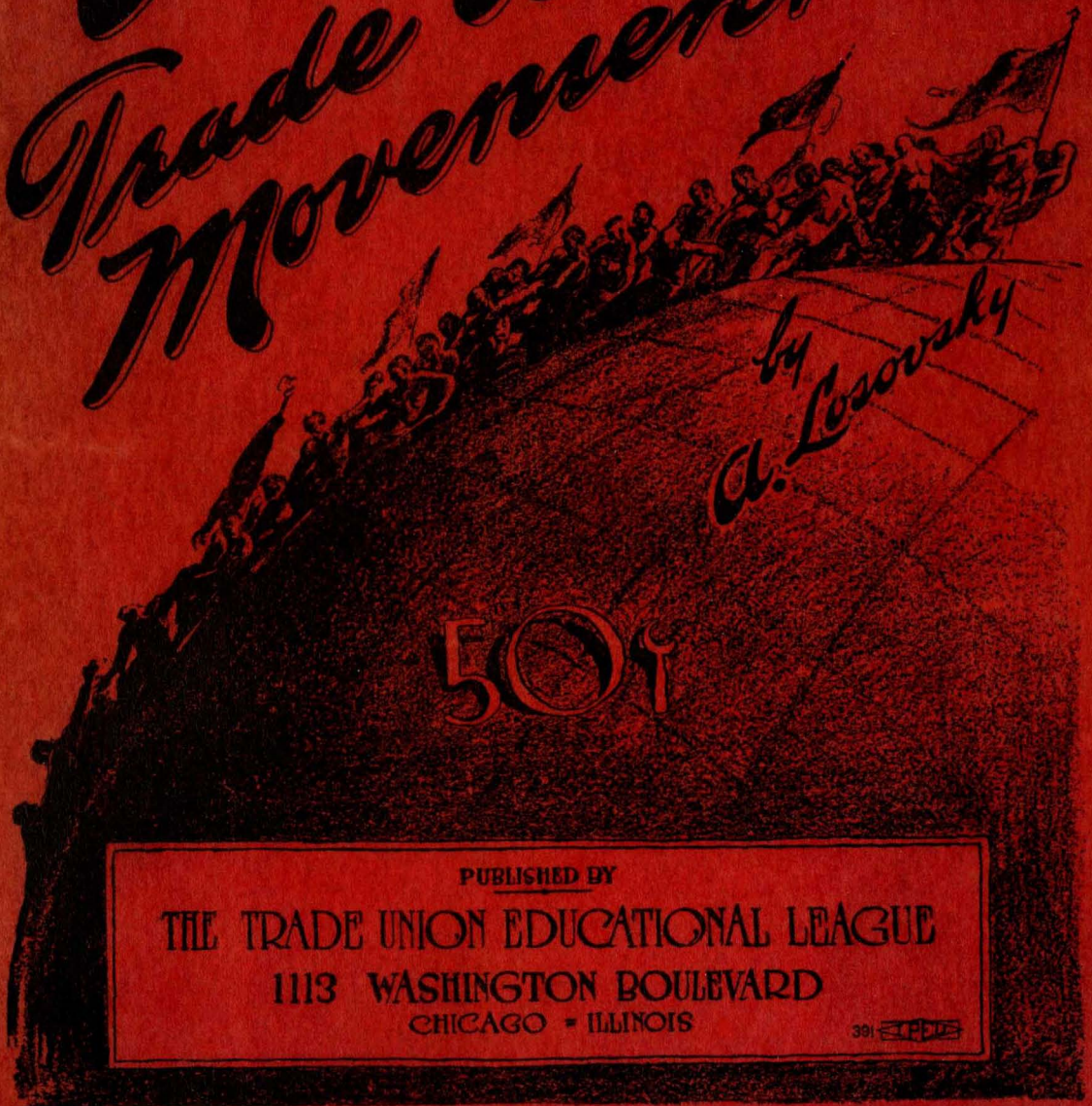


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No 10

The World's Trade Union Movement



by
A. Losovsky

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PUBLISHED BY
THE TRADE UNION EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE
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A. LOSOVSKY

General Secretary, Red International of Labor Unions

Labor Herald Library
No. 10

The World's Trade Union Movement

By A. Losovsky

General Secretary of the Red International of Labor Unions

With an Introduction by Earl R. Browder

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Translation by M. A. Skromny

INTRODUCTION

THIS book is the stenographic report of a series of lectures, delivered by A. Losovsky, General Secretary of the Red International of Labor Unions before the school of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow, during July and August, 1923. It was published in pamphlet form in the Russian language early this year, and is herewith presented in English.

Probably the most important characteristic of Losovsky's lectures is that, for the first time, there is available a comprehensive picture of the trade union movement from the world viewpoint, which deals not so much with the statics (the unilluminating details of organization and the million variations of program and problems) but rather with the vital, living influences at work within the labor movement, the tendencies, the relation of forces and, especially, with the tremendous struggle developing throughout the world since the war by the forces of revolutionary struggle, crystallized in the Red International of Labor Unions, against the class collaboration policies of the old bureaucracy, organized in the Amsterdam International (International Federation of Trade Unions).

It is this world-wide viewpoint upon which the lectures are based that gives the book its greatest value. Such a comprehensive outlook is especially needed in the American labor movement. The trade union movement in this country, originally among the most militant and international in its attitude, has for forty years been stifled by the narrow nationalism, as well as by the jealous craft spirit within the limits of the nation, of the reactionary officialdom headed by Samuel Gompers. To see and to understand that the fundamental problems of the trade unions throughout the world are essentially the same as our own, an understanding which a study of Losovsky's book will certainly give, is to lay the firmest possible foundation—the only possible one—for a broad and powerful revolutionary organization in America.

AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISM BEFORE THE WAR

If we were to attempt an adequate review of developments within the American labor movement, as complete and comprehensive as that given by Losovsky for the International, it would require another book of almost equal dimensions. In this brief introduction it is the purpose only to suggest some of the main points of comparison.

In the pre-war period of American trade unionism, three main tendencies may be distinguished; they may be classified as trade unionism, syndicalism, and socialism. Each of these tendencies, although corresponding in a general way to their analogous forces in the European movement, varied in many respects from their counterparts in other countries.

Trade unionism, as a distinct philosophy of the labor movement which concerns itself exclusively with the immediate economic struggle,

is adequately characterized by Losovsky in dealing with the world situation. In the international movement this tendency is largely represented by the British and American unions. One important difference in the pre-war development of the two Anglo-Saxon movements, however, necessary to an understanding of many present problems, is that while in Britain the trade unions (and trade unionism as a system of ideas) had entered a period of change and development even before the war, in America this process has started much later and under different world conditions. Thus while the British labor movement, reformist to the core though it was, yet was developing independent political action in the British Labor Party and embarked upon projects of amalgamation that broke up the hard and fast concepts of craft unionism, in this same period the American Federation of Labor stood solidly against the slightest deviation from its classical policies—collaboration in the capitalist parties and strict craft autonomy.

The syndicalist tendency in the world movement has its counterpart in America in the Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.) Arising as a protest against the antiquated structure and class collaboration policies of the A. F. of L., on the one hand, and against the parliamentary cretinism of the Socialist Party on the other, this organization played a considerable role in the ideological development of American revolutionists, though a much smaller one in the class struggle itself. Dominated at its birth by a leadership imbued with Marxism, yet early it adopted the anti-political theories of syndicalism. Although the form of this syndicalist doctrine was largely molded by the syndicalist schools of Europe, it was actually based in the social and economic conditions of the western migratory worker of America, the only element of labor that has been permanently in the I. W. W. On its positive side the I. W. W. developed a complete theory of industrial unionism, an ideal plan for reorganizing the labor movement from top to bottom. It is this concept of industrial unionism, necessarily applying centralized organization, which is the chief difference between the I. W. W. and European syndicalism. During the pre-war period the I. W. W. undoubtedly represented the most militant and class conscious section of the American proletariat.

The Socialist Party as a force in the trade union movement, has played no dominating role in America. When it came upon the scene it found the trade unions already established, with a crystallized leadership that was hostile to Socialism. The impatience of the socialists with this reactionary trade unionism led not only to the dual unionism which culminated in the I. W. W., but also divided the socialists themselves on the trade union field. The split which divided the Socialist Party from the Socialist Labor Party, one of the issues of which was the latter's policy of dual unionism, did not leave the Socialist Party free to develop as a power in the trade union movement. The socialist left-wing became militant advocates of the I. W. W., while the right-wing, which stood for working within the trade unions, was incapable

of developing a real opposition to Gompersism. While the Socialist Party remained "His Majesty's opposition" in the court of Samuel Gompers during the pre-war period, its opposition was at almost all times very ineffective, it had no trade union program, and was entirely incapable, even when its members gained control of large unions, of effecting the general course of American trade unionism.

EFFECTS OF THE WORLD WAR

The entry of America into the world war brought profound changes in all these groups and tendencies in the American labor movement. The trade unions, during the war and the years immediately following, made great strides forward in membership. The officialdom was largely incorporated into the governmental machinery and occupied a semi-privileged status. "War prosperity" delivered an enormous power into their hands. The bureaucracy was able to become an instrument for the conscription of the working class for war and industry, a vehicle for floating war loans among the workers, a machine for delivering rebellious workers to the Department of Justice—in short, to take its place as an open section of the ruling class—without losing its control over the masses, or creating any considerable organized opposition.

Upon the I. W. W., the war had a shattering effect. Permeated by militant rebels who actively fought against participation in the world slaughter, it brought down upon itself all the wrath of American capitalism. But because it was dominated by syndicalist prejudices it was completely unable to form such a well-knit body of men and ideas as could survive such a period of suppression and emerge stronger than ever on account of it. After hundreds of its leading militants had been sent to prison, the I. W. W. rapidly developed into a pacifist, non-resistant organization. It lost not only the bulk of its membership but, more important, it surrendered its position held up until the war, of the most militant section of the American working class.

When America was thrown into the war, the Socialist Party was again torn by its inner contradictions. The St. Louis convention in 1917 was dominated by the anti-war elements. But the right-wing was still in almost complete control of the Party, with the result that its practical activity brought the S. P. few of the benefits of a fighting anti-militarist stand. On the other hand, the St. Louis resolution, after causing the split away of an insignificant group of socialist jingoes, (Spargo, Walling, et al), brought the S. P. up against the solid wall of Gompers' ironclad control of the trade unions. The socialist leaders in the labor movement quickly made their peace with Gompers. The ideological and organizational struggle within the S. P., between the rank and file militants who stood for active anti-militarism, and the right-wing leadership that wished to accommodate itself to "reality," prepared the ground for the later disintegration of the Socialist Party.

EFFECTS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Russian revolution crashed into this situation, upsetting all the old inertias and balances. The masses in the unions responded to it with the most widespread and effective forward movement yet seen. Great strike after strike shook the country. Hitherto-unorganized millions flooded into the unions. For the first time militant leadership upon a large scale was able to appear above the stifling Gompers bureaucracy, as in the steel strike. The masses in the trade unions had been profoundly stirred.

In the I. W. W. the Russian revolution had been greeted with great acclaim. With the development of civil war and the accompanying struggle against anarchist and Menshevik ideology in Russia, a division took place in the I. W. W. The anarcho-syndicalist tendency which, combined with a bastard pacifism, was in control, became definitely antagonistic to the revolution; at the same time a large number of the clearer elements definitely began to shed their anti-political dogmas and to assimilate the lessons of the Russian revolution. The development of this Communist wing in the I. W. W. was retarded by the imprisonment of many of its best leaders. This allowed some misunderstanding to occur, so that the confusionist leadership continued to dominate the organization. The result was that thousands of the best rank and file militants left the I. W. W. in disgust at its propaganda against Soviet Russia. The full effects of the favorable reaction towards the Russian revolution on the part of the I. W. W. membership thus failed to obtain expression in the organization as such.

Most profound was the effect upon the Socialist Party of the Bolshevik upheaval. The split which took place in 1919, the formation of the various Communist Parties and groups, and their later integration under the influence of the Communist International, brought a profound change into the left-wing conception of trade union strategy and tactics. At the same time this split eliminated the Socialist Party as even the shadow of an independent factor. Since 1919 the S. P. has steadily and consistently gone to the right, abandoned all pretense even of opposition to Gompersism, and today suffers silently from the insults which "the Grand Old Man" heaps upon them the while he orders them about.

THE BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN LEFT-WING MOVEMENT

Within the trade unions there had for years been a small group of revolutionists attempting to develop a revolutionary wing therein. In 1912 this group organized the Syndicalist League of North America, which expressed the general tendency of syndicalism but in flat opposition to dual organization, opposing thereto the idea of revolutionary nuclei in the mass unions. This movement after a short but active life subsided, to appear again in 1916 as the International Trade Union Educational League, which, however, soon expired in the war atmosphere of the time. In 1920 the Trade Union Educational League was

formed, marking time for the most part, while it endeavored to bring about unity of program among all the left-wing elements.

It was at this time that the full effects of the Russian revolution upon the American labor movement generally began to show themselves. Under the leadership of the Communist International and later also of the Red International of Labor Unions, the revolutionists of America were freeing themselves from the peculiarly American dogma of dual unionism which had rendered their efforts sterile for a generation. The result was the coming together in a great campaign of left-wing organization and the clarification of program, in the Trade Union Educational League. From the mass trade unions came hundreds of militants hitherto unattached to any revolutionary body on account of the old dual union notions. From the I. W. W. came a group of workers who embodied all the fine traditions of the best revolutionary days of that organization. From the Communist groups that split away from the Socialist Party and were later unified in the Workers Party of America, came the full current of American revolutionary experience and ideology. In the Trade Union Educational League all these elements, comprising every healthy American left-wing tendency, were fused together into the first effective left-wing trade union movement in this country, the American section of the Red International of Labor Unions.

THE RED INTERNATIONAL IN AMERICA

In the brief years of its work the Trade Union Educational League has wrought a profound clarification in the entire labor movement. Starting out with a great campaign from coast to coast and in every labor union, for amalgamation and a labor party—slogans expressing the two deepest and most fundamental needs of the American labor movement—the T. U. E. L. has reached the minds of hundreds of thousands of trade unionists and influenced the decisions of at least 2,000,000. From the broad slogans that stir the masses, it has intensively developed the issue of revolutionary unionism until today it represents the organized struggle within the unions against every phase of capitalistic influence and bourgeois ideology. While it battles for the formation of an all-embracing farmer-labor party, to express the broad political struggle of the toiling masses at the present moment of development, it is at the same time rallying the smaller groups of conscious revolutionary workers to the more bitter and intense struggle against the subtler forms of class collaboration. It is no accident that the T. U. E. L. is at once a leading factor throughout the labor movement in the struggle for a labor party, in which millions are enlisted, and at the same time is organizing the resistance to the nefarious "B. & O." class collaboration scheme of the railroad union bureaucrats, to the poisonous effects of which the workers are only beginning to be aroused.

Of course the tremendous progress made by the Trade Union Educational League, in establishing the left-wing as a power in the trade

unions, has not been unopposed. Long before the bureaucrats generally realized what menace the T. U. E. L. was to their comfortable swivel-chair life, the old fox Gompers had sounded the alarm. As the left-wing campaigns shook the labor movement and registered success after success in almost every legislative gathering of the working class, the officialdom took alarm and rallied every force of the union machinery, the capitalist press, and the State. The Federal Government was used in an attempt to railroad Foster to prison, along with 70 other trade union militants and Communists. The capitalist press has teemed with organized and inspired propaganda against the left-wing. The union journals have been full to overflowing with denunciation and provocation against the T. U. E. L. militants. And, direct from the Amsterdam International, headquarters of reaction in the world's labor movement, has been imported the policy of expulsions and splits against the left-wing.

Space will not permit even the briefest review of the development of the American left-wing movement in the trade unions. Those who have missed reading *THE LABOR HERALD*, monthly organ of the Trade Union Educational League since March, 1922, can find the rich experience of these few years embodied therein. Back numbers and bound volumes can be obtained from the League office. Just as this book of Losovsky's is necessary to everyone who would understand the world's labor movement today, so is *THE LABOR HERALD* necessary to every left-wing unionist who wishes to be an effective participant in the great revolutionary struggle now going on for the leadership of the American labor movement.

Although the American class struggle has so far developed the most primitive trade unionism, in ideology and organizational form, yet the struggle itself, in the direct clashes with the employing class, its private armed forces and the State, has been more bitter and violent than in perhaps any other country previous to the revolutionary period. The reactionary leadership and antiquated program and structure of the American labor movement could not prevent the giant forces generated by American capitalism from coming to expression in great struggles. It is enough to cite Homestead, Pullman, Ludlow, McKees Rocks, Lawrence, Mesaba, the steel strike, Herrin, West Virginia, and the whole history of the coal miners, to understand that the American working class contains within itself the forces of proletarian revolution corresponding to the productive forces of American Capitalism, the greatest in the world. Delayed in coming to expression by the peculiar conditions of American social development, the forces of revolution in the American trade union movement will be all the more sweeping and rapid in their development, all the more decisive and relentless, when the chains of capitalist ideology, of reformism, of Gompersism, are finally broken.

April 28, 1924.

EARL R. BROWDER

LECTURE NO. 1

The World's Trade Union Movement Before and After the War

GEOGRAPHY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

IN order to understand the development and the ways of the world trade union movement in the post-war period, we will have to give a short characterization of its conditions before and during the war. Before the war the trade union movement could be characterized as follows, first of all from the geographical point of view it was not yet a world movement; it was mostly developed in Europe and in the Anglo Saxon countries, and on the other hand in the British colonies, such as Canada, Australia, South Africa. All Asia without mentioning Africa—this great area of working masses—which by its population is much greater than the so-called civilized world, had not been drawn into the world's socialist nor into the world's trade union movement, for the simple reason that the labor movement began to crystalize in these countries only at the end of the war and mainly in the post-war period. So from the geographical point of view we have a trade union movement which is confined within a certain territorial frame, which can only be called a world movement with certain reservations.

