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The Hague Conference

WHEN, after lengthy discussions and many threats of disruption, the "independent experts" in Paris came to an agreement and signed the document known as the Young Plan, the social-democrats of every colour and shade heaved a sigh of relief. The Young Plan was immediately declared to be, firstly, a new proof of capitalist stabilisation; secondly, a proof of the possibility of mutual concessions in the capitalist world; thirdly, an example which would prove to the whole world that Germany, in carrying out the "policy of fulfilment," was gradually, with every year, freeing herself of the burden imposed upon her by the Versailles victors.

The solemn acceptance of the Young Plan was to take place at a political conference to be called after the experts' conference; and, in addition, two or three political gestures towards Germany were to be made. This was to create the illusion that "concessions" were made to her in the political, as well as in the economic, field.

But all the solemn and pompous preparations for the political conference were spoilt by Snowden, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in

the Labour Government, who took up a sharp and implacable attitude, and demanded a drastic revision of the Young Plan in favour of British capitalism. It would be naïve and stupid to think, however, that the crises in the Hague Conference, which threatened every day, if not to break up the Conference completely, then to prolong it indefinitely, were caused by Snowden's action, and that this action alone was the cause of the threatened smash-up of The Hague Conference. It may be said that never in the history of post-war capitalism has a conference brought to light with such clearness and precision the contradictions which are tearing up the capitalist world. These contradictions are especially evident just now because the "honour" of fiercely defending the interests of the English bourgeoisie has fallen to the Labour Government. This defence has already evoked an enthusiastic approval of Snowden by the Conservatives. It must be admitted that never, during the whole period of the Conservative Government, had the world heard a more arrogant statement than Snowden's: "We are trying to restore England's rights to their

place once again," and "The time has come when England shall once again occupy her rightful place in the world.*"

With "pride" Snowden is able to declare that he has received "numerous telegrams from all over England approving the position taken up by the English delegation."

It was this firm defence of English capital that brought to light the plentiful contradictions of Capitalism which, at the Experts' Conference in Paris, were slightly glossed over and hidden.

THE new proof of the stabilisation of capitalism which the social-democrats announced to the whole world after the Experts' Conference in Paris lasted less than two months. The Young Plan cannot now be described as something that really exists. The document which was born as a result of the prolonged efforts of the experts is nothing but a scrap of paper round which the fierce struggle of imperialist interests is taking place. Together with the discrediting of this new "proof" of the stabilisation of capitalism, perished the carefully-cherished illusion of the social-democrats that the capitalist world, by means of concessions and compromises, could overcome the existing contradictions. The struggle which sprang up round the reparations question has never, since the time of the Versailles Treaty, been so fierce. Over this question, as over the question of Germany's contributions in kind, the conference was sharply divided into two camps: in one was England, supported by two or three small States; in the other were four powerful pillars of the capitalist world—France, Japan, Italy and Belgium.

Two weeks of the conference were taken up with questions of secondary importance which were only remotely connected with matters of principle. These questions were concerned with comparatively small sums. Nevertheless, the two sides had great difficulty in arriving at any agreement. Snowden's replies to the memorandum of the four powers was the best example of that "spirit of conciliation" which, according to the social-democrats, is the characteristic feature of capitalist conferences.

One can easily imagine what a fight will spring up in The Hague over a question which is of primary importance to the fate of European capitalism—the question of the International Bank for Reparations Settlements. The problem of the bank is the point on which will clash the pretensions of the various capitalist groups who hope to have the control over the currency circulation of Europe. The idea that lies at the bottom of this bank, *i.e.*, of regulating the anarchical condition of capitalist economy, is, of course, quite impracticable. It would be quite Utopian to imagine that at The Hague or in any other town the various capitalist groups will be able to come to any agreement over the question of regulating the currency circulation of the world, and of controlling the national banks of issue. The struggle will take place over the question as to which of the capitalist groups shall have the greatest influence in this sphere.

The U.S.A., which is not greatly interested in the Anglo-French discussions on the sharing-out of reparations, will certainly appear in the foreground of the conference when it comes to the question of the bank.

UNDoubtedly, the antagonisms of modern capitalism will be revealed with especial clearness when this question is discussed. While the English delegation had to stand up against the attack of the French when the question of the division of reparations and of contributions in kind came up, it will have to fight the American financial groups over the question of the bank. Whatever the issue of the Anglo-French struggle may be, there is no doubt that Snowden will have to retreat before the U.S.A. The proud statements of the Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer about "England's honour" will have no effect on the American bankers. Indeed, it is quite possible that Snowden was so firm in his defence of the English bourgeoisie before the French attack in order to be able to balance this victory with his inevitable defeat in the fight with the U.S.A.

The slightest acquaintance with the Young Plan does away with any illusion that it might, in comparison with the Dawes Plan, improve the lot of Germany: in many ways it tightens the noose round the neck of the

*All quotations re-translated

German people. The social-democratic propaganda of the Young Plan is, as usual, a perversion of reality. The social-democrats were able, nevertheless, to deceive some people into believing in the progressive character of the Young Plan compared with the Dawes Plan, and The Hague managers made haste to "add" to the proof of this progression. The search for a means of agreement between the two sides will inevitably lead to the detriment of German's interests. The offers which the representatives of the four powers made at the last moment to the English delegation concerning the division of reparations and contributions in kind were concessions made at the expense of Germany. Thus, the German bourgeoisie, in accepting the Young Plan, is now being burdened with new sacrifices besides those of this Plan. It must be remembered also that any temporary and uncertain compromise made in the matter of the International Bank of Reparations Settlements between the various capitalist groups (if it is ever made at all) will inevitably mean that the interests of the German bourgeoisie have been sacrificed.

The Conference at The Hague has not only brought to light the economic contradictions of modern capitalism: the political contradictions have also been revealed. The fight between Snowden and Briand, in addition to being a fight between the financial interests of both countries, is a revision of the new *Entente cordiale* created by the English Conservatives. The French bourgeois press is full of threats and of open anxiety with regard to the fate of Anglo-French relations. And again in this question both sides are trying to play their game at the expense of Germany: one threatening to withdraw its troops from the Rhineland; the other threatening to continue to occupy it independently.

SUCH is the picture which The Hague Conference have shown us. One more detail in addition is seen. Never has the rôle of social-democracy as the defender of the interests of its "own bourgeoisie" been so clear. The fight between Snowden who, as the defender of the interests of the British mineowners, upholds the decrease in Germany's contributions in kind, and Hilferding, who, in the name of the interests of the German mineowners, protests against the decrease, is instructive and interesting to the whole working class.

Whatever the results of the conference at The Hague, whatever compromise has crowned its work, it has unquestionably shown a whole series of convulsive efforts of the various capitalist groups to preserve a truce before throwing themselves headlong into a new world war.

The *Manchester Guardian's* view of Snowden's speech is very characteristic: "His speech marks the end of those illusions that friendly agreements exist where there is nothing but discord; that there is real peace in Europe when there is only an armed peace, etc."

We were never victims of those illusions, the end of which, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, Snowden announced in his speech at the conference. The working class knows the real value of that "stabilisation" which the social-democrats are acclaiming all over Europe. The working class and the Communist parties the world over must keep their eyes fixed on the conference at The Hague. The fight between the capitalist groups at this conference; the width and depth of the antagonisms which are being revealed there; the many pseudo-compromises;—all this must serve as a barometer which shall measure the speed of the approaching war danger.

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The Face of German Social-Fascism

By R. Gerber

THE bloody May days in Berlin, the white terror loosed under social-democratic leadership and social-democratic slogans against the traditional mass demonstration of the proletariat, and the Magdeburg Congress of the S.D. Party which passed the social-chauvinist defence programme—these events, occurring more or less together, indicate a certain maturity in the development of social-fascist tendencies in Germany. They justify us in speaking no longer of the growth of the leading reformist circles in the direction of fascism, but of definite and conclusive signs of fascism in German reformism as a whole. It is, however, incorrect to see fascist development in Germany only in the growth of social fascism. There is also (as the Landtag elections in industrial Saxony and in agrarian Mecklenburg, and the communal elections in Coburg-Bavaria show) a great advance in the National-Socialist Party, which is openly and consciously fascist (an increase in votes of 100 to 150 per cent. in one year) and which is recruited chiefly from the petty bourgeoisie and (in connection with the chronic difficulties of coalition government, expressing the general crisis of parliamentarianism) there is also a definite revival in the activities of the various defence organisations, from the *Wehrwolf* to the *Reichsbanner*.

German fascism is advancing in three partially separated columns, each active in a different sphere. It would therefore be wrong to expect to find all the signs of fascism fully developed in one of them—the social-fascist column. It is true that in this article we are not dealing with German fascism in general, but only with social-fascism; still, we must point out its general connections which will give us a basis for the limits within which we may expect similarities to Italian fascism.

It may be objected that in such a broad conception of fascism, fascism loses its specific content, that the totality of these “three columns” is nothing more nor less than the bourgeois reaction, and that it is not worth while seeking fascist elements in each of them.

This alternative, put forward by the conciliators—the denial of social-fascism, or the obliteration of all differences within the bourgeois reaction, is false. There are a number of factors which are common to all forms of German fascism and which, taken together, differentiate fascism from other forms of bourgeois dictatorship. As distinct from a purely military dictatorship (which in recent times, it is true, tries to strengthen its position—and with a fair amount of success—by creating fascist support for itself) all forms of fascism are based upon broad mass organisation whose activities are contrasted with the failure of bourgeois parliamentarianism and which—otherwise the masses could not be won for fascism—use a certain “anti-capitalist” phraseology, and refrain from appearing openly as representatives of capital.

Fascism is differentiated from the terror exercised against the working class by a parliamentary democracy (a terror which in its outward manifestations may be just as brutal as fascist terror) in that it justifies its terrorist actions, not from the formal standpoint of the “will of the majority,” but by the particular weight of the interests it represents. To bourgeois democracy it opposes the “organic membership of society” by the co-operation of various group organisations—fascism does not deny class contradictions; it merely maintains that they can be overcome within the framework of “common interests.” In this way it seeks to organise the anger of the masses at the bankruptcy of parliamentarianism in a manner which involves no danger to the rule of finance capital, and, when bourgeois democracy fails, tries to utilise that anger for the maintenance of bourgeois class rule in other forms. For the working class movement, the particular danger of fascism lies in its use of demagoguery as well as terror, lies in the fact that it awakens among the workers the illusion that the dictatorship which it is anxious to establish, or has succeeded in establishing, is not the rule of their class enemy, but the result of their own work.

In this sense, of course, fascism is the general tendency of the development of bourgeois democracy in the period of capitalist decline. The growth of internal and external contradictions necessarily leads to an intensification of the white terror against the proletariat and also makes the parliamentary democratic form of bourgeois class rule less and less useful for finance capital. On the other hand the increasing difficulties and working class revolt which is drawing more workers into the struggle, necessitate the creation of bases of support within the working class, support which is won by the corruption of the labour aristocracy. The smaller this aristocracy becomes, because of growing economic difficulties, the closer, by way of compensation, grows its connection with finance capital. For this limited group to fulfil its duty of binding the greatest possible number of workers to the policy of finance capital, it must convince them that the tendencies in the development of imperialism—increasing monopolisation and trustification, State capitalism, the enrolment of members of the labour aristocracy in the executive organs of bourgeois class rule—are means of overcoming “the bad side of capitalism.” This is but a paraphrase of the fascist ideal of the “organic state,” of “structural democracy.” The organisational concentration of the national economy by means of State capitalism in the interests of finance capital appears as the “supersession of private capitalism,” and the use of degenerate working class elements to suppress their class comrades as the “participation of the working class in the management of industry.” These basic elements of fascist ideology will, in the conditions of the third period, develop to a greater or lesser degree all over the imperialist world. It is therefore of the greatest importance to deal with the growth of general fascist tendencies in those organisations where this course of development is in most glaring contradiction to their past history and where, consequently, the new state of affairs is most sharply expressed.

II.

The objective social basis of reformism generally is the corruption of the labour aristocracy (which in certain circumstances may

be very great and in some countries even form the majority of the working class) rendered possible by the imperialist extra-profits of the bourgeoisie. The question then arises: does the development of reformism to social-fascism correspond to a change in its social basis, to a change in the type of corruption. This is true of countries such as Germany. Before the war, and during the first period of prosperity after inflation, the skilled groups of workers were fairly well off, and reformism rested on the basis of this prosperous position of certain, generally highly qualified crafts, but in the period of capitalist rationalisation this state of affairs has undergone change. The special position of these highly-qualified workers was lost as a result of the growing mechanisation of labour. Statistics show a lessening in the gap between the wages of skilled and the wages of unskilled workers, despite the growing wage differentiation within the working class as a whole (cf. the statements on pages 167 et seq. in the report of the C.C. of the C.P.G. to the Twelfth Berlin Congress). The explanation of this apparent contradiction is not far to seek: capitalist rationalisation draws large masses of badly paid workers (practically women and juveniles) into the process of production and depresses the wages of the working masses, while on the other hand it creates well-paid positions for a limited group, a group which by no means coincides with the skilled working class, but includes also semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Individual workers who either act as foremen, or whose rate of work determines that of their fellow workers, must, in rationalised undertakings working on the transmission belt system, be urged to more intense activity in the interests of capital by means of higher wages, wage premiums, etc.

