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## Counter-Revolution in Afghanistan.

By M. N. Roy.

King Amanullah is overthrown. Incipient forces of progress in Afghanistan are overwhelmed by reaction. The events in the far-off Asiatic kingdom are not only of local importance. They are closely connected with the preparation of war against the Soviet Union. King Amanullah lost his throne, because he represented a new Afghanistan, still in embryonic state, which threatened more than the purdah (women's veil) and the fez (red head-gear of the Moslems). Taking a long view of the situation, it threatened British domination of the Middle East; and, immediately, was an obstacle to the preparation of war against the U. S. S. R. His overthrow renders an important base of military operation against the Workers' Republic, secure.

Control of Afghanistan has always been the key to the British policy in that part of the world. Previously, Tsarist Russia disputed this control. The struggle between Tsarism and British imperialism for the control of Afghanistan led to many an armed conflict. Revolution in Russia eliminated one factor in the struggle; but for British imperialism the New Russia is much more of a menace than the old. Therefore, for British imperialism control of Afghanistan has become of much greater importance than ever.

Before, the task was to keep the enemy away from Afghanistan. Now the problem has become much more complicated. The enemy, now, is in Afghanistan. It grows out of the soil. Previously, it was comparatively easy to control Afghanistan on the pretext of safeguarding it against the Russian menace. When Russia became a friend of the weak and oppressed Afghanistan, the situation grew much more difficult for the British to handle. The disappearance of one of its traditional oppressors, namely, Tsarist Russia, improved the position of Afghanistan. Taking advantage of the favourable position Afghanistan tries to stand on its own feet, — to assert its national independence, and reconstruct itself on the basis of this independence.

Amanullah objectively represented the forces hostile to imperialism. As such he was inclined to be more friendly to the U. S. S. R. than to the British. But events proved time and again that he was neither particularly friendly towards the former, nor unduly hostile to the latter. This being the case, it was possible to tolerate the evolution of the new Afghanistan into a buffer state with progressive tendencies, had British policy been simply to maintain the status quo. The class basis of the new Afghan State together with the general socio-economic conditions of the country would be a sufficient guarantee against its

coming so much under the influence of the U.S.S.R. as could transform it into a direct enemy of the British Indian empire. So, it is evident that the present British policy in Afghanistan is not to maintain the status quo. The policy in that region is an integral part of the general policy of British imperialism, the cardinal principle of which is war against the U.S.S.R.

Under normal conditions, British imperialism need not be unduly alarmed by the developments that were taking place in Afghanistan under the direction of Amanullah. But the new Afghanistan of Amanullah cannot be depended upon in case of war. Indeed, the British have made such formidable military preparations all along the north-western frontier of India — from the sea to the Himalayas — as place Afghanistan in a position in which it can be easily crushed. Britain's policy, evidently, is not to neutralise Afghanistan in the prospective war against the U.S.S.R., but to use it as an active factor of aggression.

The situation in India imposes this policy upon British imperialism. With a gigantic revolutionary movement in the rear, the British cannot undertake an open attack upon the U.S.S.R. from that side. In order to win over the support of the Indian bourgeoisie, in addition to that of the other reactionary classes, it is necessary to create plausible reasons for such a war. A government in Afghanistan completely subservient to British dictation, willing to act as a provocative agent, would be very useful for the purpose. This cannot be expected of Amanullah. He would not take such provocative steps against the U.S.S.R. as might embroil the latter in actions providing the plausible pretexts sought by British imperialism for the realisation of its policy. In other words, Amanullah was an obstacle to the policy of using Afghanistan as a weapon of aggression against the U.S.S.R.

It is hardly necessary to prove that British imperialism was behind the counter-revolution. All the profuse protestations of the British to the contrary are ridiculous, and do not convince anybody having knowledge of the local conditions. Events leading up to the outbreak of the counter-revolution show how the affair was organised. It is generally believed that his visit to Europe fired Amanullah with the zeal for reform which presently cost him his throne. It is a mistaken belief created by imperialist propaganda. Amanullah evolved his programme of reform long before he visited Europe. Indeed, his visit to Europe was an evidence of his progressive tendency. His prolonged absence from home was utilised by his enemies for undermining his position and consolidating theirs. Indeed, one can reasonably suspect that his premature journey abroad was encouraged by his foes for this purpose. It cannot be believed that this astute plan for the fomentation and organisation of counter-revolution was worked out by the tribal chiefs who revolted against him. A cleverer head behind the scene directed the whole affair.

Then, take the military aspect of the affair. Amanullah's army was fairly modern, equipped with up-to-date weapons of warfare. This army could not be beaten unless the rebels were equally equipped. And they were equipped with modern artillery which they knew how to use. Until now, these tribes have always operated only with old fashioned guns smuggled in small quantities with great difficulty from the Persian gulf ports. Suddenly they appear with artillery, machine guns etc., and use them effectively. Under the given circumstances, the things could come to them only from India, and their artillerymen trained by British officers, unless these were actually directing the rebel field operation. The recent construction of the Kheyber Railway must have provided the opportunity for transporting these heavy weapons disguised a railway materials.

It is evident that without the help of the British the rebellion could be crushed by Amanullah's forces. Indeed, without British instigation reaction might not have raised its head at all in Afghanistan.

Amanullah is gone; but the nascent new Afghanistan he represented remains. The violent attempt to crush it will only quicken its development. The attempt to mobilise the forces of reaction in the country as a weapon in the aggression upon the U.S.S.R. will surely draw the incipient progressive elements in the Afghan society closer to it making them ever stronger. So, the forces of democratic anti-imperialist forces, for representing which but half-heartedly Amanullah is overthrown, will not be crushed by the counter-revolution; on the contrary, it will quicken their crystallization into a decisive factor of the situation operating ever more relentlessly against foreign domination and its agent, native reaction.

## POLITICS

### The Political Situation in France.

The French "Parties of the Left" in Opposition.

By J. Berlioz (Paris).

The Poincaré Ministry, newly formed on November 2nd without participation of the Radicals, has of late had to face violent attacks on the part of the so-called "Parties of the Left", i. e. the Radical-Socialists and the Socialists. These factions have impelled Poincaré on the subject of his entire policy, and the Communists likewise initiating an interpellation, voiced by Comrade Cachin, the result was a general debate in the Chamber. Poincaré consequently put the question of confidence to the House. When the votes were cast, 325 were found to be in his favour and 250 against him. His opponents comprised the Communists, the Radical-Socialists and the Socialists, the unanimity of the latter parties having been made a matter of discipline on the basis of fractional resolutions. Only one small group of extreme Right Radical-Socialists voted for Poincaré. Thus the Poincaré Government is now supported by the entire Right, by the Centre, and by the Loucheur group of the "Radical Left", which at one time took part in the Government of the Left Bloc.

What the Radicals and Socialists tax the Government with is by no means its programme as such, a programme which has remained unchanged since the formation of the National Unity in 1926, which was approved by the Radicals for two years and which had the support of the Socialists in its practical execution. What the Left parties attack is the composition of the Cabinet out of members of the Right. The real reason for their "determined" defection in favour of the Opposition, however, lies in the growing discontent of their constituents in the country.

The mass of small farmers have had a bad year. The constant increase of taxation has caused their land to yield them but a poor return. The bourgeoisie in its entirety complains of the agrarian crisis which continues to develop. Nor are the middle-classes satisfied with the effects of stabilisation, which has not only confirmed the depreciation of their property, their rents, and the like but, together with heavy taxation and the constantly growing concentration of "big" capital, is strangling the small industrial and commercial enterprises. The salaries of State officials have not been increased. Finally, those advantages which the reformist leaders of the labour aristocracy promised their followers as a result of rationalisation, have failed to accrue. The entire proletariat has been roused. These are the main reasons which have induced the Radicals to quit the Cabinet of National Unity.

Meanwhile new motives for an oppositional attitude have arisen, chief among them the State budget of 1929 with its 65,000 millions of taxes and the wave of price-appreciation. The increase in military expenditure and the policy of armaments seriously disturb the broad masses. Under such circumstances, an oppositional attitude is welcomed by the "Left" as a safety-valve for the purpose of mitigating the dissatisfaction of their electors. In view of the prospective municipal elections in May 1929, this policy of opposition is also recommendable, seeing that it affords the prospect of capturing several large municipalities.

The big bourgeoisie is not altogether at one as to the attitude to adopt in view of this development. It was for this reason that Poincaré toyed with the thought of demission, an intention he subsequently abandoned. One group of the big bourgeoisie is of opinion that it should henceforth be possible to rule without the representatives of the small bourgeoisie, or even in opposition to the latter. Another group, again, considers it necessary to make sure of the adherence of the small bourgeoisie and to govern the latter by means of a broad National Unity. Poincaré himself holds this latter opinion.

This was also decisive for the programme just developed in the Chamber by Poincaré. It is a programme of the big bourgeoisie, which aims at bringing about economic prosperity, while at the same time promising improvements and certain social reforms, as a means of gaining the adherence of the

middle-classes and even of part of the working class. Poincaré expects in this way to broaden the foundations of his majority. The essential points of this programme are an agrarian scheme providing for the facilitation of exports, the electrification of the country, and considerable credits for the small farmers; then the development of the economic apparatus in co-operation with the National Economic Council and the C. G. T. represented herein; furthermore, the better exploitation of the colonies; a general reform of legislation regarding social relief and national health; the legal enforcement of obligatory arbitration in the case of social conflicts; and finally a definite settlement of Reparations and inter-Allied debts.

Thus Poincaré hopes to undermine the force of the "Opposition". The latter, meanwhile, has no intention of quitting its Parliamentary basis. On the contrary, it is apparent that, in the event of a continued radicalisation of the masses and of an extension of the strike movement, the Socialists themselves would openly support a restoration of National Unity, so as effectively to counteract the revolutionary proletariat. Both the Radicals and the Socialists, including M. Frossard, have declared unmistakably in the Chamber and in the Press that they are "ready to undertake the greatest responsibility or to share it with others", if there is any question of "saving" the bourgeois Republic and the cause of Parliamentarism. In this connection they make no secret of the fact that this attitude of theirs is directed against the Communists just as much as against the Fascists.

The "Opposition" will attempt to transfer the struggle to some side issue or other, as e. g. by placing the question of religious congregations in the foreground. Thus the only fighting opposition to the bourgeois regime is that of the Communist Party, which aims to place itself at the head of the class-struggles of the proletariat.

## The Maxton-Cook Campaign.

By W. Holmes (London).

14th January 1929.

During the last week the "Socialist Revival" campaign, undertaken by A. J. Cook, Secretary of the Miners' Federation, and James Maxton M. P., Chairman of the Independent Labour Party, has reached a definite crisis in which it has antagonised the organised Left-Wing Movement, the Communist Party and the militant workers who are under their influence in the Minority Movement.

The crisis began with a meeting organised in Glasgow by James Wheatley, and Kirkwood, two M. P. s who have supported Maxton in his campaign, and are clearly identified with him. The meeting was in support of Wheatley's candidature at the forthcoming General Elections and Henderson, the reactionary Secretary of the Labour Party was invited as chief speaker.

As a Labour Minister during the war, Henderson was partially responsible for the shooting of James Connolly, the Irish Labour leader, in 1916. The presence of this man on a platform supported by two allegedly Left-Wing workers, aroused the bitter opposition of the Glasgow Workers and when Henderson appeared, he was not allowed to speak. The organisers of the meeting then called in the police and 17 arrests were made, including Gallacher, the well-known Communist leader.

The use of the police by Maxton's friends was followed by a meeting in London at which both Cook and Maxton spoke on behalf of a Labour Government. Both went out of their way to disclaim association with the Communist Party or organised Left-Wing workers and their speeches aroused considerable opposition in the audience.