TRADE UNION STATICS

In the whole world before the war there were about ten million organized workers, which were organized into unions of all kinds of political shades, beginning with anarcho-syndicalists and ending with Catholic, democrat, Protestant and so forth. The bulk of these organized workers were in Europe. Taking the main countries we get the following picture: Before the war in Great Britain in round numbers were about 4,000,000 organized workers; in Germany, about 3,500,000; in the United States, 2,700,000; in France, about 1,000,000; in Italy, 900,000; in Belgium, 200,000; in Holland, 220,000, etc., etc. We will stop with these figures in order to show the real value, to show what they really contain.

France before the war was having 1,000,000 members in the trade unions; but in the General Confederation of Labor, the only organization which could be called a class organization, there were no more than 500,000. The rest were unions of agricultural workers which stood on the other side of the national trade union movement—almost on the other side; unions of government employees, which in fact were in opposition to the CGT; here we also find some little yellow unions; in

short the official statistics include in the trade unions every organization, which under the law of 1884 had to register its by-laws—and even without such registration was under that law.

It is clear such figures cannot give the real picture of the trade union movement, for such a picture we can get only when we know not only the amount but also the contents—in other words the political composition and the political movements which exist in that group of workers.

The same about Germany. Here were 3,500,000 members, at a time when the reformist unions show only 2,500,000.

The same about England, where instead of four million and a couple of hundred thousand, we should say a maximum of about three million workers had, if not a class conscious platform, at least very close to it.

In the whole world we had about ten million organized workers. In the first question which naturally comes up—What actually did that big army represent?—we have to look behind the figures. That ten million is a big army is shown by the last war. Ten million well organized workers, knowing what they want, distributed all over the world, are a great power. We can say without exaggeration that, if these ten million organized workers had been not only revolutionary in mood but revolutionary in fact, the world war would have never come about. You will see farther on that this mass of workers represented a very vivid and varied picture.

TENDENCIES IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The trade union movement of that time was divided on the main lines, between those having a class-conscious point of view and those of non-class view-point. Among those with a class conscious view-point we can count the principal trade union bodies of Germany, England, France, Italy and the Scandinavian countries, which in their programs, resolutions, etc., pointed out the class struggle and which theoretically, at least, were opposed to class collaboration.

The non-class unions, were those which in their programs declared openly for cooperation between classes and for social peace; these were the Catholic, democratic, Protestant, and other unions. We should also count here the yellow unions, which theoretically recognized the class and social peace, but, in practice had been conducting a class struggle—but not on the side of the workers; rather on the side of the bourgeoisie. This is the first grouping which divided the great mass of organized workers and which is the primary classification of the trade unions existing at that time.

But this rough division of the class and non-class is, in itself, not enough if we do not explain what the class unions at that time really were.

Examining that part of the unions which, before the war, united about three-fourths of all organized workers on a class basis, we can point out in general three political groupings which had been formed during a long historical period. On one side was trade unionism—taking here trade unionism as a certain ideological and political movement—then anarcho-syndicalism and third, social-democratic trade unions. These are the three different clear political divisions into which the class trade union movement was divided. Let us take up the characteristics of each one of these movements.

TRADE UNIONISM

What do we understand in the trade union literature and politics under trade unionism? This name, which was adopted from the Anglo-Saxon countries, became during the long period of development of the English and American trade union movement not only an external formula or symbol for a certain trade union in a certain country, but it represented also a certain ideological and political content of the trade union movement. Under trade unionism we understand such a form of the labor and trade union movement which has for its purpose only the narrow economic problems of bettering conditions of labor, higher wages, etc.

Trade unionism is a theory which has grown out of the practical Anglo-Saxon labor movement, which in fact does not have in its program, in theory or in practice, the overthrowal of capitalism, but only the betterment of conditions within the capitalist system.

So the main characterization of trade unionism (also a characterization of reformism, which is understood widely outside the borders of Anglo-Saxon countries) is the struggle within the frame of the capitalist system and the conception of that system as a permanent one within the frame of which we have to struggle and better the conditions of the working class. Most of the practical and theoretical workers of the Anglo-Saxon labor movement openly construed the problems of the trade union only in the sense of bettering the conditions of the working class under capitalism and even put up the theory of the existence of three main factors, Labor, Capital, and Society (public).

What the trade union leaders understood by the "public" somewhat reminds us in Russia of our term "the third element." There was such a third element in the zemstvo (councils of the rural citizenry), the intelligenzia, which was objectively counted as revolutionary but which played a somewhat separate role between the two main struggling classes. Under "public" they understood that part of the bourgeoisie which under the pressure of the working class came to the conclusion

of the usefulness of the gradual betterment of the conditions of labor in the interests of capital itself.

The further characterization of the trade union form of the labor movement is its organizational division (structure) and the domination of the local over the general interest. These local or craft organizations which have been built up during decades still retain their local power at the present time, notwithstanding the fact that objective conditions force the labor movement to unite the small, loose parts, to amalgamate the unions into wider organizations uniting the workers of a whole industry. As a result of the domination of the sectional interests over the interests of the whole industry, we have now the domination of the narrow economic interests over the interests of the whole class. This is pure trade unionism.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

The second movement, which represents the opposite side of the trade union movement is known by the name of "anarcho-syndicalism." If trade unionism is connected with Anglo-Saxon countries, anarcho-syndicalism is connected with the Latin. The birth place of anarcho-syndicalism is France, there it had its greatest development and there also was created the theory which united numbers of workers of the Latin countries.

What are the main characteristics of anarcho-syndicalism? Trade unionism as we said, is devoted to the interests of one craft. Anarcho-syndicalism—and this is surely the progressive side of it—is devoted to the interests of the working class. It was a healthy reaction of a certain part of the proletariat against the opportunism and reformism which had existed in labor organization, trade union as well as political. The first characteristic of anarcho-syndicalism which differentiates it is that it puts first the general class interests and struggles—not for betterment within capitalism, but for the overthrow of the system.

The second characterization of the anarcho-syndicalist movement within the international labor movement is its anti-political character. Anarcho-syndicalists consider the union as the primary organ for the class struggle. They believe there are no other organizations except the trade unions which can conquer capitalism. All political parties—say the anarcho-syndicalists—beginning with the bourgeois and ending with the socialist, and at the present time with the Communist, are, from the social point of view, mixed organizations; while the trade unions represent a purely labor organization.

A party is a union of citizens. A trade union unites the producers. In the party there may be workers and also people from other classes. In a trade union—only workers. That is why the anarcho-syndicalists

place the union ahead of the party. This is why the trade union happens to be the main weapon of the social revolution.

Besides that, in the opinion of the theoreticians and active workers of anarcho-syndicalism (of whom we may name Sorel, LaGuardelle, Grifuel) the characterization which differentiates the trade unions is that they not only are the basic stronghold of the working class in its struggle to overthrow capitalism, but also organizations around which the new society will be built. According to the belief of the anarcho-syndicalists the trade unions will not only make the revolution but will also create the new society. The trade unions will organize production, regulate production within the industries, will govern the public economy. This is the social philosophy of anarcho-syndicalism. But this is not all.

There is one more characteristic of anarcho-syndicalism which is, in full, inherited from the anarchist theory concerning the State: The State, independently of its form or contents, is an enemy. The structure of the State in itself—the anarchists always write the State with a capital "S"—is an organ of exploitation, of one part of the people by the others, and that exploitation is always used against the workers. Therefore, before the war, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat was a very vague and theoretical one. The anarcho-syndicalists were always out-spoken against the dictatorship of the proletariat, for, from their theory, the latter will mean the continuation of exploitation. They are anti-state, claiming that the State should be destroyed. They thought of the new society which will arise from the social revolution as one in which the trade union will play the leading role. They imagined it as a non-state society, which would be regulated only by the trade unions and which would be occupied only by the problems of production, distribution, etc.

However, this is only in the future; but what differentiates the anarcho-syndicalists from the other trade unionists? Anarcho-syndicalism in its direct struggle uses some methods which differentiate it from other movements. First of all, it believed in the initiative of the minority, and according to its ideas that minority with initiative could in many cases take the place of the mass. The anarcho-syndicalists in general shared the anarchist distrust of the masses. The individual plays the more important role. The minority with initiative can not only start something, drag the masses along, but also build for the masses, instead of them.

This role of the "militant minority" is one of the main characteristics of the anarcho-syndicalist point of view. And, from this angle, they brought into the every-day struggle things that we do not see in other movements. They brought into the struggle an element of adventure which could always be seen in their custom of exaggeration of the role

of the strike. Organizing strikes as often as possible, they even created a special terminology—"revolutionary exercises," figuring that every strike is a good thing. They claim that a strike is always for the benefit of the working class and it drags in a certain amount of workers into the movement and sharpens the social relations and the struggle between the classes. A careful and long preparation, the study of the objective conditions of strikes, the realistic calculation of the relation of forces and the calculation of the role of the masses and the relation between the masses and the militant minority, all this has been entirely ignored by the anarcho-syndicalists and considered as of no importance at all.

They imagined the social revolution as beginning suddenly, without the necessary organizational, political and other historical surroundings. At last they present the idea of sabotage, or what we call the "economic terror," as a means of compulsion against employers. They have been out-spoken against large, strong trade union treasuries, looking at it from the point of view that the trade unions are, as a matter of fact, like plain people, the one that has much money is not very active in the struggle; and therefore, the trade union that has much money in its treasury, will be afraid of losing it and will not be as militant and ready for strikes as necessary. This is, in short, the characterization of anarcho-syndicalism within the trade union movement of the world, and which is especially characteristic of the Latin countries, France, Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Mexico, etc. In Italy, notwithstanding the fact that it is a Latin country, the trade union movement took another form.

THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Finally, we have the third movement, the social-democratic trade union movement, the most representative of which has been the German and Austrian trade unions. What are the characteristics of this type of trade union organization? It has to a certain degree been between trade unionism and anarcho-syndicalism. In theory, the social-democratic trade union movement arose from the necessity of creating a new social order. Therefore, it has been different than the pure trade unionism in that it had as its aims the problem of creating a new society, or the destruction—under certain conditions—of capitalism. It was socialistic in the sense that it had socialistic ideas. But we would be greatly mistaken if we would mix the socialist ideas, or in other words the socialist theory and resolutions about socialism, with the everyday practice—with the preparation of the coming of socialism.

The characteristic of the pre-war social-democratic trade union movement was the thought of the possibility of arriving at the new society by gradual transition, separate victories and separate changes of society. In this way, the overthrow of capitalism was not the aim of these

unions, but the gradual change of society. And this development of socialism from a capitalist society they visioned as a developed form of democracy, a developed democratic society which spreads its democracy to the maximum. It is the development from political democracy, gradually becoming an economic and social democracy. This is the basis of the theory of the social-democratic trade union movement. Socialism, from their point of view, is the legal son of democracy. It should gradually grow out of the development of democratic forms.

And now we see that the characteristic of the social-democratic trade union movement which differentiates it is what we call "graduation" or slow evolutionary steps from one form into another. This idea has different names in different countries, but in general and more correctly it may be understood as "reformism," which means the idea of gradual change of society by means of reforms. In France that which we call "graduation" has had the name of "possibilism." In England the same thing has been called "Fabianism," adopted by the so-called Socialists who are for a slow, gradual transition from one system into another.

The social-democratic trade union movement stands separate from the Social-Democratic Party. It believes somewhat in a division of function: The party has to do with politics, we, the trade unions, have to do with economics. The general problems of the labor movement are under the jurisdiction of the party, but we, the trade unions, should only have to deal with economics. And it is interesting that there were many cases where the trade unions of Germany refused to consider the question of a general strike under the pretext that it was not under their jurisdiction, that it was the business of the party.

We have, therefore, three ideological factions in the world's trade union movement, which, before the war, were often in conflict with each other. These conflicts were mostly conflicts of leaders of different countries, notwithstanding the fact that these factions existed in every country. In Germany, where the socialist movement was most influential, the anarcho-syndicalist movement was very weak and mostly in so-called "local unions." In France, where the anarcho-syndicalist movement was the stronger, alongside with it there existed a powerful reformist trade union movement of pure German type. In America, and England where they have a specific type of trade union movement, other forms of the trade union movement also existed.

BIRTH OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION

The ideological differences which existed in the trade union movement and the factional struggle within it found their expression also within the organizational struggle, and the last, in its order, found its expression in the International which was created before the war. The careful study of these various factions within the trade union move-

ment will give an explanation—why the beginning of war was also the beginning of bankruptcy of the world-wide trade union and socialist movement.

What is the difference between the labor movement and the other forms of social movements? First of all, it is an international movement. Capital played a big role in making it an international movement, if not by creating the same conditions of labor, as least by the same forms and methods of exploitation, which were the forerunners of the creation of international organization for the working class. Thus, the necessity of creating international organization — Internationals—was growing as long as capitalism was expanding into new countries. It was growing also because capitalism itself has been becoming more international and called forth as a power against itself the international labor organization.

What are the characteristics of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries? In that time capitalism created new organizations for better exploitation, it created new combines, trusts, syndicates, etc., in which it concentrated its power, thanks to which it was able to hold down the working masses. All that, and the development of capitalist exploitation beyond the border of the given nation, forced the working masses to such forms of unity which would also extend beyond the borders of the separate country, which would unite the workers independently of their belonging to one or the other nation or state.

Thus, the growth of capitalism, the growth of forms and methods of capitalist exploitation, the growth of the centralized State, the progress of technique, the means of communication, etc., all together forced the working class to seek new forms of connections in order to be able, by centralized effort in a united fight, to compel consideration from the employers.

But, notwithstanding the great necessity of a struggle in a united front, on an international scale, neither the international trade union movement nor the political movement had risen to united international action, although they did create political and trade union internationals.

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF TRADE UNIONS

In the trade union sphere of the pre-war period we have the International Secretariat of Trade Unions, which was created in 1902. Its conferences usually were connected with the International Socialist Congresses, as these trade unions usually sent their delegates to the latter Congresses. This International Secretariat was not an international organization in the sense which especially we, the Communists, understand it. It was not an organization for struggle; but an international organization for the exchange of information. We could easily call it an "international information bureau," an international bureau for

sending statistics to each other, an international post-office box, or anything but an international labor union. It lacked the characteristic of a real labor international; that is, the domination of interests of the class as a whole over the interests of separate parts of the international.

THE INTERNATIONALS OF INDUSTRIES

Besides the International Secretariat of Trades Unions, there were international units of trade unions—or internationals—by industries: The International Textile Union, the Metal Workers Union, The Wood Workers Union; the Barbers' Union; the Cap Makers' Union, the Needle Trades, etc., over twenty international unions, which could be more correctly called a semblance of international unity than real unity. In fact we cannot remember one time in the international labor movement before the war where any industrial international played a leading role in the international struggle, where the unions would take concurrent action in different countries.

Therefore, if we look at these internationals from the point of view of those problems which an international in general should solve, we must openly state that no such international in fact existed. They were organizations which called themselves "internationals." They had stationery with their names upon it, but they were only indications of the necessity of militant internationals, which they themselves were not. The existence of these internationals proved the necessity of creating real international units. Their weakness characterized the degrees of the development of these international connections—otherwise the degrees of the development of the working class movement of the world.

Again, if we wish to get a clear understanding of those causes which led up to the disintegration of the labor movement of the world with the beginning of the war, let us see what these labor organizations represented, and what were the connections between them.

Only after we carefully acquaint ourselves with these organizations, will we understand why 1914 was the year of the complete disintegration, demoralization and disorganization of the international labor movement. The competition between international capitalist groups before the war, was reflected in the industrial international unions, and with the coming of the war, came out more boldly. After the international Congress of Metal Workers in 1914, one of the former delegates at that Congress, Merrheim, at that time a revolutionary syndicalist, stated in an article that at that Congress the competition between the British and German metallurgy showed itself.

The labor movement of that period, although officially connected in international unity, in fact was filled with national prejudices, national separatism, and national interests. The questions of "fatherland" were superior to the interests of the working class, and the question of "de-

fending the fatherland" was a principle accepted by the whole labor movement.

INFLUENCE OF WAR ON TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION

This was the situation in the international trade union movement at the moment the war came. From the point of view of the amount of the trade union membership of all countries, they at once began to shrink. The mass mobilizations which seized upon the adult population, took from the ranks of the working class hundreds of thousands and millions of people, and therefore, the unions naturally began to shrink. For instance, in Germany, which before the war had 3,500,000 members in trade unions, at the end of 1915 had only 1,500,000.

In the reformist unions there were instead of the 2,500,000, less than 1,000,000. The French Confederation of Labor, which before the war had 500,000 members, at the end of 1915 not more than 150,000. Colossal changes also took place in other countries, in the amount of memberships. Thus we see that the direct influence of the war upon the trade unions was to shrink the membership and to empty the ranks of the unions.

IDEOLOGY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT DURING THE WAR

But this was not the most important thing, as not only by the emptying of the ranks of the unions did the war attack the trade union movement, but this process also changed the old ideology, creating a new one, the ideology of the war period. This ideology in different countries had different names, but mainly it was called "war socialism." What was the main feature of this ideology which was created by the leaders of the trade union and political movement during the war?

