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The Disarmament Question and the Soviet Union.

By K. J. Voroshilow.

The following is a part of the speech of the People's Commissary of the Army and Navy and the Chairman of the Revolutionary War Council of the Soviet Union, Comrade K. J. Voroshilow, which he delivered at the celebration meeting on the occasion of the Eighth Anniversary of the Founding of the Red Army, on the 23rd of February 1926 in the Moscow Grand Theatre.

The Disarmament Question.

Between England and France very tense relations have come about in spite of the "friendly" alliance which, observed in a historical light, threaten to produce an armed conflict. The speeches on disarmament come principally from England. France is not thinking of disarmament and if it is compelled to support these speeches, it is because the French proletariat as well as the international situation are demanding also from the French government an immediate answer on this question of disarmament. Now nobody wishes to fight, including the French proletariat. Anybody who would speak at present about war would meet with no support. Therefore all the powers have begun to speak of disarmament, although of course none of them is even thinking of disarming.

Our government has agreed to take part in the proposed Disarmament Conference. That is understandable. Our workers and peasant country is not only in words but in deeds a peace-loving State. We have repeatedly proposed, already at the Conference of Genoa, through the mouth of comrade Chicherin, the commencement of disarmament. We know how the bourgeoisie at that time reacted to this. In the year 1923 we invited

the neighbouring States to meet in Moscow and attempted to come to an understanding over the limitation of armaments, possibly also over disarmament. But what happened? Under the influence of Great Britain and other powers our neighbours not only rejected disarmament but also all further discussion on this matter.

If we are now invited to join a Conference to discuss the question of the limitation of armaments or on disarmament, then naturally we accept these proposals, although the Red Army and also our whole workers' and Peasants' Union thoroughly understands that the proposals coming from the English or from other imperialist powers must not be taken too seriously. We know that these discussions lead to two purposes: On the one hand to dull the watchfulness of the working masses who are sincerely advocating disarmament, and the watchfulness of those who are able to bring about great new injury in a moment which is very unfavourable for the imperialists; and, on the other hand, those powers propose disarmament who wish to disarm as much as possible their neighbours and secretly wish to strengthen their own position still more.

What do the Capitalist States really Want?

Great Britain is interested at the present time in inducing France to cease building a submarine fleet and further to limit the building of her air service or giving it up entirely and to reduce her land army. These proposals are supported by America and are also supported by those other States which follow the lead of England. For what reason does England need this? In order to secure her Mediterranean Fleet which, at the present moment, is the most powerful and dominant in the Mediterranean.

but which is exposed to the danger, in the not too distant future, of becoming if not the second then, in any case, only as powerful as the French fleet. When one considers that France, which is separated from England by the narrow Channel, has still the most powerful land army in the world, that it disposes of one the most powerful air fleets, then it is understandable that England views with alarm the further growth of the military power of France. Therefore England is striving by every means to bring about the cessation of the construction of the fighting forces of France and especially the building of air and submarine fleets.

France cannot agree to this. She has established herself pretty firmly in the Mediterranean and will not give in to England as she herself is as much interested economically and politically in the Mediterranean basin. The French colonies on the North coast of Africa, rich in ores and raw materials, but also in hundred thousand black soldiers who supplement the French army, represent a great value for France.

Almost similar considerations are prompting Italy not to agree to a limitation of her fighting forces, her submarines and air services. On the other hand France and Italy are advocating a limitation of the construction of cruisers. France and Italy are unable, for financial reasons, to construct cruisers.

On the other hand the United States of America are able to construct cruisers and naval basis and therefore the United States of America wish that naval questions are excluded from the agenda of the approaching disarmament Conference.

If one views all these interlocking interests of these powers then one is driven to the conclusion that, even with good will, if that were at hand, these States can by no means succeed in coming to any sort of understanding.

Of course America wishes for a general limitation and would like to rule everywhere, or in any case to share her rule with the least possible number of rivals. At the present time she is in a temporary alliance with Great Britain, but this alliance is not of long standing. The American fleet has grown to such threatening size that it already equals that of the British.

But the further development of the fighting forces of America in the Pacific Ocean is impeded by the ever growing power of Japan and therefore America wishes to limit the efforts of Japan for further armaments. Japan cannot submit to this, as her vital interests require that she should possess a strong fleet of her own, especially a submarine and a strong air service. On the other hand Japan is interested in the maintenance of the prohibition of the construction of new naval basis in the Pacific Ocean which is entirely directed against the United States.

The Growth of Armaments.

In what positions are the present land armies of all the countries?

In spite of the fact that eight years have passed by since the world war the armies of all the powers have not only not diminished but in many cases have actually increased.

France has at the present time a land army of 685,000 men, while in the year 1913 she only had 546,000.

Great Britain has less at present, that is, 329,000 (not including the Indian forces) in place of 441,000, but she has under various pretexts armed organisations which represent armed troops in a hidden form.

In Italy a limitation has taken place. Formerly there were 400,000 and now there are 229,000; but, moreover, the fascist troops amount to 295,000 men. There are therefore more troops than before the war.

The army of the United States has considerably increased, from 226,000 in the year 1913 to 408,000 in 1925.

In Japan there is now a reduction by 70,000 men; but at the same time there are tens of thousands of armed men in a hidden form. In the year 1925 compulsory instruction in military tactics was introduced in all universities and schools. More than 50,000 men are trained in one year. In the lower schools more than 50,000 men are trained in one year. In the lower schools more than 200,000 go through this military training.

Altogether in these five countries we must reckon 1,918,000 men as compared with 1,880,000 in the year 1913.

All this does not signify, it appears, those "well-meant" wishes of these gentlemen who propose disarmament.

If one also takes into consideration the mad growth of war technic and the enormous expenditure which grows in all

States from year to year then one can imagine wither Europe, which now wishes to "disarm", is going.

Before the war there fell in France for every 1000 men:

Light artillery	5,2
heavy artillery	none
light machine guns	none
heavy machine guns	2,4

Now for every 1000 men there are:

Light artillery	5,1
heavy artillery	2,1
light machine guns	40
heavy machine guns	16,7

A similar picture is to be seen in all the rest of the advanced countries. I do not speak of the successes in the sphere of chemical war and of the air fleet. This side of the matter is known to the broad masses of the Soviet Union.

Let us take for example even such a country as Germany, which after the collapse has only a little more than a seventh of her armed forces of pre-war time. In the today's newspapers the information is given that Germany has reduced her military budget by one half of 1913. Just imagine what an enormous growth of armaments is going on, if even Germany, which is under the watchful eyes of the different control commissions of the victors, has brought her budget down to half of the amount on the outbreak of war, while her army has been reduced almost to a seventh. The German army in the year 1913 numbered 667,914 men and the navy 79,889 men. What does this mean? It means that Germany is openly and secretly maintaining strong armed forces which are not to be counted by tens and hundreds of thousands.

Our nearest neighbour, Finland, had in the year 1923 an army of 30,000 men and now she has 3000 more. Esthonia has raised her contingent of troops from 12,000 to 14,000. Lithuania from 20,000 to 22,000. Poland from 264,000 in the year 1923 to 325,000, Roumania from 153,000 to 158,000 and she has the intention now of bringing this number up to 200,000.

Only our workers and peasant State, the Soviet Union, has reduced her army from 5½ million to 562,000 men and does not increase the numbers of the Red Army. But of course she cannot further reduce, as long as she is surrounded by such "peace loving" powers, as above mentioned.

It must also be noticed that in the neighbouring States an enormous work has been achieved in the creation of secretly armed forces. In Finland the "Defence Corps" numbers 95,000 men and in addition the defence and sport organisations are developing strongly. In Poland the legal armed organisations in the year 1925 numbered more than a 100,000 men. A similar picture is to be seen in the rest of our neighbouring countries.

Our military budget remains for a number of years at the same level. We expended in recent years for the Red Army from 15 to 16% of the budget, including expenses for the purchase of machines and other armament equipments for our military factories which, to a considerable extent, are carrying on peace production. Our State maintains a rather insignificant army as regards numbers and expends comparatively less than any other State in the world.

A very exact picture is furnished by the figures of military expenses which fall upon each head of the population (in Roubles). These figures refer to the year 1925:

England	22,3
France	17,2
United States	9,1
Italy	8,5
Poland	11,1
Finland	8
Esthonia	8,6
Lithuania	9,5
Soviet Union	4,3

With us in the Soviet Union, according to the budget for the year 1925 '26, the expenses falling on each head of the population are not more than 4,3 Roubles. It must be noticed that in the expenses of France the enormous sums paid out for the operations in Syria and Morocco are not included.

If the imperialist lords endeavour to represent us as people who attack "peaceful" lambs living in our neighbourhood, or as people who think that by armed force they can in the shortest time introduce the communist order of society into the whole world, then these gentlemen are lying in the most insolent manner. They know very well that we are not in the least dreaming of any kind of military operations.

The Soviet Union is Striving for Peace.

If our Red Army continues to proceed on the same way it has gone till now, if its strength, its consciousness, its technical forces continue to grow and to develop as has hitherto been the case, then we do not doubt that, however much our class enemies may speak of disarmament, there will not be war, not today, not to-morrow, not even in a month or in two.

The Red Army, trained on a class basis and fully class conscious is sufficient warning for all those who talk so much about disarmament but who are secretly arming themselves in order to rob the workers and peasants of our country of the possibility of building up their new socialist life.