This gives rise to a new and quite peculiar anti-proletarian attitude on the part of the new labour aristocracy. The compositor or mechanic who in former times had a good position by virtue of his professional knowledge, thought himself to be somewhat better than other workers, he had more to lose than his chains and, in his principles, he supported capitalist society. In accordance with this attitude he was a reformist and Bernstein, who proclaimed the peaceful development of capi-

talism into Socialism, was his prophet. Beyond that, however, this labour aristocrat was united with all his professional colleagues as against the employer, fought with them for better conditions of labour and therefore had a certain understanding (even were it only expressed in benevolent neutrality) for the struggles of other groups of workers against their exploiters. To-day, the man who has first place at the transmission belt and who receives higher wages in payment for driving his fellow workers to quicker work (from which they gain not even a temporary advantage) this man is an enemy to them. The old sort of labour aristocrat may have had no proletarian class-consciousness, but only a craft outlook, but the labour aristocrat of to-day is bound by no tie whatever to his colleagues; he is bound by many ties to the employer by whom he is bribed. His object is not common advance—even of his craft alone—but personal advance, if possible, out of the community of factory workers, among whom he is an outlaw, and into the category of “employees,” each one of whom, he thinks, “carries in his knapsack the marshal’s staff” of advancement into the bourgeoisie.

It is not only in the factory that this movement of the new labour aristocracy out of its own class and into the middle class is taking place. The number of posts which they can fill is limited; but the machine of bourgeois oppression is growing greater. Thousands of social-democratic workers are getting employment in State and local government bodies, the “fortresses of the working class,” in the police, etc. A few reach to the height of minister or police president, the highest levels of the pyramid, and are accepted in the society of the bourgeoisie. They are only few, but why shouldn’t a parish councillor one day become a great minister? Those who have climbed to this height influence the way of thought of the whole. The desire for personal social advancement assumes the form of an effort to obtain positions in the State or party machine, and in the mass organisations which are closely associated with the State and in the consciousness of the reformist official there are many bridges leading to the State machine). A wide labour bureaucracy arises, rooted below in the mass organisations

and reaching above to all branches of the State apparatus; this bureaucracy serves as an excellent means of imposing the will of finance capital on the workers influenced by the reformists. However illusory the experiments in industrial democracy may be from the point of view of changing the order of society, they have the very real effect of employing thousands of workers (there are over 40,000 in the co-operatives alone, besides the “labour bank” and various industrial undertakings) in conditions which are better than those of the mass of the workers, provided, of course, that they show themselves willing tools of their party, that is, actually, of finance capital. The greater that social-democratic influence in local bodies grows, the more do local undertakings, employing their thousands of workers, assume a social-democratic character.

The character of German social-fascism is determined by this new type of corrupted labour aristocrat. Since the economic situation of German capitalism no longer allows for the corruption of whole craft groups to a greater or lesser degree, groups including millions of German workers, only a limited number can be bribed with the decreased extra-profits; but they are corrupted more intensively. This state of affairs develops its own ideology, in which personal advance into the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, and the hope of future advance into the bourgeoisie, is considered as the advance of the whole class, and these in their turn try to bind the workers to the bourgeoisie. Faced with their peculiar position in the rationalised process of production, faced with the fact that the general position of German capitalism does not permit of concessions even to craft groups, they deliberately repudiate every idea of class struggle, even in its craft forms, replacing it by the conscious glorification of common interests, both economic and political. This is just what fascism does, and the further this process develops, the more do the organisations involved assume a typically fascist character.

III.

As we stated at the beginning, we cannot expect to find all the elements of fascist ideology developed to an equal degree in German

social-democracy. After the Magdeburg Congress their presence may all be affirmed, but only in unequal degrees and with unequal definiteness. The element most prominently developed in German social-democracy is the fascist economic programme. It is clearer and stronger than in the openly fascist organisations, whose economic ideas are exhausted in misty thoughts about the "expropriation of the banking and financial masters." Social-democracy has this advantage over other fascist tendencies in Germany that, with regard to carrying on anti-capitalist demagogy, by which fascism hopes to win the workers, it was in its origins a really anti-capitalist organisation. It was not necessary to work out a new form of social-demagogy; it was enough to develop the old ideology (in doing which even the appearance of continuity was as far as possible maintained, the better to deceive the workers) in such a way that it could be used to deceive the masses. Two factors are essential to every fascist ideology as far as its industrial programme is concerned (and this is true internationally); firstly, a struggle against one section of the capitalists; this, because it is deliberately aimed at only one section is always a sham fight); and secondly, the putting forward of demands which—apparently directed against the capitalists—are actually serving the interests of finance capital.

In Germany, the first condition is fulfilled in most obvious fashion by the National Socialists who adopt anti-semitic slogans and differentiate between "creative" (*i.e.*, industrial capital) and "parasitic" (*i.e.*, bank and trading capital), the latter alone being responsible for the bad sides of capitalism. This primitive differentiation is enough to win over the petty bourgeoisie—this being the specific task of the declared fascists—who do, in fact, feel the weight of bank and trading capital. Social-democracy, which has to face a working class trained for many years in the ideas of Socialism, could do little with such slogans. It is the industrial capitalist whom the worker feels to be his natural enemy; and the old appeal of social-democratic coalition policy to bank and trading capitalists, who were regarded as "reasonable," as opposed to "scoundrelly" capitalists and who (or whose

democratic party) were for a time the chief object of social-democratic coalition policy, has become pointless because of the monopolist development of German capitalism, because of the practically complete amalgamation of banking and industrial capital. In its agitation now, reformism simply draws a distribution between "reasonable" and "unreasonable" capitalists, according to their readiness to enter into coalition with the social-democrats, to support a "democratic-pacifist" government policy, and to use more refined methods of arbitration as the exploitation of labour power increases. The special capacity of social-democracy for government, its appropriateness for carrying out a fascist economic policy in Germany, lies in avoiding discrimination against certain dominant sections of the bourgeoisie. Even the large landowners who were long described as wicked capitalists in social-democratic agitation, and who are not quite in favour to-day because of their reluctance to enter into a coalition, were reorganised as vital components of the national economy, in the agrarian programme of the 1927 Kiel S.D. Congress, and the "community" must preserve the vitality of that economy. Recently (June, 1929) the social-democratic members of Parliament have been very actively trying, in co-operation with the national junker members, to establish a State monopoly in grain trading. According to social-democratic ideology to-day, the capitalist may be fought with the weapon of the "community" only when he does not submit to "common interests," *i.e.*, to the will of finance capital. In his speech at the Hamburg T.U. Congress, and in his memorandum submitted to the Congress, Naphtali declared that the replacement of free competition by monopolist organisation was proof that "capitalism can be bent before it is ripe enough to be broken," and that "the advance of monopolist capitalism indicated the victory of Socialist tendencies over this 'bent' capitalism."

This brings us right up against the positive side of the fascist economic programme, the side which, as stated earlier, is most clearly expressed in the S.D.P.—that of economic democracy. The Hamburg T.U. Congress in September,

1928, expressed these ideas definitely (cf. article in *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, German edition, Vol. III. No. 2. *Industrial Peace and Economic Democracy*.1. The fundamental idea was expressed by Nölting in a speech at the Frankfurt T.U. Delegate Conference on 1 November, 1928:

"The worker must be placed where industry is really carried on, that is, on the management of monopolies. The introduction of workers into the control of monopoly management is the meaning of economic democracy. This change soetimes takes place without any activity on the part of the State, which assumes the right of control and supervision. The worker has a part in this control because in a democracy the popular will is decisive. What is new about it is this—that representatives of workers' organisations should be placed by the State in part control of monopoly organisations."

In both cases the road to the "worker's voice in the control of industry" lies over the bourgeois state, and, quite logically, Tarnov said at the Hamburg Congress that making economic democracy their central slogan would bind the trade unions "still more closely to the democratic state." The other aspect of this ideology is the reunciation of the "obsolete" method of class struggle against the employer, its place being taken by a "worker's voice" on the supervisory council, guaranteed by the bourgeois state. This was expressed, in a primitive but objective fashion, by a delegate to the Hamburg Congress, who said: "The class struggle has moved from the street to the negotiating room."

The social-fascist theory of economic democracy is the modern form, corresponding to the present situation of finance capital, of the old revisionist thesis of "development into Socialism." The reformists continually emphasise—to avoid the reproach of having surrendered their Socialist aims—that their economic democracy is not in contradiction to Socialism, but is "Socialism in the process of becoming." This argument, seized upon eagerly by the left, only makes the betrayal of Socialism more obvious. For economic democracy, as preached by the reformists, is nothing but the developing process of the

monopolisation of industry, plus the growing importance of State capitalism in monopoly capitalism, plus the emolument of the labour aristocracy into the bourgeois machine of exploitation and oppression. These are not figments of the imagination, but the real tendencies in the development of German, as of every other, imperialism. The reformists mean something very real by economic democracy. The treachery lies in this, that the strengthening of the bourgeois apparatus of oppression and the increasing enrolment of workers, estranged from their class, to fight their own class comrades, is put forward as an achievement. To "retain the aims of Socialism" seems therefore to mean the proclamation of capitalism to-day as "Socialism in process of becoming," and the tendencies in its development as Socialism already achieved. These ideas were expressed in the resolution passed by the Hamburg Congress, which states:

"The democratisation of economy leads to Socialism. . . The change in the economic system is not an aim of the distant future, but a process which is developing from day to day. The democratisation of economy means the gradual elimination of the rule based on the possession of capital and the transformation of the leading economic bodies from bodies serving the interests of capital to those serving the community. The democratisation of economy takes place gradually with the structural changes in capitalism which are becoming increasingly obvious. There is no doubt that development is leading from capitalist private industry to organised monopoly capitalism."

This programme is differentiated from any fascist declaration only by its terminology, only by the fact that, in deference to a working class brought up in Socialist traditions, a Socialist label is stuck on to the bottle. The contents are unadulterated fascism: the elimination of individual interests by means of greater organisation (individual interests being called "capitalist interests" by both reformists and fascists, because for them capitalism as a whole is not capitalism at all) in favour of the "interests of the community," the State playing a leading part in the change. We cannot ask more of the social-

democrats, and it would be childish to base the recognition of the presence of social-fascism on the surrender of the word Socialism. For the bourgeoisie, the specific value of social-fascism consists in the fact that the fascist programme is preached with a Socialist phraseology, just as the specific value of the Hakenkreuzlers (a fascist, anti-semitic organisation—Ed.) for the bourgeoisie (including its Jewish members) lies in their fascist programme preached with an anti-semitic phraseology. With the formula of economic democracy, German reformism, becoming social-fascism in the process, found the idea best adapted to its nature whereby to win over the largest possible number of workers to support its own desertion into the other class camp and the advancement of certain corrupted working class elements into the petty bourgeoisie, binding them, in this way, to the bourgeoisie. The consequence of this was drawn by Dittmann at the Magdeburg Congress in his speech on the defence question (a question also affected by these ideas, for they form the basis of social-chauvinism) when he said:

“We are no longer living under capitalism; we are living in the transition period to Socialism, economically, politically, socially.”

And:

“In Germany we have ten times as many Socialist achievements to defend as they have in Russia.”

Whence follows, naturally, the results of this defence, particularly against the Russians, so backward in Socialism. Whether this form of society, to be defended against the proletarian dictatorship and real Socialism, is called Socialism or corporate economy (as Italian fascism calls it) is merely a difference in the form of agitation.

IV.

While the union of reformist organisations with the machinery of oppression, and the ideology of economic democracy which expresses this union was being worked out in recent years, there seemed to be an important—and for international fascism a characteristic—sphere in which fundamental differences between fascist and reformist ideology were

apparent: this was the conception of the State, which was invoked to establish order in industry and to enforce agreement between the classes. On one side the glorification of bourgeois democracy, on the other an assertion of its bankruptcy and the deliberate preaching of dictatorship as a higher State form; closely allied to this, fascism proclaimed the “sacred egoism” of one’s own country as the highest rule of conduct in international affairs, while social-democracy indulged in pacifist phrasemongering. The differences were never so great as they seemed to be. Polish fascism and the military dictatorship in Jugo-Slavia, began their activities under the slogan of protecting and defending democracy, or of suspending it temporarily only in order to re-establish it more firmly later on. It was only during the course of the dictatorship that dictatorship was declared, more or less openly, to be the highest form of State organisation. Even in Italy, before the present state of affairs was reached, there were various stages in the exercise of constitutional rights and various corresponding ideas as to the “ideal” type of national state. The ideas at the first of these stages did not differ greatly from the demands of German democrats and social-democrats for a “strong leadership in democracy,” and were anything but anti-parliamentary. The rattle of the sword, as recent years have shown, is but an occasional tactical manœuvre in fascist dictatorships as well as in democratic States; it is not the normal, which in both cases consists in the justification of armaments by an appeal to the necessities of “defending peace,” “protecting the frontiers,” etc.

If, in those countries where it is to a large extent based upon organising the petty bourgeoisie against the proletariat, fascism has developed an open anti-parliamentary and anti-pacifist ideology only very gradually, so that it is not complete even to-day—and in any case this development has occurred almost entirely after the seizure of power—it would be quite stupid to expect German social-fascism to fulfil its task of winning democratic and pacifist masses for war and dictatorship by publicly renouncing a democratic and pacifist ideology. Social-fascism’s work on behalf of the bourgeoisie consists in trans-

forming this ideology in such a way that it can be used in the propaganda for a fascist dictatorship, and for this purpose such a renunciation would be the worst possible method. This is the real reason why the group concerned with the *Socialist Monthly*—which has for many years declared that parliamentary democracy is bankrupt, and has advocated a “structural democracy” based on economic corporations, after the style of fascist syndicates, joking maliciously about pacifist ideology and openly sympathising with Italian fascism—why this group, although leading trade unionists and prominent persons like Severing and Wissel belong to it, and although it has fairly correctly foretold social-democratic tactics on all internal matters, cannot guide the development of social-fascist theory, but can only influence it from outside. In an industrial country such as Germany, the task of social-democracy consists in preparing and organising the fascist dictatorship by spreading ideas—if possible “Marxist” ideas—calculated to mislead the greatest possible number of workers, and not in openly and honestly expressing its treachery to the old principles. The Magdeburg S.D. Party Congress was particularly significant because it took a definite step in guiding this democratic pacifist ideology into fascist channels. After German social-democracy had declared the rule of the bourgeoisie to be “Socialism in process of becoming,” it was only right and proper that the social-democrats should solemnly announce their duty of defending that rule against all internal and external foes.

