina. It will soon enter into relations with the Chilean Party. Our united efforts are the best hope for the future of Communism in South America. Our propaganda is especially difficult in the rural sections; the attention of the Central Committees of the South American parties is especially drawn to this matter.

IN THE R. I. L. U.

Agenda of the II. Congress of the R.I.L.U.

1. Report by Comrade *Lozovsky*.
2. The Offensive of Capital and the United Front of the Proletariat:—Comrades *Monatte, Foster, Walcher*.
3. The R.I.L.U. and the Communist International:—Comrades *Brandler, Repossi, Monmousseau, Nin*.
4. Questions of Organization:—Comrades *Lozovsky, Hais, Lian*.
5. The Attempts at Splits by the Amsterdammers and the Fight for the Unity of the Trade Union Movement:—Comrades *Rosmer, Heckert, Pavlik*.
6. High Cost of Living and Unemployment:—Comrades *Pollitt, Melnitchanski*.
7. The War Against Imperialism and Militarism:—Comrades *Jacquemotte, Vecchi, Semard*.
8. The Trade Unions in the Colonies and Semi-Colonial Countries:—Comrades *Tom Mann, Kunitare Ande*.
9. Elections.

IN THE CAMP OF OUR ENEMIES

The League of Nations and the Georgian Mensheviks

By *J. Shaffir*.

The cunning founders of the Versailles Treaty, the oppressors of many peoples and states, have as is known, a "morality club", the so-called League of Nations. The decisions of this very precious institution, of the "Conscience of Europe" are very often disregarded even by its most intimate friends. No one, apart from the leaders of the Second and 2½ Internationals takes this Home of Rest for superannuated and invalid diplomatists seriously.

Though not very effective, the proceedings and decisions of the League of Nations are at times very symptomatic. Therefore the discussion upon the Georgian question at the session of the 6th Commission which took place on the 20th of September, is deserving of our attention. Wolff's Bureau did in fact report this session but the newspapers, chiefly the German, made no mention of it. We must therefore repeat it in brief:

The Belgian delegate introduced the following draft resolution. "Having regard to the unhappy position of Georgia, which, is occupied by foreign troops, against the will of its people the Supreme Council be instructed to follow the events in this country with close attention and to take advantage of the first opportunity to restore normal conditions there."

Wolff's Bureau further reports that this resolution was accepted by the Commission in a milder form in which the words referring to "foreign occupation" and the "unhappy position" of the country were stricken, on the suggestion of the English delegate Fisher and the South African delegate Cecil.

The text of the accepted resolution, however, was not published. That the English raised objections to the expressions above-mentioned is perfectly comprehensible. It is obviously unpleasant for representatives of English Imperialism which is now engaged in raising all possible forces including its own and also that of foreign states in order to maintain a forceful occupation of Turkish territory, to hear anybody talk of "foreign occupation" of this or that territory.

The Belgian delegate was so tactless as to mention a rope in the house of the one to be hanged. In spite of this it must be assumed that the tenor of the resolution remained the same, at least in sense, after the omission of the words, described by the English as "clumsy and confused".

The decision of the League of Nations has a very important background. The raising of the Georgian question alone, is very characteristic. It is not the first time that this question has been raised on the agenda of European diplomacy by the most uncompromising advocates of intervention in Russia.

During the Genoa conference, *Barthou*, who did his best to prevent an agreement with Soviet Russia, attempted to bring

forward as a very effective argument against Soviet Russia, the "wrong" committed against the Georgian "Workers and Peasants" of Messrs. Yordania and Gegetchkori.

At that time the action was preceded by a press campaign initiated by the late government of Georgia. Yordania referred to various "revolts" and "insurrections" as a proof of the dissatisfaction of the population with the Georgian Soviet Power. This time, however, the representative of Belgium raised the question apparently quite unexpectedly and without any preliminary skirmishing on the part of the press. But only apparently. In reality the resolution adopted by the League of Nations is the evidence of a plan probably worked out very carefully in Paris and London. What else could be the meaning of "to take advantage of the first opportunity to restore normal conditions in Georgia"? It must be clear to everybody who is acquainted with the situation in Transcaucasia, that it is in the first place a question of the occupation of Batum and a whole number of important strategic points (which are economically equally if not more important).

It must not be forgotten that the League of Nations has at the same time adopted a decision on the formation of a "National Armenian Territory". In other words it is here not a question of Georgia, but of the whole Transcaucasian territory. The Georgian Mensheviks as well as the Armenian Dashniaks and the Asserbaidshan Mussovists do not for a moment think of the possibility of an isolated existence for their respective republics, and have therefore concluded, at the end of last year in Paris, an agreement for a federation of the Transcaucasian republics.