We think it can be characterized in the following short formula: "Fatherland, first of all." Let us remember that at the beginning of the war one of the most talkative "left socialists" of France, Gustave Hervé, who turned over to social patriotism with lightening agility, has explained this evolution in the following way: "The workers"—said he—"were caught by the iron hand of the war by the throat, raised into the air and thrown back by the strong hand to the ground, and they felt first of all their own ground. Every one of the workers who was thrown by the hurricane of events fell to the ground of his own country."

We have to say that although the reformists of all countries as it was already mentioned in the social sense have been believers in evolution, but in their own personal viewpoint, they have been developing in an entirely different way. In this case we may rather use the conception of revolution than evolution, for they have been changing their views literally over night. And this may be said not only about the reformists

but also about a very great number of anarcho-syndicalists, who suddenly, somehow, began to feel that they had a "fatherland" although anti-patriotism was previously their hobby.

THE DIVISION ON MILITARY-DIPLOMATIC COALITION

The military ideology of the labor movement brought great changes in the relation of forces. The modern war is not a war of small groups, or small armies. Modern war is a war of masses, a war of nations in the real sense of the word. It is a war of industry against industry. The tactics of the working class in this war, the tactics of its unions, the methods of struggle, play a decisive role in the modern war.

Not without reason did the garrulous Lloyd-George in 1916 say to the Metal Workers, "In this victory on the northern front won by the British Army, you, metal workers, played a great and decisive part." Yes, the influence of industry played a decisive role in the war. The growth of military industry explains the numerical changes of the unions beginning in 1916-1917. But, on the other hand, this growth also explains the lowering of the level of the labor movement, for in the war industry, which was the basis of war and which concentrated all workers not gone to the front, the conditions of work were such that those who participated in it were in fact ideological and political participants in the war.

When we talk about the war between France and England on one side and Germany on the other, we have to talk not only about the war between the two groups of bourgeoisie, but also the war between the socialists and trade unions of these fighting countries. Here, the war was not only in the sense that the workers had been organized into unions and sent to the front and ordered to fire at their comrades with machine guns. The war which began in 1914 started a war also between the trade unions of the Allies and the unions of the Central Powers. It started a polemic and an ideological fight where the representatives of one side—the Allies, tried to prove to the German trade unions, that they were traitors to the principles of international socialism when they were supporting the Kaiser, and Legien, the leader of the German unions, tried to prove that the traitors were the unions of the Allies, because they were supporting the bourgeoisie allied to the Russian Czar.

This war between the leaders of the trade unions is most characteristic of the unions of the whole war period. It is even more characteristic than the conduct of the trade unionists in every country who in the name of "defense of the fatherland" gave up the gains which had cost them many years of bitter struggle against their bourgeoisie. In England, by way of compromise between the cabinet ministers and the trade unions, they did away with the working rules which benefited

labor. In Germany and other countries, by agreement with the trade unions was created an indefinite working day. In short, the trade unions during the war period were the basis of the struggle. They took an active ideological and political and, more than that, a military, participation in the international slaughter.

This division into military coalitions brought about the attempt in 1916 by the trade unionists of the Allies to organize their own conference in Leeds, England, and at that conference to create the new Trade Union International of the Allies. Every time that the representatives of the neutral countries, as for instance the Swiss, Norwegian, Holland, Sweden, tried to organize an international conference in order to bring together the members of one and the same trade union international, the representatives of "democracy" and "civilization," that is, of France, England and other countries, bitterly refused to sit at one table with representatives from the Countries of the Central Powers.

Why did they refuse? Why did they not want to meet the representatives from the German trade unions in order to talk over the methods and forms of stopping the slaughter?—Because they were tied up with their bourgeoisie and a meeting between the allies of the bourgeoisie of the Allied powers and the allies of the bourgeoisie of the Central Powers would be a meeting between the two bourgeoisie themselves. And, as the war had been conducted for the destruction of the countries, for the economic destruction, for the economic exhaustion, it is natural that neither the French nor the British or the American unions, could agree to meet the Germans. The Germans expressed their willingness to meet, but the French and Belgians considered themselves citizens of attacked countries which were fighting for "Right" and "civilization."

The trade union movement was broken up into different coalitions along the lines of diplomacy, which is, perhaps, the lowest form of disgrace, the most extreme point reached by the trade union movement in its disintegration.

THE REFLECTION OF ALLIED VICTORY ON THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The war, which ended in a victory of "democracy" over "barbarism," resulted in the famous Versailles, Trianon, and Sevres Treaties, which brought "peace to humanity." It would be a mistake to consider the victory only as a victory of one bourgeoisie over the other. It was not only of the bourgeoisie of the Allied countries over the German and Austrian people,—it was something more than that—it was the victory of the trade unions of the allied countries over the trade unions of Germany and Austria. It was a victory of one part of the workers over the other. The dominant position which the German trade unions occupied before the war, was destroyed by the victory of the Allies.

The British unions became the dominant factor in the international trade union movement, which corresponds to the economic hegemony of their bourgeoisie. In this way the development of the labor movement, the development of international organizations is closely related to the destiny of capitalism, and the victory of the bourgeoisie of one country reflects on the position which the workers of the other country had in one or another international.

The victory of the Allies signified a victory of the trade unions of the Allied countries which very boldly was demonstrated at the international conferences which were held at the end of the war and which also reflected itself in the whole post-war period.

THE BIRTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS

In the picture which we are presenting here it seems there is no light at all. Everything shows up colored in black or yellow-black. Being dependent on the national flag, everything is tinted with the national color. But a clear-cut red color could not be noticed and it seems difficult to understand how from such a dark prospect could be born that new thing about which we are to speak. We will answer that question which comes up naturally.

Alongside of the process of adjustment of the labor movement to the war, another process has been in development, the process of collecting the hatred to the war. In what are the roots of reformism and of Communism? How could one and the same working class create two opposite movements, fighting each other with arms in hand? What are the causes of it?

The answer is, that the working class is the basis and builder of capitalist society, and, at the same time, the destroyer of capitalist society: It is at once trying to adapt itself to capitalist society and trying to destroy it. Thus Communism and reformism taking their origins in the working class, reflect the different stages of its development, the different tendencies of that class which day by day shows more and more of that side which leads to the destruction of bourgeois society. It would have been a mistake if we would have considered the war period from the point of view that because Legien and Jouhaux have been the representatives of the working class, the class itself was filled with war ideology. It is a fact that these gentlemen became traitor to their principles. There is not the slightest doubt about that. But why did millions of proletarians in every country follow these leaders? Why? That's the root of the question.

Here we come to that side of the problem which has not been clear enough to us before the war. We did not estimate the real degree of influence of the bourgeoisie on the working class. We had been fight-

ing against reformism even before the war, we fought against the bourgeoisie. But that the bourgeois relations, the bourgeois ideology, the bourgeois literature, the bourgeois church and philosophy, and in general all that was created by the bourgeoisie could so much dominate the working class, this—to be frank—every Bolshevik may say we did not expect.

And for us, the left wing of the labor movement, which had been the left wing before the war and remained as such during the war, was the degree of the collapse entirely unexpected. We underestimated the influence of bourgeois society on the labor movement. We did not calculate that organic connection which existed between the labor movement and that society in which the labor movement developed.

However, during the war, concurrently with the maximum influence of the bourgeois society on the working class, began to develop that tendency which is within the working class of antagonism toward bourgeois society.

This tendency which in the first period was very weak and very insignificant in some countries found its reflection only in individual actions, such as Liebknecht in Germany (and he, among other things, did not vote the first time against the war credits, he voted against them the second time), appeared in the trade union movement of France. I happened to participate directly in the creation of the first international nucleus in the Confederation of Labor together with Monatte, Rosmer and the "dead-in-life" Merrheim. That was the first nucleus from which grew the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences. The labor movement from within itself began to develop a new movement, new powers. . . .

The whole post war period of the labor movement can be understood only when we come up to the war period from the point of view, not only of the changing of leaders, but also the objective forces which lead the workers in the political and spiritual sense; also from the point of view of the growing, new forces within these anti-patriotic groups, which by the end of the war took a definite form and in the post war period brought about the creation of the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions.

The trade union movement after the war, as the labor movement in general, could be understood only by a careful study of the labor movement as it existed during the war period, by calculating those contradictory forces within the capitalist state which create the class struggle and create organizations which have on their banners the overthrow of capitalist society.

We have therefore acquainted ourselves in a general way with the basic factors in the development of the trade union movement before and after the war period. It is natural that these basic lines drawn

by us could be fully understood only by better acquaintance with more material which depicts the situation of the labor movement in every country. Only by studying the particular forms of the labor movement of our epoch can we form an opinion not only about the causes which brought about new forms of the labor movement but also to understand the organizational and other forms which were taken by the newly-formed national and international organizations.

LECTURE NO. 2

The World Trade Union Movement at the End of the War

THE INFLUENCE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT

THE first period in the post-war development of the trade unions is marked by the influence of the Russian revolution. It is known that even the February revolution of 1917 brought in something new in the war itself, and mainly in the international labor movement, for it cut through the black cloud which covered up the whole so-called civilized world and brought in a ray of hope for the liberation of the exploited and down-trodden.

The fact of the Russian revolution in itself had an influence in strengthening those movements which had been forming themselves within the international labor movement, which were striving to end the war. We have to point out that the acceptance of the Russian revolution by the international socialist and even the trade union movement was different, depending on the territorial, geographical and diplomatic relations of the various countries.

For the leading Austrian and German trade unions the Russian revolution was the beginning of the disintegration of the Allies, and they from the sheer practical consideration, if they did not congratulate the revolution, anyway were glad that Russia ceased to be a danger to their "dear fatherland." On the other hand, in the leading circles of the trade union movement of the Allied countries, the Russian revolution was looked upon as something that would strengthen the democratic front of the Allies against Germany. In this way, from the beginning of the Russian revolution, the attitude of the different trade union circles was dictated by the expected success in arms of one or the other military coalition.

This official view of the leaders of the trade union movement was met by something new which was brought by the Russian revolution. That new thing was the following:

We know that to the social patriots of central Europe including among them most of the leaders of the trade unions which played a leading role during the war, the struggle against Czarism was that triumph which had to play the biggest role in raising the military spirit of the masses. Czarism fell and, by that for the social-patriots of Central Europe, this monster against which they claimed to defend their "fatherland" no longer existed. On the other hand, the Russian revolution in its first period bettered the position of the social-patriots of the Allied countries, because they who fought for "culture and civilization" were

the Allies of Czarism and the mere possibility of alliance with Czarism for the high ideals of defending "democracy and culture" was very difficult to explain.

We should also point out that at the beginning the revolution appeared somewhat to help the Allies. By using the word "Allies" we do not mean the leaders of the government at that time, but the union leaders of the Allied countries. It seemed to the union leaders that they gained something as at present liberal friends will not be allied any more with Czarism but with not less but maybe more liberal Russia, with a republic under the leadership of Kerensky.

But these gains which they tried to realize were quickly evaporated. In the leading circles of labor, and especially in the trade union movement they began to look with great fear at the growing "anarchy," as it is known, began to appear about June, 1917. We will not stop here, to explain how they sent to us their "socialist ambassadors," how La Fon, Moute, and Cachin — at present Cachin is a Communist but at that time was not—were given the mission of bringing Russia into the folds of "democracy," otherwise stated "to drag Russia back into the war." We will not stop here to explain how the Belgians sent to us their wonderful speakers, and how the British and Americans worked to the same end. There were attempts from the labor movement, from the trade union organizations of the Allied countries to influence the Russian revolution, to bring it into the folds of the Allies by the promises that were made.

It is well to point out also that French imperialism—giving the devil his due—was very able in conducting agitation and propaganda for the purpose of fooling the masses. They prepared already the sending to us from France as a semi-official representative but with plenary powers, the leader of the Metal Workers, Merrheim, who was in the cabinet circles, and if it did not succeed it was our fault, the fault of the Russian workers, for we arranged suddenly for them the October Revolution. On the other hand, from the side of the labor circles of Europe they considered the revolution from the point of view of "What will the revolution give to conduct and continue the war?"

But the Russian revolution in its further October development, reflected on the laboring masses; it created an enthusiasm, a great encouragement, for the revolution itself. From the moment of the October revolution there begins a new epoch in the war itself as well as in the international labor movement. Therefore, in order to understand the shapes which the labor movement has taken in Western Europe it is necessary to understand the general relation of forces and that new force—the Russian revolution—and then we will be able to judge the influence of its post-October period.

The October revolution made such a great change in the picture of the labor movement that it brought to the foreground the question of ending the war. As this was the central question for the labor movement of all countries, the end of the war brought in a certain change in the trade union organizations of all countries.

How was the October upheaval accepted in the Western European trade union movement? Again, in different ways, depending on the diplomatic coalitions. The reformists were against the Bolshevik *Bashibusuks* (barbarians) who broke down all principles of "democracy," "eternal rights" etc., but even this opposition was different in Central Europe than it was in the Allied countries. In Central Europe they looked upon the October revolution, and later on upon the Brest Litovsk Peace as a liquidation of the enemy's power. Thus, the trade unions of Central Europe, although opposed to the October revolution, at the same time considered it as a somewhat unexpected aid and relief in the sense of liberating the necessary forces for the fight on the Western Front.

Entirely different was the conception of the October revolution in the countries of the Allies. Here our exit from the war was considered an unheard of violation of all laws of god and man. They looked upon us almost as violators of a sworn promise, although you know we never gave any promises. All promises were made by Nicholas II, and after him by Kerensky. However, their relations to Soviet Russia in every country has been changing, according to the coalitions and new groupings, depending on the changes of relations of forces, etc. That is why we had new groupings and new alignments also in the trade union movement.

NEW GROUPINGS OF FORCES

What were these new grouping of forces? I mentioned previously that the question of ending the war by Soviet Russia was presented not in a theoretical way, but in practice, and therefore in the consciousness of the masses this question was brought in, not in the form of an illegal proclamation, but as an historical occurrence which cannot be covered up by the military censorship. It was impossible to hide from the masses the fact that Russia ended the war—was through with the war. And the problem of the reformists was that this end of the war which already was a fact of life, should be used for the further mobilization of the masses on one hand, and mobilization of these masses against the revolution itself on the other. That was their main problem.

At the time when the leading center of the reformist part of the trade union movement was trying to solve this problem, in the masses of France, Germany and England this ending of the war in fact brought to us a wave of sympathy and the desire to do the same thing. Thus, the end of the war changed the inner groupings, it made stronger the

international groupings and that feeling which had not definite characterization during the war, and which was called "pacifism." The Russian revolution itself, the ending of the war by us, strengthened the general desire for peace on one hand, and on the other—the labor pacifism, that is, the tendency of the workers also to end the war.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

The Brest Litovsk Peace was the culminating point around which the struggle of the working masses of the world for peace concentrated. If you will take the trade union literature of the period of the Brest Litovsk Peace, the German, French and English literature, we will see that the fact in itself of making the Brest Litovsk Peace, the preparation for it, was discussed by this literature in a varied manner, depending on the coalition to which each belonged.

In 1920, while in Germany, I had to make a speech before the All-German Factory Committee Congress, where a majority were Social Democrats. We Russians have a habit in our greetings to Western Europe of saying many unpleasant truths, and at that Congress I quoted a few remarks from the *Korrespondenzblatt* (central organ of the German Federation of Trade Unions), in which the German trade unionists expressed themselves about the Brest Litovsk Peace. For instance, the following: "It is not in the interest of Germany to safeguard the unity of Russia." This was stated by the central organ of the German trade union movement at the time when General Hoffman was knocking his fist on the table demanding the signing of the Brest Litovsk Peace without any changes as proposed by the German military staff. There is some more; there is a statement, for instance: "Surely the Peace as signed is not entirely satisfactory to us, nevertheless it is a great move ahead on the way of establishing the principles of democracy in those countries which were formerly under the oppression of Czarism."

I could quote much more from these exceptional articles, but when I quoted them in 1920, at that Congress where over a thousand people were present, three-fourths of whom were Social Democrats, I heard a remark behind me in the presidium, "Unheard of impudence!" That was a remark of Humbrecht, but the members of the Congress were sitting with lowered heads. After I quoted, I said: "You can now imagine, after your experience with the Versailles Peace which represents a worse edition of Brest Litovsk, how we Russian workers felt when reading such things at the time of Brest Litovsk." The Brest Litovsk Peace, as well as the Russian revolution was considered by the reformists exclusively from the point of view of the "dear fatherland," and the interests of the particular state.

If we will take the literature of the Allied countries we will see that all that has been written about the Brest Litovsk Peace by the leaders of the trade union movement of France, England, Belgium, etc. without mentioning the United States—Gompers is still writing such things, which proves absolutely his impaired mental capacity—we will see that they considered the Brest Litovsk Peace mainly as an injury to the interest of their "fatherland."

The reasons for Brest Litovsk Peace are well known. However, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of mentioning an interesting moment from the struggle and quarrel within the Russian Communist Party on the question of the Brest Litovsk Peace. You know that the Party at that time almost split: For peace at any price was Ilyitch (Lenin) and in the C. E. C. there were about half and half. And here, Radek relates at one of the fiercest discussions, Ilyitch (Lenin) said: "The peasants have already voted for peace." Radek asked, with a stare, "When?" "They voted with their feet"—answered Ilyitch—"because they are running away from the front and against this vote nothing can be done."

This, in a general way, was the reason for the Brest Litovsk Peace. And this reason was not noticeable even to all of us, so much the less of course, to the working masses of Europe. We have to say that the Brest Litovsk Peace, and the period of great difficulty in which the revolution was after the Brest Litovsk Peace, was used during a long period as a strong weapon in the hands of our opponents, the reformists, against Communism. But, on the other hand, the fact of peace in itself brought in something entirely new into the world's labor movement for the rank and file worker, be he a member of a trade union, or be he in Australia or Alaska, and even not knowing anything at all of what was going on in Russia; the fact in itself that the press of the whole world was against us, was cursing us, because we were confiscating banks, factories, etc., all that created a stimulation in him, a somewhat uncertain sympathy for us.