The real idea behind the replacement of bourgeois democracy by fascist dictatorship was expressed by Wels (S.D. leader) in a famous speech, in which he said that the dictatorship is at first established in the interests of a later “re-establishment of democracy,” and that the parliamentary crisis is recognised to be only of a temporary character.

Actually, it is clear that the longer the fascist dictatorship lasts, the smaller becomes the possibility of a return to democracy, and that once in the stream of “managing the dictatorship” (which has its own internal logic, wherein one measure gives rise to an-

other) the theory to justify this management will be found and based on “Marxist” principles (if this word has not been entirely discarded, as its spirit was long ago), as that the social-fascist dictatorship is the highest form of democracy, from which it would be senseless to return to lower forms. It is significant of the real spirit of the entire social-democracy that the lefts accepted Wels’ famous statement not in a critical manner, but as an indication of the party’s growing militancy.

Should the social-fascist dictatorship be established in Germany, it will differ from the Italian brand in its efforts to use with greater care extraordinary force, which is a part of every fascist dictatorship and which is employed both in the form of “emergency measures” (which, nominally only temporary, outlive their legal limits) and in the form of the employment of “private” and “irresponsible” force exercised by organisations formally unconnected with the State. Since German fascism finds its chief support in social-democracy (as was to be expected from the structure of the country) which must have an ideology to cling to, State emergency measures will be the dominating form. Severing’s speech in the Reichstag on June 27th indicated this. ‘After the rejection of the law for the protection of the republic, he declared that the Government was prepared to use the emergency clause 48 of the Reich constitution (a year ago the social-democrats protested against the use of the same clause to bridge over certain legal gaps). The actions of the Coalition Government are very greatly accelerating the development of the required ideology. There is also a good deal of preparation for the use of extra-legal force in the activities of the *Reichsbanner*, which will certainly be extended as the difficulties of the German bourgeoisie come to a head. The dominant feature (as is to be expected considering social-democracy’s special function) is the tendency to make social-fascist organisations and their terrorist acts a part of the mechanism of the State apparatus. At the last conference of the leaders of the *Reichsbanner*, where the May Day struggles were discussed, the question of establishing connections between that organisation and the *Reichswehr* and *Schutzpolizei* (semi-military

official bodies) was the principal item considered. It was stated there that they were only a hair's-breadth off from doing so; this may be an exaggeration in actual fact, but it was an exaggeration designed to facilitate the ideologic and organisational preparation of social-fascist terrorist groups for the coming class struggles.

Wels—as any avowed fascist might have done—referred to the strength of the reformist organisations as a special justification of reformism's claim to exercise the fascist dictatorship in Germany. Actually, reliance on mass organisations outside the State apparatus is part of the nature of any fascist dictatorship, and gives it (from the bourgeoisie's standpoint) an advantage over the traditional forms of military dictatorship. Ideological and organisational unity and the exclusion or violent elimination of any anti-fascist tendency, are the essential conditions for the usefulness of an organisation as a pillar of fascist dictatorship. The greatest practical advance of German social-fascism at the present time is probably the progress of the trade unions and other mass organisations controlled by the reformists, along this road. It is impossible to enter into all the details of the reformist offensive directed to splitting all these bodies. Since we are dealing mainly with the ideology of German fascism, we must be content with pointing out that the measures responsible for splits and exclusions have undergone change in the last year or two. Previously Communists were excluded because they "brought politics into the trade unions" by expressing their ideas, and violated the "neutrality" of the nominally unpolitical mass organisations; now "neutrality" has disappeared even from the official statements. The connections of these bodies with the "trade union party" are openly proclaimed and Communists are excluded, not because they introduce politics, but because they carry on a definite, anti-social democratic policy and fight against the "trade union party."

At Hamburg Tarnov pointed out that the programme of economic democracy would necessarily bind the unions more closely than ever before to the party working for that programme in the State. Objectively, these ties are nothing new, but their open admission

indicates great progress in the development of these organisations towards fascism, because it prepares the minds of the members for the part which, according to Wels, these bodies will play in the coming dictatorship. The *Reichsbanner* bore typically fascist features from its very foundation, but the May Days, for the first time for many years, witnessed the trade unions acting as promoters and exponents, and finally as defenders of the white terror used against the working class (they justified the prohibition of the demonstration as necessary to "protect their meetings," and declared that "the interests of the community must be protected from a minority of disturbers of the peace"). This fact both implicitly and explicitly affirms the social-fascist character of their actions.

The political objection of social-fascist arming, and the chief purpose for which the bourgeoisie requires this social-fascist development, is the coming imperialist war. In this sphere Magdeburg showed great progress in the development of fascism. So much has been said and written about the social-democratic programme of defence that little further is necessary. Nor, after what has been said above, need we explain the necessity (from the standpoint of the special functions of social-fascism) of coupling pacifist phrases with the imperialist reality and why this in no way prejudices the fascist character of the programme. Its fascist character is, on the contrary, intensified by the "concessions" made immediately before the Congress, to the critics within the party. The original statement on the necessity for an army (and therefore of the coming war) stated that, in view of the "fascist and imperialist powers" threatening the German republic with counter-revolutionary intervention and new wars (according to Hermann Müller's thesis submitted to the Congress there is no such thing as German imperialism) a defensive force was necessary "to protect the self-determination of its (the German republic's) people," while the text finally adopted runs: "To protect their neutrality and the political, economic and social achievements of the working class."

Externally, this seems to indicate a weakening of the avowedly nationalist ideology (the German people's right to self-determination),

actually it is a further development of typical social-fascist ideology, which developed, not by simply adopting nationalist phrases, but by basing and justifying dictatorship and war on the special interests of the working class. In the coming war the question will be not so much of making propaganda for the war, as of having at the Government's disposal organisations to defeat the revolutionary proletariat and to maintain the war industries, Levi, a "left winger," in his pamphlet on the subject, expressly emphasised the particular capacity of the working class to further a war "in its own interests," because of their control of military supplies and their strong organisation. In thus planning the future rôle of the organisation (in which work left and right share) German social-fascism is carrying out the main object of its development. If the organisations are to be maintained as an effective force, their fascist work must be based upon "the interests of labour." The idea of the nation is not surrendered, but sharply underlined by laying emphasis on the special interests of the working class in the war conducted by and for the bourgeoisie. This assures the bourgeoisie of organisational support from among its one real enemy, the working class.

Magdeburg brought the ideological development of German social-fascism to a certain provisional conclusion. In its counter-revolutionary activities social-democracy will cast off the last "shackles" of its past—and also thousands of workers which it has misled in the past—and, by virtue of its position, will become the strongest counter-revolutionary force in the country, attracting to itself the labour aristocracy and numerous petty bourgeois elements. Every step on the road to

social-fascism means accelerating and extending the next steps, as it affects the social structure of the party, repulsing workers and attracting the petty bourgeois. If German social-fascism is to be useful to the bourgeoisie it had necessarily to develop out of a "proletarian" ideology, but every step in this development takes it further from the starting point. Democracy and pacifism, two years ago important planks in reformist propaganda had, at Magdeburg, changed from slogans of action (or at least things to be defended) into petty beautiful "distant objects" to assure which, for the time being, war and dictatorship must be accepted as part price of the bargain.

The new elements that have come into the party will start with the "provisional" justification of war and dictatorship and will, in practice, reach their ideological justification, will reach a hundred per cent. fascism (which the leaders have done long ago). Magdeburg clearly announced the participation of German social-democracy in the anti-Soviet war. While Breitscheid, referring to the May struggles, talked of the "impermissible interference" of the Soviet Government in German home affairs, Wels declared German capitalism to be a higher form of Socialism than that in Russia, and Crispian referred clearly enough to the necessity, in the end, of intervention.

The campaign for the imperialist war of intervention against the Soviet Union, together with the greater use of the State machine in the class struggles during the autumn and winter, will bring with it the next great steps in the development of social-fascism.

The Fascist Danger in Austria

By J. Koepling

SINCE the bloody suppression of the Vienna rising in July, 1927, affairs in Austria have been developing rapidly in the direction of an open fascist dictatorship. The Vienna police, whose adherence to the Social-Democratic Police Union has for years been regarded by Austrian social-democracy as a remarkable success for its policy, gave full evidence in the July days of their reliability in the struggle against the working class. Since then they have been equipped with armoured cars and with all the requirements of modern technique useful in a civil war. The same has been done with regard to the defence force and all the other organisations of the State apparatus. This is only one aspect of the process through which Austria is nearing fascism.

A distinctive sign of this development is the establishment of an avowed fascist mass movement as indicated by the *Heimwehr*. The *Heimwehr* arose on the collapse of the old monarchy. In the peasant villages of Tyrol and Styria *Heimwehr* bodies were formed under the leadership of former monarchist officers as a defence against the threatening proletarian revolution. In a few areas, *e.g.*, in Carinthia, the *Heimwehr* was supplied with arms by the social-democratic State Government of the time on the occasion of the fighting between Jugo-Slavia and Austria. These arms have been kept and when the Austrian social-democrats, with a sensational gesture, exposed this *Heimwehr* arsenal a few weeks ago, they merely confirmed their own counter-revolutionary activities.

After 15 July, 1927, the *Heimwehr* groups in the villages, insignificant up till then, began to carry on greater agitation, spreading also to the industrial towns, among the upper and middle classes who were terrified by the July events. In this they were heartily supported by finance capital, the Seipel Government and the manufacturers' associations. By terrorism and demagogic promises, exploiting the extreme impoverishment of large working masses, they managed to pene-

trate into such important industrial areas as Upper Styria and to win over large sections of the working class to the *Heimwehr* movement. The number of *Heimwehr* members to-day, organised in a military fashion and for the most part armed, may be placed at about 100,000. Their progress in such important industrial areas as Vienna-Neustadt, St. Bölten, etc., has set its stamp upon the development of home politics in recent years. With the growth of this movement and the progress of the whole fascist movement, its political character changes. It would be incorrect to see in this movement no more than one means by which the bourgeoisie exercises pressure upon the social-democrats to force them to surrender the positions they hold with regard to rent restrictions and other political matters. Rather we have to do with a decided policy designed to bring about the change to openly fascist methods of government. In the first period of its development, the *Heimwehr's* slogan was "safeguard democracy," but to-day its members speak openly of the bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy and declare their immediate aim to be a change in the constitution and the existing parliamentary system. The activities of the parties in the bourgeois *bloc*, of the government and the industrial associations are bending in the same direction. The plan to create a so-called "post standing above parties," under Seipel's management, for the purpose of co-ordinating the activities of the *Heimwehr*, the bourgeois *bloc* parties, the industrial associations and the government, is merely a formality; actually unity already exists on all important points. In so far as there are disagreements among the bourgeoisie, they concern tactical matters, particularly the question of the most expedient method of drawing the social-democrat into the fascist front against the Austrian proletariat.

For the bourgeoisie, the necessity of transforming the rule along fascist lines arises from a number of circumstances. In the first place there is the acute economic crisis, undimin-

ished in intensity, which is expressed most clearly in chronic mass unemployment. The number of unemployed reached its highest point in the winter with 300,000. In the last few months the cost of living has risen, and this will be still further increased after 1st August, when the increase in rents decided upon by the government enters into force. The efforts of the government to raise new foreign credits have so far met with no success; the old credits have been exhausted and the repeated local financial crisis indicates the weakness of Austrian stabilisation.

The peculiar class relations in Austria are another reason urging the bourgeoisie to intensify the fascist offensive. In Austria to-day there is a strongly-pronounced two-party parliamentary system. In all political elections in the last few years the dominating influence of social-democracy over both the working masses and over large sections of the petty bourgeoisie, was very noticeable. As opposed to this, the workers are becoming more radical, a development which was expressed in the elemental and mighty outburst of the masses' will to fight in July, 1927, when the deep class contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the social-democratic apparatus, which has now become part of the ruling system, on the one hand, and the masses on the other, became apparent. These contradictions led to the revolt of the Viennese workers. From these events the bourgeoisie learned that the social-democratic apparatus was not, by itself, a sufficient guarantee for carrying out its policy against the workers, and it assured and strengthened its position by arming the fascist *Heimwehr*.

There is one more important factor which should not be overlooked in considering the fascist development of Austria: the war preparations of the imperialist powers, in which Austria plays no insignificant part. The facts were made clear recently by the disclosures of the *Heimwehr's* plans and on the occasion of the Hungarian-Czech frontier conflict. The *Heimwehr* has connections with the fascist governments of Hungary and Italy as well as with the German Army Command, from whose staff Major Pabst has the military and technical management of the *Heimwehr*. No attempt is made to deny these

connections. On the contrary, on the occasion of the Hungarian-Czech frontier conflict, the leading organ of the Austrian fascists, *The German-Austrian Daily*, wrote:

"The policy of a State as inadequate in size as new Austria should not remain passive, for it must be directed, not to maintaining the existing situation, but to changing it. . . . For Austria, neutrality means isolation; and isolation means the continued worsening of economic and political conditions. The necessity for an active foreign policy arises from the same popular movement which gave rise to the *Heimwehr*."

In a speech delivered on the same day, the Federal Chancellor Streeruwitz expressed agreement with this fascist newspaper:

"Austria," he said, "has no reason to be satisfied with the present European situation and with the destiny laid down for her after the war. The country has been deprived of all the blessings and advantages of the right of self-determination."

