The Peace Comedy
By Arthur Rosenberg.

The Hague peace congress of 1922 will figure in history alongside the congresses which were held in the same city before the war. The trade union bureaucrats of to-day will contribute as much towards peace as the capitalist diplomats of that time. On the 30th of July 1907 the foundation stone of the Hague Peace Palace was laid by the Tsar’s ambassador, Mr. Nelidov. On the 28th of August 1913 the palace was inaugurated in the presence of every possible great personage: 12 months later the divisions of the peace-loving Tsar invaded East Prussia, and the cavalry of the peace-loving Kaiser reconnoitred near Paris where will we be in December 1923? If we are not in the pathway of a new world war, it will not be the fault of Thomas and Vanderwelde. The very memory of the Hague strikes alarm. The peace conferences of the Hague have hitherto been infallible oases of war. May the proletariat be on its guard against the spirit of the Hague!

It is true that this time the messengers of peace have not met in the Peace Palace, that turreted building in imitation old Dutch style erected with American trust money under the blessing of the Tsar. This time the peace congress has had to meet in the Zoological Garden, the Peace Palace being occupied by a juridical conference. The congress is not to blame for being in the Zoological Garden. Jokes on the subject are cheap, and some animals are clever enough. But it does require a certain amount of self control not to make all kinds of unfriendly comparisons with regard to this perfectly grotesque congress.

What do the international reformist socialists really intend with regard to the peace congress? For we cannot visit the land of the guilder without paying for it. It may be calculated that the German General Federation of Trade Unions alone, a by no means rich organization according to world standards, is spending 30 million marks to keep its troop of delegates here for a week. Why does this Federation spend so much money? Well, the winter is hard for the starving proletariat of Germany. A desperate struggle is taking place between the old bureaucrats and the communists within the trade unions. The workers are looking anxiously for a way out of the misery, but as the Amsterdam leaders cannot find them this way, they have to sell the workers some other story. They must make it appear as if something were being done. Hence the reason for the Hague Congress. With the aid of this congress it may be possible to gain a month in Germany, and that is something this winter. It is worth 30 millions. Reports can be given, in the trade union meetings, that Fimm and Henderson, and even Vanderwelde, have condemned the policy of force against Germany. And thus the members will perhaps be induced to believe that the Amsterdam international does accomplish something. The feeling among the masses in other countries is similar. Everywhere one traces the connection between own misery and the continuation of the imperialist military system. When the Amsterdam International issues a great proclamation against war and the danger of war, it fulfills the dearest wish of all the millions who still belong to it.

But this congress has its dangers also: for the danger of war is a product of capitalism. To secure peace under the present conditions of power means to open war against the governing bourgeoisie. At their congress in Rome, the Amsterdamers passed a resolution demanding the general strike in case of war. As Radek rightly said at the Hague, such a general strike would be a social revolution. But the Amsterdamers do not want this. And how can one find a way to wash the fur without wetting it? The recipe has been thought out as follows: the peace idea is insulated from the social conditions, separated from the class war, and converted into a thing in itself. This conjuring trick is rendered possible by inviting all bourgeois pacific societies, and by leaving out the Third International.

On this basis peace propaganda was no longer dangerous. Fraternal relations were entered into with bourgeois pacifists, with Buissner and Quillibe and besides these with all the pacifist tendencies of the present-day bourgeoisie, which reach from Keynes to President Harding, and to the Lloyd George of Genoa. It may safely be said that at the present time a decisive part of the ruling capitalists want to avoid a new war more than anything in the world, and are anxious to postpone the collapse by a so-called pacifist solution. It is not by accident that Poincaré-la-guerre is transformed into Poincaré-la-paix, the keeper of the peace of the Orient. In the same manner Vanderwelde-la-guerre, the man of Versailles 1919, has become Vanderwelde-la-paix, the man of the Hague 1922. What a strange peace congress! In the president’s chair, sitting comfortably with his pipe in his mouth, is Mr. J. H. Thomas of London, a pillar of British war policy. And below in the hall there are Henderson and Weis, Renaudel and Vanderwelde, all defenders of their mother country in the past and in the future! A disastrous discord was certainly struck by the delegation of the Russian trade unions, Radek, Lozovsky, and Rothenstein, who held up a mirror reflecting the true countenance of the congress. But this had been prepared for, and care had been taken that the necessary Georgians, Menahemiki, etc. were present to grind out the old anti-Bolshevist tunes.
Against the Separation of the Rhineland.