In this way we can say in a somewhat paradoxical way, that the first agitator for Bolshevism was the bourgeois press itself—for we had no Communist press in the different countries; and the more the bourgeois press was cursing us, the more sympathy it created for us. And all that, taken together, influenced the creation of that uncertain movement which, although very slowly, was growing as a left wing in the international labor movement, which at the proper moment joined with the revolutionary trade union movement and created world wide organization known by the names of Comintern (The Communist International) and Profintern (the Red International of Labor Unions). We should consider these moments, as I have already said, in order to understand the further development of the international labor movement.

THE FOURTH TYPE OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

There was another very important occurrence which brought in a change in the picture of the world trade union movement. That was the appearance, formation, and development of the trade union movement in Russia. While I have been picturing the trade union movement of the world, Russia was not even mentioned. It is true that there were some unions in Russia, but they were so insignificant that they did not play any role at all within Russia, and so much less outside of Russia. The trade unions which were organized by us in 1905, and those developed in 1906, had been destroyed by the victory of Stolypin (a reactionary premier). They appeared again in the period of economic revival in 1912-13 but were entirely destroyed at the beginning of the war.

But in the post-war period, we see something entirely different. Together with the February revolution, with the appearance of trade unions in Russia, and especially with the October revolution, there appeared on the scene also a fourth factor in the world labor movement, one which we may call the heart of the revolutionary trade union movement, which, in short, may be characterized as the "Communist trade union movement," which includes the best there is in the unions of the world.

Above we gave the characteristics of the three types of the trade union movement, which we marked according to their geographical lines, as the Anglo-Saxon, the Latin and the German; but if we will use the political terminology we will have: Trade Unionism, Anarcho-Syndicalism, and the Reformist or Social-Democratic trade movements.

What are the characteristics of the fourth type of the trade union movement? We characterized it as "Communist." But, doesn't that mean that the trade union movement is the same as the Party movement?—It is first of all Communist by its contents, by its tactics, aims and methods of struggle, although it officially is not a part of one or another party. The party is supposed to have only an ideological leadership of the trade union movement.

The fourth type of the trade union movement, which we may without exaggeration call the "Russian type" (to apply to it also a geographical term), is different from the other trade union movements in that it has never been a purely economic or purely co-operative movement. Our trade union movement was always a deeply class movement, even when it had before itself the everyday problems, it would consider them from the point of view of the general interests of the class struggle.

The fourth type of the trade union movement is different from the reformist trade union movement in that it never had as its aim the gradual transition from capitalism to socialism. Our movement is different from the anarcho-syndicalist in that it has never been anti-state in the metaphysical sense, in the abstract. The Russian trade union

movement, if it is anti-state, is so only in that sense that it is against the bourgeois state. We consider the state from the following point of view: What kind of a state is it? Which class does it represent? Which class does it oppress? And from this concrete, historical point of view we consider the given, particular state. In other words, for the fourth type of the trade union movement, the decisive factor in its attitude toward the state is not the form of the state, but its social contents.

From this we can see that this type of the trade union movement has definite principles which differentiates it from all other types of the trade union movement. We will not dwell upon it in detail. Otherwise we would have to touch the structure of our trade unions and the work of the trade unions of Russia in the different spheres. We will take only the more important things which differentiate our trade union movement from all other forms of trade union organization.

It can be said without exaggeration, that the trade union movement of the fourth type, that is, the Russian trade union movement, has absorbed all that which makes for strength and revolutionary spirit in all other separate types of the trade union movement of different countries. Thus, for instance, we have a close similarity to the syndicalists in the sense of bringing forward the class problem, the revolutionary struggle and the direct action of one class against the other. But we also have some points which are similar to those of the reformists of Germany—in the sense of centralization, in the sense of striving for the maximum concentration of forces. We have less in common with the Trade Unionists' movement, although we do agree with them in the way they conduct their stubborn economic struggle. But the difference between us is that they are concentrating their struggle and stubbornness exclusively on the everyday problem, without passing the borders of that problem, at a time when we are using these qualities for wider aims and problems.

Thus, we see that a fourth type of the trade union movement has accepted all that is really revolutionary, which could be taken from the trade union movement of the world.

THE STORMY GROWTH OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The first characteristic of the post-war trade union movement, is its stormy growth. I believe there is no historical parallel of such a rapid development in the trade union movement and also in the labor organizations in general. We will take a few figures and then we will consider the reasons for such phenomenal increase. We will take the figures of 1919, and later those of 1920, etc.

According to official statistics of 1913, Great Britain had 4,000,000 members, in 1919, after the end of the war, there were 8,000,000 mem-

bers. In Germany, in 1913, there were 3,500,000 members, and in 1920, they had 12,000,000 members. In the United States, where the changes were not so stormy as in other countries, in 1913, there were 2,700,000, and in 1919 5,000,000. In France the official statistics for 1913 shows 1,000,000, and in 1919, 2,500,000 members of trade unions. Such growth of membership we have also in the unions of Italy, Belgium, and which is more characteristic, even in the neutral countries. We see that the workers joined the trade union organizations in great masses.

THE REASONS FOR THE GROWTH

What are the reasons for such unprecedented growth? First of all the uncertainty created in the ranks of the workers right after the end of the war as to the future. The beginning of demobilization created before the working class an array of very important problems, and before the wide masses arose the question of how to retain and safeguard their interests. Individual workers, during the war, felt themselves somewhat independent, although of course the more conscious part joined the unions. But the masses, the millions, did not go to the unions. At the end of the war the general uncertainty, the threat of loss of war-time gains, created an atmosphere which stimulated the joining of any organization where they might collectively decide their problems.

After the war, individual workers felt less independent than during the war. The colossal world events which they lived through, participants of which they had been, forced them to think matters over.

We know that the war itself which resulted from the imperialist contradictions, had as one of its main aims the killing of the socialist movement (at least many of the bourgeoisie were of that opinion), but in fact, although the first year it seemed did kill all the revolution that had been in the working class yet—at the end of the war—notwithstanding the colossal blood-letting which they had just lived through—in the masses had grown up a great discontent that had to find some organized expression. This uncertainty of the tomorrow, the general social dissatisfaction, forced the individual workers to seek a shelter, a collective family, called forth the attraction to the trade unions.

The masses went into unions looking for a better life, for better conditions of work, looking for answers to those cursed questions that were placed before them by the war. In this colossal stream into the unions went class conscious and also less conscious elements: Those who had already found answers to the questions placed before them by the war, and those who were looking for these answers. The working class went to the unions, and that is the most characteristic feature of the post-war period.

During the war and previously we had in the trade unions the more conscious part of the proletariat; but right after its end we see how the workers joined the unions in masses. This peculiarity of the post-war period of the trade union movement, we should remember in order to understand our tactics of winning the unions, our opposition to the splits, our desire to win over the organization as a whole, for we consider the trade union organizations not as a union of privileged, individuals, but as an organization which unites if not the majority, at least a great part of the workers of a given industry.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REFORMIST ILLUSIONS

But, alongside this development of the trade union movement, we have in the post-war period also the development of what we may call "the reformist illusions." The development of these illusions is the second peculiarity of the post-war trade union movement. Above, we gave the characteristic of reformism, and we pointed out its special features, but in the post-war period it seems that the reformists had the opportunity to demonstrate the practicability of their ideals and by reforms to show the correctness of their point of view as against the viewpoint of the revolutionary left wing element of the labor movement. How did the development of these reformist illusions appear? What are their peculiar characteristics?

It is known that the end of the war was coincident with revolution in the Central Powers. The revolution in Germany which is officially dated "the 9th of November," has shown that in the moment of the social impact of the revolutionary collision of the class forces, the only organized forces were the working class and the employers. The old military regime, the old structure of Junkers' Germany had fallen apart under the pressure of military defeats. The insurrection started and the strongest organized force was the proletariat; and, as in Germany, the specific gravity of the proletariat was much stronger than in other countries the role of the proletariat in the revolution could be understood.

We can, for instance, bring the following examples of the comparative importance of the German and the Russian proletariats: In Germany with a population of 65,000,000, the sick-benefit societies have insured about 22,000,000 people who are living by wage labor. In Russia, the maximum number of proletarians of all kinds, if we will include also the agricultural proletariat, is only between 8,000,000 and 9,000,000, and that is to a population of 150,000,000. By comparing these figures the specific gravity of the German proletariat will be seen.

Here another assumption appears; that in this revolution the German proletariat should have played the leading role. If the Russian proletariat in a peasant country, with a small city population, played such

a leading and distinct role, so much more should the German proletariat have played such a role. But it did not conduct itself as it should have done, and up to now this is the real cause of the tragedy of the German revolution.

THE CLASS COLLABORATION

A few days before the revolution a conference started between the representatives of the German trade unions and the employers which ended November 15th with an agreement known in history by the name of *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*. This is very difficult to translate from the German, but in a general way it means "class collaboration." Under such a name was created an organization of employers and workers for the regulation of all social questions. It was a commission which in the moment of the dissolution of the German empire had to save the basis of this empire.

The reformists themselves considered this agreement of unusual importance and, as it is natural in the German manner, tried to give it a philosophical interpretation. A philosophy was created of collaboration in all the economic and political life of the country, philosophy of equal participation by the workers and employers in the administration of things. But philosophy is one thing and life is quite another: To run industry in collaboration is impossible. As long as these collaborative commissions have been the political expressions of the shifting powers within the labor masses, as happened the moment the revolution began, so much did they play, from the start, a conservative role.

They were conservative because they selected one moment out of the revolutionary process and made it permanent, without giving the revolution opportunity to develop. And what were the essentials of the revolution. Let us take the Russian revolution. The course of the Russian revolution was the swift changes of the relation of class forces, the sharpening of struggle, the growth of class consciousness going forward in forced tempo, like a falling stone, which, the closer it comes to earth the faster it falls. It was what we may call a rapid movement in the sense of growing class unity. The growth of these class forces created a shifting between the struggling classes, and if we would take as a culminating point the relation of forces in the first period of the revolution and will stop at that it will only mean to mark time.

That is why this program of marking time by the reformists was executed by them in such a brilliant way that the working class of Germany up to now cannot get out of that "brilliant" situation.

These collaborative commissions received the approval of the employers and one of the leading employers of Rhenish Westphalian province in the coal and iron syndicate, Dr. Reichardt, explaining at a meeting of the employers the reason why that collaborative agreement was signed said, literally, the following: "If we would not sign this

agreement, all foundations would collapse; we succeeded with this agreement to stop these elementary forces which surely would bring about the destruction of industry and the destruction of all order."

We think we need no de-coding of these words. What do these words mean from the lips of a leader of the employers' organization? Let us remind ourselves of the similar expression by the leaders of the textile, iron and metal syndicates of Russia just previous to the October revolution and let us come to the necessary conclusion. We may say, and that was the belief also of the employers, that the trade unionists saved the order, production and margin of profit, and the whole old capitalist system.

But the leaders of the reformist trade union movement accepted all this as a victory of the working class. Of course, in comparison with that which had been up till the 9th of November when the iron fist of Ludendorff and Hindenburg crushed all resistance of the workers, here, perhaps, could be seen a victory; but in comparison with those objective possibilities which have been hidden in the powerful class, this agreement was the fixing of a certain moment and the holding up since that moment the labor movement as a whole.

It is known that the German revolution started with a workers' government, the same which we are demanding at present in all countries. Immediately a government was created of Social-Democrats and Independents and the bourgeois parties stepped out.

However, this government "governed" so well that in a very short time it turned over the power to the bourgeoisie and at present is only an addition to the bourgeois parties.* The reformist trade union and political movements of Germany expected that by strengthening itself with an array of reforms it would be able to use the organizing and other forces of the bourgeoisie in order to raise the political and economic structure of the country to a higher level, and then to make another step ahead, etc. And in this is contained the illusion of German trade union and political movements. It imagined the change of society, we will say, in the form of gradual steps. They stopped, in the sphere of economics—at the collaborative commissions and, in politics—at the coalition government.

I happened, at the time of the Frankfort conference in March of this year (1923) in a discussion with the Social-Democrats, to compare the tactics of the Communists and the reformists and mainly in the example of the German Social-Democracy, where I approached the question from the national point of view, from the point of view of the interests of these same Social-Democrats. I asked them: "Imagine for one

* Since this lecture was delivered the whole German working class has been delivered up to the tender mercies of the Fascist General von Seeckt, agent of German capitalism, by vote of the German Social Democratic members of the Reichstag.

moment, that the Social-Democracy of Germany at the beginning of the war would have taken an international position—what would be the results from the national point of view? Let's forget for a while the international point of view. If the war would have begun it would have been liquidated very quickly, for against the will of the trade unions Wilhelm would not have been able to conduct the war. There would have been no war, and of course, there would have been no Versailles Treaty. This way, from the viewpoint of expedience, your international position would, on one hand have saved millions of lives, and on the other—would exclude the very possibility for Germany of the Versailles Treaty. "The second example again is taken from the national point of view: If, at the time of the Brest Litovsk Peace, the German Social-Democracy, the German trade unions, would have acted not as the slaves of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, but in a decisive way, with strikes against the forcing upon Soviet Russia of a robber's peace, and would have forced its government to conclude a really democratic peace, you would have split the whole Allied front, and again, Germany would not have come to the Versailles Treaty."

So the social patriots in the final analysis are the worst enemies of their "fatherland." Even from the purely practical point of view, the tactics of the reformists not only does not give the results which they strive for, but gives just the opposite results, destroying the country and production and leading the working class into poverty.

THE TACTICS OF THE REFORMISTS IN THE ALLIED COUNTRIES

An attempt to use the reformist tactics we have also in the countries of the Allies, but there it was proceeding on different lines. It is known that the Allies conducted the struggle for "eternal principle," for "eternal peace," at least that is what they are always speaking and writing about. What kind of an "eternal peace" was achieved? At least the ten million killed in the war did receive, in fact, "eternal peace." Just after the end of the war with this same "eternal peace" begins a new, curious and most interesting phase of Allied reformism. The reformist trade unions, as we already have mentioned, have been the foundation, the basis of the war itself, and it is clear that they were very anxiously awaiting the end of it, expecting: "The war will end and we will get everything." The war came to an end and it was necessary to begin making the peace treaty. When the leaders of the trade unions dared to mention that they would like to participate in the working out of the treaties, they were given to understand that the time when they used to come in through the front door had passed; now they can come up the back stairs.

Above we have already characterized the feelings prevalent in the laboring masses. In the period of two years the reformist "quadrille"

in which participated on one hand the leaders of the trade unions and, on the other, the political leaders of the Allied nations, never stopped; although the latter clearly saw the danger which the growth of the trade union movement represented to them. As a result of the activities of the reformists, a new institution was created which was supposed to attain all the expectations and hopes of the reformists.

PROCLAMATION OF THE "ETERNAL PRINCIPLES"

During the war there was much talk of the necessity of creating a league of nations, a real league of nations. In his time Wilson proclaimed the fourteen points, which became somewhat similar to "Fourteen Commandments" for all pacifist and reformist simpletons. They were given the possibility, if not to participate in the diplomatic conferences, in conjunction with them to work on some parts of this treaty. Such leaders of the trade unions as Gompers, Jouhaux, Appleton, have been invited into the commission to work out that part of the Versailles Treaty which deals with the problems of labor on an international scale and also the creation of that institution which was supposed to regulate the questions of labor.

In the Versailles Treaty which is the most curious document ever created by human fantasy, there is a thirteenth paragraph which begins literally as follows: "Labor should not be a commodity." You will probably be surprised to find such a clearly socialist point in the Versailles Treaty, and that Clemenceau and Lloyd-George and Orlando could have signed it.

But we should remember that the government leaders of Europe are not afraid of words, they will sign any words. They put in such a formula but Lloyd-George and Clemenceau, as practical men, understood that the center of gravity is not in this formula, that the Versailles Treaty will be enforced by the one with the biggest army.

At the time of signing the Versailles Treaty, Clemenceau, the inspirer of it, made a curious remark which Poincare is even now trying to accomplish: "In Europe there is a surplus of twenty million Germans." This means that instead of 65,000,000 population there should be left only 45,000,000, and there are enough means to do that. The Versailles Treaty which had for its purpose to reduce the population of Germany by 20,000,000, at the same time proclaimed such "eternal principles" as "Labor should not be a commodity," and "Justice should triumph."

As a result of this thirteenth paragraph, "this best part of the Versailles Treaty,"—as one reformist remarked—we have the League of Nations' International Labor Bureau. The League of Nations is a trust of the victorious countries in which the strongest have the greater influence. In international politics the wording doesn't mean much:

Force plays the role and this trust of the victors found it necessary to create an International Labor Bureau whose purpose was to bring about "justice" between capital and labor.

THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

Having before it a great purpose, the International Labor Bureau was organized in the following way: In October 1919 a conference was called at Washington to which were invited the representatives of trade unions, employers' organizations and representatives of governments which, as it is known, are "neutrals." The bourgeoisie and the reformists liked very much to talk about the non-class rule of government, spreading widely the legend of the "neutrality" of government. In the report of the Amsterdam International there are many pages telling of victories the Amsterdammers attained at the Washington Conference. These victories consisted in the adoption by the Washington Conference of a program of social reform, and especially the endorsement of the eight-hour day.