Speaking about the *Heimwehr*, about its arms and war plans, the Chancellor said:

"They can be explained by the justified discontent (of Austria), the feeling of not having enough room in which to move, seeking some outlet."

This gives a clear enough indication of the connection between fascist development in Austria and the imperialist war preparations in Central Europe. A fascist Austria would be the bridge between Italy and Hungary on one side, and between the latter and German imperialism on the other. Also, because of its geographical position, a fascist Austria would be of the greatest importance in the efforts to establish a united imperialist front against the Soviet Union. What course the process of development towards an open fascist dictatorship will take in the near future, and what forms it will assume, depends upon the development of the class struggle in Austria itself and upon the foreign political situation. In any case, Austria to-day is threatened with a grave fascist danger which, in certain circumstances—particularly should class contradictions be intensified, or the war danger become acute—can develop into an open fascist *coup d'etat*.

Social-democracy has a great part to play in this development towards fascism. It is no accident that in the very country where the so-called left social-democrats have flourished more prominently than elsewhere, where Otto Bauer and company have succeeded for many years in restraining the workers from fighting the Austrian bourgeoisie by pointing to what has happened in Italy and Hungary, in this country, fascism has now become a most acute danger. Austrian social-democracy has not only cleared the road for fascism, it is helping fascism along the way. It works together with avowed fascists, between them dividing the work of fighting the revolutionary proletariat. The social-democratic *Schutzbund*, together with the police, protect *Heimwehr* demonstrations from the indignant workers. Don't be provoked! No partial action! These are the social-democratic slogans. The more the fascist *Heimwehr* indulges in breaking up workers' meetings and in attacking workers, the greater grows the resistance of the workers and the more vigorously do the social-democrats pursue their fight against the Communists and against the anti-fascist movement. In practice, the Mayor of Vienna's prohibition of demonstrations is exercised only against the revolutionary workers. In Upper Styria the reformists and the industrial associations have agreed to recognise the fascist trade unions and to accord them full rights. This was justified on the ground that law and order should be maintained in the factories, and no obstacles placed in the way of capitalist rationalisation.

In the present stage of fascist development the work of social-democracy is to "neutralise," *i.e.*, to disarm the proletariat, and at the same time there are indications that, in its further development, social-democracy will an increasingly active fascist rôle.

The most pronounced example of co-operation between social-fascists and *Heimwehr* was given in the joint demonstration of the *Heimwehr* and the republican *Schutzbund* in Klagenfurt. The slogan of this demonstration was that of the inclusion of Austria in Germany. These basic questions of the imperialist policy of the bourgeoisie clearly expose the fact that both *Heimwehr* fascists

and social-fascists actually pursue the same aims in the interests of the bourgeoisie. This united front was also strongly in evidence recently on questions of home politics. The "agreement" was paid for by the social-democrats partly by the surrender of the rent restrictions. In such circumstances the disclosures of the *Arbeiterzeitung* (central organ of Austrian S.D.P.) concerning fascist military preparations for civil war are merely an attempt to hide its own social-fascist development. This is no reason for taking the *Heimwehr* preparations any less seriously. They point to the acute danger of a definite attempt to establish an open fascist dictatorship. They demand extreme vigilance from the Austrian proletariat and the greatest revolutionary readiness for struggle on the part of the Communist Party of Austria.

The peculiar situation in Austria is also marked by the organisational weakness of the Communist Party in relation to the radicalisation of the masses. In the last few weeks the beginnings of a new surge forward in this process of radicalisation have been noticeable, such as a number of political strikes in the factories, partly offensive in their nature and partly directed to clearing the fascists out of the factories. The fact that the political activity of the masses is rising, particularly in the factories, indicates a high level of the class struggle. The same fact also exposes the chief weakness of the Communist Party, which has no firm footing in the factories.

After the tactical changes in the political work of the Party decided upon by the Tenth Congress, particularly those referring to an intensified struggle against social-democracy, the Party has in many instances already succeeded, by its resolute action, in mobilising the workers against fascism. So far, however, it has not yet succeeded in gaining decisive influence over the political strike movements in the factories, which are therefore of a more or less spontaneous character and, after a short time, these strikes are suppressed by the social-democrats.

The social-democratic ideology which has not yet been entirely eliminated from the Party, particularly from among those members who hold official position within it, and the strongly-rooted feeling of powerlessness,

which has no basis in objective conditions, as against the "great" social-democracy, have in recent years made it more difficult for the Party to make full use of objectively favourable conditions. The right group (Schönfelder, Richs, Schlamm) which was excluded from the Party leadership by the Tenth Congress, has not ceased to spread its social-democratic ideas in the Party, and the tendency towards a *bloc* between this group and the Trotskyists, against the Party, is growing more definite. At the last Plenary Session of the Central Committee a few leading members of the right and Trotskyist groups were excluded from the Party, but the work of thoroughly cleansing the Party from these elements which hinder its revolutionary development is not yet finished.

The general situation at the present time imposes difficult tasks upon the Party. The growing radicalisation of the masses may turn the forthcoming struggles into great revolutionary mass struggles. In its discussions and decisions, the Central Committee Plenum showed that it was fully aware of the seriousness of the situation. In the struggle against fascism, which is developing, the Party has laid emphasis upon the following slogans:

Clear the fascists out of the factories!

Clear the way for the workers!

For the revolutionary alliance of workers and poor peasants against the united front of fascism and social-democracy!

Down with the fascist government and its social-democratic assistants!

For the arming of the proletariat—for a workers and peasants' government!

The Party is organising local and factory anti-fascist committees of action, and attaches great importance to the formation of workers' defence groups in the factories.

The Party has good prospects of winning the masses over to its side. Things are beginning to move among the social-democratic workers, particularly among the youth section. The left wing phrases by which the S.D. Party still tries to hide its social-fascist development cannot hide its real nature. Fascism is preparing for an armed demon-

stration of the *Heimwehr* in Vienna on September 17th. This open threat of a fascist putsch has created an extremely tense atmosphere among the workers. Courage and resolution in a revolutionary mass offensive under the leadership of the C.P. of Austria—or fascist dictatorship: this is the question which the Austrian proletariat, betrayed by the fascist social-democracy, must decide.

Editorial Note.

Shortly after receiving this article, news came of the *Heimwehr* attack on the Republican *Schutzbund* in St. Lorenz, Styria. This bloody encounter had been preceded by numerous similar attacks of the *Heimwehr* bandits on workers. It is clear from this and from the Vienna demonstration, that every social-democratic retreat spurs the *Heimwehr* on to further attacks. The attack in St. Lorenz, following another bloody encounter in Knittenfeld, has given the signal for greater and more open threats from the *Heimwehr* leaders of a fascist putsch and the Christian Socialist Government Party is threatening "disquieting events." The social-democrats have replied to these threats by saying that they have already "pacified" the indignant workers who had downed tools in the Vienna factories. Again they will carry out their notorious swindling manoeuvres of "readiness"; they may even perhaps organise a short protest strike while, behind the scenes, they negotiate with the fascists as to the best way in the future of keeping the road clear for a fascist dictatorship. For the task of the social-democrats is to break the workers' resistance to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, to deliver the workers over to fascism while they themselves join in that dictatorship. The question is, how long will the social-democratic workers put up with this swindle? The reports show that the C.P. of Austria was at its post and is calling upon the workers to arm and to declare a general strike. Events are taking place in Austria which may be decisive in the development of Central Europe, and particularly in the exposure of the rôle of social-democracy.

Social-Imperialism and the Colonies

By P. Shubin

“LET us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die.’ Such is the mood reigning in the world at the present time. We do not even seek to determine the road we are travelling. We merely dance along it.”

The above words are not taken from some modern Apocalypse, not from the proclamation of some fashionable Theosophist, who counts on opening to himself the purse of his neighbour through the sheer misery of his prophecies. It is the language used by one of the recognised statisticians and financiers of bourgeois Britain—Sir George Paish. Of course, such an estimate of the present condition of the capitalist system is by no means characteristic of official bourgeois science, and Paish is a white raven among the British financiers. And it is indubitable that there is a good deal of eccentricity in his prophecies, especially as to the date at which the world financial catastrophe has to arrive (the spring and summer of 1929), and a calculated eccentricity at that, for Paish not merely predicts the catastrophe, but also indicates a sure way of salvation from it. But it would be erroneous to regard these insistent warnings and predictions of such an expert in international finance as Sir George Paish merely as eccentric shouts (“we perish!”) and merely at pre-lection charlatanic prescriptions (complete freedom of trade, and we are saved). The problem of frozen credits, *i.e.*, of loans which cannot and never can be covered, because the debtors cannot pay, and because the creditors cannot receive their money back without squeezing their own position on the international markets in the interests of their debtors, which is the problem which Paish raises, is really a manifestation of the general crisis of capitalism which strikes even the bourgeois investigator. Consequently, it is no mere accident that Sir George Paish’s last speech at the Manchester conference of friends of Free Trade was left unanswered by the representatives of bourgeois optimism. The objections which were made in the bour-

geois press were in the nature of criticism of Sir George Paish’s curative measures, his positive programme. The abolition of customs barriers in the world market and the complete freedom of trade proposed by Paish are, in the words of the *Daily Telegraph* (March 20th, 1929), in the first place unrealisable, and in the second unefficacious; unrealisable because the “others,” *i.e.*, the U.S.A., do not want to take this road; unefficacious because if we really have a financial crisis so imminent, the measures recommended by Paish cannot succeed in melting the frozen credits. Paish’s opponents are right when they jeer at his panaceas, but they are not in a position to refute the diagnosis he has made, and they prefer to pass over the problem he raises in silence. In this article it is not our intention to consider the problem bound up with the financial fever which is shaking the bourgeois economy. In passing we may note that the possible and even inevitable clogging of the international financial system is only one aspect of the general decline of capitalism, of the connection of this crisis with the intensifying antagonisms in North-American imperialism and the latter’s endeavours to get out of that crisis at the expense of Europe, the trustification of which is, in turn, intensifying the antagonisms in the imperialist camp. This question in all its aspects is one which deserves separate and attentive study from Marxist economists.

But the feature in Paish’s characterisations which is indubitably unsound in his ascription of frivolous carelessness to the bourgeoisie, his declaration that they are dancing and enjoying themselves, having no thought for anything, and are thus going to meet their doom. If such a characterisation on the part of the prophets was ever true of perishing Israel or Babylon, yet to apply it to the present-day bourgeoisie is obviously impossible. That would mean either hiding or deprecating the calculated, cruel opposition which the frenzied capitalist spoliator reveals now, when he is already to a considerable extent caught

in the toils, but is still far from being disarmed, has not lost his ability to act. After the imperialist war, after the October revolution, after a number of proletarian risings in capitalist countries, after a mighty rise in the colonial revolution, after the bourgeoisie has already seen the chasm opening beneath its feet, there cannot be any talk of its being care-free; they are not what they were before the world war, or even before the Chinese revolution. To the extent that they are allowed by the anarchy of capitalist production and the intensification of capitalist antagonisms, the bourgeoisie, both within the bounds of the separate States, and by the joint efforts of State groupings, and finally in a united front of the exploiters of the whole world, is carrying on a struggle—defensive and offensive—against the approaching danger. Of course that does not mean that the revolution cannot overtake the capitalist world in a state of confusion, that the danger cannot break over it at an unexpected moment, from an unforeseen direction, “like a thief in the night.” But that unpredictability and unexpectedness is the result, not of the thoughtlessness of the bourgeoisie, not of their being unprepared for the struggle and of their not struggling against a growing world of enemies, but of the circumstance that in the very process of its frantic clinging to existence, its maniacal endeavours to eradicate all the forces menacing it, capital only intensifies those forces, thus rendering possible and inevitable their outbreak on an unexpected front, at an unexpected moment, with unexpected force.

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One of the chief indications of the tense and incessant struggle which the bourgeoisie is waging against the hostile revolutionary forces is the increasing part which they now assign to social reformism as an instrument in the struggle. Nothing so clearly demonstrates that the counter-revolution still retains manoeuvring ability and variety of methods and resources as do the character and scale of the obligations which it is imposing on social-democracy. At the same time, nothing so summarily reveals that social-democracy has retained only the juiceless skin of its historic past, only a moribund terminology, only a castrated phraseology, as does the place

which it occupies in the camp of counter-revolution, as does the fact that it is simultaneously both its reconnaissance and its smoke-screen, and sometimes its political striking force, on the most important sections of the front. To-day, in the fortieth year of the Second International, a fitting inscription on its tombstone would be a simple chronological specification of the questions which it has raised at its national and international congresses, in its decisions and publications, throughout the period since the war.

Such a specification would show that every new problem which the Second International set itself was in one form or another a response to the practical demands of the bourgeois customer, and consequently was determined by the form and the variety of the danger which that customer considered the most serious at the moment. This is not a happy coincidence, a harmony of ideas and feelings, but an expression of the fact that social reformism in all countries is working as part of the State machinery. The answer is clear. The question of war, the political, economic, and military attack on the U.S.S.R., the preparation of various systems of mobilisation in each country and the pacifist smoke-screen accompanying those systems, the regrouping of forces in the camp of the imperialists, and the political phraseology corresponding to these regroupings, all this aggregate of bourgeois plans and counter-plans, of immediate war preparations and rehearsals for their effectuation, has always immediately found its reflection, not only in the resolutions and decisions of international social-democracy, but also in its practice. The question of “economic democracy,” of “industrial peace” and so on have not simply coincided in point of time with those moments when the alliances of the capitalist monopolists have begun to vie with one another in lowering cost price and winning external markets, but are part of the bourgeoisie’s general offensive on the living standards of the workers. The preparation for that offensive, the form it takes (intensification of labour, the stealing of the health and the life of the worker), its methods (compulsory arbitration in all its varieties), the tempo, and so on, all characteristic features of the capitalist offensive, can be easily traced

in corresponding resolutions of the Second International, resolutions which in their time appeared to be more or less trite repetitions of old compromising pasts, but which in reality heralded a regrouping or re-equipment of the bourgeoisie, a rationalisation of its social-political technique, with a view to a more efficacious struggle with the revolution.