Following this meeting, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party has issued a statement condemning the campaign as "playing the game of capitalist reaction" by allowing its originators to be drawn into the election campaign for a Labour Government led by MacDonald and the partisans of co-operation with capitalism. The Communist Party asks all militant workers to oppose the Campaign henceforth and to rally to the support of the Party and the Minority Movement in their struggle against class collaboration in both the political and trade union movements.

## A Fresh Defeat of French Imperialism in Alsace.

By J. B.....z (Paris).

On January 13th, there were again elections for the French Chamber in the districts of Colmar and Altkirch. The originally elected autonomist deputies Rossé and Ricklin are known to have been condemned for "infringing" against the French State and declared by the Chamber to have forfeited their mandates. The new elections, from which the French imperialists expected at least some progress in their favour, and which were therefore carried out under official pressure on the part of the French authorities, again turned into a crushing defeat of the French imperialists in Alsace.

At Altkirch the autonomist Stuermel, a railwayman, who had been dismissed for his political activity and who was one of the accused on the occasion of the Colmar trial, but acquitted, and who is, moreover, an immediate collaborator of the French autonomist leader Heaggy, was elected by 7144 votes. The former deputy Silbermann, candidate for the Party of National Unity, came in second with 3650 votes. Compared with the last election in April 1928, when the autonomist candidate secured 62 per cent. of all votes cast, 66 per cent. of the total number of votes were now in favour of Stuermel.

At Colmar the situation was rather more complicated. The recorded votes were distributed as follows: Abbé Hauss, formerly leader of the Autonomist Party of Alsace and the candidate of the clerical autonomists, polled 8794 votes; Abbé Hauser, candidate of the bishopric and of the National Unity, 4558, Richard, chauvinist Socialist and candidate of the "Assimilation" movement, 3592, and the Communist Mürschel 2233. Consequently, on next Sunday there will take place the second ballot at which the election of Hauss is as good as certain. In this instance the autonomist candidate recorded a certain loss of votes in comparison with the last elections (58 per cent. against 65), which is mainly due to the fact that he was opposed by a priest as candidate of the National Unity, a circumstance liable to carry weight with the Catholic-minded peasants. The peasants do not desire any open hostility to the Church, and Abbé Hauss figures as a freethinker.

The Communist Party, which has lost an insignificant number of votes, has carried on a very decided campaign, which is bound still to bear fruit, with the following main slogans: 1. The national question cannot be solved within the limits of the capitalist regime; 2. the economic and social demands of the peasants and workers must be brought to the fore in the place of the religious questions; 3. the winning of seats is a secondary question, the main issue being that of organising the wage and economic struggles and the revolution; 4. the clerical opposition is obvious, but yet demagogic; at the critical moment it is bound to capitulate to French imperialism, as similar oppositions have done before; 5. an internationally decisive factor is the fight against war, especially as regards the war planned against the Soviet Union.

The French bourgeoisie, which, in particular since the attempt on the life of Attorney-General Fachot, has been making renewed efforts to defeat the autonomist movement, is extremely dismayed at this outcome of the elections. Many capitalist papers call upon the Government to deal with Alsace with a strong hand. What the "Echo de Paris" writes in this regard is most characteristic.

"The remedy for Alsace", it says, "must be applied outside the Parliament. The example given us by the young ruler of Yugoslavia, is worthy of consideration."

What should be specially pointed out is that the socialists have again shown themselves to be French social-patriots of the most pronounced type.

## THE BALKANS

### Under the Dictatorship in Yugoslavia.

By B. B...vitch (Belgrade).

The military dictatorship in Yugoslavia is working energetically. After the Constitution had been suspended, Parliament dissolved, and the organs of the autonomous municipal administrations put out of operation, new emergency laws were promulgated in supplementation of the law "for the defence of the State", which was passed by the Belgrade Parliament in 1921 and was directed exclusively against the Communists. The new royal decrees abolish the invariability of the tribunals and even those restricted liberties of the press and of assembly which still existed for the bourgeois oppositional parties. The new law declares all revolutionary organisations to be illegal and dissolves all political parties which are founded on racial or religious principles. According to the Belgrade "Pravda", the organ of Foreign Minister V. Marinkovitch, all political parties and organisations are dissolved which support or advocate a change of the present autocracy and the present order in the State. Nor has the military dictatorship forgotten to issue a decree dissolving the workers' trade unions.

The former censorship was reintroduced for all newspapers. The latter are not even allowed to appear with blank spaces, being obliged to fill up the gaps caused by the censor with some editorial matter or other. The confiscation of a newspaper is a matter dependent not on the courts, but on the police, alone. If a daily newspaper is confiscated three times in one month, it is altogether prohibited to appear, even under another name.

The dictatorship will in future only suffer the activity of the new Fascist organisations and permit the publication of none but its own newspapers. It is easy to imagine what will pass behind the walls of the royal "Ochirana", seeing that even during the operation of the limited Constitution and during the existence of the greatly restricted liberty of the press, the brutal flogging, torturing, and assassination of political prisoners were the order of the day.

In these days of the declaration of autocracy, we cannot but denounce the despicable and contemptible attitude of Matchek, Pribitchevitch and other leaders of the Croatian opposition, i. e. the coalition between the Democratic and Peasant parties. Thus Matchek, e. g., declared that he was "satisfied" with the coup in Yugoslavia, since it represented an abolition of the centralised constitution, the overthrow of the Serbian Government coalition, and the dissolution of the Skupstina, which all stood for that policy which had led to the murder of Raditch. The "Intarnij List", representing the Croatian bourgeoisie, wrote as follows on January 9th:

"The new Government of General Zivkovitch has every possibility of altering this bad state of affairs and guiding the State on the right path. This Government will not allow itself to be disturbed by the diverging interests of individual political parties nor by the interests of individual persons. It need pay no regard to all the petty interests which influenced the individual political parties and politicians. If the Government goes the way which the people desire it to go, it will be the right Government for the people."

The Zagreb "Novosti" of January 10th (under the influence of the Independent Democrats — Pribichevitch) writes as follows on the subject of the present autocracy:

"In the manifesto of King Alexander the difference between the absolutism of past ages and the un-parliamentary government of to-day is clearly apparent. The absolute regimes in Croatia and Serbia were systems of violence. Examples of such violent regimes were the un-parliamentary government of Serbia at the time of the Obrenovitch dynasty and the 'rule of the police-commissariat' in Croatia under the Hapsburg Monarchy. The present un-parliamentary government has nothing in common with the absolutism of past times. It is intended to prepare us for a new construction of the State and for a new parliamen-

tary regime. That is the principal difference between the present state of affairs and the absolutism of the past. It was in this sense, too, that the foreign Powers accepted the suspension of the Constitution and the proclamation of the un-parliamentary government. This, too, was the guiding idea of the King in suspending the parliamentary order in the State."

The bourgeois organs in the oppressed territories have thus had recourse to the most despicable means of justifying the proclamation of dictatorship by the Serbian sword and of proving that this autocracy will not be of long duration. This volt-face on the part of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities and their abandonment of the movement of national emancipation will suffice to convince the broad masses of workers, peasants, and oppressed nationalists, that the only power capable of waging a revolutionary fight for the overthrow of the military dictatorship is the vanguard of the proletariat, the C. P. of Yugoslavia.

The military dictatorship in Yugoslavia will undoubtedly accentuate the national and class antagonisms more and more. This dictatorship, which represents the concentration of the big Serbian bourgeoisie under the hegemony of Serbian financial capital, will render the position of the working masses worse and worse. The rule of the military dictatorship stands for a brutal assault of capital on labour; it stands for the barbaric exploitation of the peasantry and for aggravated national oppression; it likewise stands for the weakening of the petty-bourgeoisie and for the dismissal of a great number of clerks and employees; it is, finally, a tool in the hands of the French and British politicians for the preparation of war against the Soviet Union. The military dictatorship, which has recourse to the most barbaric Asiatic forms, must provoke the working classes to wage an armed fight for its overthrow.

Even now there is a political mobilisation of the broad masses of workers, of the proletariat, of the peasantry, of the oppressed nationalities, and of the urban petty-bourgeoisie, for the purpose of an armed revolutionary fight aiming at the overthrow of the military dictatorship. The revolutionary united front of the workers and peasants will in the course of time extend more and more, under the slogans: for the overthrow of the military dictatorship for liberty of assembly and publication, for a transfer without compensation of all landed property to the working peasants, against imperialism, against the policy of national oppression for a free alliance of all the peoples of Yugoslavia, for the Balkan Federation of Workers' and Peasants' Republics.

### Smash the Reaction and Terror of the Yugoslavian Military Clique!

To the Workers and Peasants of All Countries.

Comrades!

A military dictatorship has been set up in Yugoslavia: Alexander Karageorgievich, the Serbian king with his blood-stained past, the initiator and patron of a number of open and secret murders of the leaders and supporters of the peoples he oppresses, has taken all power into his own hands. The very first step he took was completely to annul even that measure of bourgeois "democracy" which had existed up till then on paper only and dissolved Parliament, the district and municipal councils and appoint in their stead royal commissars, and to tighten up still further the reactionary law on the press, which was bad enough as it was, and to abolish freedom of assembly. His second step has been to promulgate a new law relative to the "defence of the State" (the 1921 Protection of the State Act proved inadequate), which places all revolutionary organisations beyond the law and dissolves all political parties "based on tribal and religious principles". Immediately there followed an enactment dissolving Radich's Croatian Peasant Party, Frank's Croatian Party, the Hungarian Party, the Serbian Peasant Union, the Republican Party and all working class trade unions. A search has already taken place in the premises of the Independent Metal Workers' Union and its offices scaled up. The same measures have been taken against the other trade union organisations as well which had re-

mained intact in spite of the White Terror to which they had been subjected for the last eight years.

Involuntarily one asks, for whom is this being done and why? The reply is clear: for the British and French imperialists who are making feverish preparations for war against the first Worker-Peasant Government in the world, the U.S.S.R., and are doing everything they can to drag Yugoslavia as well into this war. This is further confirmed by the fact that the Greater Serbia militarists have entered the anti-Soviet block (Poland and Roumania) organised by the British and French imperialists against which the workers and peasants of Yugoslavia who are wholehearted sympathisers of the Soviet Union, objected most strongly. To kill this sympathy in the Yugoslavian workers and peasants the Greater Serbia militarists, acting at the behests of Anglo-French imperialism, have now decided to come to grips once and for all with the workers and peasants of Yugoslavia and their organisations. This is being done with the blessing and the assistance of the Yugoslavian bourgeoisie and the aristocracy of the social-democracy and the reformist trade unions who are becoming part and parcel of the bourgeoisie and to not care a bit for the workers of Yugoslavia.

But eight years of the terrible White Terror of the bourgeoisie has not been able to throttle the sympathies felt by the Yugoslavian toilers towards the Soviet Union, and the military dictatorship will not now be able to do this either. The struggle, however, is a very difficult one — the enemy holds everything while the workers have not even their organisations — and the Yugoslavian workers and peasants therefore stand in great need of immediate and wholehearted support from the entire international proletariat and from the workers in town and country of France and Britain in the first place whose governments have pushed on the Greater Serbia militarists to this dirty work and are lending them their entire support. The Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions calls on the workers and peasants of all countries, and the workers and peasants of Britain and France above all, to give their help to the workers and peasants of Yugoslavia. Rally to the defence of the working class of Yugoslavia and its unions!

Smash the military dictatorship in Yugoslavia!

Down with the instigators of war on the U.S.S.R.!

Long live the workers of Yugoslavia and their true working class trade unions!

Long live the united front of the workers and peasants of all countries!

Executive Bureau R.I.L.U.

January 12, 1929.

## Against the Oppression of Bessarabia by the Roumanian Boyars!

Moscow, 19th, 1929.