It is interesting that the representatives of the governments neutral in the war voted for that program. The organizations of those countries where the eight-hour day was already won by the workers, insisted that it should be spread all over; and, of course, they declared their motives to be humanitarian, as it is well known that these are the main considerations of the employers and the governments.

The question of competition and the price of commodities also played a big role at the Conference. There were long discussions with representatives of the Japanese government which tried to prove that Japan has its peculiarities thanks to which the workers there *must* work twelve hours a day. But here the greatest defenders of the eight-hour day were not only the representatives of the workers organizations but also the employers of England and France, which, of course, are not interested in the principle of the eight-hour day but in the question of competition.

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR BUREAU

Finally, the program of social reforms has been adopted and as a result of the Washington Conference the International Labor Bureau was created. It is composed of six representatives of the workers, six representatives of the employers' organizations which, we may mention, at the Washington Conference also created *their* international, and twelve representatives of governments: England, France, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, etc. Thus, we see that the reformists had a "brilliant victory." Out of twenty-four representatives they have six. The director of this wonderful institution, the choice of the reformists, was

Albert Thomas. The working class all over the world can now calm itself, the International Labor Bureau will do for it absolutely everything, for, at the head of it, stands such an experienced fighter as Albert Thomas.

Two questions arise in connection with the International Labor Bureau. First, why did the bourgeoisie bother itself with such a plaything? Second, what was the attitude of the working masses to this "revolutionary" creation? The bourgeoisie bothered itself with the plaything of the reformists in order to release the safety valve. Experienced engineers know that it is necessary sometimes to open the valves in order to save the engine from bursting, and the bourgeoisie also perfectly understood that directly after the end of the war it was necessary to open a few of such social valves; otherwise, the energy which accumulated in the working class would explode the whole bourgeois capitalist system. Moreover an explosion had already happened in the East and the Russian revolution represented in itself a definite fact which they had to consider while marking their strategic lines.

For such reasons, the bourgeoisie in order to open a few valves, was willing to go along the road of compromise. This gave to the reformists the possibility to say to the workers; "Now, you see, thanks to our tactics, they are giving in. We are now able to get that which would cost us under other conditions, great sacrifices."

The bourgeoisie was consciously compromising, figuring correctly that it was better to give something than to lose all. They also calculated correctly that if they would continue to have the economic and political power in their hands, they would be able to end their compromises as soon as the masses become calm. We must point out that this same Clemenceau in a very quick manner in a few months put through the French parliament the eight-hour law in order to show that victorious France is giving something real to the working class for its colossal losses in the war.

How did this reformist activity reflect upon the mass? And why did they, in the first post-war period, follow these reformists? With the end of the war although there was enough energy and hatred accumulated within the working class, there was no willingness to fight. The war brought about a great fatigue, a tiredness, and a revolution would, in effect, mean a new civil war, a new demand for expenditure of energy, a new and bloody period. This frightened the wide masses, who still lived in hope of getting all promised them during the war, without new colossal sacrifices, to get something real.

All this taken together created more sympathy among the masses for forms of solving the social conflicts proposed by the bourgeoisie and the reformists.

Thus, in a certain historical moment, directly after the war, it was to the benefit of the bourgeoisie to keep up the illusions among the masses, and in the masses was a desire to put off the final moment of conflict. "Remove this cup from us," prayed the labor reformists, pointing to Russia, where, together with the revolution, came great suffering, fighting on all fronts, etc.

These are the causes which led to the development of the reformists' policies, these are the causes which created the sympathy among the working masses for those institutions which have been created by the liberal bourgeoisie together with the leaders of the reformist political and trade union movement.

LECTURE NO. 3

The International Federation of Trade Unions.*(The Amsterdam International)*

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS

LET us acquaint ourselves with those tendencies which are noticed at the present time in the world's trade union movement. In order to study the struggle of factions (tendencies) within the world's trade union movement we have to consider the existing international trade union organizations and the particularities which differentiate one type of trade unions from the other.

In the world's trade union movement there are the following organizations: "The International Federation of Trade Unions," with headquarters at Amsterdam; twenty-nine international organizations united according to industry, as for instance, the International Unions of Metal Workers, Textile, Building Trades, Tailors, Barbers, Cap Makers, etc., which are politically close to the Amsterdam International. And then there is in existence the Red International of Labor Unions, with headquarters at Moscow, and thirteen International Propaganda Committees.

Besides these international units, for which the Amsterdam International and the Red International of Labor Unions unite the international trade union movement horizontally and the international unions according to industry, the International Propaganda Committees unite these same workers along vertical lines. Now, besides these, there is an "International Workingmens' Association." If this were judged by its name it might be considered something serious. But, in fact, it is the "International" created by the anarcho-syndicalist groups of France, Italy and Germany.

In addition to the internationals, which generally embrace all the factions within the labor movement, there is an attempt to create an International of Catholic Workers. And this "International" has already had international conferences where questions of interest to Catholic workers of different countries were discussed.

Here are all the international groupings in which are reflected the divergent political and trade union movements, and which, in one form or another, represent the existing factions within the international trade union movement.

BIRTH OF THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL

We will begin our acquaintance with the Amsterdam International; in the same order as we mentioned these organizations, we will consider

their power, constitution, tactics and methods for solving those questions which the internationals contemplate to solve.

This International was created after the end of the war. Attempts to call international conferences were made even during the war, when the Holland and Swiss trade unions took upon themselves the initiative. But every time they met resistance from the trade unions of the Allied countries and therefore the conferences failed to materialize.

One of these Conferences, called on the initiative of the neutral trade unions, was held in Berne at the end of 1917. At this gathering the trade unionists of the Allied countries were not present, because the war was still continuing. Only after the war was ended did they succeed with the aid of the unions of the neutral countries again to call an international conference, which was held in February, 1919, also in Berne, Switzerland. Very little came out of that conference, but what remains proves that the main question discussed there was "Who was guilty during the war; Germany or the other countries?" The representatives from the Allied countries felt somewhat like diplomats of their "fatherlands," trying to obtain an admission from the representatives of the unions of Germany and Austria that "their countries" were guilty for the war and that they were sorry for the tactics which they used for many years. The Conference did not give any material results. The only result was to call an international congress in July, 1919, at Amsterdam. This July Congress laid the foundation for the Amsterdam International.

FIRST CONGRESS OF THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL

What problems did this First Congress solve, and what was its special character? To get an answer to these questions, it is best to allow the Amsterdammers to speak for themselves, for nobody will suspect them of lack of love and respect for their own organization.

Here we read from the official report of the Amsterdam International presented to the Congress of Trade Unions which was held in Rome in April, 1922; this report states as follows: "Although we succeeded in creating unity between the representatives of the trade unions of different countries which not long before had been quarrelling among themselves, the Congress did not give full satisfaction. In discussions on almost every point there were contradictions which, during the many years of the war, artificially flared up and these contradictions came out sharply to the surface. Almost every day, during the Congress, there were new conflicts before we could get a unanimous vote." This is said by the official report. The report was written by the Secretary of the Amsterdam International who had to soften all that was really there: and in reality this characterization of the Amsterdam Congress was very mild.

The First Congress of the Amsterdam International made an impression of a meeting of vicious and unleashed nationalists, every one of whom tried to prove that his "fatherland" was "right" during the war, and that their conduct should, therefore, be approved by the workers of all other countries. The representatives from the Allied countries presented an ultimatum to the trade unionists of Germany and Austria, demanding that the latter should in an official declaration admit that Germany was guilty for the war and also recognize the injustice shown by the German trade unions toward the Belgian proletariat. It can be imagined what an impression this made on the German social patriots who were convinced of the correctness of their own point of view just as the French were in theirs.

This demand was put in the form of an ultimatum, refusal of which would prevent the Germans and Austrians being admitted to the International. After long discussions and quarrels, and nationalist contradictions, very sharp in fact but not in form, at last the representatives of the Germans assembled, made a somewhat similar declaration: "We recognize the guilt of Germany in occupying Belgium, and, as it is now shown, we did miscomprehend the general situation; but this is explained by the fact that the working class has to defend its "fatherland" as long as it is in danger."

This explanation is very vague, but the problem of the Allied trade unionists was to get, at any cost, an official document of repentance. These tactics were used by the trade unionists of the Allies parallel with the international diplomatic conference where it was demanded of the German diplomats to admit their guilt. The only difference is that it was done there without any pretense; there they presented the Versailles Treaty and said—"Sign!"

The declaration by Sassenbach, which was a very careful one, brought forth a storm of protest and resentment from the trade unions of Germany. When he returned from the Congress, the whole German Federation of Trade Unions adopted a resolution in which it stated that it took no responsibility for the declaration made by Sassenbach. Thus, on one hand, the guilt was admitted; and, on the other hand, officially repudiated. The question was "decided" for the time being.

Even this one episode characterizes the composition of the Amsterdam International and foretells the possibilities of its future organization. And, in fact, the Amsterdam International was constructed as an international with hegemony of the trade unionists of the Allied countries. In this respect a very curious scene took place at the same Amsterdam Congress. The leader of the international trade union movement was Legien; but the victory of the Allies which brought about the collapse of Germany, brought about the downfall of Legien. Not only was another elected as Chairman, but Legien was not even elected

as Vice-Chairman, although Germany was foremost in the number of organized workers.

The representatives of Austrian trade unions perfectly understood the political significance of this fact. They understood that the allies of Germany in the war should also be its allies at Amsterdam, therefore, the Austrian trade unionists reacted to this with a purely coalitionist diplomatic solution of the problem. When one of the positions of Vice-Chairman was offered to the leader of the Austrian unions, Huber, he refused it and made the following statement: "Together with our German comrades we suffered until now; together with them we will suffer in the future."

These incidents, at the birth of the Amsterdam International, throw a curious light not only upon the structure of the International itself. These nationalistic contradictions and altercations of that period appeared also at later times, within the last couple of years, and by this time are leading to the dissolution of those organizations which were supposed to resurrect the traditions of the pre-war world labor movement.

If we will take all the decisions of this First Congress, we will find nothing of importance, except, for a few moments where they dealt with the International Labor Bureau. It is true there were attempts to talk about socialization. As you all know, 1919 was a year of budding "socialization" ideas and projects; but, about that, was more talk in November 1920 at the London Congress. At the First Congress the participants were glad of the fact that they succeeded in spite of the national contradictions in creating the International.

A question arises: If the national contradictions were so great that they could not be overcome, which is proven by the report of the Congress, why did they create such an international at all? The reason for it is that they had to create an international, otherwise they would have lost all influence over the workers. They had to create this International at any cost, because, right after the war, even the most backward laboring masses demanded some kind of an international organization which would prevent or interfere with any repetition of the events they had just been through. The need for it was very great. Therefore, the nationalistic and patriotic leaders would have been thrown aside if they would have dared to interfere with the formation of an international labor organization.

The creation of the International was dictated, therefore, by the feelings of self-preservation of the reformist leaders, as well as by an attempt on an international scale to influence those institutions which were created as a result of the Versailles Peace.

THE LONDON CONGRESS

The next Congress was held at London in November 1920. It occupied itself firstly with the Red International of Labor Unions and then with "socialization," economic questions and financial exchange. One of the leaders of the international trade union movement, the representative of the French Confederation of Labor, Jouhaux was especially busy with the stabilization of the financial unit. It was not by chance that this question was proposed by a representative of France—France, as it is known, is a country of pawn-brokers, and financial questions, questions of banking, stock exchanges, etc., are of especial interest to wide circles of the French bourgeoisie.

But looking over the decisions and resolutions of the London Congress about the stabilization of the monetary unit, we see again that all these decisions revolve around the axis of the League of Nations and the institutions which were created by it.

What should be done in order to stabilize the monetary unit? It is necessary that the League of Nations shall deal with it. That was the decision of the London Congress. What should be done in order to start socialization, with which industry should we begin? First of all, we should approach this very carefully (so carefully that probably nobody can notice it), and after that it is necessary again that the International Labor Bureau of the League of Nations shall take it up. In short, no matter what the Amsterdam International would take up or start—it would begin with the League of Nations and end with it. All this proves the inherent weakness of the organization of the Amsterdam International and the complete subordination of this organization to the bourgeois institutions which were created as a result of the world war.

THE ROME CONGRESS

The next Congress of the Amsterdam International was held in Rome in April 1922. It dealt with the problems of war, reparations, etc. Here, again, we see not one revolutionary decision. At the same time we see that all the aspirations and hopes of the leaders of the Amsterdam International continue to revolve around the same circle as in the first two years, notwithstanding the fact that the danger of war has grown and the reparation problem was very confused. This is the general outline of the work of these three Congresses.

Let us take up the separate questions, but not in a chronological way of the Congresses. Let us consider the theory and practice of the Amsterdam International and, as a result, we will be able to discover our point of view. The problems which are today dividing the world labor movement are mainly the following: the attitude toward the Versailles Treaty, the problems of reparations, the methods of struggle against

international reaction and against aggressive capitalism, the attitude toward Fascism, the fight against war, the attitude towards the Revolution and Soviet Russia, and the problem of the United Front.

These are the questions which define the differences between the international trade union organizations.

THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL AND THE VERSAILLES TREATY

We will begin with the Versailles Treaty. We have shown above that the representatives of the trade unions from the Allied countries participated in the drafting of the Thirteenth Paragraph of the Versailles Treaty. Can these leaders of the labor movement take upon themselves the responsibility for everything contained in the Versailles Treaty, or only for that which they inserted in this Treaty? But this would be rather a legalistic than a political solution of the question. It would not be a correct approach to the problem. Because the Versailles Treaty represents somewhat of a unit, and the question is not who has written one or another part of it, but who is upholding this treaty and what are its contents?

It is composed, if we take it as a whole, of proclamations of guilt of the Central Powers, of territorial division of Austria and Germany, of confiscation of the German colonies, disarming Germany, seizing her economic resources, forcing upon Germany colossal economic payments and turning her in general into a second-rate state.

The breaking up of Central Europe and the hegemony of the Allies is the main object of the Versailles Treaty. And those representatives of the workers, who, in one form or another for certain motives upheld or are upholding, separate parts of the treaty, are in a general way upholding all parts of it. We will see this in the problem of reparations and the attitude toward that question of the Amsterdam International.

We can prove as a political fact that the Amsterdam International or separate parts of it, as its representatives, participated in the drafting of separate paragraphs of the Versailles Treaty, upheld the Versailles Treaty, and, more than that, are still upholding it at present. This is not only an historically proven fact, not a question of the past, but of the present.

It is true that the Versailles Treaty is not a child of the Amsterdam International. This International did not create it, but participated indirectly in its creation. It participated in the creation of that ideology which made it possible for the wide working masses to accept that treaty. The Amsterdam International was the great machine of mobilization by the bourgeoisie which was used to obscure the minds of the workers, which brought the wide masses of workers in the Allied countries right after the war to believe that the Versailles Treaty was in reality a victory of "culture, civilization, right," etc.

THE REPARATION QUESTION

What is the essence of the reparation question? Reparation means replacement. The reparation question is the question of replacing the losses caused by the war. Who should replace these losses? Of course, the guilty ones. It seems that those who are guilty in the war should replace all losses. These were the opinions of the diplomatic representatives. This was the opinion of Foch and others, this is the opinion of the leaders of the trade union movement of the Allied countries. And, as Germany and Austria are the guilty ones, they should replace the losses caused by the war; they should rebuild areas, in short, they should bring Europe back to the pre-war conditions.

Even at the First Congress of the Amsterdam International in one of the resolutions was pointed out the justification of the reparations and the necessity of paying them. That the Germans have to pay, is stated in almost every resolution which was ever adopted by the Amsterdamers. They meet at Amsterdam in order to create an International, and decide: The Germans have to pay; and in London, again: The Germans have to pay; and in Rome, again—the same thing. No matter how many times their Bureau met, every time when they approached the question of the conflict between France and Germany, this problem which keeps Europe on a volcano, they always come to the conclusion that "Recognizing the necessity by Germany to cover the losses, nevertheless, excessive force should not be used, the problem should be turned over to the League of Nations." etc., etc.

Thus, in the question of reparations, the Amsterdam International took a purely Allied position. They forced upon the Germans not only a theoretical admission of the necessity of paying the reparations, but also demanded practical steps of pressure upon their Government in order to bring about the regular payment of the required sums. It is known that even up till now the question of reparations is not settled. The covering of all losses would mean the payment by the Germans of hundreds of milliards in gold, which is more than the financial and economic resources can permit.

To illustrate what these sums mean I will give one example. One German economist took the expenditures of the war for Germany alone and calculated how much would be required in order to turn Germany into a flowering garden in the sense that the next generation would have to work only four hours; and he came to the conclusion that if Germany would spend only half of the money which it spent on the war, for peaceful construction she would be able to make not only Germany but all Central Europe a garden.

At the time of signing the Versailles Treaty they were talking about 400 billion marks in gold. But this figure was so fantastic that they had to reduce it gradually until, in May 1921, it was brought down to

132 billion gold marks. In this manner the final sum of reparations, besides all kinds of deliveries and economic concessions, was brought down to that "small" but, in fact, gigantic contribution.

What have the leaders of the Amsterdam International been doing at a time when these colossal demands were being drawn, demanding from Germany more than she could ever pay? Considering the question of reparations they always brought forward the idea that it is, of course, necessary to pay, in a somewhat decent manner, through the League of Nations, respecting all the "rights" and jurisdictional forms. But the Amsterdamers never went further than the phraseology of "international rights."