The extraordinary activity displayed by the Second International on the colonial question of recent years entirely corresponds with the vital importance which the maintenance and extension of colonial exploitation have for the bourgeoisie at the present time. In the colonies and semi-colonies the world bourgeoisie, on the one hand, sees the swiftest of growth in the forces threatening its very existence, and on the other it is in this realm and through an extension of the area of exploitation that it counts on finding a temporary solution to the intensifying antagonisms which are rending the capitalist system. It may appear that the Second International is belated with this issue, for it set itself the task of working out a colonial programme only at its 1928 congress. But to reproach the Second International with being late and with coming at the tail (with reference to the bourgeois counter-revolution) would be unsound and unjust. For the task which it set itself at the Brussels Congress had reference, not to the antecedent cycle of colonial revolutions, but to the new and only then imminent cycle, into which the oppressed masses and the bourgeoisie are entering enriched with the experience of the previous battles.

Imperialism is feverishly arming in the colonies along the whole line, for otherwise it cannot hope to hold out against the new revolutionary rise. In the new plans of the bourgeois staffs, social-imperialism is appointed a particularly important part; it has to disintegrate the right-wing of the national emancipation movement, to draw the native Kuomintangist elements to the side of imperialism, it has to saddle the so-called national bourgeoisie, to delude the petty bourgeois sections, and thus to create an agency for imperialism in the camp of the national revolution.

Sir George Paish slanders the bourgeoisie in comparing it with a thoughtless merry-

making Babylon. Least of all is it to be regarded as a frivolous spendthrift dissipating the remnants of his possessions. The capitalist world is a decrepit monster who is striving to prolong his existence by devouring fresh young lives and demanding ever new bloody sacrifices. The bourgeoisie is perfecting, rationalising, reinforcing all the resources of its class struggle. In this arsenal of dying capital, social-reformism in all its forms and varieties is a very valuable weapon.

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With all the unity of the basic aims and content, the systems of colonial oppression of the various imperialisms are heterogeneous in their resources and methods. Always and everywhere imperialism acts as a violator, spoliator and provocateur; everywhere its "civilising mission" is realised only by the combination of shameful violence with the most miserable bribery. But the proportion in which this combination is effected is imposed upon imperialism by the definite situation, but the extent of its military, economic and financial forces inside the country, the stability of its social basis on the one hand, and the degree of development of productive forces in the colony, and the correlation of classes in the national emancipation movement, on the other. In various historical periods and in various colonies the various imperialists plunder unceasingly, but they plunder in various ways; thus the work which they consign to their social-imperialisms is varied. The disclosure of the tactics of social-imperialism in the various colonies consequently requires definite study in each separate instance. But for the purpose of characterising the general line of the Second International on the colonial question during recent years it is sufficient to consider the most characteristic types. We confine ourselves to two varieties: the tactics adopted by British social-imperialism in India and those of the Dutch in Indonesia.

Dutch social-democracy strives by all means to develop and to emphasise its activity in Indonesia; British social-imperialism strives to act unobserved, obliterating its traces, in the majority of cases not drawing any distinction between its own and the bourgeois policy and practice even in words; Dutch social-im-

perialism is trying to link with the right wing and thus to take the national movement in tow; the British places itself in opposition to all the national movement, and when the MacDonald Government was in charge in 1924 it operated through openly reactionary elements in India. The Dutch social-democrats simulate an opposition "on principle" to their Government's policy, which, however, does not prevent their participation in the administration of Indonesia as higher officials, appointees to the governor-general's council, and of recent days even as chief of the department for home affairs attached to the governor-generalship. As is well known the Labour Party in Britain previously binds itself to maintain the "continuity" of the Indian policy of the Baldwin Government, allows its members to participate in the Simon Commission, and is so completely compromised in India that there is no possibility of resorting to the policy of appointing members of the Labour Party to be officials for the purpose of providing decoys. The task of the Dutch social-imperialism is to exploit the bloody break-up of the defeated insurrection; the task of its British brother is to hinder the growth of a new revolutionary wave.

The features peculiar to each of these two social-imperialisms are inter-crossed and interlocked in various combinations in the tactics of other sections of the Second International.

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When speaking of the tactics of British social-reformism it is necessary to have in mind not only the Labour Party but also the General Council of T.U.s. As is well known, there is a division of labour between the two, such that when on the streets of Bombay or Calcutta they pretend not to recognise one another. Right down to yesterday the Purcells were anxious to maintain the purity of their somewhat soiled features on the Indian question, whereas on this matter MacDonald had no anxiety about anything. Only the resolute class struggle of the Bombay proletariat, which has forced all the parties and groups in India completely to lay bare their actual nature, has forced the General Council officially to reveal its real face.

The policy of the British Labour Party is determined by the factor that it not only will

not consider any suggestion of Indian independence, but even denies the existence of such a trend in the colony itself. In this regard, the memorandum presented by the British Labour Party to the Second International's 1928 congress is unexcelled for its cynicism.

"Until quite recently no movement whatever striving for complete national independence existed in India. Moreover, until 1916 even the propaganda for Indian home rule inside the British Empire was regarded as 'rebellion.' At the present time there exists a small but noisy group which is insisting on complete independence. This, however, is largely a cry of despair and reflects the disillusionment as to the slowness of the movement towards self-government. This tendency found expression for the first time at the Indian National Congress in December, 1927. The resolution unanimously adopted said: 'The congress declares that the aim of the Indian people is complete national independence! Although those who introduced this resolution had in mind complete separation from Great Britain, many of those who voted for it interpreted it as meaning no more than dominion status, in which India would become an equal partner in the British 'community of nations.'"

What is involved in this denial of the existence of an independence movement in India, a denial which is astonishing even when it comes from a blind and self-confident despotism? First and foremost, that MacDonaldism does not care a tinker's curse for any revolutionary movement of India which adheres to the slogans of 'driving out the robber imperialism and of the country's right to independence. MacDonald observed this elephant only after the Madras congress, when Motilal Nehru, "disillusioned by the delay," voted for independence; but he observed the elephant only to declare that it was a fly. But once that is so, the whole national revolutionary movement in India, the Communist agitation, the workers'-peasants' parties, the decisions of the trade union congress, simply do not exist for MacDonald's party. To come to any agreement, to make concessions to something which does not exist, is of course out of the question, and both in essence and in

form the Labour Party has no other policy in India than that of Baldwin.

Why is it that British imperialism and its lackeys "do not see" the struggle for independence in India? Why is it that while not seeing, they turn all the force of their terrorist machinery against any demonstration of a struggle for independence, smelling out, tracing and laying bear the sedition in its very genesis? It is because in no colony has the struggle for independence and complete separation matured and overmatured to such a degree, in no country does it "cry aloud to heaven" to such an extent as in India; because nowhere has the contradiction between the demands for development of productive forces and colonial oppression reached such monstrous dimensions as here. The first results of a very slightly weakened régime in India (weakened as the result of the imperialist war) were immediately revealed as a source of the greatest danger for the whole of Britain's colonial monopoly; on the other hand, America's economic and financial superiority threatens a blow to Britain's positions, not only in the Pacific, but in the Indian Ocean. Articles in the *Communist International* have already pointed out why this circumstance is causing a growing proportion of non-economic pressure in the general administrative system of India. But the Labour Party has essentially no other method of retaining India within the imperialist pincers than that of a police régime. Consequently it is not a mere accident that during the election fever, when, for only a few hours truly, the "continuity and sanctity of international agreements" were in suspense (Snowden), the Labour Party did not utter one word expressive of freedom and affection for India even for the sake of the parliamentary game. Even in the realm of promises, the Labour Party cannot do anything for India beyond holding out the hope of the slave whip and poisoned sweets.

Hence arises the Labour Party's inability to provide itself with any bases of support whatever in India, either in the mass movement or in the nationalist groups. We know that at the British Commonwealth Labour Conference of the British Labour Party held last year the Indian delegation, headed by Chaman Lal, i.e., by the Indian MacDonald, demonstra-

tively expressed its distrust in British reformism and left the congress. We know that at the December congress of Indian Trade Unionists, which was in the hands of the hardened reformists, Chaman Lal's conduct was approved and the Labour Party was stigmatised as an auxiliary to British imperialism. MacDonald has absolutely nothing to lose in India; he has nothing to gain by dissociating himself even in words from Baldwin's policy. India has no preference for the one as against the other; there's not a pin to choose between them.

Naturally British social-imperialism is trying to find some loophole for approach to the national emancipation movement outside and apart from the British Labour Party. One such loophole is provided by the Independent Labour Party, i.e., the "six just men," who give themselves out to be great radicals in regard to the struggle with imperialism. But as the solemn handshakes at the congress of the League Against Imperialism between one such just man, Lansbury, and the representative of toiling China did not stimulate the I.L.P. to make one single articulate protest against the British banditry in China, the gesticulations of the Maxtons and Cooks will hardly be likely to take in anyone. On the contrary, here is every reason to consider that the development of the struggle in India will very quickly reduce all shades of opinion in the Labour Party to one common denominator.

The British General Council and its Ambassador Purcell adopted a more masked form of deception in their approach to the Indian workers. Purcell's mission consisted in grafting all the limitations of trade unionism, indifference to the political struggle and a blind craft outlook, on the awakening labour movement of India. As the result of his visit to India, Purcell made certain accusations against the Indian manufacturers (and particularly against the administration of the Tata Company) pointing out quite justly that no nationalist sentiments prevented them from a most ruthless exploitation and torture of the Indian workers. And his deduction? Purcell's deduction was that the workers should separate from the national revolutionary movement, because, said he, it was "not their pro-

letarian task to help the bourgeoisie," because the workers could achieve their own happiness under an imperialist oppression. The Indian workers can achieve not merely happiness but the triumph of Socialism in a colonially ensnared country. The development of Socialism under the knout of the imperialist slave-driver—such is the attractive prospect with which Purcell wants to draw the Indian workers away from the political struggle, away from the organisation and direction of all the toilers in the revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

Now that the Executive Committee of the Second International has adopted a decision to organise a visit of Amsterdammers to the Far East, and also to South America and Australia, with the object of reinforcing the struggle against the revolutionary movement, despite all its senselessness the Purcell programme becomes the rallying cry of a new crusade of European civilisers in backward countries.

Purcell has only recently written: "I speak of a serious danger coming from India. Surely it is evident to all. Surely we are observing even now a considerable transference of industry from the West to the East. Think of India with its enormous rivers, with its exceptional natural riches, with its forests, coal, iron, cotton, jute, with its agricultural possibilities. . . . Think of India completely industrialised with a proletariat which has transformed Bombay, Calcutta, Madras into an Indian London, Birmingham, and Manchester, into repulsive Indian capitals with innumerable wage-slaves huddling in poverty-stricken hovels. The dockworkers of Bombay breaking out on the shore of the Indian Ocean presage the future. British industry cannot but be helpless before such competition from India. How can it hold out if commodities produced by such cheap labour flood the world market? It is possible to do so only if the Indian workers organise, develop a T.U. and party movement, lay down a road for themselves across capitalism and establish Socialism in this mighty Indian peninsula."*

Here we have all the precious baggage with which the Amsterdammers are now planning

to set out on the conquest of the colonies. The very approach to the "interests" of the colonial movement is determined by the psychology of the perverted labour aristocracy of the spoliator countries, which even during an attack of hypocritical sympathy for the "coloured" workers cannot consider them otherwise than as their potential competitors. The higher course of proletarian solidarity as envisaged by Purcell thus becomes an expression of blindly egotistic imperialism. The Bombay dockers may take something from the London dockers, and this is the sole reason why the British General Council is interested in the miserable living conditions of the Indian workers.

The second Purcell position is the uncooled fear of the industrialisation of India. The "serious danger" is not simply India, but an industrialised India. "Think of India completely industrialised." But British imperialism rules and enslaves, not at all for the joy of being "represented" in India, not merely in order to remain an interested observer of the processes taking place in India. All British policy to India of recent years is determined by its very struggle to prevent the industrial development of the country acquiring such a character and such a tempo as would involve India's industrialisation and transformation into a country economically more or less independent of the parasitic metropolis, and into a country capable of economic self-defence. The task of subjecting India's economic development to the interests of British industry and the growing difficulties in the way of accomplishing that task determine all the growing ruthlessness of hard-headed London. And this explains imperialism's unyielding attitude to the Indian bourgeoisie, which is waiting in vain to receive the thirty pieces of silver for its betrayal of the revolution. Does the British bourgeoisie take any account of the fact that with the simple promise of dominion status (or, in Gandhi's words, "by taking a step to meet India's legitimate desires") it can buy over bourgeois nationalism with all its entrails, can transform it into its faithful hound, which will afford unquestionable advantages, especially in wartime? Of course it does. Consideration of this possibility is to be found even in

**Leipziger Volkszeitung*, 16.3.29. Translated from the Russian.

the pages of such an organ of slavery as *The Near East and India*. In one of its recent numbers (April 18th, p. 492) its Calcutta correspondent raises in all its aspects the accursed question why the Communist International has chosen India as the arena for its activities, and not Australia, South Africa, Canada, or any other part of the British Empire. The very setting of this question contains in itself the answer as to the possibility of British imperialism cauterising the Indian ulcer by "introducing a democratic government into India" on the lines of the Australian or Canadian Government.