The press here publishes an appeal of the Central Council of the "Bessarabian Association" on the tenth anniversary of the Chodin Insurrection. The appeal is addressed to the revolutionary workers and peasants of all countries and contains, *inter alia*, the following:

Ten years have passed since the toiling population of northern Bessarabia took up arms in desperation against the atrocious brutalities of the Roumanian soldiery and the Roumanian Boyars who had taken violent possession of the land. The invaders were driven out of the whole of the Chodin district and out of a section of the Sorok district. For two weeks northern Bessarabia was freed from Roumanian rule.

Despite the tremendous enthusiasm of the whole of the population, the badly armed and badly organised insurgents were unable to stand against the counter-offensive of the regular Roumanian army supported by Artillery and Cavalry and provided with modern weapons of war by British and French arsenals. In the areas which were left unprotected by the retreat of the revolutionaries, the Boyars committed terrible atrocities against the unarmed people, and the fields of northern Bessarabia were covered with 11,000 corpses, 50,000 peasants fled with their families into the Ukraine and into Galicia.

To-day half Bessarabia, with a population of at least a million and a half, is suffering from starvation without hope

of salvation. The real reason for their sufferings is to be found in the military occupation of Bessarabia, in the Roumanian economic system and the exploitation and oppression of the workers and peasants. The present Boyar government cannot and will not make an end of the causes of the misery of Bessarabia. The insurrections of Chodin and Tatar-Bunar and many others have refuted most eloquently the lies of the Roumanian diplomats according to which the country is living in peace and prosperity. These insurrections expressed the real will of the Bessarabian people.

Workers of all countries, assist the millions of Bessarabians who have been impoverished by the Roumanian occupation! Money and bread are both necessary. The final and only solution for the misery of the workers and peasants of Bessarabia is freedom from the yoke of the Roumanian Boyars, capitalists and bankers. The innumerable victims who have fallen will not weaken the will of the Bessarabian people to freedom, but will rather steel this will to fling off the exploiters and bring about the hour of freedom.

Down with the Roumanian robbers in Bessarabia!

Long live a free soviet Bessarabia!

## THE WHITE TERROR

### The Hunger-Strike of Rakosi and Comrades Temporarily Broken Off.

Berlin, 22nd January, 1928.

The hunger-strike of Rakosi and eight other comrades (among them being Comrades Oeri and Weinberger who are seriously ill), which had lasted for ten days, has been suddenly broken off.

We have learned the following details:

When, ten days ago, Rakosi and his Comrades went on hunger-strike as a protest against the cruel regime prevailing in the Vacz prison, the governor of the prison submitted a report to the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Justice left it to the prison authorities to break the spirit of the strikers by disciplinary punishment, whereupon the governor of the prison ordered the following severe disciplinary punishment against Rakosi and comrades: all those taking part in the hunger-strike be placed in solitary confinement in dark, cold cells; their prison diet to be cut down by one third, and deprivation of warm under-clothing. What this meant for Rakosi and his Comrades can be judged when it is remembered that in the Vacz prison, even in the "heated" cells, it is so cold that the water freezes in the cans.

The relatives of the comrades on hunger strike applied to the Prime Minister, and, when he refused to see them, to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, who promised them to cancel the disciplinary punishments if Rakosi and his Comrades would give up the hunger strike. Upon the urgent request of the relatives the strikers thereupon decided to give up the strike for the time being, but nevertheless declared that they would immediately resume the hunger-strike if the promises were not carried out completely.

Thus the lives of Rakosi and Comrades are still in danger. It remains to be seen whether the promise given by the Ministry of Justice is merely a manoeuvre in order to appease the workers of the world and the broad circles of intellectuals who, in numerous protest telegrams, have expressed their indignation at the treatment accorded to Rakosi and his Comrades.

### The Campaign against Rakosi's Jailers is Increasing.

Berlin, 21st January 1929.

Telegrams are arriving here from all parts of the world showing that the international campaign of protest against the brutal and inhuman treatment accorded to Rakosi and his fellow-prisoners is increasing in extent and volume.

The campaign embraces not only the workers, but also wide circles of the intellectuals. The protest action of the toilers in the Soviet Union was initiated by articles in the newspapers, which pointed out that Rakosi had been saved from death on two

occasions by the international proletariat and that now an appeal was once again going forth to save Rakosi a third time from death, this time a death of slow martyrdom.

The alarming report of the Berlin "Rote Fahne" according to which Rakosi and his fellow-prisoners have been on hunger-strike for over a week, has brought a great movement into the Berlin factories. Numerous large-scale factories have adopted resolutions of protest and the spirit of the Berlin workers shows that in the next few days the Berlin Hungarian Embassy will be overflowed with letters of protest and telegrams.

The Paris "Humanité" brings on the first page a detailed report of the brutal treatment accorded to Rakosi under the title of "Help Rakosi! The Budapest reactionaries intend to murder Rakosi!"

In New York the American Bishop Montgomery Brown has joined his name to the protest action.

The Vienna "Rote Fahne" declares that the action of the prison authorities in Hungary towards Rakosi proves that they intend to murder slowly one of the best fighters of the international proletariat.

## Protest Telegram to Count Bethlen.

Berlin, 19th January 1929.

The following protest telegram was sent to Count Bethlen, the Hungarian Prime Minister, to-day:

"We observe with indignation the brutal treatment meted out to Rakosi and his comrades in the prison of Vacz, which has compelled Rakosi and his comrades to enter into a hunger-strike. We protest emphatically against the inhuman treatment of defenceless prisoners, all the more so as these prisoners have been sentenced solely on account of their political convictions. We expect the immediate abolition of the extreme severity applied towards Rakosi and his fellow prisoners, by which their lives are endangered, and urgently request that a more humane prison regime be introduced. In the names of thousands of intellectuals and millions of toilers in Great Britain, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia and the United States of America:

Saklatvala M. P., Helen Crawford, authoress; Fred Douglas, author; Upton Sinclair, author; Bishop Montgomery Brown, Ture Normann, author; Sven Linderut, author; de Visser M. P. William J. Kruyt, author; Frau Dr. Frischauf, M. D.; Frau Dr. Adler; Maréaux M. P.; Geux, author; Médard, author; Henri Barbusse, author; Albert Fournier, M. P.; Marcel Cachin, M. P.; Professor Dr. Z. Najedly; Dr. Hugo Hecht; J. Hora, author; Dr. I. Sekanina; Helene Malirova, author; Marie Mayerova, authoress; I. Olbracht, editor and author; Jaroslav Seifert, author; K. Tejge, architect; Dr. J. Vrbensky, ex-Minister; L. Beran, secretary of the W.I.R.; I. Hoesl, stage-manager; J. Fushik, editor; L. Landova Stychova, M. P.; Professor Dr. Alfons Goldschmidt; Alfons Paquet, author; Professor Dr. Karl Gruenberg; Frau Dr. Helene Stoecker, authoress; Dr. Egon Erwin Kisch, author; Ernst Toller, author; Dr. Adolf Behne, author; Pastor Bleier; Professor Arthur Segall; Dr. Kurt Hiller, author; Leo Lania, editor; Frau Regine Ruben, authoress; Dr. A. Frankel, M. D.; Privy Councillor Jacoby; Dr. Franz Hoellering, author; Dr. Leo Klauber, M. D.; Ervin Piscator, stage-manager; Emil Rabold, editor; Dr. Kurt Kersten, editor; Gerhard Pohl, editor and author; Dr. Obuch, lawyer; Professor Heinrich Zille; Kurt Grossmann, author; Otto Lehmann-Russbüdt, secretary of the League for the Human Rights; Dr. Franz Weisskopf, author; Dr. Boenheim, M. D.; Dr. Lothar Wolf, M. D.; Frau Meta Krauss-Fessel; Dr. Fritz Ausländer; Frau Professor Käthe Kollwitz; Dr. Schiff, author; Hugo Döhlen, author; Fritz von Unruh, actor; Heinrich Vogeler, painter; Lu Maerten, authoress; Professor Roseberry D'Arguto, composer; Arthur Seehof, editor; Professor Paul Oesterreich; Martha Arendsee, M. P.; Walter Stoecker, M. P.; Frau Hoffmann-Gwinner, Councillor; Professor Otto Dix, Painter; Professor Georg Scholz, Georg Grosz, painter; Rudolf Schlichter, painter; Oscar Maria Graf, author; Otto Nagel, painter; Bruno W. Reimann, author; Georg Ledebour for the W.I.R.; Willi Muenzenberg M. P.; Francesco Misiano, author; Paul Scholze, secretary W.I.R.; Georg Dueninghaus, Dr. Fritz Weisz, M. D.; Frau Dr. Hanna Luther; Hermann Leupold, author; Dr. Max Hodann, M. D. Lindemann chairman Socialist League.

## The Vacz Prison.

By B. (Budapest).

The prison in Vacz, in which Comrade Rakosi and other comrades have now been confined for several years, is the most cruel and frightful penal institution in Hungary. Even the "normal" regime in this prison is so cruel that there are few prisoners who do not leave it broken in body and spirit after more or less long confinement in it. The damp and mildewed cells are not heated, or only very slightly, even in the very coldest winter. The prisoners must perform the hardest work for ten to fourteen hours daily, under the constant supervision of warders, for a wage which, including "piece-work wage", is rarely higher than a penny a day. The diet is so bad and so insufficient that most of the prisoners fall ill with scurvy after a short time. Since March 1928, when the transition to the "peace regime" was proclaimed, the prisoners have not been allowed to receive any food whatever from their relatives. It is true the prisoner is allowed to spend the half of his earnings (that is not quite one shilling a month) on the purchase of bacon, onions etc. But even this trifling addition does not serve to nourish the prisoners but the prison warders, who exchange the bacon for tobacco. For bacon to the value of one shilling the prisoner gets by this means a packet of tobacco worth not more than about a halfpenny. But even this tobacco often leads to his undoing. Smoking is strictly forbidden in the prison. If a prisoner is caught smoking, or even if a trace of tobacco is found on him, he is punished in a most cruel manner.

For being found in possession of one cigarette the prisoner is usually punished one to two weeks in a dark cell with a hard bed, or is placed in fetters for twelve hours. There is a special method of fettering the prisoners: the so-called "short iron". It consists in chaining the right wrist to the left ankle and the left wrist to the right ankle, so that the arms are completely twisted. The two chains are then drawn close together and fastened with a padlock. In this position the prisoner has to spend six hours a day until he has completed his punishment. Very often the whole prison is filled with the cries of agony from the prisoners who are fettered in this manner. Rupture is one of the least serious consequences of this disciplinary punishment. The following case of which we have learned from absolutely reliable sources, is characteristic of the system of disciplinary punishments:



Comrade Rakosi

A prisoner named **Ludwig Michaelovitch** received on the 10th of October 1928 a disciplinary punishment, which included being fettered for 18 hours in the manner above-described. After having served this punishment he constantly complained of pains in the abdomen. The warden, in placing the chains on his victim, **knelt on his back**. Shortly afterwards the prisoner was found in possession of tobacco, for which, as a further punishment, his legs were chained together. He repeatedly asked to see the doctor, (on the last occasion on the 19th of October) and requested him, having regard to the fact that he was suffering from tuberculosis, that the leg-fetters chains be removed until he had at least recovered somewhat. This request was not granted. **On the next day, in the night between the 20th and 21st of October, Michaelovitch died in the disciplinary cell, still in chains, without the doctor having been called to him.** This is not an isolated case. It has happened more than once that a prisoner had his backbone broken when being placed in chains.