Declaration of the Communist Party of Rhein-Westphalia.

The communists, as representatives of the class doomed to revolution and the German proletarian proletariat, raise the solemn protest against the plans of French imperialism, as declared by Pomerâre, and having for their object the military occupation of the Ruhr district, as well as against the plans expressed by Doucheur for the separation of the Rhine country from Germany.

From the very beginning the communists designated the treaty of Versailles as an unbearable forced peace, and have exerted every effort for its revision and annullme.

The Communist Party now more proclaims that it utterly condemns the movement for separation, for such a development of affairs would not be in the interests either of the Rhein-Westphalian or the German working people. The attitude of the separatists, that the political and economic situation of the working class would be better in an independent Rhenish republic, is dangerous frauds. Such a republic, under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, would employ precisely the same capitalist methods of exploitation against the working people as are now employed by the German ruling class.

The position of the workers in the Saar district, where capitalist oppression against the working class with the same brutality and ruthlessness as everywhere else, and where about 4,000 proletarians are out of work, is the best proof of this. The complete deprivation of political rights suffered by the workers in the Saar district under the protectionate of the League of Nations, this showing how the international capital, shows plainly enough what the workers of Rhein-Westphalia would have to hope from a "Rhenish Free State." The only close relations with the revolutionary German proletariat can give the Rhineland the possibility of replacing capitalist rule by socialist proletarian rule.

While adopting this attitude against the treaty of Versailles, against the occupation of the Saar district, and against the separation of the Rhine district, the communists at the same time protest emphatically against any utilization of the nationalist methods of the Enitele victors by the German bourgeoisie.

And today, the spokesmen of the bourgeois capitalist parties, and especially the leaders of heavy industry, have approved of the use of every, even the most brutal, means of oppression and subjugation employed by German imperialism under the protectionate of the League of Nations and against the people of Germany, England, and France. They are sinking deeper and deeper into misery, while the workers in the Saar district are being held in suspension and the capitalist class is flourishing. The workers in the Saar district are fighting against the capitalist class with the same brutality and ruthlessness as everywhere else, and where about 4,000 proletarians are out of work.

By M. Philippe Prieur.


Dec. 20th, 1922.

Over a hundred years ago Rousseau said about the classes of parliamentary democracy, that it was a free man after every seven years during the few minutes, when they were recording the names of one or other of the two political parties. I do not know whether it was for this reason or for any other, but it was certainly true for a long time that in England a general election came rather to be associated with some thing akin to a horse race or to some other national sport, which has always been a popular institution in the English character. It is not, of course, applied to Scotland, where, it seems, the different influence of the Presbyterian Church has caused the inhabitants to treat elections as they would be second editions of Sunday. But throughout all the south of the British Isles a general election was concerned more with personalities than with politics, more with the private life and individual character of the parliamentary candidates than with the political programs of the parties, to which they belonged.

And yet no one could help observing that in the general election, which has just taken place, a new element was introduced into the political life of the country, which has been monopolized by the two great historic parties of England, the Liberals and the Conservatives, or, as they were known a hundred years ago, the Whigs and the Tories. Originally they represented very distinct political ideas, and they were made up of popular mouth-pieces of two great economic interests, which at that time dominated the life of the nation. They were the agents of agrarian aristocracy and the agents of the mercantile capitalists and traders. But as time went on, the economic interests of these two classes began to merge on many important questions, and this was especially the case, wherever these two parties and the interests, which they represent, were faced with the new element in political life in England today, namely organized Labor.