Under the so-called "normal conditions" is to be understood the control by the Allies over the railways as well as the most important sources of production, above all over the raw materials of Transcaucasia. There is nothing surprising in all of the power of the Georgian Mensheviks is therefore nothing else than a plan for capturing the petroleum springs and the raw materials of Transcaucasia. There is nothing surprising in all this. The Allies can naturally not forget the "normal conditions" so profitable to themselves when they governed the whole of Transcaucasia under the mask of Georgian Mensheviks, of the Dashniaks and Mussovists and treated all the Yordanias, Gegetchkoris as nothing but their lackeys.

At present the prospects of the restoration of such conditions have a great illusory attraction. The concentration of the navy in the Straits and the presence of military forces in Constantinople and its surroundings seem to revive the hopes of success in such an undertaking. The conquest of such new rich territory would be so much the more desirable as the victory of the Turkish peasants is threatening the loss of the valuable raw materials of Asia Minor. Apart from this, the occupation of Batum and Adcheristan would bring with it the great advantage of enabling them to base their war operations on the Eastern frontier of Anatolia. The presence of allied troops in Adcheristan simultaneously with the reinforcement of the allied armies in the so-called neutral zone would do much to minimize the military successes of Kemal. These brilliant "prospects" apparently inspire all those diplomatic incendiaries in Paris who are now about to forge anew the chains for the peoples of the Near East, who have broken the shackles produced in 1918 by the Peace Treaty.

Of course, in all this the parties are reckoning without their host. In Soviet Georgia and in the whole of Soviet Transcaucasia things are not faring so badly, that any one would find it an easy task to restore the "normal conditions" of occupation and conquest. The heroic Red Army is on the alert, and the Allies who did not succeed in preventing the successful attack of Kemal would hardly be in a position to achieve anything in Transcaucasia. But all these proceedings and resolutions are a sign that somebody is striving after some such plan. This is also confirmed by the fact mentioned in the Soviet Note of September 4th, to the effect that the occupation of Constantinople and the Straits by the Allies is prejudicial to the interests of the Soviet Republics.

The resolution of the League of Nations confirms unmistakably the close and inseparable connection of the Georgian Mensheviks with the Entente. The Entente considers all these protégés of Kautsky, Yordania, etc. as a very good sign-board, as an instrument for the accomplishment of their aims just as Greece is the instrument of English Imperialism. And just as often as one or the other of the great powers cherishes designs of intervention from the Black Sea, the "Georgian problem"

crops up as the occasion and the pretext of the intended intrigues. Further all this occurs on the immediate initiative of the Georgian Mensheviks, who always have been, are, and always will be the flunkeys of the world bourgeoisie.

THE WHITE TERROR

Order Reigns in Germany!..

By XXX. (Berlin).

At the time when the two Social Democratic parties of Germany, the Majority Socialists and the Independents, are preparing to unite, it seems to us opportune to recall what is their activity in the service of the bourgeoisie.

I. Government of the Social Democratic Commissaries of the People, composed of Majority Socialists and Independents, Ebert—Haase Ministry, from 9th of November to 29th of December, 1918.

6th of December 1918.—The government troops obeying an order of the Social Democrat Wells, fire on the crowd in Berlin, Invalidenstrasse. 15 killed, 30 wounded.

The same day.—Arrest of the Executive of the Workmen's Council of Berlin.—An attempt to proclaim Ebert president of the Republic.

23rd of December.—Scheidemann, in the name of the Government, delivers a message to the troops entering Berlin (General Lekis).

24th of December.—These troops discharge the artillery against a crowd of workers. 11 killed.

II. Social Democratic Government from 29th December, 1918, to 13th of February, 1919.

5th of January, 1919.—The Ebert-Scheidemann Government dismisses Eichhorn, mayor of Berlin, elected by workers.

6th of January.—The Social Democrat Minister Noske arms the workers and students and concentrates troops in Berlin.

8th—11th of January.—The attempt of the Ebert—Scheidemann Government forcibly to dismiss Eichhorn, the labor mayor of Berlin, provokes active resistance in the form of street battles. In the Ruhr basin and in Silesia, a battle between the miners who wish to take possession of the mines and the government troops.

9th of January.—Imposing demonstration of workers and soldiers in Stuttgart. Officers fire on the crowd.

11th of January.—The riots in Berlin are quelled. The proletarian prisoners are subjected to nameless brutality. In the Belle Alliance Street, Major Stephani caused 7 proletarian members of Parliament to be shot: comrades *Fernbach, Heise, Meller, Grubusch, Kluge, Schettler, Wackermann*.

15th of January, 1919.—Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, prisoners, are assassinated by the Government soldiery.