The Soviet Union desires peace, and the best guarantee for peace is our Red Army.

POLITICS

Where is England Going?

On the Pace and the Intervals.

By L. Trotsky.

In the year which has elapsed since the book "Where is England going?" was written, events have by no means developed according to the line of march of Baldwin and MacDonald.

The generosity of the Conservative Prime Minister has quickly evaporated. King George's judges have thrown into prison the Communists whom MacDonald excluded from the Labour Party and have succeeded in bringing the Party into a position of illegality. The same judges put the young Fascist madcaps on the shoulder encouragingly, recommending the breakers of the law to join the police force, whose vocation it is to protect the law. In this way the judges prove that there is only a difference of form but no difference in the nature of the Fascist transgression, and the police protection of the law. The Fascists are grand citizens, but too impatient; their methods are premature. Class war has not yet turned into civil war. MacDonald and Lansbury are still rendering service by holding back the proletariat with the fictions of democracy and the myths of religion. Fascism on its part remains in the background. The capitalist politicians, however, understand that the affair is not confined to the method of democracy, and when Mr Joynson Hicks is alone, he tries on Mussolini's mask.

The police-like determination of the Baldwin Government is a necessary completion of its pitiful economic confusion. The Protectionism of the Conservative party is as powerless in the face of new facts as is the Free Trade of the Liberals. It was clear from the beginning that the efforts to introduce Protectionism would clash with the contradictory interests of the chief branches of British trade. We had not, however, imagined a year ago that the programme of Protection would degenerate into such a farce. In this period, duties have been introduced on lace, gloves, musical instruments, gas-lighters, penknives and toilet paper. Not more than 10,000 workers are employed in these branches of industry, whilst there are 1,231,900 miners. According to official statistics there are 1,215,900 unemployed. Is not Mr Baldwin abusing in too great a degree the principle of gradualism?"

The Liberal party, the collapse of which continues to be the most striking political form of expression of the social retrogression of Great Britain has, as far as the majority of its members are concerned, given up hope of an independent government and, while its Right wing dreams of acting as a break to the Conservatives, its Left wing would like to act as a Right-flank support to MacDonald who needs such support more than ever. When old Mr Asquith ironically refers to the expositions of Snowden and Churchill, of whom the former is

beckoning the Liberals into the Labour party and the latter into the Conservative party, he is right in his way in saying that there is not much difference between dying as an appendage of one's old political enemies and dying on the basis of independence.

Neither the economics nor the politics of England in the past year give us any reason for introducing any changes into the conclusions in our book. There is no reason to react to the gnashing of teeth of the bourgeois Press in England and especially in America. "Under the mask of a new book" — howls a New York paper — "the author is teaching the Americans and the English how to make an insurrection." And the newspaper demands that decisive measures should be taken against the book, as its author is far away. That is all right. There is no need to answer, events will give the answer. The only thing I learnt from the critique of the British bourgeois Press is that Mr Winston Churchill is not yet a lord, which I erroneously or at least prematurely took for granted.

The official Menshevik Press says essentially the same, except that it calls upon the bourgeois police for protection against "the preaching of force" in a slightly more disguised form. Here also polemics are out of place. The Left Opposition in Great Britain is of much greater interest to us in the present stage of development. We hear very little from its literary representatives: "If the unreasonable tendencies of Moscow should take root in our soil, it could only be thanks to the egoism of our bourgeoisie and the excessive forbearance of the leaders of the Labour party", etc.; that is the gist of the articles by Lansbury, Brailsford and others. That is a ready-made Centrist formula with which thoughts and turns of expression can be anticipated. To expect a real attempt at the analysis of facts and arguments from these gentlemen is about as hopeful as expecting milk from a ram.

Fortunately we have in our hands a document which is distinguished by far greater directness and so to speak freshness. A Russian Comrade who is in correspondence with leaders of the English Labour movement, sent me two letters of a "Left" member of the Independent Labour Party, directed against my book "Where is England Going?" These letters seem to me more interesting than the articles of the British and other "leaders" of whom some have forgotten and others have never known how to think.

Three main directions may be distinguished in the ideological grouping of the English Labour movement and especially of its leading strata. As was once again proved at the Conference in Liverpool, the Right takes the leading position in the Labour party. The shabby remnants of the bourgeois theory of the 19th century, especially of its first half, form the official ideology of these gentlemen who stop at nothing in defending the principles of bourgeois society. At the other extreme is the small minority of Communists. The English Labour party will only achieve a victory under the leadership of a Bolshevik party. To-day the party is still in its swaddling clothes; but it is growing and may grow quickly.

Between these two extreme groups, as between two shores, is the vast number of shades of opinion and tendencies which have no future of their own but are preparing for one. The "theorists" and "politicians" of this broad central current are recruited from eclecticists, sentimentalists, hysterical philanthropists and all kinds of muddle-headed individuals. Eclecticism is with some of them a profession and with others a stage of development. The movement for opposition carried on by the Left, the half-left and the extreme Left reflects a deep social shifting among the masses. The mongrel character of the English Left, its theoretical lack of form, its political indecision make it possible for the clique of the MacDonalds, Webbs and Snowdens to be master of the situation, which however is impossible without Thomas. If the heads of the English Labour party are the reins with which the working class is harnessed, Thomas is the horse to which the carriage of the bourgeoisie is attached.

The present stage in the development of the English proletariat the overwhelming majority of which approves of the speeches of the "Left" and supports MacDonald's and Thomas's efforts to gain power, is of course no coincidence. This stage cannot be jumped over. The path of the Communist Party as the great mass party of the future, leads not only via the irreconcilable fight against the agents of capital in the form of

the Thomas and MacDonald clique but also via the systematic unmasking of the muddle-heads of the Left, without the help of whom it is impossible for MacDonald and Thomas to maintain their position. This justifies the attention we devote to the criticism from the Left.

* * *

It is superfluous to discuss the accusations of the critic that our brochure is stiff, that the questions are put in a mechanical way, that the truth is too much simplified etc. "Through his (i. e. my) whole book runs the conviction that England's decline will last another four or five years(?!) before it leads to serious complications", whereas in the critic's opinion, the next twelve months will form the acme of the crisis after which "there will be no great difficulties in the course of development during the next decade". (!) In this way the critic first forces on me an exact prophecy as to the intensification of the crisis in the course of four or five years and then opposes to this prophecy a still more exact one which divides the next period of English history into two sections, — twelve months of an intensified crisis and ten years of peaceful thriving.

The letter unfortunately contains no economic foundation. If we look for an economic significance in the prophecy of one year of crisis and a decade of progress, we must suppose that the author connects his prophecy with the present serious financial difficulties which are the result of the transition to the gold standard and of the regulation of the question of debts*). The author evidently attributes the economic crisis to the deflation crisis and for that reason he allots it so short a period. It is quite probable that after the most serious difficulties of finance and credit have been overcome, a certain amount of relief will actually be felt in the money market and consequently in commercial and industrial intercourse. It is not permissible, however, to base a general prophecy on fluctuations of this kind, which in their nature are of minor significance. In any case, his prophecy as to ten years of prosperity is absolutely without foundation. England's chief difficulties arise on the one hand from the re-grouping and rearrangement of the economic and political forces in the world and on the other hand from the innate conservatism of English industry.

During the next period the conditions for English capital will continue to grow more difficult with the consequence that the question of power will present itself to the proletariat with increasing acuteness. I have not defined any periods. The only remark on the subject in my book is that the revolutionary development of the English working class is rather to be measured by periods of five than of ten years. In saying so I did not, of course, mean to imply that the socialist revolution would occur "within four years" (although I do not consider it impossible). My idea was that the prospects of revolutionary development should not be calculated in a series of decades, not for our children and grandchildren but for the present generation.

In this connection I feel compelled to quote at length from the letter of the Left critic:

"Trotzky speaks almost the whole time of decades. Is it possible to speak of decades in reference to an economic or even a political situation? In my opinion, certainly not. It is impossible, as Trotzky himself once said, to foresee and determine an exact date for the outbreak of the revolution; and if he fixes his eye rather on the impossibility of determining the exact day, (?), I consider it impossible to foretell even the year (?).

The revolution depends above all on economic factors; there are, however, at present innumerable economic factors which may work for or against the revolution in England. The revolution might have broken out on August 1st 1925 in consequence of the crisis in the coal industry. The revolution may break out when the crisis is renewed in May 1926. The revolution may be accelerated by a crisis in the Far East, by war, the economic collapse of other countries, shortsightedness of some industrialists in our country, the impotence of the Government to solve the question of un-

*) These lines were written more than two months ago. Owing to external circumstances, there was great delay in getting the article printed.

employment, a crisis in other branches of industry apart from coal-mining and also by socialist propaganda among the workers which leads to increased demands and hopes on their part.

Each of these possibilities is perfectly probable in the present circumstances, but not one of them can be foretold even a month ahead. The present time is characterised by extreme economic and consequently political instability; one move may spoil the whole game but on the other hand, the existing system may still be maintained artificially for many years. In this way the British revolution, if we understand by that a political revolution, is under the sign of the unknown." (Retranslated from the Russian article *ibid.*)

The confusion of these lines is simply fantastic; at the same time it is not mere personal muddle-headedness, on the contrary, it is absolutely typical. It is the confusion of persons who "generally speaking" recognise the revolution, but who shudder to the very marrow at the prospect of it and who are prepared to accept any theoretical justification whatever for their political fear.