We see that to this sore and vital question of present day international politics, to the question which is now dividing the whole world, bringing about conflicts between countries, bringing about the destruction of all Central Europe, to this question the Amsterdam International approached and is still approaching from the Allied point of view, and is demanding that the German workers shall rebuild all that was destroyed by German imperialism. At the same time the Amsterdamers perfectly knew that reparations means for the Germans a further enslavement of the German workers and worsening the conditions of the working masses of Germany.

Judging by this question we can understand the position that this International has in the present day struggle of the working class. I will say more, if all the literature about the Amsterdam International would disappear, or we might say, would burn up, the future historian about one or two hundred years later would be able to judge the position of the Amsterdam International in this epoch of dissolution of capitalism, which we are living through, by its resolution on reparations.

THE PROBLEM OF DISARMAMENT

The next question is the problem of disarmament. It is known that the war was conducted for the sake of destroying "Militarism." The government leaders of Europe and America promised that as soon as Prussian militarism would be broken, they would begin disarmament, and the people would be relieved of all those military obligations which existed before and after the war. This myth about disarmament and the possibility of disarmament under capitalist society was spread by reformists of all kinds. The role of the reformists during the war was to ennoble all dishonorable motives which the bourgeoisie of every country had.

It seemed that with the victory of the Allies came the time for disarmament. The reformist leaders of the trade union and socialist movement, which for a couple of years had been repeating the pacifist

ideas of disarmament, began at the end of the war to talk about it. But nothing came out of all the talk.

At the end of the war the leaders of international politics could not simply deny the idea of disarmament, they are not so foolish as not to use to the limit the specific pacifist feeling created in the masses by the reformists. The idea of disarmament was not denied, but a committee was created by the League of Nations, which from time to time meets and talks over the usefulness of disarmament. To this committee comes representatives of the Amsterdam International trying to prove to the representatives of the governments the usefulness of disarmament, painting those brilliant perspectives which will come about after disarmament is accomplished.

It is characteristic of all parts of the Amsterdam International and also for the International itself that in the question of disarmament their practical proposals never went beyond the borders of the League of Nations.

When we see that every day armaments are growing and that the competition between the former Allies is sharpening, that not only in the line of land or sea forces, but also in the air service, all is being done in preparation for a new war, to appear at such a time before the Commission on Disarmament for the League of Nations with proposals for disarmament is just the same as to preach to wolves the usefulness of vegetarianism. How can we explain such a point of view? With personal lack of comprehension?

We are very little interested in the political foolishness of this or that political leader. After all there is no lack of fools in the world. But, to our regret, in this pacifist ideology of disarming through the League of Nations, which is itself a tool of armed-to-the-teeth imperialism, this certainly proves that there is an influence of the bourgeoisie over the working class. In this ideology are reflected the dim hopes and expectations of a certain part of the proletariat: Somehow to avoid the future war; dodging the class struggle without straining every revolutionary force and without those sufferings with which the social revolution is usually accompanied.

All this is a reflection of the dim pacifist hopes which exist in the working class, and it is the fault of the leaders of the Amsterdam International that instead of destroying these dangerous pacifist illusions in the masses, they were preaching them, giving the question of disarmament, not a revolutionary class character, but a purely bourgeois pacifist one.

For everyone who even slightly understands the existing situation, it is clear that it is impossible to have a voluntary disarmament, that it is possible only to force disarmament. There are two ways of doing this last.

The first type of disarmament is the one that was accomplished after the Versailles Treaty when the French and British disarmed the Germans. This is an imperialist disarmament, which is the disarming by one bourgeoisie of its opponents, arming itself at the same time for a future war. There is another kind of disarmament, the one that we attained when we disarmed the bourgeoisie and armed the workers. The political crime of the leaders of the Amsterdam International is contained not only in that they left the question of disarmament to the League of Nations, but also that they approached the question of disarmament and arming purely from the bourgeois point of view.

We are against war, and therefore, we are for disarmament. And here the reformist theory of disarmament is for us something entirely strange, for according to its purpose, forms, and methods it is in entire contradiction to the way we approach that problem. The hope of disarmament through the League of Nations by solving problems of international jurisdiction, all that is pure nonsense which proves the political short-sightedness of the leaders of the reformist trade union movement.

A curious discussion on disarmament took place not long ago in the British Parliament. The question was raised by the representative of the Labor Party, MacDonald, (present Premier of Britain) who is trying to find means of saving the British Empire by way of disarmament. Premier Baldwin answered him literally as follows: "At present there can be no question of disarmament. In the character and instincts of people there is a striving to fight, it is the instinct of a tiger and perhaps this instinct was given to man in order that by way of struggle he would bring about millenium to his own people." Thus the old sympathetic formula—"A man is a wolf to a man," as we Russians say, is now changed by the leader of British politics into a no-less sympathetic one: "A man is a tiger to a man." And this does not prevent the leaders of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals from approaching the League of Nations with the proposition that they shall disarm themselves. But who is an enemy to himself and who is going to disarm when, with machine guns and cannon can be obtained such wonderful and realistic economic results!

PROBLEMS OF WAR AGAINST WAR

The question of disarmament is closely connected with the whole problem of the struggle against war. Of course the Amsterdam International is against war, but how to avoid war, how to fight against it? If we examine all the resolutions adopted concerning this question by the Amsterdam International, again we will find in them the statement that all conflicts started by one nation against another should be solved by international conferences and by international law. In order to solve all these conflicts, to create some kind of higher court composed

of absolutely neutral people, and by that to create that higher institution which will be able to bring about harmony between contradictions and to destroy the military aspirations of separate countries.

The anti-war tactics of the Amsterdam International are characterized very well by the international peace congress which was called by it in December, 1922, at the Hague. To this congress were invited also representatives of the Russian trade unions in order to discuss together the danger of war and methods of fighting against it.

First of all, this congress was peculiar by its social composition. At this Congress, besides the representatives of Amsterdam, the Second and the Second-and-a-Half Internationals, all Internationals, and Secretariats of Industries, there were also representatives of all kinds of pacifist societies which appeared after the war. The bourgeois pacifists are "pacifists" in time of peace, which is not very difficult. But in time of war a great majority of them were with their governments; they were setting one nation upon another, preaching endurance and patience and fight to a finish.

At the Hague there were also such organizations as "For the League of Nations"—"The League for the Rights of Man and Citizen"—"The Society for Bringing About Friendly Relations Between Churches"—"The Union of Christian Socialists," and many other similar societies and unions, in short "Of every animal, a pair." And we, the representatives of the Russian trade unions, found ourselves in this mixed society.

At this Congress there was talk about the necessity to conduct propaganda and to bring up the youth against war by way of lectures, movies, etc. I am a lover of movies, and have nothing against them, but when delegates from all countries meet for the sake of fighting against war, just prior to the occupancy of the Ruhr, and talk about the movies, the education of the youth as a separate activity in this problem, it is clear that there is something wrong with the struggle against war.

All the resolutions adopted in this connection had for their purpose to satisfy everybody. As long as six hundred people came together, all peaceful and in a benign mood, as the Germans would say *gemuthlich*, why should any one of them be angered? As a result, resolutions were worked out for all tastes. Of course to satisfy Russians is very difficult, and we brought into this peaceful idyl a plain disharmony, but this was only because we have a bad, Bolshevik temper and it is most difficult to satisfy us.

In this resolution, which was adopted mainly in order that they should be able to digest their food after the Congress as well as before, besides their reliance upon the League of Nations which was supposed to arrange everything, there is also a threat—and this was a debatable question—a threat that in case of the danger of war all the organizations should proclaim a general strike.

When we read the resolution and came to this point we said: "Why all the waste of words; if you are promising a strike in the distant future, let us better make it in the present; as long as you are ready to organize a strike, in view of the threatened occupation of the Ruhr, let us start the strike the 15th of January (we were debating that question on the 17th of December), and by that action we will surely prevent the occupation of the Ruhr, as the French imperialists and allies of France will see that the workers of all countries represent quite a solid power."

Our proposal about a strike not distant in time or place, but right there and on the 15th of January, brought great excitement, for it is quite one thing to talk about a strike in general, and quite another to talk about one in the concrete—these are two entirely different things, and our resolution was, of course, not adopted.

Our other proposals, it is true not of the moving-picture character, as for instance to conduct an anti-militaristic agitation among the white and colored soldiers, were not only rejected but brought forth objection from the Chairman of the Congress and the Chairman of the Amsterdam International, the famous hero of "Black Friday," J. H. Thomas, who said, "It is not fitting for us to agitate among the soldiers." Of course, if it isn't fit, then, only the moving pictures—bourgeois at that—are left. If it is not acceptable to conduct the class struggle, then nothing else can be imagined but the pacifist resolutions.

I will not go into details about the work of this peculiar-in-all-respects Congress. All the Amsterdam congresses are like the heroines of Gogol: "pleasant in all respects," or "just pleasant." This Congress was "pleasant in all respects," and mainly because it satisfied absolutely everybody, except, of course, the Russians.

It is necessary to say that even on the question of strikes, in their drafting, on the question of educating the youth, there were also curiosities. One of the bourgeois pacifists who did not understand that a threat of strike was inserted in the resolution merely for the gallery—(that is, for the workers—"You see what kind of revolutionists we are")—tried to prove that the strike is, of course, a good thing, but first it is necessary to educate the youth and the children to an understanding of it. After all, this declaration of the bourgeois pacifist does not contradict the general spirit of the decisions of the Hague Congress.

This was a typical bourgeois pacifist convention and although there were many present as representatives of labor, in its character it was a bourgeois pacifist meeting. Its fundamental desire was to destroy war without touching capitalist society, it tried to interfere with war not by way of the class struggle, but through the League of Nations; it tried to interfere with war by creating a bourgeois pacifist bloc, refusing a united front with us, the Communists.

Being scared by my formula presented to them: "If you want peace, conduct a class war," the delegates grumbled: "We came to the Congress to fight for peace, and the Russian delegates propose to us that we must conduct a class war." And this was said by the so-called leaders of the labor movement. For them there was no difference between a war and a class war. All the ideology of the leaders of the Amsterdam International plainly showed itself at this Congress; here fraternized the pacifist bourgeoisie with the right wing of the labor movement. It is clear that bourgeois pacifists invited to the Congress would not vote for a resolution against capitalist society.

The Congress had for its purpose the collection of all pacifism there was in the world's labor movement and among the more advanced bourgeoisie, and to tell to the governments of the world: "You see what power we represent! If you will dare again to fling humanity into war, we are ready, even for a strike!" Later on we found out indirectly that when the leaders of the Amsterdam International were discussing a strike, among themselves, they laughed at it. They considered it a necessary ornament: It doesn't look good to pass a resolution just about moving pictures, it was necessary to mention a strike so that the workers could see that there was a will to fight.

Thus, instead of demonstrating force, weakness was demonstrated.

When, at the Congress, we proposed to the Amsterdammers a United Front, the reporter of the Political Committee, the leader of the Holland Social-Democracy, Troelstra, said, "We will agree to a United Front with the Communists only after they pass a quarantine." But with the bourgeois pacifists they did agree on a united front without a quarantine. But which will keep the other in quarantine is to be seen.

I think that from this characterization of the attitude of the Amsterdam International to the Versailles Treaty, to the problem of disarmament, to the question of fighting against war, can already be made a logical conclusion as to what the Amsterdam International represented in itself, even if we did not know how it might conduct itself in other cases and on other questions.

THE AGGRESSION OF CAPITAL

I have already pointed out that the end of the war was coincident with the development of the reformist illusions. If we would try to ascertain the relations between the growth of unrest among the workers, the growth of the reformist illusions, and the compromises along reformist lines by the bourgeoisie, we will find that they are very closely related. But if we will take the last years we will see that the social-reformism almost reached the peak in about the middle of 1920. I said "almost" for, in fact, they did not reach anywhere, because we cannot consider as an attainment the creation of the International Labor Bureau, participation in the Committees, the adoption by the Washington Conference of the Labor Program, etc.

At the beginning of 1920 in the world labor movement doubts arose in connection with the new economic orientation. The years of growth of the labor movement we can consider from about the end of 1918 during the whole of 1919 and to about the middle of 1920; marked on one hand, by the stormy growth of the trade union movement, and on the other, the retreat of the bourgeoisie in the sphere of social reforms: The establishment of the eight-hour day, the increase of talk about socialization, the creation in many countries of committees for socialization, etc.

From the middle of 1920, begins the new turn in economics, and the crucial point is reached—the crisis in international trade and in production. It begins in May, in Japan, spreads to America and together with the falling of wholesale prices, did not only stop the retreat of the bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie began to advance. This advance of capital continued through 1920, 1921 and 1922 and has not stopped yet in 1923.

The advance of capital begins together with the economic crisis. What is the purpose of this advance of capital, and how did the international labor movement react to it? The purpose of the advance of capital was to lower the cost of production as the world market began to slacken and competition increased. There was a surplus of commodities, which although needed by the masses, could not be bought by them on account of high prices. This caused the employers to force down the cost of production in order to place cheaper goods on the market. It was necessary to find the line of least resistance, and this line happened to be labor-power. Not by perfecting the technique of production, not by increasing the volume of production, but by forcing down the price of labor-power, by taking away all that was granted labor socially, by "explaining" the eight hour day, by cutting down the wages, by taking away gains—here is the line along which the advance of capital goes.

I mention one instance in order to show the volume of this advance. The official statistics of the reduction of wages in 1921 affected 7,000,000 workers in England; during the whole year of 1921, the workers lost in wage reductions five million pounds sterling per week. In 1922 the workers lost in wages six million pounds sterling per week. If we take both years together the loss in wages will reach the colossal sum of two and three quarters billions of dollars (\$2,750,000,000). This great cut in wages is of real significance for these billions which were cut from wages lowered production costs and permitted competition on the world market.

THE "FIGHT" OF THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL AGAINST THE CAPITALIST ADVANCE

Now, what did the Amsterdam International as an organization do in order to fight against the capitalist advance? First of all, in the

present economic struggle, trade union lines are too narrow; the struggle goes beyond national borders and that is why the International exists, to internationalize the struggle itself. We find ourselves in such a phase of the development of society, in which only on the international scale is it possible to attain a victory even in the purely economic sphere. Even in the question of wages, the international market regulates the price. And from the Amsterdam International there was during all the time of capitalist advance not even one act of international character, no international action, no international demonstration which would place the International against advancing capital as a unit. There were only isolated actions, separate economic strikes, separate conflicts in separate countries.

This characteristic of the Amsterdam International and its organizations is not only in the prevalence of nationalism over internationalism, but also in the prevalence of craft over industrial and class interests within the boundaries of the one nation. This is especially clear from the labor struggle in England. At the time of the famous miners' strike at the beginning of 1921, after the strike lasted for thirteen weeks they were left alone, isolated. And such organizations as the union of railway and transport workers, which had been with them in the Triple Alliance did not aid them. And the day on which these unions refused to aid the miners went down in history as "Black Friday."

In 1922, there was a great struggle; the lockout of the British metal workers. A few hundred thousand metal workers (36 unions) were drawn into the struggle. Did the other unions help the metal workers? No! And the metal workers of other countries did not help either. Separate regiments on separate fronts are conducting the fight, and not only do they get no help from the International, but they are defeated by the lack of aid from the workers of their own territory.

The tactics of the Amsterdam International, that is, the prevalence of the craft over the class, the prevalence of national over international interests, brings about the defeat of the separate parts of this International in the struggle against perfectly organized capital.

I know very well the activities of the Amsterdam International during this period and may, entirely objectively considering its activity, state that nothing was done; and this lack of action on an international scale is the main characteristic of the Amsterdam International. If not in principle, at least in practice, for this International based on national organizations every one of which defends the interests of its bourgeois state, such an International naturally is unable to fight. And during the whole period of capitalist advance we did not see a united struggle, we did not see even a serious attempt of economic aid to assist one or the other sectors of the social front.

LECTURE NO. 4

The Amsterdam International in Theory and in Practice

THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

WE will now take up the very important question of Fascism. What is Fascism? It is the last word of imperialist reaction based on the war and post-war impoverished middle classes of government employes and intellectuals (what Americans call "the white-collar class"), who expect, in the fight against the social revolution, to win back their pre-war welfare.

Fascism is a reaction, the characteristic of which is contained in that it tries to gain foothold if not among all the workers, at least a part of them, in order that together with them it may destroy the organizational centers of the revolution.

First of all, we should remark that Fascism has learned much from the revolution, and as the most outstanding exponent of revolution is Bolshevism, so Fascism borrowed something also from Bolshevism. What did it borrow from Bolshevism? First of all, the forceful methods of struggle; second, the denial of democratic legal forms; thirdly, the rapidity of action; fourthly, the understanding that in order to gain its aim it is necessary to destroy the organizational centers of the enemy-class down to the very foundations. Thus, the methods of Bolshevism and Fascism have some similarity and on this external similarity the reformists are trading by using the parallel of Lenin and Mussolini as representatives of anti-democratic "reaction," as they express it.

What is the chief difference between Bolshevism and Fascism, these two extremes in the social struggle? The difference between them is a social one; that is, on one hand, we have the use of all the revolutionary methods in the struggle against the working class, in order to destroy its power, in order to prevent the social revolution; and, on the other hand, we have the application of revolutionary, forceful methods for the destruction of the resistance of the bourgeoisie, for the fight against the ruling capitalist system in order to destroy it and the system of class society. And it is clear that not the external appearance explains this or another social movement, but its social character. And this absolute social contradiction between Fascism and Bolshevism makes them the most fierce enemies of each other, and places before the working class, which is trying to solve its class problems, the question of methods of struggle against reaction in general, and of Fascist reaction specifically.

