

LABOR IN THE FAR EAST (JAPAN)

By TANI

EDITOR'S NOTE:—The Trade Union Educational League offers to American workers a series of articles on labor in the Far East, the present series being on Japanese labor by Comrade Tani, member of the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labor Unions for Japan. The first told of the split forced by reformists in the Japanese General Federation of Labor, the formation of the left wing center, the Nihon Rodokumiai Hyogikai and its class struggle program. The second, told of this organization's activities on the serious problem of unemployment. Today we read of the problem of forming a labor party, called in Japan the "Proletarian Party." This has been realized since the article was written, but Comrade Tani tells of the struggle put up for it by the left wing. The next series will be on the labor movement of Indonesia.

ARTICLE III.

AGAINST such an attack of the reformists the Nihon Rodokumiai Hyogikai has come out with energetic propaganda, mercilessly criticizing the attempts of the reformists and calling for the solidarity of all proletarian elements for the realization of a unified national political party. The slogans of the Hyogikai are:

1. Stick to class-conscious leadership.
2. Mass organization of workers and tenant peasants.
3. Political party of daily struggle."

ON July 7th the Central Executive Committee of the Nihon Rodokumiai Hyogikai issued a manifest to the affiliated unions. It begins with the following words:

"On June 21st the Japan Peasant Union issued a call to organize a pre-

liminary organ for the foundation of a proletarian party.

"We, the workers, have hitherto declared that we are the vanguard of the toiling masses and are by duty bound to lead the peasants and others. In spite of it, certain of the leaders of trade unions have forgotten to lead the proletarian class on the political field. . . . We accept with great pleasure the call of our peasant brethren, who have taken the initiative upon themselves. We must now rectify with redoubled energy the negligence of some leaders among us and hasten the realization of the proletarian party."

AT the Executive meeting of July 12th, the Central Committee of the Hyogikai issued the following instructions as to the task of organization of the party:

"1. The District Political Bureau of the Hyogikai shall direct the political committees of the unions in respective districts. It shall organize a special committee for the organization of the party.

"2. The said committee shall be organized with two or three members from each affiliated union together with the members of the District Political Bureau. These members of the committee shall devote their time entirely to the assigned task.

"3. The work of the committee is: a) to hold local conferences with other labor organizations; b) to conduct agitational and propaganda work such as mass meetings, placarding and broadcasting leaflets, etc.; c) to assist the Peasant Union in carrying out its program; d) to fight against the tendency to organize scattered local parties; e) to carry on discussions on the program of the party.

"4. The Central Political Bureau shall issue a draft of a program and organizational plan. The local com-

mittees shall discuss them in the light of the specific local conditions.

"5. The local committees shall send weekly reports to the Central Political Bureau."

ON the 10th of August the preliminary "Conference for the organization of Proletarian Party" was held in Osaka. 11 labor organizations, two peasant organizations, one political organization (the Seiji Kenkyu Kai) and two Suiheisha (parish) organizations were represented in the conference by 56 delegates.

The more important of them were the Japan Peasant Union, the Japanese Federation of Labor (the federation joined the conference in spite of its advocacy of local parties), the Government Factory Workers' Federation, the Nihon Rodokumiai Hyogikai, etc. The conference resolved to establish a permanent preliminary committee for the organization of the Proletarian Party. This committee was elected.

The drafting of the party program, the outline for the future tasks of the committee, the program for the second conference, the financial affairs, etc., were also decided on.

BEFORE the opening of the conference, a certain amount of uneasiness was expressed as to the possibility of the flaring up of friction once again between the split Sodomei and the Hyogikai, thereby endangering the conference. This fear, however, was unfounded and through skillful maneuvers of left wing delegates the conference closed with victory on their side. The appearance of a national party of the proletariat has thus been assured at this memorable Osaka conference.

The left wingers will endeavor to put the following demands among others in the platform of the Proletarian Party. How many of these points

will actually be adopted is a matter of future interest, for it will show the relative strength of the left wing in the movement.

1. Down with imperialism and its wars.
2. Self-determination to Korea and other colonies.
3. Hands off China.
4. International unity of labor.
5. Those who toil the earth shall own it.
6. Eight-hour work day and full maintenance for unemployed.
7. Workers' control of industry.
8. Universal suffrage to all from 18 years of age.
9. Freedom of press, speech, assembly and organization.
10. Abolition of all gag-laws (peace-preservation law etc.).
11. Abolition of Upper-House, Privy Council, "Genroes", etc.
12. A workers' and peasants' government.

AMONG other activities of the left wing minority of Japanese labor, we must count its international activity first. When the Chinese textile workers started a colossal fight against world imperialism early this year, the Japanese revolutionary workers at once responded to the call of the Chinese workers and started an energetic protest movement against their own imperialistic government. The movement was relentlessly suppressed by police and gendarmerie, but it has succeeded in awakening the sense of international solidarity of the working class, even amongst the most backward masses.

The invitation issued by the Nihon Rodokumiai Hyogikai to the delegates of the Russian unions and consequent visit of the delegates to Japan is also a topic worthy of mention. It has been a long cherished dream of the Japanese working

masses to shake hands with the Russian workers who have accomplished their revolution.

THIS desire had no opportunity to express itself for eight years owing to the complete blockade set up by the bourgeois government. The burst of enthusiasm manifested by the Japanese workers in meeting the Russian delegates on their way through Japan is quite understandable in consideration of these facts.

At the same time the contemptible attitude and laughable confusion of mind manifested by the Japanese police authorities regarding the unwelcome guests is also quite understandable, when we remember the high tide of the revolutionary labor movement in the country. There is nothing more fearful for the Japanese bourgeois government than the international solidarity of the revolutionary elements within the country. The new "peace preservation law" which imposes ten years' imprisonment upon revolutionary workers is aimed at discouraging their international activities.

IN spite of all such measures of suppression and obstacles, the Japanese working class is more and more closing up its ranks with the international labor under the leadership of the left wing minority. It has already declared its intention to join one international when it will be formed.

It refrains at the present from joining either to the Amsterdam or to the Moscow Internationals. As a matter of fact, this is the result of the tactical move on the part of the Japanese left wingers to nullify the recent attempt of the right wing leaders to push the Japanese organized labor into the mire of the Amsterdam International and thereby firmly establish the rule of reformism in Japan.

(End of series.)