Of course, only such prisoners can be got rid of in this manner whose sudden death and disappearance would not cause any great excitement. Against Comrade **Rakosi**, whose fate is closely followed by the public opinion of the workers of the world, another and slower method of execution had to be thought out. The punishment inflicted upon him will — if the international proletariat does not again hasten to his aid — lead to the same result as the breaking of the backbone. The reduction of the prison diet by one-third for a whole year and three months confinement in the abominable punishment cell mean his being executed by the joint agency of tuberculosis and starvation. The hunger-strike was the last means open to our Comrades. Only international solidarity action can help this heroic fight to succeed and save the life of Comrade **Rakosi**.

## AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION

### The Cologne Meeting of the League Against Imperialism.

By **Willi Münzenberg** (General Secretary of the League Against Imperialism).

The meeting of the Executive of the "League Against Imperialism and for National Independence", which took place a few days ago in Cologne, rightly aroused the attention and interest of broad proletarian circles and of the press.

The meeting was one of the most important held since the foundation congress of the League in Brussels. The Brussels Congress in 1927 was attended by two main groups: by the delegates of the national revolutionary movements and parties, and by a strong group of left-inclined intellectuals. The representatives of the proletarian organisations and trade unions constituted a small minority at the Brussels Congress. The leading organs of the League recognised this weakness in good time and have endeavoured to remove it. The Cologne conference has shown that these endeavours have not been in vain.

The most important item on the agenda was the question of the relations between the trade unions and the League. The delegates present showed in a most striking manner that the League has been strengthened on the proletarian and trade union side. From Great Britain there took part in the conference no less than nine men and women occupying prominent and leading positions in the English trade union movement. Of these we may mention **A. Cook**, secretary of the Miners Federation of Great Britain, **S. O. Davies**, **Harry Pollitt**, leaders of the Minority Movement, **Alexander Gossip**, Secretary of the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association. There were also present: two representatives of the Trade union unity committee of Sweden, **Baumgarten** from the Basle trades council, **Hercllet** from the C. G. T. U., **Yue Fei**, representative of the All-China Labour Federation, **Ford** from the American Negro Workers Congress, **Soubri**, the leader of the left-wing of the Arab national revolutionary movement, **Fritz Heckert** of the Red International of Labour Unions. As delegates from the trade unions of the Soviet Union there were present: **Melnitchansky**, **Figatner** and **Josevitch**.

Messages of greeting and expressing approval of the objects of the League were received from other trade union organisations, including the **Finnish Trade Union Federation**, the **Peasants League and Trade Unions of the Philippines**. During the meeting news was received that the **All-India Congress of Trade Unions** had decided on collective affiliation to the League Against Imperialism. In addition to the big trade union organisations such as the trade unions of the U.S.S.R., the **All-India Trades Union Congress**, the **Australian trade unions**, the **South African Trade Union Congress**, the **Chinese Trade Union Federation**, the **English National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association**, over one hundred trade union organisations and trades councils are collectively affiliated to the League. The League has thereby in the last few months greatly extended its influence among the workers and peasants and thus created a solid foundation on which it can proceed to carry out its international tasks.

The Cologne conference was the first occasion on which **Russian representatives took part in a meeting of the League**. The conference welcomed this fact by unanimously adopting an address of welcome which calls the attention of all organisations and friends of the League to the increasing danger of war against the U.S.S.R. and pledges them to prevent by every means the war against the U.S.S.R.

When dealing with the question of trade unions and the League, the two tendencies represented at the conference found sharp expression. One tendency, which was voiced by **Cook**, still cherishes the utopian idea of the possibility of convincing the reformists of the harmfulness of their actions and winning them for revolutionary work. Against this group the representative of the Russian trade unions, **Comrade Melnitchansky**, and **Comrade Heckert** put forward the programme of revolutionary class struggle and of fight against the conscious traitors in the labour movement. In his speech in reply, **Cook** attempted to answer the attack and in so doing revealed a social-democratic point of view on certain points. Nevertheless **Cook**, as well as all the other non-Communists present, left no doubt whatever that he is ready to work with all energy for the League and for its fight against imperialism.

The resolution drawn up by **Cook** and **Melnitchansky**, and moved by the former, calls for a close co-operation of the anti-imperialist and national revolutionary movement: in particular the broad masses of the workers, especially the trade unions of the western countries, must take part in the work. The trade unions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries must be promoted, without, however, the League interfering in the work of the trade unions. The resolution concludes with an appeal to all trade unions and workers to join the League.

It is clear that the differences of opinion between the two tendencies at the conference regarding tactics have not been removed with the unanimous adoption of this resolution. **Comrade Melnitchansky** rightly pointed out in his closing speech that the Russians will always fulfil their duty and call attention to all errors in the tactics of the workers' organisations. It speaks, however, for the strength of the League Against Imperialism that it unites in its organisations representatives of national revolutionary parties along with intellectual Socialists and Communists and can carry on a discussion between representatives of different tendencies regarding tactics. The first attack on the League has been repelled by the British group under the leadership of **Maxton**, the chairman of the League. When **Friedrich Adler**, at the Brussels Congress of the II. International, called upon the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain to choose between the II. International and the League, **Maxton** declared a few days later at a mass meeting in Berlin that, faced with the alternative of going with **Friedrich Adler** against the League or of going without **Friedrich Adler** with the League — a declaration which **Maxton** and the other members of the Independent Labour Party who appeared with him at the Cologne conference have emphasised.

In spite of the differences of opinion on the question of trade union tactics, the Cologne conference was united in conducting a revolutionary policy in the anti-imperialist struggle and unanimously demonstrated its readiness to exert all its forces against imperialist war.

This was clearly expressed in the speech by Saklatvala on the latest phase of the struggle for freedom in India and on the reactionary putsch in Afghanistan. In the decision adopted on this question the conference points out that the reactionary machinations in Afghanistan are to be attributed to the intrigues of England, and have as their object to disturb the peaceable relations of Afghanistan to the Soviet Union, to strengthen the influence of English imperialism and align Afghanistan in the war front against the Soviet Union.

It is quite understandable that the proceedings of the Cologne conference cannot give complete satisfaction when viewed from the severely critical standpoint of our Communist Party policy. The statements of some of the speakers betrayed illusions regarding the reformist leaders and their role in the proletarian class struggle and revealed a narrow outlook in regard to making use on an international scale of the experiences acquired in the proletarian class struggle.

It will be the task of the Communists in the League to continue the discussion of these questions which was commenced in Cologne. It would be a mistake, however, to restrict the work of Communists in the League or even to abandon the League on account of the existing differences of opinion. In the short period of its existence the League has proved that important sections and groups in the various countries are conducting a serious revolutionary fight against imperialism. Even if many leaders who made a big show at the Brussels Congress have gone over to the enemy, others have made great sacrifices for the anti-imperialist movement.

Others, such as Ghedli, the leader of the anti-imperialist movement in North Africa, have been condemned to long terms of imprisonment; Senghore and Mella have sealed with their lives their fidelity and devotion to the anti-imperialist movement.

The proletarian extension and growth of the League recorded at the Cologne conference is a further guarantee that the League has not got into opportunist channels, but, like its best sections in Mexico, in the Latin-American countries, in North Africa, in the Arabian territories and in India, is fighting with revolutionary and proletarian tactics for the correct anti-imperialist programme of the Brussels congress.

### **Speech of Comrade Melnitchansky at the Cologne Meeting of the League against Imperialism.\*)**

You will not consider it immodest when I say that our country as a whole is a decisive factor in the fight against imperialism and for the peace of the whole world. As soon as the Central Trade-Union Council of the Soviet Union was invited by the Presidium of the League to participate, we joined it, although we were aware that the League Against Imperialism is composed of various elements.

I believe that at a meeting of the presidium of the League Against Imperialism the question of importance should be not so much the nature of imperialism but rather how the fight should be fought and at whom the next blows should be aimed.

We must state that imperialism has lately greatly recovered from the big revolutionary shocks. For this reason one can again detect the smell of gun-powder and poison gases in the air. The defeat of the Labour movement in Europe, the brutality of Great Britain in the colonies, and especially in China, has restored freedom of movement to the capitalists and given them fresh hope. The working class at home is weakened and no longer constitutes an immediate danger, therefore, a free hand is given for quiet preparations for fresh warlike adventures. We must say quite openly that the defeat of the working class and the weakening of the proletarian fighting organisations strengthens imperialism and hastens the outbreak of a new war. The situation in which the working class now finds itself is a result of the treacherous policy of the

reformists — the leaders of Amsterdam and of the Social Democrats. The latter have done their best to disorganise and to betray the working class at the time of the most serious conflicts between the proletariat and capitalism. The reformists betrayed the interests of the working class in individual fights, and they are betraying these interests now by splitting up the trade-union movement, by driving out of it all virile and revolutionary elements.

I am not in agreement with Cook when he maintains, that the reformists — members of the General Council — are not traitors but cowards and ignoramuses, who do not know the economic laws of the national and international Labour movement. Apparently Cook still entertains illusions in regard to the role of the leaders of the General Council. The course of the English mining lock-out, the dissolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee, the abandonment of resistance to the carrying through of the anti-trade union law and of Mondism do not appear to be sufficient lessons for him. You might suppose that the members of the General Council are little children who do not know what they are doing. From the lips of Comrade Cook this sounds much too naive, to say the least of it.

The nature of reformism does not lie in the circumstance that its leaders are ignoramuses and cowards, but in the fact that in their nature and psychology they are faithful agents of capitalism, for they are a part of the capitalistic machinery, which serves the purpose of still further enslaving the working class.

Moreover, Cook contradicts himself, for he admits that there can be no doubt but that, even though the statutes of the General Council of Trades Union Congress provide for the necessity of fighting against war, the General Council would in case of a declaration of war forget this and repeat the history of 1914. The Ben Tillets and Thomasses will become recruiters for the army. Tell us, Comrade Cook, will this be the result of ignorance and cowardice or the result of treachery?

Cook also said that we must carry on the fight against imperialism on a broader basis by attracting into the fight the ultra-right and ultra-left. At the same time, he says that you cannot fight against imperialism with phrases. Without meaning any offence to Comrade Cook I must say that his statement about the necessity of co-operating with the ultra-right and ultra-left is nothing but a phrase. How is it possible to fight against imperialism in collaboration with Thomas and his set, in collaboration with people who do their utmost to serve imperialism.

The League against Imperialism must recognise that it cannot wage war upon imperialism by means of resolutions and high-sounding phrases.

Our country, our workers and peasants, had to bear all the burdens of the imperialist war and of the interventions, had to sacrifice millions of human lives and suffer severe economic shocks. After this bitter experience we have arrived at our standpoint, based upon the practice of the class war both at home and abroad, which standpoint envisages the necessity of the most active and ruthless fight against imperialism and war. We openly affirm that war is a consequence of that economic system prevailing in the capitalist-imperialist countries. This system is based upon the slavery of the working class and of the poorer population, upon the competition of the capitalists in the various countries, upon the fight for markets, upon the annexation of colonies, upon the subjugation of whole peoples and countries in the interests of the imperialist aggrandisement of the capitalist class. By reason of its mere existence this system bears within it the danger of fresh war. As long as this system lasts we shall not be able to banish the danger of war.

We bear witness that not a single capitalist country hesitates at any expenditure, no matter how great, for the purpose of perfecting its war and chemical industries and strengthening its military power. And in this, too, the reformists support the capitalist government. They are faithful servants of capitalism and are occasionally handsomely rewarded for their service. There are many people who do not comprehend that we are on the verge of a new war, a war which will be immeasurably more terrible than the international slaughter of 1914/18. Many do not yet grasp that the post-war period was employed

\* This is a free translation of Comrade Melnitchansky's speech, printed without being first submitted to him. We have no shorthand note of the speech. Ed.

for the creation of still greater technics with the object of destroying not only the opposing armies but the populations of whole cities and countries. Furthermore, only a few of those who understand this danger know what should be done to obviate the danger of war and to make war an utter impossibility.