Let us consider the writer's line of argument. He is charging at windmills when he demonstrates that the rate of development of the revolution and consequently the date of its outbreak is dependent on the accelerating or retarding effect of the reciprocal influence of numerous factors and circumstances. He himself draws the indisputable conclusion that it is impossible to foretell the date of the revolution. But he is clever enough to formulate this quite simple idea a follows: Trotzki considers it impossible to prophesy the day of the revolution; he however, the wise critic considers it impossible to foretell even the year. This contrasting of the two assertions is almost incredibly childish. One might almost think that it is not even deserving of an answer. But are there not, as a matter of fact, many members of the "extreme Left" who have not even thought out the most elementary questions of the revolution on the crudest outlines and for whom the mere fact of considering the day and year means a tremendous advance which may be compared to the transition from complete ignorance of reading and writing to the stumbling spelling out of words?

Had I actually meant that it was only the day (?!) of the revolution which could not be determined in advance, I should at least have tried to determine the week, the month or the year. It is perfectly evident, however, that I made no such attempt. I pointed out that the social development of England has entered on a revolutionary phase. At the end of last century it was only possible to speak in quite general terms of a revolution in England in the future. In the years which immediately preceded the imperialist war, it was already possible to point to a number of symptoms which heralded the approach of a turning point.

After the war this turning point was arrived at and it proved a sharp one. In the past, the English bourgeoisie, by oppressing the workers and plundering the colonies, led the nation forward on the path of material increase, and thus ensured its own supremacy. At present the bourgeois regime is not only incapable of leading the British nation forwards, it cannot even maintain it at the level already reached. The English working class is fighting in the midst of the contradictions of the decline of capitalism. There is no single question of economic life such as the question of the nationalisation of mines and railways, the campaign against unemployment, Free Trade or Protection, the housing problem and so on, which might not lead directly to the question of power. This is the social and historical foundation of the revolutionary situation. It is, of course, a case of fight of living historical forces and not of an automatic accumulation of quantities. This alone makes a passive prophesy of the stages of the process and of the periods of the outbreaks impossible. Nothing is left for us but to feel the pulse of English economics and politics and, without for a moment neglecting the general prospect, to keep a careful watch on all the partial fluctuations and ebb and flow, and to determine their position in the process of the decline of capitalism. Only on the basis of such general knowledge can a revolutionary party carry on its policy, the elasticity of which finds expression in that even partial fluctuations are taken into consideration, while however, the main lines of development must by no means be lost sight of.

My "Left" critic has — on some occasion — heard something about determination of the "day" of revolution, and has not

clearly understood that this refers to the moment of the armed revolt which had been placed on the agenda by the revolution. These are two quite separate questions, although they are closely bound up with one another. In the one case it is a question of a prognosis based on history and the general line of strategy resulting from it, in the second case of a tactical plan which proposes a more or less exact determination of time and place. It would not occur to anyone — unless perhaps to the English public prosecutors — to say that at the present moment armed revolt is on the agenda in England, and that it is a practical duty to work out plans for it and to determine its date. In such a connection it would only be possible to speak of one day or of days. In the autumn of 1923 the situation was just the same in Germany. At the present moment, the question in England is not to determine the "day" of revolution — this is still far away — but clearly to understand that the whole objective situation is bringing this "day" nearer, introducing it into the sphere of the policy of education and preparation of the proletarian party whilst at the same time conditions are being created for rapid revolutionary development of the party.

In the second letter the same critic comes to still more unexpected conclusions in support of his scepticism with regard to the dates (as a matter of fact, however, with regard to the revolution):

"The realm of economics", he maintains, "is practically speaking, unlimited... a new discovery, a re-grouping of the capitalist forces... The other side realises the danger at the same time... Even in America, measures may be taken to arrest the coming collapse of England. To put it briefly" — the critic concludes — "there are many possibilities, and Trotzky has by no means exhausted them all". (Retranslated from the Russian article Ed.)

To our friend of the Left all possibilities are necessary except one, that of revolution. Whilst playing hide and seek with reality, he is prepared to cling to any fantastic dream. In what sense for instance can, a "new invention" change the social conditions of the development of Great Britain? Since Marx' time, there have been not a few inventions which have not weakened, but rather strengthened Marx' law of the concentration of production and the intensification of class dissensions. New inventions will also in the future give the advantage to the stronger, i. e. not to Great Britain but to the United States. That the "other side", i. e. the bourgeoisie, will be aware of the danger and fight against it with all means in their power, cannot be disputed. This however is also a very important political prerequisite of the revolution.

Finally, the hope that America will extend a helping hand, seems quite absurd. That, in case of civil war in England, America will try to help the bourgeoisie is more than likely, but this only means that the English proletariat must also look for allies beyond the borders of its own country. We believe it will find them. The result will be that the English revolution will inevitably assume international proportions. We have not the least intention of dispelling that. But our critic wants to say something different. He expresses the hope that America will support the existence of the British bourgeoisie in such a way that it will help it to avoid any outbreak of revolution.

Nothing better than that can be imagined. Every new day bears witness to the fact that American capital is the historical tyrant who, intentionally or unintentionally, will strike the most deadly blows at Great Britain's predominant position and the firmness of its internal structure. This however does not prevent our "Left" friend from hoping that American capital will graciously exert itself in the interest of British capital. To begin with, he evidently expects that America will waive her claim to the payment of the English debt; that it will hand over to the British Treasury, without indemnification, the 300 million dollars which form the reserve of the British currency; that it will support Great Britain's policy in China; that it will even perhaps hand over to the British fleet a few new cruisers and to English firms some Canadian shares at a discount of 50%. In other words, it is to be expected that the Government in Washington will hand over the management of State affairs to the "Ara" (American Relief Agency in the Soviet Union during the famine. — Editor) and choose the most philanthropic Quakers for the job.

Persons who concern themselves with nonsense of this kind, had better not dare to aspire to the leadership of the British proletariat!

Fascism in Belgium.

By A. Habaru (Brussels).

Mussolini's semi-official organ, the "Popolo d'Italia", wrote recently, in discussing the events of the week: "It can now be said that Fascism is now established in Belgium." The Italian newspaper enquires into the characteristics of the "flag day", concludes that a Fascist movement exists and regrets that there is no leader in the country who is capable of guiding this movement.

Do the statements of the Fascist paper correspond with reality?

The "flag day" of February 9th does not mark the establishment of Fascism in Belgium. It is however a serious sign of the reaction which is beginning to become prominent in the ranks of the middle-classes against the democratic regime, its taxes, its increase in the cost of living and its vassaldom to international finance.

It is nothing new for people and organisations in Belgium to occupy themselves with praising Mussolini and imitating the Black Shirts. Noisy nationalistic picked troops which, in common with certain organisations of young Catholics form groups with pronounced Fascist tendencies, have arisen out of the "Committee for National Politics" which was founded in 1919 and of which the socialists Piérard and Destrée were members. There are now appearing the "National Legion", the "Belgian Fascio" and since a few days the "National Guard", further a weekly paper "L'Action Nationale".

Apart from these parade organisations, there is, among the Young Catholics and also the Liberals a tendency of ideas which must not be overlooked. It is a kind of nationalistic renaissance which is developing among the young bourgeoisie. Influence of Maurras and the "Action Française" is growing among the Catholic intellectuals. A Fascism adapted to the social conditions of Belgium is rather to be expected from that side and from the Citizens' Union ("Union Civique" than from the camp of those who imitate Mussolini.

Is it possible that the general preliminary conditions for the development of a real Fascist movement exist in Belgium?

For this it would be necessary for the democratic regime to prove incapable of solving the economic, financial and social crisis of post-war times; parliamentary tradition would have to feel itself threatened with having to pay for the restoration of their own economic position; the capitalist Great Powers would have to have an interest in destroying legality and in subsidising the fighting groups of Fascism. Finally a deep-reaching disillusionment would have to seize hold of the masses and make it possible for the Fascist organisations to win over the workers by a demagogic programme.

These preliminary conditions are not yet realised. Democratic tradition still holds its own. Reformist defeatism promotes the cutting down of wages (the metal workers have just returned to work after a strike of 8 months, with a reduction of 5% on their wages and with despair in their hearts), and allows the capitalists to make the workers pay the consequences of stabilisation. Along with the National Bank, groups of great financiers support the Catholic-Socialist Left Bloc which looks after their affairs. It must however not be forgotten, that stabilisation will be followed by a serious economic crisis, that the despair of the working masses will increase, that the victims among the middle classes are beginning to stir and that the demagogy of the Government is calling forth progressive reaction in capitalist circles. It is doubtful whether all this will lead to a Fascist coup d'état. It is, however, inevitable that a strengthening of reaction and of its pressure on the Government will result.

In reality, however, the bourgeoisie is on the way towards creating a Fascist reserve army and at the same time rousing a strong movement of public opinion against the Government. A "League for Public Interests", with Senator Despret, director of the Bank of Brussels at its head, which is supported by the Central Committee of Industrialists is opposing the Government's programme by that of the "producers" and is finding numerous partisans throughout the country. At the same time the Fascists are gaining an increasing number of the petty bourgeoisie and earn the applause of the Liberal and the Right Catholic Press.

The bourgeoisie is thus creating a Fascist reserve which, in case of need, it would throw into the balance, although it is more likely that it will only make use of it as a constant threat in order to influence the Government Coalition.

Fascist Preparations in Poland.