As I have mentioned, the characteristic of Fascism is contained in that on one hand it is trying to base itself, or, better to say, is reflecting

the disillusion of the middle classes, and, on the other hand, is trying to penetrate the labor organizations. There is one more peculiarity about Fascism: it is the mobilization of active workers from the workers' organizations, and especially from the leaders of the left for action against the labor movement. We should not forget that Mussolini himself, during the year 1914, was a member of the left wing of the Socialist Party, was the editor of *Avanti*, that, among his cabinet members and comrades there are former leaders of the anarcho-syndicalist movement. It is natural that these elements who came from the school of labor organizations, know the weak points of these organizations and are able to hit these spots very hard.

One Italian writer has called Fascism "the preventative counter-revolution" as a means to avoid a revolution. The Fascist movement which at present is embracing the whole world, especially demonstrated itself in Italy. Fascism is at present a very important social occurrence, which needs very careful study. But this is not in the scope of my discourse. At present we are interested in the question as to the attitude of the Amsterdam International and its component parts toward the Fascist danger.

First of all, we must point out that the Amsterdam International in its different sections did not understand the social significance of Fascism. In those very rare resolutions which they adopted on that question they considered Fascism as a simple reaction. But if Fascism is a simple reaction, then why don't we talk about Fascism in Hungary, where the reaction is not less than in Italy? Why don't we talk about Fascism in France, where we have such representatives of reaction as Poincare?

It is apparent that the character of a Fascist regime demands a more clear description. This reaction is a specific one, and specific methods should be used in the fight against it. Fascism not only tries to base itself on some sections of the working class, but is also trying to create its own Fascist labor organizations, and this does represent a greater danger. In Italy has been created a confederation of Fascist trade unions which is trying to capture the whole labor movement. It is natural, therefore, that the struggle against Fascism, besides the usual methods of struggle against reaction, must bear a special character fitted to this special form of reaction.

The first to raise the alarm of the necessity of the struggle against Fascism were the Comintern and Profintern. Directly after the upsetting which took place in Italy, we approached the Second, the Second-and-a-Half Internationals, and the Amsterdam International with proposals to begin a united fight against Fascism. Our proposals were rejected and the Amsterdam International as well as the international political organizations assumed the responsibility separately to fight against the Fascist reaction. And what did their fight consist of?

If we will look over all the literature of the Amsterdam International and its affiliated organizations we will not find even a serious analysis of Fascism. We will find separate articles against Fascist reaction, but we will not find even an attempt to concentrate upon that social phenomenon which began to spread all over the world, not even one attempt to concentrate upon a political analysis or to bring about a general line of action against Fascism.

However, there is something more serious than that just mentioned, and it is more peculiar if the Amsterdam International in the question of Fascism did not show any activity and not only gave no instructions to its local organizations about the methods of struggle against Fascism, but the local organizations which were affiliated to it in this question had a very strange position. Here, again, we have to turn to Italy with which we have to deal every time when we talk about Fascism, as we have to mention Russia when we talk about Bolshevism.

Fascism, after its victory in Italy, at once showed itself in the pressure upon the working class along all lines, beginning with lowering the wages, lengthening the work-day, etc. In order to attain all this the Fascists began to destroy the labor organizations, taking away from them their headquarters, destroying the trade unions, capturing the co-operatives, killing the more active leaders.

And here the Fascists figured that the more revolutionists were annihilated, the harder the labor organizations would be hit, so much more difficult would be the future victory of the revolution. The revolution cannot be destroyed by destroying the revolutionists, but it can surely be obstructed. We know that after the Paris Commune when the French bourgeoisie in the bloody week between the 20th and 27th of March, 1871, killed 30,000 workers, it reflected on the labor movement of France. The blood letting which took place in the first years of the German revolution, reflected on the tempo of development and on the revolutionary organizations themselves and the revolutionary events of Germany.

The destruction of the more revolutionary elements, of course, cannot save any country from revolution, for the revolution is brought about by objective conditions, and instead of one set of leaders, others will come. But, to make it more difficult for the revolution, to make it more injurious and bloody, this Fascism with its methods may do. This is the main purpose of Fascism, which it is striving for, and from its point of view is attaining.

I have said that the reformists like to align Bolshevism and Fascism, and then to exclaim: "No Fascism, no Bolshevism, but democracy!"

It seemed that with the Fascist *coup* and the domination of the Fascist fist in Italy not only were the democratic forms of government destroyed but also the labor organizations were razed to the ground

by the black shirted Fascisti. It seemed that here a specially hostile position against Fascism should have been taken.

But, in reality, the experience of the last year's development of the Italian labor movement shows that the most militant element against Fascism were the Communists, while the reformists had a very strange and ambiguous position in regard to Fascism, beginning with the seeking of a common ground, which would bring about a *modus vivendi* between the Fascist leaders and the leaders of the trade unions. In this respect the rapprochement between Mussolini and the leaders of the Italian Confederation of Labor is very interesting. Of course, in the fact of rapprochement itself there was nothing wrong. The revolutionary workers of Russia in their time had been talking with the bashibuzuks—Governors General. But what took place before they started those parleys with Mussolini proves that these parleys were not parleys between representatives of different classes sent to find the weak points of the enemy, or in these parleys to defend a certain position. These parleys took place for the sake of adopting common lines of action, of collaboration.

That this was so is proven by the declaration of Mussolini, made in one of his last speeches, that he was always very friendly to the working class, that he was willing to do most everything, and that he would like to have the representatives of the trade unions to participate in the government, that he was ready to give them very important portfolios.

Such declaration it seems should have brought forth a storm of protest from the representatives of the trade unions sitting in parliament, but it was not the case. When vote was taken in the parliament on one of the proposals of Mussolini, D'Aragona who was forced to vote against it, stated: "I wish to explain that I am voting against the government as a member of the Socialist Party, and not as a representative of the Confederation of Labor."

If we will consider the whole situation, the colossal Fascist pressure on the working class, and also the fact that the Confederation of Labor is busy with expelling Communist local unions instead of fighting against Fascism—the character of this flirtation between the Fascists and the reformists will be understood. This political flirtation is not of a purely Italian character. Something similar to it is also noticeable in Germany, where the Social Democracy and the leaders of the trade unions consider Communism as a more dangerous enemy than Fascism. And, at a time when the Communist Party is raising an alarm about the danger of Fascism in Germany, the Social-Democrats are raising the alarm about the danger of Communism. Here they also have the formula: "No Fascism, no Communism, but democracy!" But "democracy" does not in any way oppose Fascism, because the first to recognize the Fascist government were the liberal governments of France, England

and the United States, while, although the Soviet government has been existing for six years, the latter country has not recognized it.

There are no great differences between Fascism and reformism: Both of them recognize the necessity of saving capitalist relations, and the methods of doing it is a question of secondary importance. But the social basis of both is one and the same. As long as we have in fact a desire to save the capitalist system, all that is against this system, all that undermines this system—and Communism surely does play an "evil" role—is very dangerous and a bitter war against it should be conducted.

But there is one more glaring fact; we notice during the whole history of the German revolution that the leaders of the Social-Democracy are crushing the workers even worse than Mussolini. Out of the entrails of the trade union organizations are being selected separate groups crystallized into nuclei which at the moment of very sharp social conflicts, take the side of the Fascists. Thus, in the reformist trade unions there already are certain groups, and special groups of backward workers on which Fascism will be able to rely in its fight against the social revolution, against Communism.

Did the Amsterdam International or its separate sections make any attempt to oppose this tendency? Was there any attempt from the Amsterdam International or its sections to crush this embryonic Fascism in its own ranks? Or to crush Fascism outside its ranks? An abstract, formal desire was there but no action could be found in the whole history of the Amsterdam International. It could not be found because the Amsterdam International built its tactics, not on revolution but evolution, not on conflict but on collaboration, not on war of the classes but on peace between the classes.

This is the so-called social philosophy of the Amsterdam International in its entirety.

THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

It is natural that as long as the base of the philosophy of the Amsterdam International lays in its refusal of relations with the revolution, as long as it figures that the working class can only lose by revolution, so long it will work to prevent the revolution. It looks with suspicion every time at those revolutions that are accomplished facts. We notice this stand of the Amsterdam International, in its petty inimical attitude toward the Russian revolution, especially from the moment the Russian revolution took a plainly Bolshevik character. We have to mention, however, that separate parts of the Amsterdam International, at the moment of the February revolution, accepted the upheaval in Russia with great enthusiasm. Yet from the moment the Russian revolution took

its October character, we notice a very strong inimical attitude to it, to Bolshevism, to Communism, in short to everything connected with the Russian Revolution.

Here we must note a few moments which are very peculiar in the attitude of the Amsterdam International toward the Russian revolution. I already said that the Amsterdam International is categorically and sharply against all our conceptions. It is against the dictatorship of the proletariat, for it prefers the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. But every time the Russian revolution was passing through a crisis the Amsterdam International attempted to defend the Russian revolution. Here we have the inner contradiction. This contradiction appeared clearly, especially after the crushing of the Hungarian revolution and at the moment of the Polish offensive against Soviet Russia.

All the organizations which are affiliated with the Amsterdam International, as well as the International itself, could not find words enough to stigmatize the Hungarian revolution which brought into Central Europe the "barbarian, Asiatic, Bolshevik" methods. But, when the reaction of Horthy conquered, then the Amsterdam International came out in defense of the Hungarian workers, in defense of the unions then being destroyed. It would seem more logical to support the Hungarian workers at the time they were in power, which is the most proper time for support, and not when tens of thousands have been killed, when hundreds of thousands have been exiled.

Why did the Amsterdam International come out in defense after the destruction of the revolution in Hungary? Because it had to show this face to the workers who had been members of its own unions. It had to show that it is fighting against reaction, that it is defending the workers of other countries. By this stand it almost said the following: "Although the Hungarian workers have been mistaken, we must defend them." Thus, the Amsterdam International was compelled to take the position of defending the workers of this or another country by the pressure from below, by its efforts to keep the masses under its influence, which would leave it if it showed no external phase of activity.

As far as the relations between the Amsterdam International and Soviet Russia are concerned, there are many cases where its leaders came out openly and sharply against Bolshevik Russia, against the Comintern, etc. Why, then, did the Amsterdamers suddenly remember in the time of the Polish offensive against Soviet Russia, that Soviet Russia is the land of victorious revolution?

The more extreme reformists insisted that Czarism and Bolshevism is one and the same thing, and at the same time they were crying for the saving of the revolution. What is the use of saving it, when there is no revolution, when it is already dead? But this contradiction could be found in the whole of international reformism. This theory of theirs

proves their political two-facedness, because their conduct does not correspond with their opinions. If you think that Czarism and Bolshevism are one and the same thing, you should call for the overthrow of Bolshevism. This is logical. But such a call is impossible, because first of all these reformist organizations are full of workers who are instinctively in sympathy with Russia. There was an attempt to help Soviet Russia, even to attempt a boycott against Poland, and there was more or less aid in the time of the famine, all on the background of repudiating the revolution.

The whole reformist labor movement finds itself in this contradiction. Especially clearly did it show itself at the Hamburg Congress of the Second and Second-and-a-Half Internationals. There, as a reporter about the situation in Russia, was the Menshevik, Abramovitch, who stays abroad in order to "represent in all cases the Russian proletariat."

He drafted such a resolution which even the more extreme reformists like the representatives of the British Labor Party, could not stomach. They were discussing that question for a long time and although Abramovitch fell upon the bosom of his reformist friends with tales concerning all the sufferings the Mensheviks went through in Russia, these ungrateful friends refused to fall upon the Bolsheviks, but instead fell upon Abramovitch. How could this be explained in the reformist Congress? It was because the Bolshevik is a revolutionist who has overthrown the bourgeoisie, and therefore the western European workers cannot understand how could the attitude toward Russia be hostile.

We must remark that in this inability to understand there is a great element of patriotism. A reformist cannot understand how one could come out against his "fatherland." A good government or a bad one, but it is my government! Looking from the patriotic standpoint he cannot understand how the Russian "Social Revolutionists" war against Russia. The British, German or French reformists may make a bloc with its "black hundreds," but how can one come to an understanding with a foreign foe against his own "fatherland?" This a worker with reformist and patriotic sentiments could not understand.

If we will take all that into consideration we will be able to understand why the Menshevik attempt in Hamburg did not meet with sympathy. The resolution of Abramovitch, although revised a couple of times, could not gain the approval of the majority of the delegates, and especially the British voted against it.

Thus we see that the attitude of the Amsterdam International toward the Russian revolution was always two-faced. At a time of danger to the revolution the Amsterdam International in its appeal would use revolutionary phases to show that the downfall of the revolution would mean reaction not only on the territory of Russia but all over the world.

This consciousness that the fall of Soviet Russia would be a victory not alone for Russian, but for world reaction, is so strongly in the minds of European and American workers that even the most reactionary leaders cannot work against this class instinct of the wide working masses. From this arises that contradiction which finds its expression in the instability and vacillation of the Amsterdam International in its relations to Soviet Russia. Attack upon Soviet Russia when there is no external danger, enforced aid when there is such danger—thus there are two steps made forward and three backward. These contradictions are a result of the contradictory composition of the Amsterdam International itself, from dim sympathies for us from the masses to definite antagonism to us from the leaders.

THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL AND THE UNITED FRONT

From all the above we may reach a conclusion as to the attitude of the Amsterdam International and all reformist organizations to the tactics of a United Front. What is the origin of the United Front idea? What is the attitude of the reformist wing of the labor movement to the United Front?

The idea of the United Front appears at the same time when the tide of the revolutionary wave began to ebb. We must admit that in the first period of the October revolution we, the Russian Communists, over-estimated the tempo of the development of the world revolution. It seemed that after our revolution, revolutions would at once follow in other countries. Some expected it in a few weeks, others in months, and in general this expectation of a rapid conclusion, a rapid development of events, surely made an impression on all our tactics.

The tactics of a revolutionary party are decided, not by abstract principles, but by calculating the real situation, and the relations of forces in the struggle. In order to select a line of action for the next period, that is, to map out the strategic plans for action, we have to calculate the surroundings, the relation of forces, the power of resistance of our enemy, the degree of our organization, to calculate the assets of all the fighting forces, to study the social topography of the area. And our area is quite a big one. It takes in the whole world. And only all this taken together decides our line of action. With a rapid development of events our course would be one line of action, with a slower development, a second line, although we have before us one and the same problem.

What are the characteristics of the first two years after the October period. Let us remember the development of events in Germany and those street battles which took place there while there was no powerful Communist Party in existence, nor even strong Communist local organizations. The first period was characterized by frontal attacks;

they were driven back. A new period began and new groupings of forces, marked by apathy in the working masses. The bourgeoisie began to advance against the working class, taking away its elementary gains. In connection with this period, a problem arose before the Comintern of adopting such a line of action as would unite the masses in resistance to the aggression of capital and to stop its advance, and later on, from this form of struggle to take the aggressive.

The situation of the world labor movement in 1921, was somewhat more difficult than in 1919, directly after the end of the war. The spontaneous movement began to slacken. The high waves of the revolution which frightened the bourgeoisie were not strong enough to crush this Colossus. A new period begins, and to this period we had to adapt our tactics, the tactics of the United Front, which has for its purpose under the changed conditions, to unite the wide masses and draw them into the way of revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system.

What is the essence of the United Front? We can explain it in the following way. The Communists are calling upon the non-party workers, the Catholic labor unions, the reformists, in short on all the workers without regard to their political or other affiliation. And we say: "We disagree with you on many fundamental questions. We are for the dictatorship of the proletariat; you are against it. We are for revolution; you are for class collaboration, etc. But we do agree with you that it is necessary to save the eight-hour day, that it is necessary to bring up wages to the increasing cost of living, that it is necessary to retain the social gains we have already obtained. Let us lead all the workers into the struggle according to your program, and not ours. Let us create together a United Front according to your own program. Our program does not end with merely economic demands and the demand of the fight against the danger of war. Our program is much wider than that. The crux of it is the overthrow of capitalism. You do not agree with that; let us lay aside all those points upon which we differ; let us leave only those which unite us and on these points let us wage a relentless struggle." These are the causes, character and essence of the United Front.

The first question arising is:—Is this a correct line of action for a revolutionary Communist party? And, also, for revolutionary trade unions? Can we, in order to gain a United Front, put aside all that which divides us from the reformists? Can we allow such a strategic manoeuvre?

Firstly, a United Front is possible only if it is a purely labor front, and this it is that differentiates us fundamentally from the reformists, who are for a United Front of Labor with capital. Thus, the first distinction of our United Front is its purely labor character, independently

of the political views or beliefs of separate workers or groups. Further, the purpose of this United Front is to fight against the bourgeoisie. By that you can see that the United Front is aimed at our class enemy. And again the idea of the United Front sharply conflicts with the theory and practice of the reformists, for with them the question is one of collaboration between the classes.

These are the boundaries of the United Front for us Communists which we cannot overstep. And because the United Front should be a purely labor front, because its aims are against the employers, against the bourgeoisie, therefore it should conduct a struggle and not discuss collaboration. That was the reason why the reformist organizations were all the time against the United Front. This is the crux of their position.

They look upon the United Front as a new invention of the Bolsheviks, the slogan of a United Front they understand as a new manoeuvre of "Moscow," and under the name "Moscow" they understood everything, the Profintern, Comintern, the whole of Soviet Russia, and all that has anything to do with the Russian revolution.

That is the way the reformists understood our proposals for a United Front although in reality they are opposed to it because it holds a clear proposition for the class struggle, for breaking up all coalition with the bourgeoisie, because they are the ardent defenders of such a coalition.

As long as a United Front would be created with the Communists—and in this respect they had a clear understanding—the possibility of a united front with the bourgeoisie had to disappear. There is no third way out of it and therefore it is plain why the Amsterdam International was so opposed to the idea of a United Front, and quite naturally attempts were made to defame this idea instead of realizing it.