We have been witnesses of international conferences and congresses of the pacifists and reformists, which have dealt with the question of combating war. We were present at the Hague Congress of 1922. Our delegation warned that congress against desiring to solve the problem with mere resolutions and pious wishes. We said that all real opponents of war must immediately organise a fight against this system which gives rise to wars and fosters them. Into this fight must be drawn the soldiers, their mothers, wives, and sisters and the youth who fill up afresh the ranks of the armies. The working class and the poor sections of the population must be organised for the revolutionary fight. The Hague Conference — held immediately before the occupation of the Ruhr — did not take the path indicated by us.

We also now warn against the imminent danger of war. Feverish piling up of armaments in the capitalist countries, the growing Anglo-American rivalry, the Anglo-French, Anglo-Japanese and the Polish Roumanian treaties, all this goes to prove that the danger of war is an absolutely real one. The growth of political and economic reaction in the capitalist countries, the consolidation of Fascism and the defeat of the working class in the Fascist countries tend to accelerate the outbreak of war. We have already had fighting in Nicaragua, Morocco, Indonesia, etc. The governments of the imperialist countries know only too well how to manoeuvre. They have created a complete system wherewith to pacify the people and divert their attention from the new wars for which armaments are being piled up. The League of Nations, the International Labour Office, the Kellogg Pact, the disarmament conference, these are all parts of a single system for the deceiving of the workers and the enslavement of the peoples. The best help the capitalists have in this scheme is that rendered by the reformists in retarding and preventing the organisation of the revolutionary class struggle.

We workers and toilers of the Soviet Union put the question clearly and definitely. We say that in each capitalist country there is a war every day: the class war. The more organised and revolutionary the working class is and the heavier the blows it aims at capitalism, the weaker the latter becomes and the less its possibility of engaging in foreign wars. From this we draw the conclusion that the workers in every individual capitalist country, as also on an international scale, should increase the revolutionary fight against capitalism. This will amount to an increased fight against imperialism and the danger of war. We would emphasise that apart from the imperialist wars for new markets and colonies, the constant increase of armaments is intended to serve another purpose, the crushing of the Labour movement and the enslavement of the working class.

Our country, the Soviet Union, under the leadership of its Government is the only country that consistently desires peace, but at the same time, in consequence of the triumph of the workers and peasants over capitalism, the Soviet Union is the country which is menaced most by imperialist assault and interventions. The capitalist world hates the people and the country where the working class has overthrown its own capitalists and seized power and where socialism is being built up. Therefore, all the plans of the capitalists are directed towards the weakening of our economic development. The clear example, which spurs the workers of the capitalist countries to a similar course, must be destroyed in accordance with the desire of the imperialists.

From the first days of our great October victory our Government, with the full support of the workers of our country, has been working up a real peace programme, a programme of disarmament, of abolition of secret diplomacy and of the rights of all subjugated and colonial peoples to self-determination and complete independence. Our representative, Litvinov, submitted our Government's programme to the Geneva Disarmament Conference. This programme is also observable in (all) the treaties concluded with neighbouring countries concerning renunciation of wars of aggression and in proposals

lately put before the Polish and Lithuanian Governments. This programme has the full support not only of the workers, peasants and all toilers of our country but also of the working class of all countries and of all those who are sincerely endeavouring completely to destroy war, the scourge of mankind. The reformists are of assistance to the imperialists in that they declare themselves to be opposed to every war, including the revolutionary class war of the workers. They spread stories about Red Imperialism emanating from Moscow. It would suit them best if the working class were disarmed, so that the bourgeoisie might more easily destroy the stronghold of revolution.

Class war against war must be declared by all those who have to suffer most under capitalist exploitation. The war against war and against imperialism must be carried on immediately and every day, so that the outbreak of a fresh war may be prevented. At the same time as effectual weapons against war the demands for disarmament and for the execution of Litvinov's proposals, the organisation of the defence of the Soviet Union, the refusal of all war credits, the organisation of protest demonstrations of both adults and children must be resorted to.

When war has once broken out it will be a very difficult matter to wage war on war, and for many it will be too late. The whole of the machinery of State will be set in motion to suppress the slightest attempt at protest and to rouse the peoples to patriotic war-fever. We have no doubt but that the Amsterdamites and the leaders of the Second International, as also many leaders of the national-revolutionary movement will then find themselves on the side of the belligerent governments.

We know that the Anti-Imperialist League cannot accept our views in their entirety, for the League is associated with organisations which also embrace petty bourgeois elements of the national-revolutionary parties and are at present fighting for freedom from foreign yoke. We know that these can accompany us only a certain distance along our path and that immediately afterwards they will observe a policy of exploitation in relation to their own working class. Nevertheless, we consider it possible for us to join the League for the purpose of the common fight against imperialism and the danger of war. We are of the opinion that for this purpose the trade unions should join the League. In this regard we must, however, say most emphatically that joining the League should by no means prevent the trade unions from carrying on their daily class fight. At this point I would draw attention to the activity of the trade unions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The national revolutionary parties there try to make this activity serve their own interests. The trade unions in the colonies must free themselves from this influence. In order to stiffen their fight the trade unions must work exclusively in the interests of the working class. The entry of the trade unions into the League must be viewed in this sense.

In conclusion, I should like to say a few more words about the question which Cook touched upon in his speech. He repeated the old story about "not meddling" in the domestic affairs of each and every country. This demand was put up by the members of the General Council, especially when they attempted to justify the treacherous breaking up of the Anglo-Russian committee. They designated as meddling in internal affairs our sharp criticism of their treachery in the miners' struggle. Does Cook perhaps believe that we are guilty of "meddling in the domestic affairs of Great Britain" in criticising the General Council on account of its support of imperialism?

In joining the international associations we must understand how the interests of the workers of one country can be brought into consonance with those of the other countries. When we work out a common international programme and fighting tactics, this must not remain on paper but must be converted into action in every individual country. It is only in this manner that results can be achieved in the international fight. And this international discipline and solidarity should by no means be interpreted as meddling in the internal affairs of another country.

We are opposed to the interference of the League Against Imperialism in the activity of the trade unions; we are opposed to any attempt on the part of the League to determine the fate

of the international trade-union movement. We are of the opinion that the most effectual fight against imperialism and capitalism will be practicable only when we have succeeded in creating a truly revolutionary international association of trade unions. This association will lead the working class of all countries in the attack upon the strongholds of imperialism and capitalism and we will then raise no objection if it meddles in the affairs of the trade-union movement of any country, even if that country be our own.

Only the victory of the working class and all toilers over capitalism and the creation of an order of society, in which the exploitation of one person by another is impossible, and in which all the enslaved peoples of China, Egypt, India, Latin-America and of the other countries will gain complete self-determination and independence will abolish war. Only the triumph of socialism over capitalism will free humanity from war and the danger of war.

## Resolution on the Trade Unions by the Anti-Imperialist League.

1. Imperialism in the colonial countries expresses itself in the loss of all political and economic rights, destruction of freedom of the press, free speech and public meeting, loss of land, terrible housing conditions, long hours, starvation wages, unheard of exploitation, appallingly high death rates, and complete absence of all protective and social legislation.

All this is achieved by the most naked and brutal violence by the imperialist forces of suppression, their armies, navies and police, which are employed in order to keep the colonial peoples in subjection for the profit of the imperialist exploiters.

2. In the "home countries" of imperialism, the conditions fostered in the colonial countries are made the basis for attacks on what have hitherto been conceived to be the higher standards of the working class and a continued offensive which results in lower wages, longer hours, increased exploitation, increased unemployment, reduced expenditure on social services and the destruction of legal trade union practices and customs all showing the necessity for the unification of the two anti-imperialist movements, the class struggle in the capitalist countries and the national revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies.

The struggle for new markets and spheres of influence arising out of the intensified international competition, results ultimately in new wars.

3. The fight against imperialism and against the ever-growing danger of war can only be carried out successfully on condition that the broad masses of the workers of Europe, England and America and all other countries actively take part in this struggle.

4. This is particularly true for the anti-imperialist fight for freedom in the colonial and semi-colonial countries which can never end in victory if the broad masses of the workers and toilers are not brought into the anti-imperialist struggle. The trade unions can and must fulfil a special role in this fight.

5. The Executive Committee of the League against Imperialism therefore draws the attention of all its organisations and groups to the necessity of strengthening the work of winning the trade unions for the work of the League either by means of the affiliation of these unions to the League or through special agreement with the trade unions for particular campaigns and activities against imperialism and the war danger.

6. The Executive of the League recognising to the full the necessity of drawing the trade unions into the common fight against imperialism considers it necessary to emphasise that neither the League itself nor single sections of the League should intervene in the internal work and the inner life of the trade unions.

At the same time the Executive is of the opinion that the development and the strengthening of the trade unions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries can only be successful if their leadership is in the hands of the workers and representatives

elected directly by the workers. The trade unions particularly in the colonial and semi-colonial countries can only fulfil their revolutionary tasks in the day to day struggle if they keep their class character and do not become dependent on nationalist and bourgeois revolutionary parties.

The Executive Committee of the League against Imperialism considers it necessary to draw the attention of all class conscious and revolutionary trade unions of Europe, England and America and other countries to the trade union movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and to point out to them that it is absolutely necessary to render assistance to the latter in organising work and in economic and political struggles.

The Executive Committee of the League against Imperialism appeals to all trade unions and to all workers organised in the trade unions and to the toilers of the whole world to support and further the necessary and difficult work of the League against Imperialism in all countries and in all its campaigns.

## Protest by the League Against Imperialism Against the Murder of Antonio Mella.

(Adopted Unanimously.)

The Executive of the League against Imperialism, met in an extraordinary session, notes with indignation the cowardly attack of the mercenaries of the Cuban government to which Julio Antonio Mella, member of the General Council and one of the founders of the Latin-American Anti-Imperialist League, fell a victim.

Numerous members of the General Council have, after the historical World Congress of the League at Brussels, fought with all their energy and their whole personality for the promotion of the anti-imperialist movement and have had to suffer imprisonment and even death for this activity. Mella is a new and unforgettable loss.

In the year 1927 Mella took part in the Brussels Congress as representative of the Mexican Peasant Association, and after his return to America he devoted himself, as member of the Executive of the League, to the building up of strong sections of the League in the American countries.

As a result of his bitter struggle against North American imperialism he was thrown into prison in Cuba. Owing to a mass protest the Cuban Parliament was compelled to release him from prison. The government, however, expelled him from Cuba on account of his anti-imperialist activity.

At the behest of the Cuban government, which is headed by Machado, an agent of Washington, Mella has now been foully murdered in Mexico, where he continued to fight for the independence of Latin America from the imperialism of the United States.

The Executive takes cognisance of this murder with indignation and resolves to extend on an international scale the protest action which has been initiated in the Latin American countries, and to honour the memory of this fighter of Latin-America at the Conference of the League on February 13th.

## IN THE INTERNATIONAL

### British Communist Party's Tenth Congress.

By L. S. Z. Condon (London).

19. January 1929.

Nearly 150 delegates from every part of Britain assembled in Bermondsey Town Hall on Saturday for the Tenth Annual Congress of the Communist Party.

Comrade J. R. Campbell, opening his presidential address, said that he would make his speech a justification of the new line of the Communist Party in regard to the Labour Party and our election policy.

The past year, he said, had been made difficult by the increasing pressure of police persecution, victimisation at the factory and mine, and the tremendous anti-communist drive of the bureaucracy in the Labour Party and trade unions.

The two main issues in the general election as far as the Communist Party was concerned would be the growing danger of war and the means of combating it; and the decay of the basic industries, which is being accompanied by further attempts to lower the wages of the workers engaged in them.