I well remember elections in England in the days before the war. In the town, for which I was Labor candidate in that recent election, it was usual for the Liberal candidate to get in for one election by the lavish expenditure of money, and the promises of orders for the factories, so that the workers would be kept in employment. After he had been in for a term of years, and had secured for himself the title of "safe" or "he had perhaps bought for himself a seat in the House of Commons, it was generally regarded that it was time for the Conservatives to "go and so the candidate of this party would get in and remain in, till he had given a jobs or some other public employment to the people of the district, the petty bourgeoisie and small shopkeepers and their personal attendants, immediately dependent upon them for their livelihood. The big bourgeoisie had enormous influence upon the
The Development of the Profintern

By A. Lazrovsky

The forerunner of the Profintern was the International Trade Union Council, founded on July 15, 1920 in Moscow. Essentially, the International Council was formed by the trade unions and represented the ideas of the revolutionary trade union movement. It possessed no definite program and no clearly defined tactics. Its object was to unite the revolutionary trade unions under the slogan of the overthrow of capitalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The platform of the Council was so broad that it left much room for maneuver. In July 1921 it appeared that there were many more revolutionary trade unions than those listed in the Profintern.

Between July 15, 1920 and July 1921 there proceeded the assembling of forces. The first year passed in conflicts between revolutionary ideas and reformism. The American Amalgamated Textile Workers of the Entente countries, drunk with victory, was at the height of its power. To many comrades it appeared perfectly hopeless to attempt an attack on the reformist stronghold against this mighty reformist organization. But the call of the International Council, appealing to the revolutionary trade unions to unite, found an echo in every quarter of the globe, and in July 1921 it appeared that there were many more revolutionary trade unions than those listed in the Profintern.
did not care for the too clearly outlined program and the too revolutionary tactics. The reformist Italian CIGL, preferring to steer a middle course between the two internationals, deserted the new organization, which was also attacked by those anarcho-syndicalist groups who do not see the necessity of an international.

The time between the first congress and the second congress now taking place has been occupied by a desperate struggle on two fronts: against Amsterdam and against the anarcho-syndicalist organizations. The 16 months of struggle have yielded definite results. Syndicalism itself broke up into several groups, one part siding for the Russian revolution, another siding against it, and against the dictatorship of the proletariat and the alliance of the Proftinern with the Cointinern.

If we consider the results of this conflict of ideas, we may claim that the Proftinern has won the struggle. There is not a single anarcho-syndicalist organization in the world adopting an attitude contrary to the Proftinern. And there are large organizations like the French, in which 1/4 of the membership are on our side. Thus the clear definition of our ideals, while causing a good deal of commotion, has at the same time rendered possible a successful development of our work.

The second conference now being held strengthens the ideal and organizational connection with the Cointinern, and creates a firm basis for common work between communists and syndicalists. The 2nd congress is adopting a number of practical measures for the struggle against capitalism and reformism.

One point especially distinguishing our second congress is its practical organizational character. Decisions have already been taken on the most important fundamental questions. The question of the relations between the Comintern and the Proftinern is still a matter of debate, but only for an inconsiderable minority of the congress. The great majority of those participating in the congress are clear as to their attitude on this question.

What resources has the Proftinern at its disposal? At present we are numerically weaker than the Amsterdam International. But the power of an organization does not depend upon its numerical strength. The Amsterdam International is only a conservative power, an obstacle on the road to revolution. It is the embodiment of the inertia of the working class. The Proftinern, on the other hand, is the embodiment of everything revolutionary. The Proftinern is the trade union movement that worships another source of power that is that we have followers within the Amsterdam International. This strengthens us and weakens the Amsterdam International.

The delegates of the congress do not shut their eyes to the difficulties in front of us. And these difficulties are great, for there are several millions of workers whose minds are still paralysed by reformism. The giant organizations of the world, the trade unions, are still in the hands of agents of the bourgeoisie. To drive the reformists out of the labor organizations would mean to lop off the branch to which bourgeois society is today still hanging. We do not know how many years we require to do this. But there is no doubt whatever that our powers are increasing from day to day, and that the Amsterdam International is weakening. Our opponents are also well aware of this, and therefore hate the revolutionary trade union movement in general and the Proftinern in particular.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

To the Miners of Great Britain

Fellow Workers!