By Axel (Warsaw).

At the end of February there took place in Warsaw Conferences of the Enlarged Central Committees of two of the most important parties of the Polish bourgeoisie, the National Democratic Party and the Christian Nationalist Party. As is known, the first comprises a considerable portion of the petty bourgeois elements and a certain portion of the peasantry, but it is still more a bearer of the "ideals" of the heavy industry. The second also is backed by a considerable army of petty bourgeois voters but it is, in its nature, a Party of the big agrarians and is also called the party of the arch-bishops, for in its leadership a large number of high catholic dignitaries have a part.

The resolutions which were passed at the conferences of these ultra-reactionary parties, show a good deal in common and display a great fighting spirit and offensive tone; the demands of the Right camp of Polish fascism are sharply and concretely formulated.

The National Democrats insist upon a "reform" of the Constitution of 17th of March 1921 which is intended to strengthen the executive power and would secure to the State its national (that is to say Polish-Nationalist) character. For this purpose the election law for the Sejm and the Senate must be altered by restricting the rights of the working class and of the national minorities; further, a law must be enacted which excepts from immunity of the members of parliament all crimes of high treason and, finally, guarantees must be created against the impunity (?) of the efforts of the Communists hostile to the Poles and against the activity of the non-Polish elements against the State.

The Party of the big landowners and the arch-bishops demand on their side a "thorough alteration" of the election law, equal rights for the Sejm and the Senate, strengthening of the Executive power by granting to the head of the State the right of Veto and the right of the dissolution of the Sejm. The final aim of the Party is for a king, a monarchy.

As is to be seen from this bill of fare the two parties are striving in a united front of the large industrials and of the big landowners under the blessing of the highest representatives of the catholic clergy to change thoroughly the existing Constitution in Poland without taking regard to § 126 of Penal Code of the former Tsarist Russia and § 58 of the former Austrian Monarchy which is so eagerly applied by the bourgeois judges of independent Poland.

Just at the same time as the National Democrats and the Christian Nationalists are adopting the monarchist-fascist resolutions, the Ukrainian Nikolai Filas has been condemned to death by the Lemberg military court on account of the spreading of Communist literature.

Of course both parties are claiming that for the achievement of their aims, indicated in their resolutions, they are striving in a peaceful and strictly constitutional manner. But they are the usual tactics of the bourgeois hypocrits. Should it be necessary for the carrying out of the fascist "ideal" they will resort to force. The National Democrats have in this connection already had experiences. In the year 1923 they murdered Narutowicz, the first President of the Polish Republic.

The whole of the reactionary press greets joyfully the resolutions of both Conferences. The "Gazeta Warszawska", the chief organ of the National Democrats, declares the thesis of their party to be a turning point. They see in it the beginning of a great action which the National Democratic Party will introduce.

The danger of an attack of fascism is only not seen by the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). They do not see it because they will not see it, and content themselves in their central organ "Robotnik" (the worker) with tasteless, ironical observations about the National Democrats.

That such tactics are apt to dull the attention of the workers who ought to be on the alert and ought to be preparing the defence against fascism, does not disturb the leaders of the Polish social democracy. They are guilty of still greater crimes on the Polish proletariat.

Only the Communist Party is conscious of the danger which threatens the workers' and peasant masses of Poland. They only call for opposition, and are organising resistance. And this is the more necessary as the reactionary bourgeoisie arms itself not only for the "putch" and not only conducts a monarchist propaganda. It is trying also to build up fascist organisations inside the working class itself.

The bourgeoisie demands on the one hand the dissolution of the class trade unions and tries on the other hand to organise fascist trade unions. Such a trade union is the organisation "Praca Polska" (Polish Labour) set up in the Basin of Dombrova, a trade union in which not only hooligan elements of the proletariat but also honest workers have entered who, under the threat of dismissal and starvation, have been pressed into it.

With the help of this organisation the employers have recently made an attempt to worsen the position of the miners. This attempt was wrecked thanks to the general protest strike, but no doubt other attempts will follow.

The collision of the workers of Poland with fascism is unavoidable.

Palestine under Lord Plumer.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

The English system of colonial policy is superior to the French in that considerations of home politics are not allowed to influence it. Even though the Liberals be at daggers drawn with the Conservatives or the leaders of the Labour party with both other parties on questions of "principle" — where the inviolability of the British Empire is concerned, they hardly differ from one another.

Thus it comes about that the English colonial apparatus changes very little. Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner in Palestine, was appointed under a Liberal Government and remained in office for five years in spite of four changes of government (Liberal — Conservative — Labour — Conservative). The end of his term of office and his replacement by a military governor — Lord Plumer — by no means signified a change of system, but only took into account the military significance of Palestine and, on the other hand, was intended to subordinate the country more definitely to the English Colonial Office than had been the case in Herbert Samuel's time.

The hopes of certain Arabian politicians that the appointment of a "Christian" High Commissioner would put an end to Great Britain's Zionist policy, were disillusioned in the first weeks of Lord Plumer's rule. Everything remained as it had been and Lord Plumer did not even meet the most elementary wishes of the Arabs for representation of the people in Palestine. The fact that nevertheless there was no disturbance in Palestine is chiefly attributable to the tactics of the Arab national movement, which regards the liberation of Syria from French imperialism at its most immediate task and does not consider the forces at its disposal sufficient to fight against France and Great Britain at the same time.

One of the reasons why the anti-French insurrection in Syria not only cannot be extinguished rapidly but is in the position at any moment to receive new nourishment and support from the foreign insurrection committee, is doubtless the exploitation of the imperialist contradictions which, in spite of all agreements between Chamberlain and De Jouvenel, in spite of all official and semi-official assurances of sympathy and "holy" treaties, are strong enough to ensure that England will observe loyal neutrality with regard to the Syrian revolt. The Arab national movement is right when it considers it of little importance that the English should for a time have peace in their mandatory territories if in consequence a firm basis can be created in a liberated Syria for the coming great Arab revolution, especially as the inevitable fate of a simultaneous revolt in English and French territories would be a rapid suppression.

The British Government naturally makes the best possible use of this favourable situation. British Imperialists are clever enough to understand that the conflagration in their neighbour's house will sooner or later spread to their own territory and they are therefore doing everything in their power to be prepared for so serious a contingency.

In the first place the Government is endeavouring to disintegrate and disorganise the Arab national movement and, if possible, to smother it altogether. The Arab population is to be humiliated, to be disarmed in every respect, it is to be inoculated with faith in British omnipotence. Never in the past, did the British Government indulge in such rough and brutal treatment of the Arab national movement, never did it so openly carry on a campaign against the Arab Nationalists as it is doing to-day.

In the course of the last few months, the blows against the Arab national movement have followed in quick succession: the prohibition of a demonstration of sympathy for the victims of Damascus, the throttling of the Arab Press by special postal

rates, the prohibition of Arab newspapers, prohibition of demonstrations of mourning for Fuad Selim, a Nationalist who fell in Syria, the banishment of esteemed Arab politicians from Palestine, the annulment of the elections for the "Supreme Council of the Moslems", because the Nationalists had received the majority of votes and finally — the official answer to the memorandum of the Arabian Executive Committee to the effect that its aggressive tone made it "undeserving of an answer"!

The object of each of these measures is to make the Arab national movement contemptible and to weaken its authority. To these must be added a multitude of small insidious attacks on the Arab intelligentsia, workers and peasants, a memorable example of which is the recent sentencing of 60 poor peasants because they would not voluntarily clear land sold by a large landed proprietor. The Arab Press emphasises that, even under the Turkish Pashas, the population of Palestine never had to endure so much injustice and oppression as under the Englishman Lord Plumer.

It would however be erroneous to suppose that the English policy of force is directed only against the Arab population of Palestine, and that the Jewish population enjoys special privileges, though it is true that, just in recent times, the relations between the British Imperialism and the Zionist organisation have been conciliated.

The Zionist organisation receives thousands and tens of thousands of certificates on the basis of which it is entitled to introduce thousands and tens of thousands of Jewish immigrants into the country. The Government, however, is not moving a finger to help to provide these immigrants with bread and work, still less with land. Of the 25,000 immigrants who came to Palestine in 1923, only about 1% (300) have been settled on agricultural land. The great mass of the immigrants has remained in the towns, where the meagre beginnings of an industry which lacks experience, credit and capital could only absorb a small number of the arrivals. The great mass of the new immigrants, as indeed a large number of the immigrants from the years 1919—1924, is far from being in a firm economic position.

A Jewish Meeting of Delegates which met in Jerusalem in January, gave a picture of the terrible distress among the Jewish population in Palestine which now numbers 140,000. The Meeting also showed how difficult it is to find an issue from the crisis, as the wealthy Jewish bourgeoisie will not hold itself responsible for the "inflation immigration" and the Zionist fund, after the high hopes in the summer, is hardly in a position to cover the deficit on the existing colonisation enterprises. (In the two months November and December, there was a deficit of about 40,000 pounds in the Zionist "stock capital").

The — very moderate — demands placed before the Government by the Meeting of Delegates in the hope that they would receive at least some slight assistance, was rejected en bloc by Lord Plumer. No wonder that in such a situation, the large strata of the Jewish population are disenchanted and recognise the great obstacle which British Imperialism forms to the development of Palestine.