"If Great Britain," the correspondent continues, relying on a conversation with someone completely devoted to British imperialism, "if Great Britain is not prepared to take this risk (the introduction of a democratic government) what do you think will happen? The following will happen: If a serious conflict arises anywhere in Asia, irrespective even of what States are involved, and if Great Britain is drawn into it, India will not follow her under the influence of a natural enthusiasm such as arose during the Boer and the Great Wars. India will say: Now is the time to bargain. Let us see which power will give us the biggest guarantee that we shall be ensured self-government."*

Surely the buying over of bourgeois nationalism in the event of a war by the "introduction of a democratic régime" is an operation advantageous in all aspects? But British imperialism thinks it involves risks, and very big risks. The right of dominion status would restrict and constrict those possibilities which British imperialism possesses of altering the cut of India's economy and distorting its development in accordance with its own interests, the interests of a dying capitalism. The Balfour Commission considers the "industrialisation of the trans-oceanic agrarian countries and the growth of economic nationalism" one of the chief causes of the depression in Britain.† Does the development of the dominions have a similar influence? For the sake of a quiet life the British economists

refuse to dot the I's and cross the T's. But even among them one can find unequivocal indications that the prosperity of the dominions is hindering British industry from getting out of its chronic crisis in the chief spheres, a crisis conditioned first and foremost by the loss of its previous positions on the world market. In a special work published by the *Economist* ("The case for Free Trade," *Economist Supplement*, March, 1929) the refusal of the dominions to serve as a blow-hole for the choking British industry is summed up as follows:

"There is no justification for expecting that the dominions are ready to make any considerable increase in the import of the manufactures of British industry. On the contrary their tariffs, especially since the war, are more and more directed towards setting up and developing their own industry. It is true that British goods have the preference in the colonies. But that preference consists only in the fact that when British goods are, say, taxed 20 per cent., other goods are taxed 30 per cent. The alterations effected in the tariffs of the dominions involve a raising of tariffs on British goods. In consequence of the decision of the dominions to develop their own industry, the idea of 'Free Trade within the Empire' remains in practice unrealised."

In the view of British imperialism the only thing that can forestall the "serious danger coming from India," *i.e.*, her industrialisation, is a struggle by all means against Indian independence in any form. The Purcells and MacDonalds know that as well as the Lloyd Georges and Baldwins.

Finally, the third characteristic feature of the Purcellist colonial policy consists in the struggle to fasten on the colonial workers' movement the type of "Socialism" which would be reconciled with the rule of imperialist oppression. With ut any special need for it Purcell cannot bring himself to talk to the British worker, even hypocritically, concerning the victory of Socialism as the sole way out of the intolerable misery and exploitation; but why does he not try to delude the Indian worker, oppressed with a triple joke of exploitation, with this type of conventional radicalism? But the British General Councillors have already burnt their fingers over

*Translated from the Russian.

†The final report of the commission was issued in 1929, *i.e.*, five years after it began its labours. A genuine five-year plan of declining British capitalism!

that kind of game. The danger of Socialism in the mighty Indian peninsula would prove to be considerably more real than India's "complete industrialisation." It is this which has forced the General Council hurriedly to surrender its position of "neutrality" and to effect a disorderly retreat to MacDonald. The General Council's latest manifesto, in which it quite openly and exasperatedly comes out against the Bombay textile workers with slanderous attacks in gutter press style on the Girni Kanigar Union (which, despite all the blows of imperialism is continuing its vigorous growth, and has now raised its membership to eighty thousand) heralds the close of the Purcell line in India.

Not any of the varieties of British social-reformism will succeed in fulfilling the task of perverting the Indian proletariat. The General Council is no more able than is the Labour Party to act in India in any other way than as part of the machinery of imperialist reaction.

Needless to say, the social-democracy of Holland also can be no other than a slavish agent of its native imperialism. But as the situation of Dutch imperialism in Indonesia is not that of the British imperialism in India, as the forms of colonial imperialism in the two cases are not one and the same, as the degree of maturity of the class forces of the national revolutionary movement are different, so also the tactics of social-democracy in these two colonies have specific features of their own.

Perhaps none of the capitalist countries has so completely lost its "historic right" to any of its colonies as has Holland to Indonesia. Historic rights consist first and foremost in the predominance in that particular sphere of the military might of the colonial spoliator over that of its rivals, in its ability to defend its prey from the attempts of other imperialists by force of arms. The situation in which the feeble, toothless Dutch imperialism annually gathers a tribute of milliards from Indonesia was revealed to be the anachronism it is during the first imperialist war. Only owing to the fact that at the moment of the conclusion of the Versailles Treaty not one of the powerful imperialist robbers was yet sufficiently strong to raise the issue of the Pacific Ocean problem and to demand a repartitioning of the

colonies in that area, only owing to the fact that the situation resulting from the war afforded the U.S.A. an opportunity to plunder the world in a new fashion without for the time being resorting to the seizure of new colonies, was the Dutch flag able to continue to flutter over Indonesia. On the other hand, owing to their age-old accumulation of experience, the Dutch bourgeoisie succeeded in manœuvring so that whilst remaining neutral in the North Sea they could maintain their highly vulnerable position in the East Indies. The post-war financial, economic and concession policies of Dutch imperialism were determined in even greater degree by the necessity to ransom itself from the pretensions of other imperialists by a "voluntary" surrender of a corresponding share of its colonial acquisitions. The art of Holland's foreign policy consists in effecting a timely reorientation from American or British imperialism, in flinging, now one then the other, a titbit first in oil then in rubber, without, on the one hand, overdoing the payment to the extent of inflaming the appetites of the other claimant, and yet temporarily appeasing the appetites of that party which is the most dangerous at the particular moment. This complicated game, this tightrope walking, is rendered still more complicated by the circumstance that in doing so the Dutch Government has also to keep one eye on Japan, finding it necessary to avoid measures (the restriction of Japanese textile imports for instance) which would incite the imperialism of the land of the Rising Sun, and even finds it necessary to take the Chinese bourgeoisie also into account, since the latter, holding fairly strong economic position in the country, claim equality with Japanese imperialism. The politicians of Holland call this policy of enforced manœuvres the "open door" policy, thus likening it to the "liberalism" of the United States in, say, China. In reality this is of course only a miserable pretension. The "liberalism" of the U.S.A. and of Holland have only the common feature that neither of them effects any alleviation in colonial oppression nor causes any changes in the imperialists' attitude to the colonies, but merely characterises relationships with the competing imperialisms. But whilst the Americans are opening the doors for them-

selves in others' colonies, in preparation for their complete appropriation, the Dutch open the doors in their own colonies to the strongest imperialist powers, thus calculating on retaining their colonial monopoly. American imperialism is riding on the open door policy upward, the Dutch imperialism is slipping, despite its resistance, ever downwards.

Naturally the Dutch bourgeoisie cannot conceal from itself the fact that it has to make some kind of concession in Indonesia. But it consoles itself with the thought that these concessions are made not to the colonies themselves, but to other imperialists, and that consequently the correlationship of forces as between the oppressors and the oppressed remains unchanged. They see in this a guarantee that the population of fifty millions will not obtain a separation. "The old Dutch monopoly," writes the newspaper of the Java sugar magnates (*Sugabajansch Handelsblad* for 25th July, 1923) "has gradually been changed, and we think it cannot resist a further development of such changes. We are living in a period of the definite internationalisation of our colonial possessions. Our island possessions are in a state of transition from Dutch to international colonies. The 'open door' policy carried out over a prolonged period is bound to lead to this."

The remark that Indonesia is becoming an "international colony" is merely throwing dust in the eyes. The Dutch sugar magnates are able by "voluntary" rental to force the Malaysians to hand over their ricefields to be turned into cane plantations, to steal water from the peasants' irrigation system, to transform the chiefs and usurers into part of their spoliatory machinery, to squeeze out tribute of fifty per cent., and so on, solely owing to the fact that they operate on the Dutch colonial monopoly. But on the other hand the tempo of growth of British and American investments in the plantations, the petroleum fields and other concessions of Indonesia present a phenomenon not customary to a complete colony. Does this fact contradict the general position that the colonial monopoly of a dominant imperialism guarantees it economically against all the accidents of struggle even with stronger rivals? No. One can even say that the very situation in Indonesia reveals all

the importance of political annexation. Without that, without Holland's ability to operate on its colonial monopoly, American imperialism, wandering about the world in search of "corners" suitable for the development of rubber plantations, would long since have laid its hands on Sumatra and Borneo. American and British capital finds its way into Indonesia in dimensions painful to the Dutch planters, it enters by way of Amsterdam, *i.e.*, by the purchase of Dutch shares, by penetration into Dutch companies, by the capture of influence in the Dutch banks, by obtaining concessions through the Dutch Parliament and so on. Such "open doors," such a circuitous method of penetrating a rich tropical colony, whilst inflaming imperialist appetites, never satisfied Britain, and still less can it satisfy the United States. From the viewpoint of imperialism there cannot be any talk of the "internationalisation" of a colony, but only of which imperialism is to obtain a monopolist authority over it. And in the last resort this issue is resolved only by force, by war.

"If the economic interests of the metropolis in the colonies weaken, *ipso facto* the political link between them also weakens; the colonies no longer represent, or to a much less extent than before represent the interests of the nation." (*Haagsche Maandschrift*, January, article by Dr. Leizen.) Thus Dutch imperialism is cognisant of the danger which in the last resort is threatened by the growing, albeit controlled penetration of the finance capital of stronger imperialists into its colony. But Dutch imperialism sees the main threat to its positions not in this but in Indonesia's own struggle for independence, not in a pseudo internationalisation, but in a real separation. The decisive factor for Dutch policy is not the forestalling of a distant danger, but a struggle with the imminent danger. In order to avoid or postpone it, the Dutch bourgeoisie is ready to reinsure its monopoly with any other imperialism you like, is ready to pay as high a premium as you like for that insurance.

"But if Holland's share in commerce is diminishing" (*Sugabajansch Handelsblad* for 31/1/29), "the proportion falling to the West as a whole is growing. If the figures of trade appear to be less satisfactory to Holland as a monopolist, it none the less has to be accepted

that this very process of internationalisation of commerce hinders the development of the process of Indonesia's separation as viewed from the aspect of our political power. The situation would be different for the leaders of the West if the native elements played a great part in the changes occurring in our commerce."

Here we have a definite imperialist doctrine amounting to the argument that it is less dangerous within the limits of maintenance of its monopoly voluntarily to concede part of the plunder to other imperialists than to concede it to the native population. The first does not involve any threat to the political monopoly, whilst the second undermines its very roots.

In such a policy the systematic and increasing payments made by Holland and American, British and Japanese imperialism are effected not at her own cost, but at the cost of the oppressed masses of Indonesia. Hence the extraordinary extent of the Dutch colonial rapacity, despite, or rather owing to the very weakness of its position both in the international areas and within the country.

The circumstance that a foreign bourgeoisie has pillaged and is continuing to pillage Indonesia has as its consequence an extraordinarily restricted emergence of a native bourgeoisie, even of a compradore type, in the country. Owing to a number of historical conditions, the compradore functions in Indonesia have fallen not to Malayan but to Chinese and Arabian capital. The "open door" policy has intensified this process, so restraining the class differentiation of the native bourgeoisie, despite the extraordinarily swift growth of productive forces in capitalist agriculture and the exploitation of the richer sources of raw materials. From this fact that the native bourgeoisie is still only poorly defined and that the affluent section of the peasantry has not yet been defined in the class regard, the C.P. of Indonesia once made the incorrect deduction that all the native population and all its classes are motive forces for a national revolution, that Dutch imperialism has no social support whatever among individual native strata, either of the towns or of the villages. But while the course and the outcome of the armed rising revealed this error, on the other hand it showed Dutch imperial-

ism the extraordinary limitations of those native elements on which it can depend in the struggle with the national revolutionary movement. In view of the weakness of the military positions held by Dutch imperialism, this inadequacy of their agents in the national movement frightened the imperialist robbers very considerably.

Hence their tactics after the suppression of the rising: the physical annihilation of all the steadfast strugglers against imperialism, and first and foremost the Communists, also the destruction of the mass revolutionary organisations, such as the Sarekat Raiat; a simultaneous simulation of concessions, of petty gifts to the owning classes, the strengthening of the opportunist and treacherous elements of the national upper groups and assistance to it in obscuring and subjecting the national revolutionary movement. But as was pointed out above, the extent of the concessions which Dutch imperialism can make in Indonesia is extraordinarily restricted, its manœuvring powers in regard to reforms are extraordinarily straitened. The task has become that of resorting to insignificant bribes in order to create for itself a social basis in the country, of buying a pound note for a penny. Imperialism lays the accomplishment of the task on its social-democracy.