Your Delegate Conference meets at a time when all of your members are living under the most appalling conditions within living memory.

You have had fifteen months in which to test the Agreement reached at the Great Lock-Out in 1921. The Coal Owners have shown themselves to be the most callous and brutal employers. British Capitalism has yet produced. In their impudent Manifesto issued last week, their only answer to your cry of despair is:

"You Were Worse Off in 1888" (Miners’ Manifesto)

Mr. Bonar Law “The Tranquilizer” has turned you down, and told you that nothing can be done. Think of your humiliation! Your Federation, once the strongest and most powerful in the world, has to beg of the Government, not for luxuries, but for a crust of bread. When you signed the 1921 Agreement, your Secretary, Mr. Frank Hodges, said in support of the Agreement:

"I venture to say it is the greatest wage producing principle that has ever been introduced into this country."

Has your experience born this out? No!

Mr. Hodges has admitted that many Mining Areas were the “famine areas” of Britain. At one time 12 of your 13 districts were down on the minimum of 20% above 1914 rates, when the Board of Trade showed that the cost of living was 80%, 85%, and 90% above 1914.

The more coal you have produced the worse has your lot. The standard profits have either been paid, or they are accumulating against you, to be paid off by you in the future,—an ever increasing burden on your industry.

Stephen Walsh was Right when he said at the Special Delegate Conference on June 20th 1921.

"Never in the history of any industry on earth before now has an attempt been made to fix a standard rate of profits upon the aggregate wages of workpeople.”

No Trade Revival.

The Press is saying that there is soon to be a trade revival, and if you strike for a living wage you will retard this revival in trade.

The Press has been saying for the last two years that trade was going to revive.

The Press that is against any subsidy for miners, is on the other hand, agreed that the miners’ low wages should be the means of subsidizing the capitalists in other industries.

Then why do you ask for higher wages? That the Industry cannot afford it. This proves the failure of private enterprise. Are you and your wives and children for ever to pay for the incompetence and failure of private enterprise?

You must be bold. You must again raise the agitation for the adoption of the Sankey Report and the Nationalization of the Mines.

Miners of Great Britain. You have been the victors in many long and bitter struggles. The Communist Party is confident that you will again lead the way, and that the Miners will be the first Union to stop the workers’ retreat. At this National Conference you must give a lead to all your districts. As an immediate practical program the Communist Party proposes that your Conference shall adopt, work and fight for the following demands:-

1. Terminate the present Agreement, and demand an increase in wages of 80% above 1914 rates. Remember the Board of Trade latest figures show that the cost of living is still 80% above 1914.

2. Demand the Cancellation of the accumulated arrears of standard profits, which amount to millions of pounds. These are a burden which Stephen Walsh vigorously protested against at your Conference in 1921.

3. Call upon the Labor Party to join you in an agitation to enforce the operation of the Sankey Report, and the Nationalization of the Mines.

4. Call upon the General Council of the Trade Union Congress to join you in an agitation against the attempts to lengthen your hours.

The Seven Hour Day Must Be Maintained.

Remember in every statement of the Coal Owners, in every speech of their representatives in or out of Parliament, they are insisting that if you want higher wages you must work longer hours.

Remember you still have 70,000 unemployed. The Owners’ statement of diminishing output is false. Your output for the week ending October 21st. was the highest for three years, 3,355,400 tons as compared with 4,236,000 tons three years ago. Yet in spite of these facts the owners dare to talk of lengthening your working hours.

Miners! Private enterprise cannot give you a living wage. Miners! Let your New Year slogans be:

A Living Wage for Miners.
No Lengthening of Hours.
Nationalization of the Mines.

The Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Printed by Friedrichsdorf-Druckerei G. m. b. H., Berlin SW. 45.