The Communist Party with its slogan: "Arab and Jewish masses of workers, unite in a common fight against British Imperialism!" received more than 1000 votes in the election for the Meeting of Delegates, and the attitude of its fraction roused considerable sympathy among the workers, in spite of the raging bourgeois and Social Democratic Terror. There are now even in Zionist circles, individual (especially German) Zionists who aim at an understanding with the Arab national movement for liberation instead of an alliance with British Imperialism.

The British Government, however, whilst oppressing and exploiting both Jews and Arabs, is always doing its best to fan once more into flame the national hatred between the two parts of the population. The antagonism between Jews and Arabs remains, apart from the other imperialist methods of oppression, the main pillar on which the English rule in Palestine rests. Preparations are being made to bring these contradictions to a head by creating two national legions (an Arab and a Jewish one, each with English officers): When once the "equilibrium" is established, England can calmly proceed to carry through its plans in the Middle East, at which Amery recently hinted in his speech. These plans concern the development of the direct lines Haifa—Bagdad, Haifa—Mossul, the security of the air route Kantara—Karachi and the transformation of Palestine into an English commercial colony for petroleum and cotton with Iraq as hinterland.

The Parties in the Japanese Parliament.

By N. J. (Tokio).

Japan is on the eve of a revival of the political season. On January 21st. the session of the Japanese Parliament was opened. The parties call meetings and come forth with declarations. The newspapers are counting the votes of the various Parliamentary groups and are trying to guess which ones will form a bloc together, which will oppose each other, the greatest variety of suppositions being expressed, all of them contrasting one another. This is not to be wondered at, as there are no sharp demarcations between the parties represented in Parliament.

There are at present three large parties in Japan: the Kenseikai, the Sejukai and the Sejuchoito. They cannot be called large parties because they embrace large numbers — they are by no means backed by millions or even by hundreds of thousands, as are for instance the European parties — but because they make politics on a large scale. The Japanese parties are as a matter of fact more or less important groups of influential persons from the ranks of the feudalists, industrialists, merchants and financiers.

There is little difference between the Kenseikai, the Sejukai and the Sejuchoito either in their composition or their programme. Landed proprietors, merchants, bankers and industrialists are members of each of these parties, and their various interests are intertwined into such a complicated tangle that it prevents any definite and distinct programme from showing up clearly. In this respect, these parties resemble the American ones — the Republicans and the Democrats — which are actually indistinguishable from one another and which protect the interests of the capitalists with equal zeal.

As with the American parties, one thing is quite clear with the Japanese parties, that is their efforts to get the government into their hands and to take possession of the apparatus of State and of State property. The seizure of the government however does not involve any change in the quality of the apparatus of State, but merely a change of personalities. The adherents of one party step into the shoes of the adherents of another, and all remains as it was.

At present the government is in the hands of the Kenseikai party. This party which numbers 163 deputies in the House of Commons is considered to a certain extent a liberal party. The "Liberalism" of the present Government has not however prevented it from dissolving the "Proletarian Party" on the first day after it was formed, has not prevented it from carrying on a most embittered fight against the "dangerous ideas" of the Japanese students and of the Japanese intellectuals altogether, not to mention the fight against the political and economic demands of the proletariat.

As is well known, Japan has passed through an economic crisis since 1920. This crisis was caused by the fact that after the war Japan, which during the imperialistic war had inflated its industry to a measure which was incompatible with its economics, again encountered the competition of England, America and other Powers in those markets which Japan had already got into its hands by making use of the situation created by the war.

The crisis was intensified subsequently to the earthquake in 1923. The Kenseikai Government therefore decided to extricate the country from the economic crisis by restricting expenses and observing the greatest economy.

The Sejukai Party which counts 136 deputies in the House of Commons, who are in the opposition, proposed another programme, the programme of the "industrialisation of the country". General Hanaka, the leader of the Sejukai Party, preaches the necessity of a further development of Japanese industry. In his opinion, it does not do to be "cheeseparings" in industry; on the contrary. The Government must use new means to further its development. Thus, if the policy of the Government can be called passive, that of the Sejukai may be described as active.

The third "large" party is the Sejuchoito. This party has 90 deputies in the House of Commons. The Sejuchoito, which at one time split off from the Sejukai, includes in its ranks the most conservative elements of the Sejukai. At the present moment, the Sejuchoito is not proclaiming any special programme. It will however play an important part in the coming Parlia-

mentary session, as on it will depend whether the Government will remain in the hands of the Kenseikai, whether it will pass on to another party or whether the Government will dissolve Parliament, making use of the circumstance that the present Parliament was elected on the basis of the old franchise law.

What will be the policy of the Seju-chonto with regard to the Kenseikai and the Senjukai? There seems to be just as much possibility of the Seju-chonto forming an alliance with the Sejukai and of their supporting the Government of the Kenseikai. (In the meantime, according to the latest reports, the dissolution of Parliament has been avoided thanks to a compromise between the Kenseikai and the Seju-chonto. — Editor) It is characteristic that, in summing up the number of adherents of the Government and the adherents of the Opposition in Parliament, the English newspaper "Japan Chronicle", published in Japan, reckoned the Seju-chonto among the adherents of the Government, whereas another English paper, the "Japan Advertiser" which is equally well acquainted with local conditions, reckons the Seju-chonto to the opposition.

There are a few other smaller parties in the Japanese House of Commons. Thus for instance, a group of 26 who are in favour of a complete reunion of the Seju-chonto and the Sejukai, recently seceded from the Parliamentary fraction of the Seju-chonto. Apart from this, there are 6 Independent members and 9 members of the so-called "Trade Party". The latter is a specially interesting party for it is the embryo of a purely bourgeois party which will undoubtedly come into being in Japan in the course of time.

The attitude of these small parties in the coming parliamentary session is also unknown, and the Japanese Press ascribes this or that party at one time to the Opposition and at another to the adherents of the Government.

It will depend on the behaviour of the Seju-chonto and the small parties in the Japanese Parliament whether or not the Government dissolves Parliament. The Japanese public naturally desires the dissolution of Parliament and the issuing of writs for new elections on the basis of the extended franchise law. According to the new law, about 10 million electors will go to the poll, whereas only about 3 million took part in the election for the present Parliament.

Both the Government and the Opposition dread the dissolution of Parliament for it is unknown who would win at a new election. In any case the Kenseikai, the Sejukai and the Seju-chonto are all taking measures not to appear before the masses with empty hands in case new elections should take place. In anticipation of the coming election, all the parties are endeavouring to represent themselves as "defenders of the interests of the people". It is a sign of the times that all the parties, without exception are beginning to talk of defending the interests of the workers, of liberating the peasants from the burden of taxation and of making it easier for the peasant tenants to get possession of land etc. This is evidence that the masses of the people, the workers and peasants, are actually beginning to enter the arena of public life of Japan.

The Tacna-Arica Challenge.

Statement of the All-America Anti-Imperialist League.

The All-America Anti-Imperialist League considers it of the utmost importance to expose what the United States government is doing in the Tacna-Arica region of South America, under pretense of arbitrating a dispute between Peru and Chile.

Nine months have passed since President Coolidge decided upon a plebiscite in Tacna and Arica, appointing to the essentially diplomatic post of chairman of the plebiscitary commission, not a diplomat but a general—whose diplomatic experience had been confined to commanding "doughboys" in France and chasing Pancho Villa over the northern desert of Mexico. General Pershing arrived at the port of Arica with a great show of material ostentation.

Numerous military aides accompanied him and a well-manned U. S. cruiser remained at anchor in Arica harbor. It was more like a force of occupation than a visiting arbitral mission.

During the succeeding period Pershing did little besides establish the supreme authority of the United States in the disputed provinces. The plebiscitary commission consisted of a Peruvian, a Chilean, and General Pershing as chairman, but

Pershing ruled that he was the representative of President Coolidge and that the other two did not count. Assuming complete control over the situation, he has used his position in such a way as to arouse suspicion and alarm throughout South America.

The plebiscite is still a long way off. Questions have arisen on every hand as to what the purposes of the United States government really are—for it is plain that Pershing has been merely carrying out instructions from higher up. The general has pursued consistently dilatory tactics.

There has been postponement after postponement in the programme of the plebiscitary commission. And now General Pershing is returning to the United States "to have his teeth fixed," and his place is taken by another general—General William Lassiter, erstwhile military governor of the Canal Zone, the man who a few months ago directed the strikebreaking occupation of the city of Panama by U. S. troops. It is apparent that there is to be still more bluster and delay.

On Nov. 26, Senor Augustin Edwards, Chilean representative on the commission, sent General Pershing the following note:

"I shall not resume my attendance at the meetings of the plebiscitary commission until they shall include in their agenda the registration and election regulations and the dates for the opening of the registration and for the holding of the plebiscite..."

The plebiscitary commission received on Aug. 12, nearly four months ago, the draft of the registration and election regulations presented by the Chilean member. In the first days of October, nearly two months ago, it received the draft presented by the Peruvian member. The member representing the arbitrator has, therefore, had ample time to examine the election regulations that will guarantee the rights of both."

Pershing did not deign to answer the statement of facts in Senor Edwards' letter. The Chilean allowed himself to be bluffed into resuming his seat on the commission, meantime appealing to President Coolidge! Of course, Coolidge upheld his own appointee. Reports are now current of an appeal to the League of Nations. North American newspapers are indignant. The principle of the Monroe Doctrine is involved, they say. In other words, Chile and Peru, at issue over the question of sovereignty in the Tacna-Arica district, are told plainly that the ultimate sovereign is not one nor the other, but the government of the United States.