We have seen that the British Labour Party could not even observe any "movement for independence" in India. The Dutch social-democracy cannot allow itself such a luxury; it cannot help its imperialism by being myopic. "The slogan of the separation of Indonesia from Holland is not our slogan, if by it is meant that this separation has to take place immediately," wrote the Social-Democratic Party of Holland in its memorandum to the Third Congress of the Second International. Immediately! If the emphasis be laid on this word it may appear that the Dutch social-imperialists would not be averse to agreeing to the separation of Indonesia at some distant future. It is not necessary to demonstrate that these promises are not worth the paper they are written on. But it is also clear that such a formula presupposes a complicated system of hypocrisy and falsehood in order to maintain it at least in words. Consequently the colonising testament of the

Amsterdam hypocrites expounded in the above quoted memorandum is of a very distinctive and highly humorous nature. In it they find themselves forced to represent themselves as desperate radicals, and this constitutes their difference from the MacDonalds, namely, that they do not spare their harsh words in criticism of the government policy. But as simultaneously the social-democrats themselves participate in the carrying out of that policy they are lashing themselves. Thus in criticising the Dutch administration of Indonesia they point out that "in the existing election laws the situation is such that the more or less advanced Dutch elements have no chance whatever of getting into the People's Council." A piquant remark, in view of the fact that there are two Social-Democrats in that Council! It is true they are not elected but are appointed by the governor-general, but that hardly makes them any more advanced! And the position is altered but little by the circumstance that both these Social-Democrats allow their somewhat abbreviated tail to be in some evidence in the slave-owning parliament. As the very result of this "radicalism," the imperialists grow more and more willing to make extensive appointments of "critics" to the most responsible posts in the administrative-compulsion machinery, so much so that during the last few weeks the governor-general has appointed the Social-Democrat Mullenfeld to be director of Indonesia's home affairs, *i.e.*, he has been entrusted with the entire machine of political control. "The national movement in Indonesia, which is by no means synonymous with Communism, enjoys our sympathy." But then what is the position in regard to the rising of 1926/27? It is impossible to pass it over in silence. To deny the danger of a new rising would be inexpedient, for that would involve a depreciation of the rôle of social-democracy as the saviour from that rising. "In any case that time (*i.e.*, in 1926/27) it was possible to suppress the rising by force without any great effort, but whether it will be possible so easily and with the same measures to remain master of the situation in the future is quite another question," says the memorandum. But if the rising is a fact which the Dutch social-traitors cannot get over by a simple denial, what hap-

pens to the estimate of the rôle played in that rising by the C.P.? To say that the rising was headed by the Communists is tantamount to admitting the place which the C.P. occupies in the national revolutionary struggle of Indonesia. To deny the part of the Communists involves social-democracy, which is making up to the national movement, in the necessity of pronouncing itself at least in favour of an amnesty for thousands and thousands of fighters who have been flung into prison or sent to penal servitude. The social-democrats, who are no less afraid of an amnesty than are the Dutch bourgeoisie, and who arrange their tactics on a further intensification of the terror, can do neither the one nor the other. The social-democrats find a conventional way out of this situation, which is truly worse than that of a governor-general, by "demanding" an amnesty, but only for those who are not guilty in the rising, and demand this in such a form that there is nothing left for the governor-general to do than to hand the whole affair over to the social-democratic director!

Whilst Purcell sees the "serious danger menacing Britain" in the industrialisation of India, the Dutch social-democrats consider demagogic play with the slogan of industrialisation still more dangerous in the conditions prevailing in Indonesia. And that for an understandable reason. In no colony has the transplantation of capitalist production during the war and post-war period proceeded to such an extent as in British India. Nowhere has it so clearly involved the sprinkling of isolated centres of concentrated and technically highly-organised large enterprises over a backward colonial economic system; nowhere have the results of that capitalist development struck so painfully at the imperialists' positions, on the one hand calling into being a young proletariat already caught away by revolutionary class enthusiasm, and on the other revealing such tendencies of development as would menace the very existence of imperialist monopoly if they were not gripped in an iron vice. That is not the situation in Indonesia. The large-scale capitalist investments and high-developed technique are directed towards the exploitation of Indonesia purely as a tropical colony, as an agrarian raw material basis. In Indonesia, where there is

not a single works producing instruments of productions, where there is not a single modern textile factory, where small metal-working workshops are occupied purely in repair work, where finally the native bourgeoisie is extraordinarily restricted in its compradore functions, owing to the positions seized by Arabian and Chinese capital in the wholesale and wholesale-retail trade, the social-democrats have no justification for being afraid of the prospects of industrialisation; as ardent partisans they can observe bourgeois nationalism, and can delude with the prodigality of their promises of industrialisation and de-colonisation.

"For many years we have demanded an energetic stimulation and support of industry on the part of the government. At one time it even seemed that the government, emboldened by Van Koli, who travelled through Japan mainly in order to study this problem, had serious intentions of developing a native large-scale industry. But it confined itself to a few unrelated steps. At the present time the slogan of 'industrialisation' of Netherland Indonesia which was bruited around several years ago, has now died down. Despite this, with the passing of time, it will inevitably come to the development of large-scale industry." (Memorandum.)

The most ardent adherents of the theory of industrialisation in the Second International are the Dutch. But they also grant the possibility of separation, and needless to say all this is postponed to a very distant future, it is all with a view to playing with political inexperience.

Japan, a country of frenzied imperialism, is industrialising itself. Why not industrialise Indonesia, ruined by a triple imperialist oppression, in the same way? All this kind of argument is nothing more than a bait. But the necessity and simultaneously the possibility of resorting to such lies as a system leaves its impression on all the tactics of Dutch social-imperialism.

What sections of the native population does that social-imperialism hope to subject to its influence? The policy of an agreement with the great bourgeoisie has no essential significance for Indonesia, owing to the insignificance of the rôle which they play and will play

in the immediate future in the national movement. Thus social-democracy must hook itself on directly to the middle class, to the bourgeois intelligentsia, to the middle bourgeoisie, to the kulak upper group of the countryside, and, of course, first and foremost, to the most secure strata of the officials and employees in the State apparatus and the foreign enterprises. This forces Dutch social-democracy to adapt itself to the backward Utopias of the petty bourgeoisie, to repaint itself the colour of a distinctive colonial populism, which dreams of overthrowing the power of finance capital with the aid of the home-grown, artificially stimulated petty national banks, petty co-operative factories, arbitration courts and so on. "The formation and development of a middle class as a road to the liquidation of the capitalist colonial policy,"—such is the programme with which social-democracy is trying to take in the petty bourgeois nationalist groups. And it has to be added that to the extent that the mass murders and exiles have driven the revolutionary being underground, to the extent that in certain nationalist organisations the reactionary bourgeois elements are seizing the leadership, to that extent the Dutch social-democrats are succeeding in developing their agents in the camp of the nationalists. *Inter alia* the influence of social-imperialism finds its expression in the circumstance that the Sarekat-Islam, a nationalist organisation with a religious tint, which cannot decide as yet openly to renounce the tactics of non-co-operation with the government, has sent its vice-president Salim to the conference of the Geneva Labour Bureau, as a representative of the government. The growing development of actual co-operation between the Sarekat Islam and the government (the appointment of its representatives to a government "commission for consolidating the middle class," participation in governmental arbitration commissions with a view to suppressing strikes and in general to effect a renunciation of strike struggle), is a direct result of social-democratic influence on the reactionary leaders of the Sarekat Islam who have come to the front during the present conditions of repression. In accordance with

this the inimical attitude adopted by the Sarekat Islam to the left-wing workers' organisations is becoming more and more obvious. The leaders of the Sarekat Islam, who in imitation of the social-democrats are demanding the return of the "innocent" from exile, are leaving the Communists and the members of the Red Unions perishing in Digula completely to the tender mercies of the imperialist executioners. At the T.U. conference of the banking houses' employees, the representatives of the Sarekat Islam objected to the inclusion of the independent T.U.s (one of the organisers of which is the T.U. worker Marzuti, popular for his revolutionary past) in the proposed central T.U. federation. Consequently it would be a great mistake to underestimate the importance of the perverting influence wielded by the social-imperialists, whose strength consists in their operating on the basis of the colonial compulsion apparatus.

The support to the middle classes manufactured by the social-imperialists is now becoming the device also of the governmental officials and even of bands of planters in Indonesia. This the *Sugabajnsch Handelsblad* for 30th March, 1929, patronisingly claps the right-wing nationalist organisation, the "Research Club," organised for the purpose of freeing the Indonesian native sugar factories, on the back. "The Research Club's efforts in construction are deserving of our sympathy, and our possible support." They might even have welcomed their efforts! A sugar syndicate turning over millions of guildens has nothing to fear from a tiny factory built by the collection of 25,000 guildens in subscriptions. Let bourgeois nationalism console itself with its dreams of industrialising the country in such a fashion. The governor-general goes ever further, and links up the prosperity of the middle-class with fidelity to the Koran.

"It is a striking fact," the highest representative of European civilisation says in one speech, "that many of these (native) employers are hadjis. That is not an accident. In preparing for a journey to Mecca and gathering the money necessary for that journey these men must learn to accumulate. The intelligence to accumulate and the acquisition of a wider outlook during their travels con-

duce to the emergence of those elements which can win a place for themselves in the middle class. If it were possible to find a means of developing these benefactors to a maximum extent, it would connote a considerable step forward in the work of developing a native middle class."

Thus the social-democratic recipe for bribing the right-wing nationalist leaders and for the delusion of the remaining elements of the emerging bourgeoisie becomes the official programme of Dutch imperialism.

Another indicative feature in the tactics of Dutch social-democracy is its complicated game over the question of repealing compulsory contracts in the hire of coolies in Sumatra and Borneo. "We shall not be appeased," they vow in the memorandum we have already quoted, "so long as we have not achieved the repeal of the institution of contracting for coolies." As we know, this form of purchasing slave labour power is a very munificent gift to the planters on the part of the government. The contracted workers, who are either emigrants from over-populated Java or Chinese exhausted with hunger, pay with their lives for those few crumbs which they receive in making the contract. Those of the sold workers who do not die of fever and excessive labour during the obligatory three year period are forced to sell themselves again in consequence of their indebtedness and lack of resources to enable them to return home, and so the temporary slavery is made permanent. But it is no sentimental feeling which compels the Dutch social-democrats to take the question of contracts so much to heart. ("We shall not be appeased!" the memorandum also says, "here it is a question of exceptional importance, one which interests the foreign world, the inter-parliamentary union, the League of Nations, the Mandates commission and the International Labour Bureau.") That's letting the cat out of the bag! the interest of the foreign world. Indignation over slavery in foreign colonies is a pretext resorted to by certain imperialists in order to cause unpleasantness to others. In reality the institution of slavery is resorted to by all civilised colonisers with the same willingness, when owing to local conditions it provides sufficient advantages. British im-

perialism is not squeamish about it in cases where it ensures a cheaper labour power (in South Africa), and it is found in the Belgian Congo and in French Indo-China, where this form of slavery has been particularly developed under the social-democratic governor Varennes. But this luxury which British and French imperialisms can allow themselves without consideration of the "foreign world" may cause some unpleasantness to Dutch imperialism. What the latter needs is a cloak, and social-democracy is making it.

There is yet another reason why the Dutch slave-owners need an adaptation of the system for purchasing labour power to the new circumstances. The elemental and still unorganised outbreaks of the enslaved coolies are growing in frequency, owing to their being brought by exploitation and torture to the last extremity of despair. The press is daily reporting further cases of overseers on one or another plantation being beaten up by the workers. So far the junior employees on plantations who are directly concerned with driving the coolies have been recruited exclusively from Malays, and the murder of supervisors troubled the Dutch but little. Since the rising the situation has changed and the planters find themselves compelled more and more to resort to white supervisors. As a result the Dutch press is giving increasing space to complaints of the junior personnel, who have no desire to risk their lives in the interests of super-exploitation, and who are seeking to get away from Indonesia. The Dutch slave-owners are given even more trouble by those parties of workers whom they buy in China: the vessels on which the contracted Chinese are transported from Canton and Shanghai are accompanied by guards armed with machine-guns in order to suppress the inevitable outbreaks of protest en route. Consequently Dutch imperialism needs even more than its rivals to rationalise the mass application of slave labour. No one can carry through this profoundly hypocritical cynically false game more successfully than the political coolies contracted by imperialism, in other words the social-democratic officials.

A man in complete unanimity of spirit with these officials, Albert Thomas, favoured Indonesia also with a visit. The object of his

journey to the East, and especially to the Dutch possessions, was to stimulate the readiness of the Geneva Bureau to act as a fighter for the abolition of the contracting of workers, in other words to open a blowhole for the elemental protest of the enslaved, whilst affecting the interests of the slaveowners to a minimum extent. Thomas formulated his programme of reforms, which at the same time predetermined the decision of the Geneva Conference, in the following terms: "The abolition of the compulsory agreements can be achieved only gradually, together with the adoption of economic measures to forestall the directly injurious results bound up in that abolition." This inoculated gradualness will be achieved in his view if after working three years on a compulsory agreement the coolies are afforded the opportunity of renewing the agreement without compulsion to carry it out. "This could be a first step in the direction of a gradual abolition of these agreements." "Think what a munificent reward for three years' slavery: the possibility of continuing it voluntarily! Is it necessary to add that this programme completely satisfies the Dutch social-imperialists? Moreover, the tempo of the reforms as proclaimed by Albert Thomas, the first step in the direction of abolition of the agreements, wholly supports the promises which the Dutch Government itself has more than once made. In 1918 the People's Council attached to the governor-generalship solemnly proclaimed that the contracting system ("Poenale Sanctie") would be abolished in the immediate future. That decision was taken under the influence of the first blows of the rising colonial revolutions, but it lay inoperative for more than five years, until the 1923 strike roused the social-democrats to turn their attention again to the "serious situation of the contracted workers." "We at once raised our protest on every occasion and opportunity, and again did so in 1924." Shapper demanded the abolition of the "Poenale Sanctie." The majority of the Chamber did not agree with him. But at least it expressed its desire that the "position of the coolies" should from 1930 be changed in the sense that a gradual abolition of "Poenale Sanctie" should be achieved. (Memorandum.)

Thus Albert Thomas had taken a big step, but all he had done was to copy out his formula word for word from the records of the Dutch Parliament, which with divine help had been adopted five years previously. As experience has shown, all these blessed raptures of the imperialists have good reason not to yield their slaveowner positions even gradually. By the admission of the Dutch press itself, the payment received by the coolies in the Sumatra rubber plantations is from one-third to one-fifth of that which the Malayan peasant who searches for rubber next door to the plantation pays his day-labourers. In fact, the payment received by the contracted coolies is still lower, for part of it, sometimes a considerable part, is kept by the planter under the pretext of arbitrarily imposed fines. But the position of the coolies in the mines is still worse. The Inspector of Tin Mines Waierman, in the newspaper *Java Bode*, showed the necessity of maintaining the contract system, by pointing out that the coolies run away from the mines to the plantations.