In the war situation today there were three main possibilities. Firstly the Imperialists may patch up their quarrels and combine to make war on the U. S. S. R. This was the policy for which Sir Austen Chamberlain has strived all along. Secondly there is the possibility of war between Britain and the U. S. A. And thirdly there is the possibility of a gigantic struggle developing out of the fight of the colonies for their freedom.

The latest example of British Imperialist policy was to be seen in the attempts of the British Imperialists to disintegrate the progressive forces in Afghanistan, represented by Aminullah, as part of their plan to encircle the Soviet Union. While, as communists, we could not agree with Amanullah in many ways, nevertheless it was our duty to stand behind him in the present crisis.

The three capitalist parties were all pursuing a war policy. The Conservatives pursued it openly and unashamedly. The Liberals were more hypocritical, using pacifism as a smoke screen for the work of the warmakers. The Labour Party judged by its deeds and not by its words, was equally a party of the Imperialists. This was particularly shown in its attitude to China, to India, and to Egypt. And while the Labour Party programme speaks of diplomatic recognition of the U. S. S. R. we know from Messrs. MacDonald and Snowden that the Labour Party stands for diplomatic recognition of Russia on Baldwin terms, namely, liquidation of the Communist International, and recognition of Tsarist debts.

The Communist Party, as the only party opposed to these imperialist intrigues, will show the workers that not by votes alone but by the mass power of the working class will imperialist war be prevented. The Communist Party will carry its message specially to the workers in the war industries and to the workers serving in the fighting forces. Propaganda carrying the Party's policy on war must be intensified and extended to such degree that if within the next few years an imperialist war breaks out, the working class will prefer to risk a fight for socialism in this country rather than fight for the imperialists.

On the question of the decline in the basic industries, said Campbell, the policy towards the three capitalist parties was much the same. The plan of the Conservatives for reviving these industries was clear: first they proposed to present their friends with a gift of £ 24,000,000 under the de-rating scheme. This amount would be placed as a burden on the workers, principally under the same de-rating scheme. Wages would be reduced; and on that basis they would proceed to intensive rationalisation. Rationalisation could be defined as two men doing four men's work for one man's wage.

The policy of the Liberal and Labour parties was the same — Rationalisation under capitalist control.

Part of this scheme of rationalisation was Mondism and industrial peace. And the logical outcome of Mondism is that you cannot agree with the boss on economic issues without agreeing with him politically. This was clearly demonstrated in the wool textile industry, where the trade unions had agreed to support the employers' policy of safeguarding (i. e. tariffs).

But the Communist Party declares that capitalist rationalisation will not solve the difficulties of capitalism. It will only result in lower wages in other countries which compete with capitalist Britain, and eventually still lower wages in Britain.

Before Rationalisation can be of use to the working class, we need nationalisation without compensation. Only when the workers themselves control production, will rationalisation on socialist lines be of value to the workers.

It is a mistake, however, to think we can get nationalisation without compensation by a majority in parliament. Our

electoral system is such that even a majority of votes will not give us a majority in parliament. And even if we get a majority in parliament, the banks, the Privy Council, and the State apparatus would not give the workers control without a struggle. We will need not to capture but to smash the capitalist State machine.

While a parliamentary fraction is useful, our main emphasis in the General Election will be on organisation in the mines, factories, workshops, and at the Employment exchanges, for direct action by the workers themselves.

Comrade Campbell in conclusion dealt with the new line of the Party. The plan of the bureaucracy, he said, was to let things go quietly until after the general election, and then endeavour to make a clean sweep of the Communist Party in the trade unions, hoping to divorce it entirely from the organised workers. We can defeat this plan by binding ourselves yet closer to the workers in the factories and in the constituencies.

The capitalists and bureaucrats had hoped for a division in the ranks of the Party. They would be disappointed. We have had a keen, vigorous, and on the whole good humoured discussion of the questions at issue. This Congress would decide those issues and end the discussion. We will then go forward as a strong, united Party, confident that whatever the difficulties, we shall win through, leading the working class to victory. (Prolonged cheers.)

Comrade Gallacher introduced the discussion on "The Present Situation and the tasks of the Party".

He pointed out that despite the subjugation of the workers to the process of capitalist rationalisation there is increasing evidence of a radicalisation of the working class. But there was one chronic illusion which they would have to overcome, that "things would improve after the General Election".

In the discussion which followed, considerable criticism of the Central Committee was expressed.

Comrade Wintringham (London) said that though the new Party policy was a sharp weapon, it was being used with the blunt edge. Several mistakes had been made during the past year, but criticism of these was lacking in the documents submitted to the Congress. There had been practically no organised fight against the labour leaders, no fight for control of the political levy by the trade union branches, and little anti-militarist work had been done. A mistake had also been made in connection with the Maxton-Hicks campaign. He also complained that pamphlets had been issued by the Party several months after the adoption of the new line, in which it was said, for instance, that the Labour Party was "incapable of fighting capitalism". Then there was the priceless remark in a pamphlet by Comrade Campbell that "the Communist Party realises as well as the Labour Party the importance of forcing concessions from the capitalist class".

These mistakes revealed not only a serious Right wing tendency in the leadership of the Party, but a tendency towards the fostering of social democratic ideas in the Party.

Comrade Wintringham pointed out that the Party thesis published before the Ninth Plenum last February had been withdrawn not because of the serious mistakes that it contained, but on the grounds that it was "inadequate". He thought that one of the most useful things the Congress could do would be to deal with these mistakes and learn the lessons for the future. He suggested the appointment of a special commission to consider the mistakes made by the leadership, and report to the members.

Comrade Wintringham also complained that at previous congresses members of the Party had been ignored. In this he was supported by Comrade Maurice Ferguson who also said that the Central Committee did not listen to members.

Comrade Worrall (Portsmouth) declared that the Party was too timid. Comrade Campbell's presidential speech he said, was like one made to the Salvation Army.

## FASCISM

### The Position of Italian Fascism around the Turn of 1928 and 1929.

By Edmondo Peluso (Rome).

We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the apparent calm prevailing in Fascist Italy. It is the outcome of an unprecedented system of oppression employed against the working masses by means of an apparatus of coercion which can hardly be equalled elsewhere. But beneath the surface a volcano is seething and finds expression from time to time in spontaneous eruptions of proletarian hatred (strikes, disturbances, the murder of Fascists, etc.); these are naturally put down at once, but they are yet characteristic symptoms of the true situation of Fascism at the present moment.

Fascism has entered upon an extraordinarily serious crisis, which is bound to be aggravated as time goes on, especially when the financial obligations the Government has incurred, fall due. All the economic "battles" which Mussolini undertook to fight with vaunting words and gestures, have been lost. The economic position of Italy in general and the financial position of the State in particular give proof of this fact. It must be admitted that the State balance-sheets submitted by ex-Minister of Finance Count Volpi, were forged.

The Government balance for the year 1927/28 closed with a deficit indicated at 1,356,000,000 lire but in reality amounting to nearly 2000 millions. In spite of the coercive measures of the tax authorities, in spite of the elaboration of the bureaucratic apparatus, in spite of the taxation of foodstuffs and commodities such as bread and tobacco, and in spite of the fact that the tax on salt has been trebled, the Government revenue is constantly on the decline, by about 100 million lire monthly. By the end of June 1929, the deficit of the first half year will presumably already exceed that of the entire year 1928. The costs of the bureaucratic apparatus of oppression and of the Fascist service of espionage are continually increasing. Exports continue to decline. The surplus of imports over exports, which in the first nine months of the year 1927 amounted to 4278 million lire, figured in the first nine months of 1928 at 5749 millions. The data for October show that this deficit was increased by another 787 millions in that month. This adverse balance of trade is aggravated by the change in the character of imports. Italy imports fewer and fewer raw materials or semi-finished goods, while the quantity of industrial commodities constantly grows. This is an indirect admission of the catastrophic situation of Italian agriculture.

Savings, too, grow smaller and smaller. The reason is obvious. Want draws ever wider circles among the population. The comparatively small number of savers have lost confidence in Fascism. The gold of the Italian proletarian emigrants, which for the last forty years has figured as a very important asset in the Italian banks, is now almost wholly lost to them, since the emigrants now generally deposit their savings with American banks. Italian emigration, moreover, has declined by about 80 per cent. during the last few years by reason of the immigration restrictions in America and of the smaller call for foreign workers in France and other countries.

What, meanwhile, is the position of Italian industry? The revalorisation of the lira entailed the loss of a certain number of markets and the depression of agriculture. The attempt to reconquer these markets with the help of rationalisation or, to put it more plainly, by a reduction of wages and by a concentration of capital, was doomed to fail. The appreciation and stabilisation of the lira itself could only be attained with the aid of foreign capital. The United States alone furnished some 12,000 millions and thus secured the control and a considerable encumbrance of a certain portion of Italy's industry. The increase in the productive capacity ought to have been accompanied by an extension of the inner and outer markets. This was not the case. The impoverished Italian masses have a smaller purchasing capacity than ever before. Therefore, certain industries, such as the textile industry and the automobile industry, seek to force exportation by granting their customers

long-termed credit, in consequence of which they themselves constantly suffer from a dearth of capital. The result is a scarcity of money which entails a great general depression throughout the country and so many bankruptcies that the Government has determined only to declare such firms bankrupt as desire it themselves. (Circular of Minister of Justice Rocco.)

Unemployment increases rapidly. Although the Fascist Government officially indicates no more than 515,000 unemployed, the actual total exceeds a million.

Is there then any possibility for Italian industry to acquire new credits? Wall Street does not seem to be inclined to grant them. In consequence, the Italian bourgeoisie is commencing to offer that portion of Italian industry which is still in its hands for sale on the foreign stock exchanges. The lead in this direction has been made by the great Italian chemical trust of Montecatini. And German capital, in the form of the I. G. Farben, is already stretching out its tentacles towards this greatest of Italian industrial trusts.

According to this programme, Italian industry is becoming more and more the vassal of foreign capital. Hence the great contrast between Italy's foreign policy, which is that of a great imperialist Power, and its economic policy, which has lost practically all independence. Altogether, the decay of the entire economy is advancing with giant strides. Not only do the middle-sized enterprises disappear; even those of the heavy-metal industries, such as the Ilva, are threatened. One bank failure follows on the other; the concerns in question are mainly provincial banks, which have managed by fraud to appropriate the last penny of many an Italian farmer.

In the opinion of the general public the Fascist State appears in the light of a fraudulent business-adventurer out to steal their savings. Since the Government cannot pay back the short-termed loans, it has arbitrarily consolidated them. For the purpose of procuring 200 million lire which were badly needed, Treasury bills were issued which were secured on deposits in the post-office savings bank and on bail in the hands of the Government.

After the catastrophic results of the last few loans, to which all and every, even such as provedly had no money at all, were obliged to subscribe, any new loan is destined in advance to be a failure. To-day, two years after the issue of the last loan, the Italian State has not yet emitted the relative title-deeds. Now pressure is being brought to bear upon the subscribers to persuade them voluntarily to relinquish their claim to title-deeds as a sacrifice on the altar of the Fascist State.

The "industrial battle" is lost. So is the celebrated "grain battle", which engendered the strangest results, inasmuch as grain production, which had figured at a value of 65 million lire in 1925, receded in 1926 to 60 million lire, and in 1927 to 53 millions. In the year 1928 it recovered very slightly. The other agricultural products, oats, rice, wine, oil, etc., have regressed in a similar measure.

The Fascist taxation policy, which altogether favours the big landowners, has completely ruined the middle peasants, once the most enthusiastic supporters of Fascism, but now its bitterest opponents. Added to this, hundreds of thousands of day-labourers now form a revolutionary mass. From time to time their discontent has found vent in acts of violence, as recently at Pordone (Ventia) and Molinella (Emilia). But a cruel and immediate suppression of the disturbances always restores "order".