Appealing to Coolidge against Peru, and conveying the suggestion that Peru is the real sinner and Pershing just an involuntary accomplice, the statement of Senor Edwards is of the sort that only blindness or irresponsibility regarding the real purposes of American imperialism in Latin America can explain—unless it is downright toadying to imperialism. It is picked up and repeated by the capitalist press in the United States to show that Chile and Peru cannot possibly get along together, that only the strong arm of American imperialism can assure order in "the troubled region." The history of the Tacna-Arica affair from the very beginning indicates what grave dangers lie in losing sight of the real enemy in the midst of petty squabbles.

Before the war of 1878-82 between Chile on the one side and Peru and Bolivia on the other, there was no "Tacna-Arica question." These provinces were a recognized part of Peru. The richly prized nitrate territory immediately to the south of them belonged at that time to Peru and Bolivia. War was fomented by American nitrate interests, in connection with their determination not to pay the duty of 10 cents per hundred-weight levied by the Bolivian government on all nitrate exported through the port of Antofagasta. Peru was drawn into the war as an ally of Bolivia. Chile was victorious over the allies and annexed all of the nitrate territory. Furthermore, according to the Ancon peace treaty, the Peruvian provinces of Tacna and Arica were to go under Chilean administration for a period of ten years, after which the inhabitants were to choose in a plebiscite between the sovereignty of Chile and Peru.

The plebiscite was never held.

North American interests took systematic advantage of the long-continued differences between the two South American nations. National jealousies were played upon and stimulated. Costly armaments were disposed of to both sides. Diplomatic pressure was brought to bear, now apparently on the side of Chile, now on the side of Peru. For decades this went on, the situation becoming more and more hopeless. Meantime, the

United States had blossomed out as a fullfledged imperialist power whose bold pretensions to Latin-American domination were expressed in the new Rooseveltian interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. North American policy directed itself toward establishing that the only possible solutions of the antagonism between Chile and Peru were in war or intervention by the United States.

Finally, in 1923, Secretary of State Hughes dispatched notes to the two governments inviting them to send representatives to Washington "to the end that such representatives might settle existing difficulties or arrange for arbitration." Instead of refusing this offer and taking their case to a Latin-American body for arbitration, the ambitious rival governments walked right into the lion's den. The president of the United States was made sole arbiter. He declared that there could be no appeal from his decisions.

Coolidge decided upon the holding of a plebiscite and forthwith appointed General Pershing to go to Tacna-Arica to head the plebiscitary commission. Peru's protest was overruled now. American imperialism was bent upon the plebiscite—or rather, not so much upon the plebiscite as upon the plebiscitary commission. Somehow or other the "stars and stripes" had to be raised on the Pacific coast of South America. For months now U. S. militarists have been the virtual rulers of Tacna and Arica. They have busied themselves "establishing order" and "overcoming obstacles." The plebiscite is not even on the agenda.

It is certainly no accident that the two South American provinces over whose destiny the U. S. government has become so deeply concerned, border directly upon the famous Chilean nitrate fields. These fields yield \$173,000,000 worth of nitrate of soda yearly, which is 95 per cent of the world's total mined supply. The recent declarations of U. S. Secretary of Commerce Hoover, in which nitrates were mentioned along with rubber, sisal, mercury, coffee, etc., as a foreign "monopolized" commodity calling for special action by the U. S. government, show this is no insignificant factor in the situation.

But the interest of American imperialism is not limited to nitrates. Tacna-Arica constitutes a precedent for U. S. intervention which all of South America will yet learn to regret. If American imperialism succeeds in establishing a strong foothold on the Pacific coast of South America, it will be an opening wedge for further and systematic expansion. Virtually since the beginning of the world war, American imperialism has made the Caribbean "an American lake." It has definitely subjected all of Central America as well.

It is an imperialism now conscious and advancing along clearly marked-out lines. Anyone would be a fool who did not see that the entire American continent is threatened. For many years the Monroe Doctrine has been interpreted in the United States as a general claim of authority over the territories of the western hemisphere. In the wake of this doctrine economic penetration and political influence have proceeded. Direct government intervention however, in the form that it assumes in Tacna-Arica, has been confined to Central America and other regions of the north. This is its first appearance in South America. Tacna-Arica, therefore, marks an important stage in the development of American imperialist policy.

The governments of Chile and Peru have themselves to blame for the situation. By listening to the overtures of the U. S. secretary of state and placing the disposition of Tacna and Arica at the mercy of American imperialism they committed treason to their respective peoples, and to all of Latin America. These governments are in no sense the legitimate representatives of the Chilean and Peruvian people. President Leguia of Peru is an irresponsible dictator, holding power from year to year by means of bribery, terror and assassination. He has committed innumerable crimes against the Peruvian masses and long ago sold out his country to the forces of American imperialism. The government of Chile holds power only as a result of fraud and violence at the polls, the candidates of the wage workers' bloc ("bloc de los asalariados") having been cheated out of election only a few weeks ago. This government, still dripping blood from the mass butcheries of nitrate workers at Tarapaca, Antofagasta, etc., etc.,—where Chileans were imprisoned, deported, murdered, in the interest of the foreign nitrate companies—this government appeals for "patriotic" support against the sister republic of Peru!

If the governments of Chile and Peru have still some self-respect left they will withdraw the Tacna-Arica question from

"arbitration" by American imperialism. If they do not act at once the peoples of their respective countries must force them to act. The All-America Anti-Imperialist League has full confidence in the other Latin American peoples as well and feels sure that they will continue to bring pressure upon the Chilean and Peruvian governments to settle their differences and aid in the building up of a solid anti-imperialist front against the domination of Wall Street.

The All-America Anti-Imperialist League knows, moreover, that in the United States itself there are valuable and trustworthy allies of the Latin American countries in their struggle against American imperialism. It knows that large numbers of the toiling masses in that country, who are themselves exploited by the monster of imperialist capitalism, have been carrying on a militant fight against the designs of Wall Street and Washington.

For the solution of the Tacna-Arica controversy, the All-America Anti-Imperialist League proposes the following programme:

1. Immediate withdrawal of all U. S. military and administrative forces from the provinces of Tacna and Arica.

2. Recall of General Lassiter as head of the plebiscite commission.

3. Abrogation of all authority from President Coolidge or the United States government as arbitrator in the Tacna-Arica question.

4. Investigation by a Latin American committee to be named by the Union Latinoamericana, the Federacion Obrera Regional Uruguaya, the Junta Ibero-Americana de Intelectuales and the All-America Anti-Imperialist League.

5. Arbitration of the Tacna-Arica question by a Latin American body in accordance with the recommendations of the aforementioned committee, following their investigation.

The menace of North American imperialism is confronting the entire American continent. The peoples of Latin America, together with the exploited workers in the United States must organise to fight it.

ALL-AMERICA ANTI-IMPERIALIST LEAGUE:

Cuban Secretary, Julio Antonio Mella;
Porto Rican Secretary, Jaime N. Sager;
Mexican Secretary, Enrique Flores M.;
Colombian Secretary, Juan de Dios Romero;
Ecuadorian Secretary, Juan F. Karolys;
Venezuelan Secretary, Gustavo Machado;
Brazilian Secretary, Eduardo Mattos;
U. S. Secretary, Manuel Gomez.

THE BALKANS

The Amnesty and the Municipal Elections in Bulgaria.

Letter from Sofia.

The first deed which is characteristic of the policy of the Ljaptshoff Government, the second Government of the Democraatishiski Sgovor, is the "amnesty" law which has already been passed by the Chamber. This law grants a wide amnesty above all to the thousands of criminals from the camp of the bourgeoisie and the Government, the speculators, usurers, defrauders and corrupt subjects from the time of war, as well as to the members of the police who have been sentenced because of arbitrary acts and deeds of violence at meetings, during the elections etc. Full amnesty was provided for all crimes committed "in the interest of the State" and in the persecution of "illegal organisations", i. e. for the executioners of the Government who have murdered thousands of imprisoned Communists, members of the Peasant League etc., plundered houses and were guilty of deeds of violence.

In contrast to this, the "amnesty" which is provided for some of the victims of the White Terror is limited and conditional. The greater number of the persecuted Communists and members of the Peasant League, especially those who are persecuted according to the "Defence of the State Act", and above all those who were persecuted after the explosion in the Sofia cathedral, these, who are described as "the chief criminals", are excluded

from the amnesty, are being sent to the gallows or are rotting in the prisons. According to the statements of Professor Kuleff, the Minister for Justice, not even half of those who are accused, sentenced and persecuted under the law for the defence of the State are "amnestied". Further the amnesty for them is conditional, i. e. it is only valid if in the course of the next three years they do not trespass against the Defence of State Act and a number of articles of the criminal law; otherwise they will be punishable for both "crimes". The Minister of Justice further declared that these "amnestied" persons would be shadowed, i. e. that they would live under continuous pressure and the permanent threat of being again thrown into prison or murdered in the streets. There are emigrants who returned after being "amnestied", who however, tried to flee the country again because they were persecuted; they were arrested and thrown into prison.

The "amnesty law" shows plainly that Liaptsheff does not intend to abandon Zankoff's methods. The object of the Liaptsheff Government in this law is to deceive the masses of the people who demand a wide amnesty and the termination of the reign of Terror, and also to silence the indignation abroad at the arbitrary proceedings and reaction, only to pursue the same course of wild reaction, persecutions and deprivation of right with regard to the masses of workers and peasants.