"It must not be forgotten," he says, with an impudent frankness which far surpasses that of the social-democrats, "that in Billiton (the mines locality) it is found necessary to use the labour of Chinese, who receive an advance of 130 to 140 guildens per capita for the journey; there is an average number of ten thousand Chinese at work. Consequently, we must give a guarantee that these men will not slip off; and we shall not have that guarantee if compulsory contracts are abolished. The Chinese will unquestionably flee to the Straits Settlements, where they will earn more on the rubber plantations. No matter how well you treat them they will slip away if they are afforded the opportunity of earning more, even if only temporarily."

Did anyone ever, even during the period when men and women were stolen openly, adduce more convincing arguments in favour of the necessity of maintaining slavery than has this highly-placed imperialist specialist in the year of our Lord 1929!

But in Albert Thomas's artistic exposition, the "truth concerning Indonesia" seems quite different; this is how the representative of the Second International speaks of the paradise created by the Dutch: "The Dutch colonial

labour is truly worthy of astonishment. What I saw in Java left an inimitable impression upon me. This colonial labour is worthy of the recognition of the entire world. I have in mind not only what has been done for the workers, but what is being done for the small peasant." A crusade against the contract system proclaimed by such a rapturous adherent of Dutch imperialism is not very terrible. And no matter how infamous and miserable this farce may be, none the less, as the result of it, these social pimps have succeeded in representing the affair in such a light that the government has appointed a nationalist as its representative at Geneva. In passing we may mention that this representative Salim was seen several years ago by the Indonesian Communists to have a great weakness for the florins with which the Dutch Government rewards its open and secret agents, and consequently he can hardly prove a great adornment even to such an unattractive company as that of the Geneva Conference.

Even under the cover of the governmental terror the specific importance of the leaders of the nationalist right-wing is far too insignificant. In order to exploit its agents, imperialism is trying to subject other petty bourgeois nationalist groupings to the control of the right-wing. The radically-minded nationalist intelligentsia is itself aiding social-imperialism in carrying out this manœuvre directed against it. The left-wing Socialists are allowing the reactionary elements to befool them in the most obvious fashion. The organisational expression of this deception and self-deception took the form and character of the Federation of Nationalist Unions which arose after the rising.

After the 1927 rising the leftward orientating intelligentsia organised a nationalist party: The Nationalist Party of Indonesia, on a somewhat indefinite programme of non-cooperation, remnants of the old confusion in regard to the question of force, peculiar populist illusions and a highly varied social composition. None the less, despite all its half-heartedness, its lack of formulation and complete inability to head a mass national revolutionary movement, the National Party of Indonesia cannot but be in opposition to the sanguinary régime of Dutch imperialism. The

social-democrats have tried all possible means of stupifying and castrating this opposition. It has exploited the political inexperience and naïveté of the student group in Holland in order to profit by the rôle of its defenders in the Dutch court. Being in no condition to see through even such a petty cheat on the part of the social-imperialists, the left-wing intelligentsia has been even more entangled in the National Federation by those imperialists.

The initiative in forming the Federation belongs to the National Party of Indonesia. One of the leaders of that party, a member of the Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism, Katta, at that time indulged in dreaming aloud of the transformation of the Federation into a parliament of Indonesia, where all the tendencies of the national emancipation movement would be represented. The stern reality very swiftly showed what character a parliament could have in a situation in which all the left-wing workers and peasants' organisations were broken up and driven underground, in which thousands of fighters were perishing in poisonous penal servitude. The leaders of the right-wing captured the machinery of the Federation and established their own dictatorship in it, binding hand and foot even the leaders of the National Party, not to speak of the mass of the members. The right-wing leaders interdicted all the criticism directed against them, thus transforming the Federation into a screen behind which they could carry out their treacherous activities. (Salim's visit to Europe.) At the head of the Federation was placed Doctor Sutomo, one of the most arrant of opportunists, who openly co-operates with the Dutch imperialism. At the last congress of the Federation a press bureau was established, and all the articles of members of the Federation have to pass its censorship, ostensibly in order to avoid injury to the national cause, but more truly with a view to prohibiting articles unmasking Sutomo's policy. The censorship bureau has been handed over to the right-wing. It will not be surprising if Katta, who dreamed of a free exchange of views in the federation-parliament, is the first to fall a victim to this censorship guillotine.

The Federation makes no protest against the right-wing's co-operation with the government, co-operation carried on first and foremost by the organisation Budi Utomo, headed by officials. The Dutch social-imperialists were confident that having fettered the intelligentsia wing it had thus safeguarded itself for at least the immediate future against any unpleasant surprises on the part of the national movement. It appeared that they had come to that decision without inviting the opinion of the master and real leader of the revolution in Indonesia; they had come to that decision on the assumption that the exhausted labour movement of Indonesia would not rise again for a long while.

* * *

In answering the characteristic question in the Second International's questionnaire: "Is there any labour movement in your colonies?" the Dutch social-democrats wrote:

"There is no labour movement as we understand it in the West in the Dutch East Indies. No native labour movement with any class character exists in Dutch India. The characteristic feature of the native populist movement is its nationalist or even racial nature. Although the society of Indonesia has its own very severe class antagonisms, the national movement is none the less directed first and foremost against the European employers, against the Western capitalists and against the foreign rulers. There can be no talk of its having any class character. It is true there are native trade unions in existence, but they are still extremely weak and are directed against the European employers. Until quite recently these native T.U.s were under the influence of Communist propaganda." (Memorandum.)

This contemptuous attitude to the labour movement in the colonies as being a racial one is the usual cheat of the Second International parties. We know that under the pretext of the racial nature of the Chinese revolution the Second International solemnly repudiated it, aided imperialism to shatter it, and is now inviting the yellow unions of Chiang-Kai-Shek into its Amsterdam booth as being class unions. However, in their endeavour to deny the existence of a labour movement in Indonesia, the Dutch social-democrats over-reached

themselves. What a low estimate one must have of one's audience in order to advise it not to recognise the class character of the strike movement of the Indonesian proletariat on the railroads, the sugar works, the plantations, the mines, water transport and so on! Yes, the social-imperialists declare touchily, but those strikes were directed against foreign capital! The "Marxists" of the Second International are not averse to advising the proletariat of Indonesia to postpone its strike struggle until the factories, the works, the mines, railroads, trading enterprises, etc., have all passed into native hands as the result of the industrialisation which they have promised.

But this declaration is not only the result of a bureaucratic stupidity. Simultaneously it witnesses to the circumstance that the Dutch social-democrats know whence they are menaced by an unavoidable danger, what forces will destroy all their treacherous plans and manœuvres. They know that despite all its youth the proletariat of Indonesia has already revealed itself as a force, heading the national revolution. The lessons which it has drawn from its defeat in 1926/27 consist in a recognition of the necessity for a stronger, more independent, more sustained organisation of its forces, around whom all the toiling and oppressed masses of Indonesia can concentrate, and especially the peasantry who so self-sacrificingly sought a leader during the rising. It is out of its very recognition of this that social-imperialism is striving by all means to exploit the circumstance of a terrorist régime in order to supplant the shattered workers' organisations with treacherous pseudo-unions, and are trying to draw the nationalists into this work. Before the rising the social-democrats had command only in the white "trade unions," concerning which the memorandum itself admits that "all their activity has been directed to the realisation of the privileges of the whites." Since the rising the social-democrats have been endeavouring to organise such a "class workers' movement" as would satisfy even the tastes of the planters, partly working through the nationalists, and partly leaving the latter to act independently. In the first most severe period of bloody terror which followed the rising and the reaction

caused by its defeat, the social-imperialists and nationalists succeeded in capturing positions in isolated trade union organisations which were infected with a temporary paralysis. To deny this success on the part of imperialist reaction and national opportunism would be unwise. But at the same time the instability and the insignificant nature of those successes have already been revealed. Without in the least exaggerating the class steadfastness and reliability of the neutral and independent unions, whether of railwaymen, of sailors, sugar-workers, or printers, which have already emerged in opposition to the social-democratic and nationalist unions, one can confidently state that the very fact of their emergence shows that the workers' movement is already breaking down the iron frame into which reaction so ruthlessly sought to drive it. We do not yet possess sufficient information to decipher the significance of this independence and neutrality, under which the new unions are developing. Does it involve independence from the importunate suit of the imperialists, and so is an expression of the necessity for the unions adopting an independent class position? Or is this independence to be understood in the sense of renunciation of all politics, as a variety of "pure trade unionism," which would be especially Utopian and monstrous in the conditions of colonial oppression. Only the experience of the development and struggle of the independent unions can supply an answer to this question. But their very first uncertain, still indefinite steps show that they are not in the grip of the social-democratic idyll. The independent trade unions are openly acting against the social-imperialists, and squeezing them out of the positions they had captured. According to the newspapers the administration of an independent union has excluded a representative of the National Party of Indonesia who sought to subject it to his own political organisation. At the same time the general character, truly of the very few, yet resolute strike conflicts which have occurred recently, leaves no doubt that either through the independent unions as a transitional form, or against them, the workers' movement is returning to the old road which the lackeys of imperialism have stigmatised in the passage we have above

quoted, in which they admitted that "until recently the native unions were under the influence of Communist propaganda."

The workers' movement in Indonesia is beginning to heal its wounds. The first signs of growth in its activity cannot but have their effect on the national-revolutionary movement. The masses which for a number of years have followed the party of the working class are beginning to break the graveyard silence. The right-wing monopoly in the national movement is being broken. This process has found a still feeble reflection even in the congress of the National Party of Indonesia which was held in May in Batavia. No matter how tied the leaders of this congress were by their "promise of silence" imposed by membership of the Federation, the pressure from below was strong enough to break through in the speeches at the congress. The telegraphic reports which have appeared so far only in the Dutch imperialist press, the *Neure Rotterdamschs Courant* for 23/24th May, 1929, naturally do not present a true picture of the congress. But even on this basis one can say that whilst on the one hand the congress refrained from criticism of the right treacherous wing of the nationalists and thus revealed its own basic weakness, on the other hand it could not but attack Dutch imperialism, thus showing that the whole edifice of the social-compromisers is built on sand. "For Indonesia the capitalists are a plague bringing death and destruction everywhere. . . ." "Eastern Sumatra is a hell for the contracted coolies. . ." "The capital of the sugar trusts is poison for the people." These declarations alone sounded in sufficient numbers at the congress for the social-democrats to sound the alarm. The social-democrat Stokitz (who has great services as an imperialist lackey to his credit, having been appointed to the People's Council by the governor-general, and for this reason on his return to Holland elected a number of the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party) considers it necessary to express his dissatisfaction with the congress and to make a timely report to his command: "It is very possible that the remnants of the Communists not yet sent to Digula are forming a nucleus in the National Party of Indonesia." (*Het Volk* for 22nd May, 1929.)

To retain the oppressed masses of the colonies under the imperialist oppression—such is all the law and the prophets for all sections of the Second International. That is their chief task. Differences in the ways and means of carrying out that task are only details. In certain conditions those details have a certain importance as beauty aids to the tactics of social-imperialism; in other conditions, and particularly in those cases where the national movement is resolutely raising the issue of a determined struggle for independence, they are withdrawn into the background. Then social-imperialism of all varieties and hues reveals its nature as spoliator and robber. We have already seen that in the face of the imminent revolution in India, the Labour Party and the General Council are diligently stopping their ears with cottonwool, declaring that they cannot ever hear a whisper of independence, whilst on the other hand the Dutch social-democrats immediately after the defeat of the rising felt themselves seated so firmly in the saddle that they even began to play with this same little word "independence."

But those happy days are beginning to pass for the Dutch social-democrats also. From under the tombstone of terror the tiny shoots of a new life are beginning to sprout in Indonesia. The enslaved nationalist press is also just beginning to show signs of the new life. The journal of the students' group, *Indonesia Merdeka*, recalls, albeit rather belatedly, that "the social-democrats have no right whatever to talk about the independence of colonies, because they do not recognise Indonesia's right to immediate independence."

Such a statement of the issue, such ingratitude arouses an outburst of indignation from the Stokfitzes. They give the rein to their exasperated feelings and begin to talk in their natural MacDonalld tone.

"We do not deny Indonesia's right to desire immediate emancipation," writes Stokfitz, in answer to the article in the students' journal. "But we are not talking about that right, but of the expected results, and that not only for Indonesia but for all international economy, which after all is also of some importance. Taking into account the injurious consequences which the separation of Indonesia would entail along the whole line, we cannot

accept that slogan. The fact that British India, which is considerably nearer to that aim, and is considerably more experienced in struggle, has so far only put forward a demand for dominion status shows that she estimates the situation more soberly."

What benevolence: the social-democrats will allow Indonesia to desire it! And what devilish laughter at those who desire! "International economy also is of some importance." But the reality? In reality at the decisive moment the social-democrats put themselves into opposition to the national-emancipation movement as the representatives of the interests of world economy. In other words, remember that not only Holland, but all world-imperialism is interested in the oppression of Indonesia. That is of some importance. Remember that the national revolution

of Indonesia will have against it not the Dutch imperialism alone, but all its powerful rivals, who on this issue will become its allies. The example of British India is mentioned by no accident. It serves to remind Indonesia that the imperialists act in a united front against the colonial revolutions.

But in saying so much, surely Stokfitz, one of the best men of practical affairs in the Second International on the colonial issue, said more than he had intended! For there is truly a connection and interaction between the revolutionary movement of India and Indonesia.

And it will make itself known, the international proletariat will work to see that this will occur as soon as possible, and will make itself felt with such force that the swansong of the Second International will be truly ended.