Unemployment in the rural districts never attained such dimensions as it has at present. There are provinces, such as Ferrara, in which 80 per cent. and more of the workers are unemployed. The peasants can emigrate neither abroad nor to the cities. Mussolini recently issued a decree forbidding the inhabitants of rural districts to leave their own villages without a permit from the authorities. Every village thus becomes a prison, which starvation may to-morrow turn into a hotbed of revolution.

Fascism fully comprehends this danger and has again promulgated a plan which is calculated to provide work for the unemployed, namely that of a general improvement of the untilled ground. This "magnificent plan" is based on an expenditure of 7,000 million lire, distributed over 15 years and

payable by the tax-payers. But countless difficulties lie in the way of its realisation. In the meantime the hunger of the unemployed increases. Therefore Mussolini and his Ministers have now resolved to make do with 270 million lire, so as immediately to appease the thousands of agricultural workers, whose ranks are swollen daily by more and more unemployed workers from the towns. Fascism seeks refuge in "national workshops", similar to those which existed in France prior to 1848. But these naturally by no means suffice to provide work for the masses of unemployed.

In the meantime the indignation of the unemployed agricultural workers rises from day to day. Many roam about as vagabonds in search of bread. Such communities as are obliged to support them get deeper and deeper into debt. Ex-Minister of Finance De Stefani has announced that the indebtedness of the provincial capitals has advanced from 3066 millions in 1925 to 5481 millions in 1928. Meanwhile the Fascist leaders, who are under no control, rob the State Treasury at will.

Thus not only the industrial but also the agrarian plan has miscarried. Can Fascism therefore be said to have succeeded in establishing itself politically?

True, Fascism has arrived at the extremes of political stabilisation. All is Fascised, the State apparatus, industry, commerce, the schools, the trade unions. But this is only on the outside, for in reality all, save the landowners, the interested capitalist groups, and the high functionaries of the Party, are anti-Fascists. The social basis of Fascism, which in the moment of victory and for a short time afterwards was very broad, has shrunk to the narrowest dimensions. The socially most important element of the petty-bourgeoisie in town and country, has quitted Fascism or is about to do so. The entire proletariat, both urban and rural, is opposed to Fascism.

Nevertheless, there is apparently no opposition in Italy, the hegemony of Fascism is undisputed, it has even destroyed the entire constitution. The Supreme Council and the Fascist Chamber of Corporations have taken the place of the "irregularly elected" organs of Government. The local administrative bodies are appointed and the workers controlled through their trade unions.

In reality, however, affairs are very different. Both the economic and the social basis, on which the Fascists have erected their regime of fire and iron, are beginning to shake.

Added to this, a struggle is going on, albeit silently, between the Pope and Mussolini. That is why the Roman Catholic papers have been forbidden to occupy themselves with politics. Nevertheless, the influence of the church organisations has only increased. In the rural districts, most of the oppositional elements are grouped round such Roman Catholic organisations as still exist.

This dangerous position of Fascist Italy, which is internally decayed and outwardly isolated, and the dwindling support given to Fascism by the broad masses, have induced Mussolini once more to rally around him the "old Fascists", i. e. the original Fascist cadres.

All Italian workers, whose position is wellnigh unbearable, abhor Fascism. They may be divided into three groups. One of these is altogether depressed and has lost all hope. Another is full of hope for the future, but considers the "powers that be" too strong and the present time inopportune for action, wherefore it elects to remain inactive. The third group is composed of the active elements who know that Fascism must absolutely be beaten and that it can only be beaten by force of arms. This group forms the vanguard endeavouring to banish lethargy and lead on the masses of the proletariat. It is the Communists who defy all tortures, executions, and indescribable persecutions in carrying on the struggle against Fascism. In this struggle they are now aided more and more by the fact that the very foundations of Fascism are increasingly undermined.

## THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

### The Miners' Strike in France.

By J. Berlioz.

After three weeks of struggle the strike committee of the miners of the Loire district decided, in view of the numerous breaches in the front of the strike, to resume work on January 17th.

The miners of the Loire district have hitherto always stood at the head of the wage movements in the mining industry. Their strike commenced in a very promising manner, as in spite of the existence of a fairly strong organisation of the reformist miners, in the first days 20,000 miners out of a total of 26,000 downed tools. But they fought against the cunning manoeuvres of the employers, against an unheard-of police terror and against the sabotage of the reformist leaders, who are backed by numerous socialist and radical municipal councils.

By threatening to close down the alleged unprofitable pits the employers awakened among the workers the fear of prolonged unemployment, which was seized upon by the reformist leaders as a pretext for reproaching the revolutionary trade unionists with heedlessly running their heads against a brick wall. In Ferminy and in Roche-la-Molière, where their influence is especially strong, they ordered the continuation of work which had been resumed on the 9th of January. Everywhere the reformists visited the miners in their homes in order to persuade them to go back to work.

The whole district, into which thousands of gendarmes and "mobile guards" were brought, was turned into an armed camp. The mobile guards in particular distinguished themselves in persecuting the fighting miners, devoting special attention to foreign strikers and workers from the colonies. In numerous cases the quarters of these categories of workers were destroyed in the most barbarous manner. With the aid of the socialists a real reign of terror was set up: the socialist municipal council of Ferminy advocated the despatch of mobile guards "for the maintenance of order".

But a further very regrettable circumstance is responsible for the failure of the strike. It appeared that the members of the revolutionary miners' union and certain Communist elements were not up to their tasks. Here there were to be seen partly anarchist-syndicalist traditions and partly reformist tendencies. Many did not realise that the fighting conditions of 1929 differ from those of the year 1906. They confined themselves to a superficial propaganda without organising the united front. With their advice to stay peacefully at home they remained behind the fighting spirit of the masses, who wished to demonstrate their will to struggle in the streets. The Central strike committee did not know to create a permanent contact with the broad masses of the strikers. The reformist manoeuvres and the fierceness of the political persecution rendered them confused and evoked a defeatist mood.

It is clear that this attitude represents a striking illustration of the opportunist danger in the unitary trade unions and in our Party, against which the leadership of both organisations must resort to energetic ideological and organisational measures.

But in spite of everything the strike in the Loire district has had considerable results. The miners who had become apathetic under the influence of the reformists were shaken out of their inactivity. The strike has sealed the alliance between the French, the foreign and the colonial workers, who participated most actively in the strike and who are now as a whole standing behind the unitary miners' Union.

In addition, the strike in the district of Gard is still proceeding; 15,000 miners are enthusiastically continuing the movement in this area. Even the reformist leaders are unable to do anything here against this movement, which got beyond their control. They are preserving "neutrality" and avoiding taking up any definite attitude. The municipal bodies under socialist control are also compelled to follow the example of the municipality of Alès, which is under Communist influence, and grant means in support of the strikers.

In the district of Gard the strike is being conducted with methods which are incomparably superior to those employed

in the Loire district. The strike Committee consists of men who are themselves working in the pits and is maintaining contact with the workers. This committee, for example, called a conference for the 14th of January of representatives of all pits, at which the unorganised and before all the members of the reformist trade union were represented. It was decided at this Conference to continue the fight. Ticketing is carefully organised; detachments of strikers penetrate the colliery buildings where they extinguish the fires under the boilers. The government thought that it could send French troops to secure order. But the miners immediately took up the demands of the soldiers, defended them and supplied the troops with food. The result: at two pits the soldiers fraternised with the miners, allowed them to pass freely, so that the government was compelled to withdraw these troops and to replace them by police and gendarmes.

In the little district of Aveyron with only 7000 miners, the forces of the unitary and the reformist trade unions are about equal. The unitary trade union organised a conference of pit representatives which took place on the 6th of January at Decazville. The various pits were represented in all by 36 unorganised miners, 31 members of the unitary and one member of the reformist trade union. This Conference decided to repudiate the treaty regarding wage increases concluded between the employers and the leaders of the Confederation, (i. e. the reformist trade union). An ultimatum to the employers was drawn up and on the 11th, in spite of the opposition of the reformists, the strike was declared as the employers had rejected the ultimatum. At first only 50 per cent. of the miners took part in the movement; it has since grown however and gradually captured the area which was greatly under the influence of the reformists.

Finally, the fighting spirit is now extending to the decisive districts in the North. The unitary miners' federation in this area increased the agitation and prepared a big Conference of representatives of the pits to take place on the 20th of January. The majority of the French miners are discontented with their present wages, which the reformists more or less openly promised them would be considerably improved as a result of their negotiations. The reformists are quite aware that the unitary influence is growing, and are therefore conducting a fierce campaign of calumny against the Communists, whom they reproach with desiring to bring about strikes for the sake of strikes and thereby play into the hands of the bourgeoisie in order to be able to report to Moscow that they have conducted another strike. They themselves maintain that they "serve the general interests better", i. e. the role which the employers allot to them of persuading the miners that the colliery companies are in a very serious situation and that the profitability of the companies must be secured by increased output before there can be any talk of granting wage increases. They are showing themselves once again to be the direct agents of rationalisation and of industrial peace, for the sake of which only the workers are to make sacrifices.

## AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR

### Set up the United Front against Imperialist War!

Comrades, Class Brothers!

The growing contradictions of the capitalist system, the struggle of Capital against the Soviet Union, the country in which socialism is being built up, are bringing nearer with every hour the moment of the outbreak of the imperialist slaughter, and in the first place of a war of the bourgeoisie against the first workers' State of the world.

Chemical capital has become one of the most important elements for the armaments of the bourgeoisie. Alfred Mond, the apostle of industrial peace, is at the same time the inspirer of the graniose British war-chemical industry. German, American, French and Italian capital, the bourgeoisie of Poland and of Czechoslovakia are investing enormous sums in the war-chemical industry. Ninety-nine per cent. of the chemical production is destined for the requirements of the future war. Under the cloak of peace industry, militarism is feverishly producing, in the underground rooms and basements of the fac-

tory buildings, in a greatly extended network of laboratories, hundreds of thousands and millions of tons of suffocating and poison gases, phosgen, pyrit and lewisite. The most dreadful means of annihilation are being produced, destined for the physical destruction of millions of proletarians who have been put into military uniforms, for the mass annihilation of the inhabitants of peaceful cities and villages and for the destruction of the Soviet Union, the fatherland of the world proletariat.

In its activity capital finds an important support in the reformist trade union leaders, who have openly gone over to the other side of the barricades. The spokesmen of the reformist factory workers' unions are open agents of chemical-capital. They screen the activity of chemical-capital for the preparation of war. They prove to be a counter-revolutionary force in all the daily struggles of the factory workers. They direct all their efforts towards undermining proletarian unity, towards a desperate fight against the revolutionary workers, towards bringing about a peace and an understanding with the capitalists.

The proletarians have replied to the offensive of the capitalists by putting up an active defence. The working class of all countries is stirring and making ready for the struggle.

In this moment the factory workers must stand in the first ranks of the fighters. They are confronted with the task of shaking off the exhaustingly long working hours, of demanding adequate payment for their work from the robbers of chemical-capital who are making millions out of the sweat and blood of the working class. The women and youths, who are especially brutally exploited by chemical-capital, must join the common proletarian ranks for the fight for a better future. During the approaching big struggles the innumerable masses of the organised factory workers must stream like a broad wave into the ranks of the fighters and support with all their forces the Left-wing of the factory workers. The men and women factory workers of all countries must raise their voices against the war against the Soviet Union, against the preparation of an unheard of slaughter which threatens to deprive anew the families of their bread-winners and of the roof over their heads.

**Men and women factory workers of Germany!** In the approaching struggle for the renewal of the collective treaties and for the new election of factory councils follow the example of the 25,000 workers of the Leuna works and side with the revolutionary trade union minority!

**Working men and women of France, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Belgium and other countries!** Rally in the approaching struggles round the revolutionary wing of the factory workers, which is the only bearer of the class struggle!