The second factor which characterises the political situation in Bulgaria is the Municipal elections, which took place in the towns on the 14th and in the villages on the 21st of February. These elections had a political significance. They were less significant for the administration of the municipalities than for the Government, the administration of the State and the policy of the Government. The Liaptsheff Government however did not permit the political forces and the will of the masses of the people of the country to express themselves freely. At the urban and still more at the rural municipal elections, the Government again made use of all the means of Terror and violence in order to suppress the will of the people and to seize votes. Thus the elections are a further proof of the reactionary course of the Liaptsheff Government.

Only the official reports of the results of the election are known; these usually observe dead silence as to the successes of the opposition and especially the working class opposition. But even these reports show that the municipal elections signified in the towns a defeat of the Government party and of the Government itself. In all towns the Opposition defeated the Government by a large majority. In Sofia, for example, 10,544 votes were polled for the Government altogether (among them 1790 for the Opposition group in the Government party itself which opposed the official candidates in the elections), whilst 21,200 altogether voted for the Opposition; in Sliven 1542 votes were polled for the Government and 3991 for the Opposition; in Plovdiv there were 4521 votes for the Government against 7579 for the Opposition; in Varna 2672 votes for the Government and 8208 for the Opposition; in Russe 3608 Government votes against 4716 for the Opposition etc. Altogether in the towns the 85,000 votes for the Government are opposed by 95,000 for the Opposition.

A still more characteristic factor of the election results is the number of votes polled for the Peasant League, round which the workers, artisans and peasants gathered, as the only legal organisation of the working class. In a number of towns, this bloc of the workers received thousands of votes, and either defeated the Government parties or almost approached them in the number of votes as well as far exceeding the votes of the bourgeois Opposition and other parties. Thus in Sliven the Peasant League received 2119 votes (the Government 1542), whilst in Varna the 2672 votes for the Government are opposed by 2685 votes for the Peasant League etc. To these must be added the so-called "invalid" votes with slogans etc., most of which come from Communists and the number of which amounted to several hundred in some places, in Sofia for instance to 1200.

The results are all the more telling since they occurred under the pressure of the most acute Terror and since the working masses and their organisations even those of them which are nominally legal, such as the Peasant League, were deprived of the right to hold meetings or carry on Press or other propaganda. The elections in the towns show that there is a large majority against the Government and the Sgovor. In spite of Terror and persecution, in spite of the condition of

martial law, the masses of the people have tried to express in every possible way their indignation and deep discontent with the ruling reaction by voting for the bourgeois Opposition parties and even for the National Liberals. The greater part of them however gathered once more round a bloc of workers in order to start an active campaign against the Sgovor reaction.

The results of the municipal elections in the towns enraged the Government and it tried with all possible means to compensate for its defeat at the Council elections in the villages. Liaptsheff set in motion the whole police force and the secret police and all the sinister forces of the Sgovor in order to stifle any resistance of the masses in the villages. The methods of Zankoff and General Russeff were again applied, the villages were occupied by the police, wholesale arrests and ill-treatment took place, murders even have been recorded. In many villages, the Opposition groups, especially the Peasant League were prevented from putting up their lists of candidates. In this way Liaptsheff succeeded in obtaining more votes in the villages. These votes are by no means evidence of the power of the Sgovor and the Government but merely of the strength of the Terror and violence. Of the Opposition groups, the bloc of the toilers, represented by the Peasant League again received the greatest number of votes.

On the whole, the elections are a true expression of the people's movement against the regime of the White Terror and its violence. This people's movement finds stronger expression in the towns where there are masses of workers. The Government succeeded in suppressing the discontent in the villages by Terror; as a matter of fact, however, the discontent is no less wide-spread among the peasant masses. The election results will strengthen the self-confidence of the masses and give an impulse to the fight for the overthrow of the detested Sgovor tyranny. At the elections, the Liaptsheff Government finally threw off its mask and showed itself a worthy successor to the Zankoff Cabinet. It turned with bestial wrath not against "illegal deeds" but against any independent participation of the workers in a legal fight such as that of an election campaign. Even the parties of the bourgeois Opposition suffered under the Government Terror.

The elections are over, but the Terror continues. The Government wants to suppress this new manifestation in favour of a union of the working masses and is carrying on persecutions, again not against "illegal acts" but in order to silence any legal expression of opposition to the exceptional regime. Quite recently, a non-party paper "Novini", which has only been appearing for a short time, has been prohibited. This paper advocated no other slogans than that of the restoration of constitutional freedom; for this reason it was described as "communis" and "in favour of a united front" and was suppressed. The editorial offices were searched, the editor was arrested and is being tried under the "Defence of the State Act". Under the "Democrat" Liaptsheff, just as under the Fascist Zankoff, the Government is persecuting, as "illegal" any effort to restore legality in the country.

Among the bourgeois Opposition parties, the National Liberals can record the greatest increase of votes at the elections. Through shrieking demagoguery and the mendacious assertion that they were carrying on a decisive fight against the Sgovor rule, they succeeded in winning over some sections of the population. Among the Left bourgeois parties, the Democrats can record some increase of votes. The Social Democrats who fought "independently" this time, received an insignificant number of votes and proved themselves a political factor of third rank.

The results of the election make it evident that the bourgeois Opposition and the Social Democrats cannot take the lead in the fight against the White Terror because they have no intention of carrying on the fight decisively or of advocating the demands of the masses of the people. In the Social Democratic party there is even a tendency in favour of approaching the Sgovor. The Social Democrats also opposed the independent fight of the working masses. The bourgeois Opposition is more interested in party successes amongst the masses of people who have no rights than in the fight against the military Terrorist regime. Consequently the masses of the people, in their fight against this regime, try to gather round a centre of their own, a bloc of the workers outside the bourgeois parties.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

On the "Unity" Proposal of the I. L. P.

(Leading Article of the "Pravda" of 4th of March 1926.)

From to day's telegrams the reader learns that the **Independent Labour Party in Great Britain** has the intention of introducing at the April session of the Second International a motion of convening a Conference of the Second and Third Internationals.

The driving forces of the proposal formulated by the I.L.P. lead us to the actual nature of the process now going on upon the scenes of the international proletarian movement. The new regroupings in the rank and file of the international proletariat furnish us the key to the understanding of the peculiar policy of the I.L.P.

As a matter of fact one of the most characteristic and original features of the present situation is the elementary wish of the proletarian masses for unity in their ranks. One can say that the tendency of the masses for a united front is the specific feature of the moment. And not only we, the Comintern and its sections, have become aware of this fact, also our opponents from the camp of the social democrats begin to see this more and more clearly. They see it clearly on the ground of a number of object lessons furnished by the masses. They have already received not a few bumps as a result of their being stupidly and straightly opposed to the elementary desire of the masses for unity.

Now the opportunist leaders begin to understand that a new task lies before them, that is to take under their lead the elementary process and then to curb these elementary forces through a number of clever measures and to lead them on the social democratic barge on to the reformist sand bank.

The compromising leaders have also understood that the initiative of the fight for a united front comes from the Communist Parties. The fact of the communist leadership of the fight for the unity of the ranks of workers cannot be denied. From this it results for the social democratic leaders that this our initiative must be captured and the whole elementary process which is developing in the masses must be given another fundamental direction, more acceptable for the social democrats. There lies hidden the secret of the peculiar counter-proposal of the united front, issued by the I.L.P.

The reckoning of the newly arisen fighters for the united front is fairly simple. We — declare the compromisers to an astonished world — are also for the unity of the proletarian ranks. But when one already directs the policy towards unity, it must be realised to the entire 100%. If we are uniting, then let it be not on account of everyday details, but because of an earnest will. If we want to achieve the united front then we must first unite the hostile Internationals. But naturally we can only unite them, if a certain concrete conception exists for such a unity. We must discuss this conception. One of the representatives of the I.L.P. has talked out the basis upon which, according to his opinion, the discussion should be conducted. This is the great political and social question — the part of the reforms and of the application of force.

Everybody understands that the reformists are aiming at masking secretly by such a question which does not immediately touch the masses at present the problem of unity on the basis of the defence of the most urgent demands of the masses which are at present stirring the wide proletarian sections. In such a way the reformists hope to rob the insufficiently conscious, not yet prepared elements of the proletariat of every desire and every interest in the question of unity.

Our answer to the opportunists is clear and distinct. You want unity, therefore let us realise this unity not in words but in deeds. Show that you are able to join us in a united front, honestly and openly in defending the real class interests of the workers. Do not immediately promise cranes in the sky to the workers, rather put a tomtit into their hands. You, the I.L.P. especially have a thousand means to prove how you are ready to conduct the class war not in words but in deeds. In May, the great conflict in the mining industry of England will arise. Show your face, show your will for unity so that it is visible to everybody, to us as well as to the coal kings of England and to the exploited English miners. If you cannot do this then all your present declarations, all your sensational proposals are only a humbug of charlatans and you yourselves are not fighters for the unity of the working class but only "Lefts" who wish to hide their opportunism.

FOR THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The Revolutionary Workers in the General Confederation of Labour in Italy.

By G. Germanetto (Milan).

The Reformists of the *Confederazione Generale del Lavoro* (C. G. D. L. = General Confederation of Labour, the free trade union organisation in Italy, ruled by the Reformists) make use of every wave of reaction to force new laws on the Communists and the revolutionary workers within the C. G. D. L. itself.