16th of January.—Comrades Loewsky, Marx, Jordan, Milkert, are murdered in the forest of Tegel during their transfer to the prison of that locality.

4th—5th of April.—Reprisal expedition of the Fifth division (General Herstenberg) against Bremen. Bombardment of the city and shooting.

8th of February, 1919.—Troops fire on workers in Weinmeisterstrasse. 5 killed, 13 wounded.

III. First Coalition Government (Party of the Center and the Social Democratic Party) from 13th of February 1919 to 20th of June 1919. The citizen Scheidemann, president of the council.

13th of February.—Arrest of Radek in Berlin.

19th—22nd of February.—General strike of miners of the Ruhr Valley following the dissolution of the Soldiers' Council of Munster. Crushed by Government troops.

2nd of March.—The Government ceases to ration the Berlin regiments known for their "bad revolutionary spirit".

3rd—8th of March.—The Minister for Foreign Affairs spreads broadcast the lying report of the massacre of 60 officials by the Spartacists at Lichtenberg.

9th of March.—Prisoners are tortured and killed at the prison of Loert.

10th of March.—Leo Yogiches, Polish military commandant arrested by the order of Noske, is killed in the courtyard of the prison of Moabit.

11th of March.—29 naval prisoners are murdered by order of the official, Marloh, Französische Strasse, Berlin.

8th of August.—Hunger riots at Chemnitz repressed by troops.

IV. Second Coalition Government (Social Democratic, Center, and Democratic parties) from July 19 to March 26, 1920.
January 13th, 1920.—Demonstration of workers before the Reichstag, against the law on shop committees. Troops fire on the unarmed crowd. 42 killed, 103 wounded.

13th—23rd of March.—Reactionary uprising of von Kapp-Lüttwitz. Ten-day general strike. Arming of the proletariat of the Ruhr Valley, of Thuringia, Saxony and Central Germany. The government calls a general strike. Street battle between the workers and the reactionary forces.

21 of March, 1920.—At Coepenick the workers Dürre, Kegel, Gradske, Vinske are shot.

23rd of March.—Resignation of Noske.

25th of March.—Students of Marburg fire on 15 workers near Mechterstädt.

V. Third Coalition Government (Social Democrats and Center) from March 25th to June 26th. The Social Democrat Hermann Müller is president of the Council.

23rd of April, 1920.—Watter and Severing begin a military offensive against the workers in the Ruhr Valley, in which are employed all the resources of military technique.

In the Ruhr, in Thuringia, in Central Germany, in Saxony, the proletarian movement, resulting from the call to a general strike, issued by the government itself against the uprising of Kapp, is crushed in blood with the aid of those very reactionary troops against which the Democratic and Social Democratic Government had called the workers to action. The number of killed and wounded is not known.

22nd of May.—Comrade Hans Paasche is killed near Kreiz by Government soldiery.

VI. Fehrenbach Government, without official participation of the Social Democrats (but which would never have been established without their assistance) from June 26, 1920 to May, 4, 1921.

29th of June, 1920.—Hunger riots in Mainz, Hamburg, Frankfurt etc.—everywhere suppressed. Killed and wounded.

29th of December.—Comrade Hoffmann killed by the police at Flensburg.

4th of January, 1921.—At the funeral of Hoffmann, the police and the troops opened fire on the processions of workers. 11 killed and 22 wounded.

15th of January.—At Berlin, the police fire on a workers' demonstration. Several wounded.

16th of March.—Minister Hoersing concentrates troops in Central Germany.

21st of March.—The provocations of the police succeed. General strike in Central Germany.

23rd—27th of March.—The revolutionary General strike of Central Germany is crushed with the utmost violence. Numerous acts of savagery. Assassination of prisoners, fusillades, court martials.

1st of April.—Comrade Sylt is killed by the Berlin police of which the Social Democrat Richter is the head.

VII. Fourth Coalition Government (Social Democrats, Democratic Party and the Center). from 11th of May 1921 up to today.

22nd of June.—Max Hoelz, one of the leaders of the Ruhr uprisings, is condemned to hard labor for life. Court martials at work. Hundreds of workers tried for participating in the "March insurrection". All condemned to long terms and to life imprisonment.

2nd of May, 1920.—The police under the Social Democrat Richter fire on the municipal workers of Berlin in the course of a demonstration. Several wounded.

This simple enumeration is not up to date. We know that on Wednesday last, September 1, at Eberswalde, near Berlin, the police opened fire on a demonstration composed mainly of housewives protesting against the high cost of living. (1 killed, several wounded); and that on Sunday, September 3, at Charlottenburg, (Berlin) the police fired on the young Communists (1 killed, 5 wounded). During the last six months several similar attacks have taken place, notably at Königsberg, where, likewise, the blood of the workers flowed.