**Working men and women of Great Britain and the United States of America!** Set up your own fighting organisations, win for them hundreds of thousands of unorganised workers, who, owing to the policy of the treacherous trade union leaders, are delivered over to the mercy of chemical-capital!

**Proletarian Chemical workers of Poland!** Support the Left wing in repelling the terror of fascism and its accomplices, the disrupters in the social democratic Party of Poland!

**Proletarian brothers of the Scandinavian countries!** Demand from the reformist leaders the cessation of sabotage of unity, the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship with your brothers of the Soviet Union. Fight for the revolutionary leadership of your trade union organisations!

Against the lengthening of working hours, for the seven-hour day as a maximum working day and for the six-hour day in harmful occupations.

For an increase of wages, for equal pay for equal work. Against the inhuman exploitation of the working class, against industrial peace.

Against the treacherous reformist leaders. Working women, fight shoulder to shoulder with the whole proletariat!

Young workers, be the vanguard in the future collisions of the classes!

All join in a firm united front in the struggle, over the heads of the treacherous leaders, in a struggle against the capitalists, against the instigators of a world-slaughter and their henchmen!

All for the protection of your proletarian fatherland, the Soviet Union!

**The International Propaganda and Action Committee of the Chemical, Paper and Sugar Workers.**

## FOR THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

### The Rejection of the Russo-Finnish-Norwegian Trade Union Alliance by the Leading Organisations of the Norwegian Trade Unions.

The following is an extract from an article of the Central organ of the C. P. of Norway: "Norges Kommunistblad". Editor.

In accordance with the wishes of the great majority of the members, the Congress of the Trade Union Federation adopted in the year 1927 a decision aiming at restoring the international unity of the trade unions. The delegates were well aware of the difficulties which have to be overcome, nevertheless they decided, together with the Finnish Trade Union Federation, to invite the two Trade Union Internationals to a World Congress in order to discuss the question of international unity.

The Red International of Labour Unions declared itself ready, but the Amsterdam International preferred to stick to its splitting policy and bluntly rejected the invitation. That the Amsterdamites could adopt such a provocative attitude was due to the fact that they were well informed regarding conditions in Norway. They knew that the reformist majority of the Norwegian trade union leaders cherished the desire to lead the Trade Union Federation back into the Amsterdam International and that they had sent the invitation only under the pressure of the members. They also knew the attitude of the Norwegian Centrists, with Tranmael at the head, who made the reservation to conclude the fighting alliance of the Norwegian, Finnish and Russian trade unions only on condition that the Scandinavian Amsterdamites were not opposed to it. But this reservation meant in its formulation a direct appeal to the Scandinavian Amsterdamites to exert strong pressure upon the Finnish and Norwegian workers in order to frustrate the carrying out of the decision.

The Norwegian workers know that this appeal has been responded to. The reformists in Sweden and Denmark openly threatened to break off the Scandinavian connections in the event of the Norwegian Trade Union Federation entering into organisational relations with the Russian trade unions.

The Executive of the Trade Union Federation has resolved, by 62 votes against 18, to postpone indefinitely the carrying out of the decisions of the Scandinavian-Russian Conference, which aimed at the establishment of a mutual fighting alliance of the trade unions of these countries. Formally this means the postponement up to the next Congress; in fact however, it means the rejection of the fighting alliance with the Finnish and Russian trade unions.

The next Trade Union Congress is to take place in the year 1930, at the same time as the elections to the Storthing are to take place. The Ministers, the reformist leaders of the Trade Union Federation as well as of the Norwegian Labour Party, will certainly do everything in their power to prevent anything which would injure the prospects of the Labour Party as a government party. The decision means a victory of the Amsterdamites within our movement and a final subjection of the Centrists to the policy of civil peace and class collaboration.

Tranmael's organ, "Arbeiderbladet", writes: "According to our opinion the discussion on the international connection must be concluded. Our organisations are confronted with other tasks which claim the entire interest and the whole energy of the union members."

These wishes of Tranmael will hardly be fulfilled, for the revolutionary workers of Norway will, under the leadership of the Communist Party, continue the fight for the establishment of international trade union unity over the heads of the reformist trade union bureaucrats.

## FIGHT AGAINST THE RIGHT DANGER

### The Polit-Bureau of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia against the Right Danger.

Prague, January 13th, 1929.

The Politbureau of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia, after the arrival of news regarding the meeting of the E. C. C. I. Presidium and the latest events in the C. P. of Germany, has once again laid down its standpoint concerning the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I. to the Communist Party of Germany. The adopted resolution declares:

"The Politbureau of the C. P. Cz. entirely agrees with the resolution and the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I. to the members of the C. P. of Germany."

This decision is of first class importance for our Party as we have in our present crisis to conduct a difficult fight against the liquidators and against the vacillating elements in our Party. The liquidatory programme of Brandler and Thalheimer, which has its open and concealed advocates in our Party, finds its most blatant expression in the policy of leading trade union functionaries in the conduct and leadership of economic struggles. The unity of the revolutionary trade union movement in Czechoslovakia is seriously threatened by these ideological adherents of the German liquidators. The solution of our Party crisis is closely bound up with the thorough overcoming and revision of the erroneous political line of the Party, of all remnants of Brandler's ideology in our ranks. The solution of our Party crisis is closely bound up with the thorough overcoming of all social democratic traditions of our Party.

The Politbureau of the C. P. Cz., in complete agreement with the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I. to the C. P. of Germany, approves the expulsion of all those from the ranks of the C. I. who continue their fractional activity and desire to spread the liquidatory policy of Brandler in the Communist ranks.

The Politbureau of the C. P. Cz. at the same time condemns the role of the conciliatories in the C. P. of Germany, who pretend to recognise the correctness of the general line of the VI. World Congress but at the same time are conducting a sharp struggle against the decisions of the VI. World Congress in the inner-party policy of the C. P. of Germany and support the struggle of the Right liquidators against the line of the VI. World Congress and the C. C. of the C. P. G.

The Politbureau of the C. P. G., which pursues with the greatest attention the activity of the German brother Party, considers the line of the C. C. of the C. P. G. to be correct and in accordance with the decisions of the VI. World Congress of the C. I. and the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U.

We declare that the C. P. G. proved to be up to the difficult tasks with which it was confronted in the armoured-cruiser campaign, in the present Ruhr struggle and in a whole number of mass actions, in which it has practically applied the new strike strategy laid down by the decisions of the VI. World Congress of the C. I. and the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U.

The Politbureau of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia condemns the attitude of Comrades Humbert-Droz and Serra, who have adopted the standpoint of the German Rights and have taken over their defence.

The Politbureau of the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. draws the attention of the Party members to the international importance of the Open Letter of the C. I. to the C. P. of Germany. The Right danger is the greatest danger which threatens the Communist Parties, and the sharpest struggle must be waged against it.

The Politbureau of the C. C. of the C. P. Cz.

## THE YOUTH MOVEMENT

### **The Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. for the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I.**

The Presidium of the E. C. of the Young Communist International, at its session of December 21st, heard the report of Comrade Chitarov regarding the treatment in the E. C. C. I. of the question of the Right danger and the conciliators. Nearly all comrades took part in the discussion. They welcomed the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I. against the Right and the conciliators and emphasised the great role and importance of the Young Communist Leagues in the struggle against the Right danger and especially in connection with the carrying through of the E. C. C. I. Letter.

It was decided to publish a pamphlet on the tasks of the Y. C. Leagues in the struggle against the Right danger (which is at present the greatest danger in the C. I.) and against deviations in general. In this pamphlet there will be recorded the glorious past of the Y. C. I. and its sections in the struggle against all deviations and for the true Bolshevik line.

In conclusion a resolution was unanimously adopted containing the following passages:

"The Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. declares its complete and unreserved approval of the Open Letter of the Comintern and of all its decisions regarding the situation in the German Party..."

The Presidium calls upon all sections of the Y. C. I. to support actively the Open Letter of the Comintern to the German Party and to conduct a decisive and ruthless struggle against all Right and conciliatory groupings and tendencies in all Communist Parties and Young Communist Leagues."

### **The Young Communist League of Germany in the Struggle against the Renegades and Conciliators.**

By R. Leibbrand.

At the beginning of the discussion there occurred some vacillations in the C. C. of the League, which in the last few years was one of the champions of the Comintern line in Germany. The Bureau of the C. C. not only approved of the wrong decision of the Party Central in the question of Comrade Thälmann, but even made some reservations to the Comintern decision on this affair. The development of the inner-Party struggle, however, soon convinced the comrades of the incorrectness of their attitude; the Bureau, in the resolution submitted to the session of the Plenum of the Central, recognised and corrected its errors. The attitude which the Young Communist League adopted in the further course of the discussion, destroyed all the speculations of the Rights and the conciliators and proved that the vacillations in the leadership were in fact only accidental and temporary and that the League is firmly and unitedly siding with the Comintern and the Party majority.

The influence both of the Right liquidators and of the conciliators in the League is relatively much weaker even than

in the Party. As far as an Opposition made itself apparent in the Youth League at all, it did not, for the greater part, emerge from the Youth League but was carried from the Party Opposition into the League.

It is extremely characteristic that in the League the boundaries between the Rights and the conciliators are almost obliterated. In Leipzig, where the Opposition in the League was the strongest, the Rights and the conciliators formed one fraction, and oppositional functionaries who began the struggle against the Party and the Youth League with conciliatory arguments soon landed on the platform of the Brandler fraction. In the same measure, however, that individual conciliatory functionaries exposed themselves as genuine Right liquidators so they lost every influence upon the members of the League.

The Opposition in the League is not even able to come forward with its own platform; it contents itself with repeating the Right and conciliatory arguments against the decisions of the VI. World Congress and the policy of the Party, and is unable to prove wherein the "ultra-Left", "sectarian" policy of the Party finds its expression in the work of the Youth League.

Only in one question did the Opposition attempt to attack the policy of the Youth League by opposing the tactics, decided on by the V. World Congress of the Y. C. I., of drawing the young workers into the economic struggles. According to the opinion of the Rights the apprentices must not be called upon to participate in strikes, because they are bound by the individual apprentice-agreements and have no right to strike. Instead, we should issue for the apprentices the slogan of "Refusal to perform blackleg-work". As a matter of fact refusal to do blackleg-work by the apprentices is hampered by as many legal and contractual provisions as that of participation in a strike. The legal situation is therefore the same; the difference consists only in the fact that by the slogan of "refusal of blackleg-work" (which we shall issue if our first attempt to win the apprentices for participation in the strike should fail) the apprentices are forced on to the defensive.

The Youth League has in connection with the reports on the VI. World Congress, organised a broad ideological campaign to enlighten its members regarding the opportunist conceptions of the Rights and the conciliators, with the result that the already weak influence of the Rights and conciliators is uninterruptedly waning. The best example is the development in West Saxony. Some leading comrades of the district committee had, by means of a tendentious distortion of the happenings in the Hamburg Party organisation, at an Enlarged district committee meeting, brought about the adoption of a resolution against the Comintern decision on the Hamburg affair. When, however, after the intervention of the C. C., the fractional manoeuvres of the Opposition have been exposed and a thorough discussion on the decisions of the VI. World Congress was initiated, more than four-fifths of the members decided against the Rights and the conciliators. In Silesia where the former district secretary was in fractional connection with Hausen and attempted to play the Youth League into the hands of the Rights, the latter have the majority only in a small local group.

In other districts the Rights and the conciliators have never had any influence whatever. The district conference of Berlin-Brandenburg, the strongest and leading district of the League, voted with 130 votes against two and one abstention for the line of the VI. World Congress and the Party majority. All the district conferences which have taken place since the beginning of the discussion have resulted together in 374 votes for the Comintern and the Party against 7 votes and 11 abstentions. These figures prove sufficiently that the Rights and the conciliators constitute an insignificant minority.