When, in 1922, the Communists in Turin succumbed to the blows of the Fascist volunteers, the Reformists took possession of the organisations under the control of the Communists. To-day the same thing is happening again in other forms. Like hyaenas on the battlefield, the Reformists make use of the reaction in order to rage against their conquered enemies.

The Fascist trade union laws were followed by the new constitution of the C. G. D. L., which was resolved upon contrary to all rules of constitution and contrary to the customs of Labour organisations. This constitution is now being applied in practice. As could be foreseen, the advance of the Reformists in the C. G. D. L., which is conducted by the Reformists with Bruno Buozzi, d'Aragona's successor, at their head, is directed against the trade union associations which are under the control of the Communists and affiliated to the C. G. D. L. The F. I. L. I. L. (*Federazione Italiana Lavoranti in Legno*, Italian Wood-Workers Association) has received an ultimatum, the F. I. L. A. M. (*Federazione Italiana Lavoranti Albergo Mensa*, Italian Union of Hotel and Restaurant Employees) has received a letter in which it is informed that it has been determined that it shall belong to the mixed trade union federation of the C. G. D. L. in which all industrial organisations which are not yet in the hands of the Reformists are to be grouped together. The official pretext for the arrangement which regulates this transition is that of making it possible for the small trade unions which cannot afford to keep one clerk, to continue their existence with the help of a confidential representative of the C. G. D. L. In practice however it means that an end has been put to the workers having any control in their organisations, an end which has been forced on them by the leaders of the C. G. D. L.

The behaviour of the Reformist leaders of the C. G. D. L. has even compelled the Maximalist "Avanti!" which has always taken an attitude of keen opposition to the Communists, for once in a way not to side with the Reformists but to raise a protest against their "reorganising activity" in the C. G. D. L.

The document in which the transition of a whole number of trade union organisations to the mixed federation was decreed and at the same time the continued independence of a number of trade union organisations was confirmed, contains many irritating contradictions. Thus for instance, the small trade union of the haters is said to be capable of continued independence, whereas it becomes doubtful whether the F. I. L. I. L. and the trade union of private employees which are controlled by our comrades can maintain an independent existence. Of the ten trade union organisations which have been dissolved, seven are managed by non-Reformist elements (Maximalists and Communists) and this explains everything if we take into consideration the preparations for the coming Trade Union Congress.

The Maximalist who are now raising a lively protest have, up to now, always sided with the Reformists against the Communists. Any communist proposals to form an anti-Reformist united front have always been rejected by the Maximalists. The Maximalists had delegated one of their members to the Executive of the C. G. D. L., the deputy Viotte who retired a short time ago after having for a long time joined in the Reformist game. Now, of course, his resignation is a meaningless gesture.

The programme of the Communists is well known and our tasks are clearly outlined. Not with words but with deeds must we work for the unity of the working class. The fight against the Reformist leaders of the C. G. D. L. must be continued. It is a matter of course that their action meets with the approval of the bourgeoisie and that the bourgeois papers publish articles consenting to the suppression of the Labour Chambers (Trade

Union Councils) by the Reformist leaders and the substitution of confidential representatives of the C. G. D. L. as mentioned above.

The bourgeois Press also remarks that, as it would have been easy for the extreme elements to prevail in the Labour Chambers (Trade Union Councils), the Reformists were quite in the right in taking measures against them. The dissolution of these trade union organisations is therefore dictated by fear of the Communists, and thus represents a complete acknowledgement of our real influence over the masses.

It is then easy to understand in what circumstances the proletariat must work in view of the general situation and of the situation created by the Reformist of the C. G. D. L. in the trade unions. It would seem that the Reformist leaders of the C. G. D. L. are working towards enticing the workers into dissensions which would lead to a split. A split would indeed suit those who do not desire the victory of the proletariat. It does not suit us. In spite of all "exceptional laws" we remain affiliated to the C. G. D. L. in order to rescue it from Reformism; and we are prepared to form an alliance with all who honestly take the side of class war and are against a collaboration of the classes.

The C. G. D. L., however it may be brought low by the Reformists its leaders, must once more become the unity organisation of the Italian proletariat. No trouble and no sacrifices are too great if we attain this end.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Communist Movement in Sweden and its Immediate Tasks.

By K. Kilbom (Stockholm).

When, in August 1924, Höglund and his friends finally broke with the **Communist International**, both the bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats declared that it is now an end with Communism in Sweden. The chief organ of the Social Democrats triumphantly declared that its prophecy that Bolshevism, being a typical Russian phenomenon, could not take root in Swedish soil, had now come true. They forget, however, that 40 years ago the bourgeoisie used literally the same words with regard to Social Democracy which, in their opinion "could not become popular among the reasonable and honest Swedish workers". Nevertheless things turned out otherwise, for we already have the **third purely Social Democratic Government** in power since 1917. As regards Bolshevism, it is so far from being at its last gasp that even the bourgeois Press demands that all kinds of measures should be taken against its leaders whilst the Social Democratic Press declares that "Swedish Bolshevism" is particularly "infectious" and calls upon its partisans to fight against the Communist party.

Soon after Höglund's breach with the Comintern, the influence of the Communists in the trade unions began to increase. This was due to our activity in the beginning of 1924, when the employers threatened to turn 160,000 workers into the streets. With what the bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats considered "ominous" rapidity, the workers adopted the Communist slogans of the necessity of fighting and of refusing to submit to the employers' insolence. The leading organs of the employers declared that it was in the interest of society that the power of the Reformist leaders in the trade unions should be strengthened and that, with this in view, the employers should help by making concessions. And with what result? Of course the defeat of the workers.

It soon became clear to a large number of workers what were the consequences of the reformist leadership of the trade unions. In the course of 1925 other phenomena occurred which also contributed to their enlightenment. A conflict had been going on in Sundsvall since the beginning of 1924 between the municipal workers and the town administration; the same thing happened in the previous year in Kalmar. The attitude of the Government to the strike in both cases was such that the embitterment of the workers was intensified. In the last conflict the Government actually legalized the strike-breakers guard "Public Help". The result was a semi-defeat of the workers. Mean-

while three workers were sentenced to long periods of imprisonment because they took part in a demonstration organised by the leaders of the strike; and in spite of the fact that even the masses of the Social Democrats demanded an amnesty, their demand was rejected by the Government.

It is not to be wondered at that the Conference of the trade unions of the Opposition, which took place at the beginning of January this year, chiefly to discuss the fight against the strike-breakers and against Fascism and to further the work for trade union unity, was of comparatively great significance in spite of the resistance of the Social Democrats. It is only natural that this conference increased the alarm of the bourgeoisie which began to clamour more loudly than ever that measures should be taken against the Communist. The Social Democrats considered this the most appropriate moment to begin with aggressive action. Their formal excuse was the reorganisation of the Communist Party on the basis of nuclei. In Stockholm many long articles were published in the newspaper "Socialdemokraten" as to the danger involved in the formation of these nuclei. The slogan "Cleanse the factories of the nuclei" was proclaimed by the Social Democratic Press throughout the country.

"Swedish Bolshevism" which, a year ago, was described merely as a symptom of crisis, has now become the justification for mobilising against the Communists the whole Social Democratic Party which, thanks to the trade unions having been compelled to join it, now numbers 560,000 members. The present condition of Swedish Social Democracy is one of mobilisation against the Communist Party. Social Democracy is making great efforts to inculcate this slogan throughout the country into the trade unions which are outside Social Democracy and, where that is impossible (in many places the workers refuse to support social democratic policy), it is trying to organise the workers individually. The War Minister himself is at the head of this campaign. In the first place the movement of Young Social Democrats is being made use of against our Party. In every factory and in every works endeavours are being made to neutralize our nuclei by the organisation of Social Democratic Juvenile Clubs. Time will show how long the campaign will last. The policy of the Social Democrats in Parliament does not make it easier for the workers to join the Social Democratic Party.

The Swedish Party is faced by the following tasks:

1. that of continuing the reorganisation of the party on the basis of nuclei as the lowest organs of the Party in the factories, in the villages and according to streets so that in this way the organisation of the Party may be strengthened and its membership increased.
2. that of strengthening and developing our Young Communist League.
3. that of beginning as soon as possible to publish a theoretical review and to organise a party school. (Preparations have long been made for these two tasks.)
4. that of continuing and intensifying the work in the trade unions in order to turn them into revolutionary mass organisations, and to strengthen the work for the realisation of national and international trade union unity.
5. that of stimulating the activity of the discontented elements among the agricultural class and organising it on definite lines.

The last two tasks are of particular importance.

The above mentioned attitude of opposition in the trade union movement and, above all, the affiliation to the Göteborg Conference against Fascism and strike-breaking and in favour of national and international trade union unity, as well as other phenomena among the poorest of the peasantry, clearly show that the time has come to gather the party together on an organised basis. The logic of events, combined with a sensible policy on our part, will ensure victory to the policy and organisation of the Communist Party. The Social Democrats and the bourgeoisie may combat and put obstacles in the way of the communist movement, but they cannot defeat it. Many things indicate that even the next year will offer many fundamental and formal proofs of what has been said above. However that may be, the Communist Party has by no means died out as a result of the breach between Höglund and the Party. On the contrary, it has become stronger and more active than ever and continues to develop. The Swedish Communists will do all in their power to fulfil their duties as members of the Comintern; they will do all in their power to follow the example of their Russian comrades.