In connection with the United Front there were many gestures made by the Amsterdam and the Second Internationals. You will remember the Berlin conference of the three internationals where the Comintern, the Second and the Second-and-a-Half Internationals were represented. Here we had no united front but only talk; on one hand, on the question of the evil of Bolshevism; and, on the other, on the evil of reformism. This meeting of the representatives of the three executive committees, was only a trial of strength, but it could not give any concrete results. This failure however, could not stop the Profintern and Comintern from attempting to create a United Front and, whenever a proper moment would arise in the labor movement, we would call upon the Internationals, the Amsterdam and the others, proposing coordinated action. Usually we would get no answer at all, or get one in the sense that "We will not fall for the provocations and manoeuvres of Moscow."

THE RUHR CONFLICT

At the Hague Peace Congress where the delegates of the Russian trade unions represented not only the Russian unions, but also the Comintern and Profintern, we openly proposed the creation of a United Front. This proposal brought forth a sharp rejection from the reformists. They wanted no United Front with us and therefore they did not like my statement, that—"We will create a United Front, with you if you wish; without you if you will stand aside; or against you if you oppose it."

If the reformists had wanted a United Front with us they would not have invited the bourgeois pacifists to the Hague. They understand that we will make no United Front with the bourgeoisie and therefore the composition was of such character that the possibility of the United Front was excluded.

The Hague Congress, as it is known, ended on the 18th of December 1922, and the 10th of January 1923, the French army occupied the Ruhr. From this moment there began a serious turn among the masses toward a United Front.

What brought about this turn? The occupation of the Ruhr demonstrated clearly the bankruptcy of the Amsterdam International. Three weeks after the Amsterdammers promised to start a strike, they not only failed to start one, but they were unable to adopt a more or less decent resolution of protest against the occupation, because the Germans were pulling one way and the Belgians and French the other. The Amsterdam International was unable to give a clear slogan in connection with that affair. The only thing it was able to say in its resolution was the necessity of turning over the Ruhr conflict to the League of Nations and to make a soft protest against the violent action of the French and Belgian military.

Some of the leaders of the Belgian trade unions and the Labor Party stated at their convention and in parliament that there was no other way out of the reparations problem except the occupation of the Ruhr. The reformists opposing the Belgian social patriots tried to prove that the occupation of the Ruhr was not profitable, that better, more profitable methods should be used as pressure against Germany, such as, for instance, a request from the League of Nations or other international organization.

In answer to that the Belgian king's pet reformists stated that it was "not true that the occupation is not profitable: we received from Germany four and one-half billions francs and the occupations cost us only seven hundred million." Imagine yourself an International whose members are discussing the question if this operation is profitable or not, which three weeks after a promise to call a strike proposes to

apply to the League of Nations, an International unable to call for a demonstration in connection with the occupation of the Ruhr, and you will understand the disillusionment which began in the masses connected with the Amsterdam International and the despair among the German workers created by this weakness in the political activity of this international.

This bankruptcy of the Amsterdam International was a shock for the masses which showed them the necessity for seeking something new. And what could they find? One could go along the lines of the reformists continuing to flirt with the bourgeois pacifists, or could join in a United Front with the Communists. There is no third way out of it.

The occupation of the Ruhr has so clearly illustrated the inner division of the Amsterdam International itself, has thrown a bright light upon the inner national-imperialist contradictions which were tearing apart this so-called International, that a desire for a United Front began spontaneously among the masses, a desire to create at any cost a United Front with those who are willing to fight. And who were fighting at that time? Who were making any real proposals to fight against the advancing bourgeoisie? Only the followers of the Profintern and Comintern. There was nothing else on the political horizon. There was a saying: "All roads lead to Rome." Now it has been changed to: "All roads lead to Moscow." And every time when the working class gets into a trap and can find no escape through methods of the reformists, at such moments it begins to seek the road to "Moscow," that is, a road of common struggle with Communists against the bourgeoisie.

THE BERLIN CONFERENCE OF TRANSPORT WORKERS AND THE SABOTAGE OF THE UNITED FRONT BY THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL

Already at the Frankfort Conference we had followers in the representatives of the Factory Committees, we even had a Social-Democratic group which came out with the statement demanding from its leaders the creation of a United Front with the Communists. The latter events in Germany have proven the absolute necessity of such a front. The United Front was being created by the workers themselves, without and in spite of the reformist and Social-Democratic leaders.

The Amsterdam International sharply and clearly refused a United Front. But not all industrial internationals could refuse a United Front. The first break that was made in the ranks of the Amsterdam International was in the International Federation of Transport Workers. You read, of course, about the international conference of transport workers held in Berlin at the end of May 1923. What brought about this conference? How could a part of the Amsterdam Inter-

national and one of its secretaries, Fimmen, come to the conclusion of the necessity of having the United Front with the Russian Communists and the followers of the Profintern when it was prohibited by the Amsterdam International?

The roots of it are found in the Ruhr occupation. There are moments when a rap over the head with a club brings about clear thinking. And the Ruhr occupation was such a rap over the head, which made a breach in the minds of the wide laboring masses and later on found a reflection in the heads of their leaders.

On the agenda of the Conference we inserted a few questions: The struggle against Fascism, the creation of the United Front in the trade union movement, and the fight against war. We agreed upon a manifesto, resolutions, etc. The belief that there was no other way out, in the minds of the representatives of the International Federation of Transport Workers, aided in bringing about this agreement.

We adopted very elementary decisions: The fight against war by creating control committees in all seaports, in important railway centers, etc. But all that was adopted by the Conference of the International Transport Workers met a sharp and decided opposition from the Amsterdam International which is built upon the principles of representation by national organizations and is politically supported by vertical units (transport workers, metal workers, etc.). Now imagine, we were pulling one of these supports from under it, and this support of the transport workers plays a special role, as we can fight against war only when the transport workers will join the fight.

When this immense scandal in the "respectable family" of Amsterdam occurred, when a part of the International made a bloc with the Communists without approval of the other parts, it seemed that they had now to come out in the open and state: "We do not recognize the United Front." It seemed that they could do nothing else. However the conditions of the Amsterdam International after the occupation of the Ruhr were far from its condition before occupation. They met, discussed at length the question, and finally adopted a resolution in which it was stated that the Amsterdam International is not bound by the decisions of the Transport Workers Conference.

But we never considered binding them. Why, then, did they come out with a statement that they "are not bound by it," instead of coming out with a protest? It was because they were afraid to come out as opponents of the United Front, which would be to lose their influence over their own ranks. For this reason they did not come out against the United Front with a frontal attack, but began a strategic detour, stating that they are for a United Front, but they are not bound by decisions adopted by someone else.

At the same time, they stated their willingness to talk over matters with the Russian unions. To this the Executive Committee of the Russian trade unions answered that they were ready to talk with the Amsterdam International and even to propose to talk seriously on the question of a United Front, the struggle against Fascism, etc. They received an answer over the signature of Oudegeest (they have their left and right hand and when it is necessary to sign something especially reformistic in character, it is signed by Oudegeest) in which he said that the proposal of the Executive Committee of the Russian Unions would be discussed by the Amsterdam International at the beginning of August and that they wished to know if the Russian unions are speaking in their own name or in the name of the Red International of Labor Unions. As to the conference of the Transport Workers, it is further stated, the International Federation of Trade Unions does not take any responsibility for its decisions.

The Central Committee of the Russian Unions in its letter to the Amsterdammers mentioned the conference of the transport workers and stated its willingness to come to such agreements in other industries as well. But the pressure of the reformists was so great that they succeeded in the recent (August) council of the International Transport Workers in passing a resolution which states that on one hand the United Front is a good thing, but that on the other hand it is necessary that this question shall be discussed by the Amsterdam International. It is natural that when one says, "On the one hand—yet on the other," there is neither head nor tail to it. In this case it happens that although the decisions adopted by the Berlin Conference are recognized in principle by the Federation of Transport Workers, in practice they have not been applied at all.

We decided, for instance, to create international committees of action, but the reformists went no further than "in principle." It is known that Henry the Fourth had a wish that every peasant should have a chicken for dinner, but out of this wish "in principle," the French peasant not only had no chicken but not even black bread. Such principles don't mean anything.

Anyhow, the Amsterdammers succeeded in stopping that which we began. It is quite possible that we, the representatives of the Russian trade unions will have to meet again with the representatives of the Amsterdam International, because the pressure from below for a United Front is so great that the reformists willy-nilly shall be forced to come to agreement with us.

We may consider as a strong pressure the decision of the last Belgian trade union convention which ended the first day of August. At this Convention a resolution was adopted which instructs the central bureau to defend the United Front in the Amsterdam International. If

the idea of a United Front found a place in the heads of the Belgian trade union leaders it was not their fault. It is clear that even there where the sabotage of the United Front was being used successfully—and in this respect we have to give the Belgian labor leaders their due—even there it was impossible to get rid of it with resolutions.

It was necessary to give the laboring masses a straight answer to the question: Do you want to fight together with the Communists against reaction? In this decision of the Convention of the Belgian trade unions is reflected the ideological and organizational crisis of the Amsterdam International, separate parts of which under pressure of the workers, were forced to act in contradiction to the general line of their international unit.

To show another example: Parallel with the Transport Workers Conference in Berlin, between the 23rd and 25th of May the Congress of the Second and Second-and-a-Half Internationals met at Hamburg. At that Congress, six hundred delegates were present; at the same time at our Transport Workers Conference in Berlin only nine. They had a "Congress." We had only a little conference. At the Congress was present one secretary of the Amsterdam International, Oudegeest. At our conference another of its secretaries, Fimmen. At Hamburg, Oudegeest was talking against the Communists and the United Front, while at Berlin, Fimmen agreed to a United Front with us. It is easy to imagine the political basis, the political strength of an organization in which one secretary is fraternizing with the Communists, and another with their enemies.

From this fact alone it is possible to make a conclusion on the weakness of the Amsterdam International and of its lack of any possibility of action. This is not an international of action, not an international which organizes the proletariat for struggle but, so to speak, an international for the exchange of information, an international for periodical writing of resolutions. But there are many such international units: there are international sport societies, international rabbit raisers—O, there are many international associations! But there is nothing here which would describe the Amsterdam International in the sense of uniting a class, or in the sense of united tactics, for coordinate action in all countries.

All this proves the maximum disintegration of the whole reformist movement, and also that reformism in its essence—as long as it sticks to the bourgeoisie—is unable to create an international.

INDUSTRIAL INTERNATIONALS

The characterization of the whole right wing of the trade union movement would not be final if we would not touch the existing industrial

internationals which are politically connected with the Amsterdam International. There are twenty-nine such internationals. All of them were created in the end of the nineteenth century, some earlier and others later. For the sake of common struggle they unite workers of one trade, of one industry. This is, in fact, the idea of every international, but as a matter of fact in the many years of their existence they had not led a very noticeable political life. They are mostly organs for general information, and to be exact, even that information was not well organized.

With the beginning of the war and the fall of the socialist and trade union internationals which followed, these internationals, in fact, ceased to be such. We have noted that at the beginning of war all international organizations, including the workers' internationals, were split into military-diplomatic coalitions, according to the place where this international happened to be. The socialist international had its headquarters in Brussels and the keys to it were in the hands of Vandervelde; the trade union international had its headquarters in Berlin, at the head of it stood Legien, who was pulling for the Central Empires. The industrial unions were partly in Germany, partly in England and partly in other countries. And, according to the place they were situated, they were inclined to this or that military coalition. In fact, the industrial unions ceased to exist during the war. They began to revive after the war when the Amsterdam International was born.

What do these post-war industrial units represent? If we will take them along vertical lines we will see that they numbered about twenty million members which is in a general way equivalent to the number of these same workers united by the Amsterdam International along horizontal lines. The largest industrial international is the international of the metal workers. It unites almost 3,000,000 members. Then comes the miners' international with 2,500,000, the laborers with 2,300,000, the internationals of agricultural and textile workers numbering about 1,500,000 each. Less than a million members are in the wood workers, building trades and clerks.

These are the biggest international units, but we have also industrial internationals which can hardly be called international organizations, as for instance, the international of barbers, which has 12,000 members; fur workers with 13,000 members; pottery workers with 13,000 members, etc. It is sufficient to state that there are a few internationals even in one industry; the painters have their international, the building trade workers theirs, etc.

We have lithographers, pressmen, book-binders organized separately. In short, by detailed examination of these internationals we will see a purely formal unity, the specific gravity of which is characterized by such number of members as twelve and fifteen thousand all over the

world. This is characteristic of the reformist trade union movement, which has a vast number of separate organizations, any one of which is interested in its own economy and which strives to remain in the borders of its craft.

In order to show how widely split is the trade union movement of the present day, we will give the following examples: In the American Federation of Labor there are over one hundred units, and in the whole German Federation of Trade Unions there are fifty-four centralized unions. There are over fifty such unions in France; over a hundred are in England, although England is now going through a period of amalgamation. It is sufficient to mention that in Russia we have only twenty-two industrial unions.

These industrial internationals are characterized not only by their separatism—this is only a half of the evil. There are a few internationals, as for instance the metal workers, the mine workers, the laborers, the transport workers, which could play a big role in the class struggle (by "laborers" we understand also those who in many countries are part of the factory workers handling chemicals). But if we will take the last few years of the existence of these unions, we will see that they played no role even in their own industries, so much less in international policies or at a time of great international conflicts.

In a few examples we will endeavor to show the tactics of these internationals and the tactics of the revolutionary unions. All of course remember the famous great strike of the British miners at the beginning of 1921. This strike which embraced over a million miners of England, was of great significance to the whole British labor movement, and especially to the miners' movement. What is characteristic of this strike, is, first, its isolation within the country.

The Triple Alliance, the agreement between the Miners, Transport Workers and Railwaymen for common action broke up with this strike. The Transport Workers and Railwaymen did not support the Miners and the latter were isolated on a national and international scale, because no organization of mine workers did anything to support their British comrades.

How did the mine owners of England succeed in smashing this movement? Thanks to the German, American, and Belgian coal! Thus, the members of one and the same international gave the British mine owners the opportunity to crush this colossal and powerful movement, to drive back this revolutionarily-inclined federation of mine workers.

However, the British mine workers who were defeated took their revenge during the strike of the American coal miners. In 1922, 500,000 American coal miners were striking. This time the British workers

did nothing to aid the American workers, and the coal dug by the British miners helped crush the American miners. We have such relations among the miners of all Europe. The German, Belgian, and French coal miners made no move during the strike of the British miners to help them for the simple reason that the British coal miners were indifferent during the strikes of the other European miners.

The characteristic of the Mine Workers' International is the national tactics of its separate parts. An international which in the sharpest moments of struggle in any one country remains aside from the struggle, which not only does not aid the fighting workers of its own industry but looks on indifferently while other parts of it in other countries are in fact scabbing, is not an international.

Similar tactics—if it may be called tactics—we have also in the International of Metal Workers. During the lockout of the metal workers in England none of the sections affiliated with this international did anything to help the British metal workers. The only international in which a striving to do something on an international scale is noticed, is the Transport Workers International. It made an attempt to boycott Hungary, to boycott Poland at the time of its attack on Soviet Russia, etc. It is true they did not accomplish much but at least we could notice a striving to become an international in fact.

What is the attitude of these internationals toward the Amsterdam International? Not being connected with it organizationally, they accept its political leadership; they say, "We are international by industry and the Amsterdam International is a general class organization, dealing with general questions." This is the way the reformists explained their position at the convention of the chemists just ended.

There was an attempt from separate internationals to formulate a general line of action upon more militant questions. The Metal Workers, Mine Workers, and Transport Workers attempted to create something like the Triple Alliance for international action, figuring that if these three unions could come to an understanding it will be possible to bring greater pressure on the international labor movement. They had a few conferences. They created a special committee on this question, passed a few resolutions against war, and again there was a lack of action by these three internationals.

For the last few months, especially after the occupation of the Ruhr, these three internationals which were supposed to do something, did nothing at all. For the simple reason that they also were being torn asunder by nationalist contradictions as well as the Amsterdam International.

It is natural that such a lack of action by the Amsterdam and the industrial internationals called forth a desire in the masses to create such an organization as would not be an "oleomargarine" substitute for an international, but a real militant one.

LECTURE No. 5

The Red International of Labor Unions

(Profintern)

THE ROOTS OF THE RED PROFINTERN*

LET us pass over now to the other ideological-political trend in the international labor movement.

The organization which is competing with the Amsterdam International, is the Red International of Labor Unions, which was organized in 1920. What are the roots of this International? No doubt the roots of this revolutionary organization should be sought in the war period when the sobering of the workers began, and the creation of revolutionary nuclei within the labor organizations, political as well as trade union took place. The idea of creating a new international appeared at that time.

It is true that all during the war the idea of creating a new trade union international did not appear. At the time of the Zimmerwald conference, and even before, the Bolsheviks declared the necessity of creating the Third International, but the idea of creating a new international within the trade union movement had not yet appeared. No doubt at the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences in which some separate trade unions participated, the political antecedents were laid for the formation of the left wing of the trade union movement and for an independent international organization.

This idea sprung up after the war. The necessity, the reasons which forced the creation of this new international, this new power which might give opportunity of better alignment of the militant trade union movement—is connected with the later period, mainly with the Russian revolution and the creation of the Third International.

The Russian revolution was the outstanding feature which brought about the formation of the Third International and also stimulated the creation of the revolutionary international of trade unions. Nevertheless the idea of creating a revolutionary trade union international was absent even directly after the October revolution. More than that, the idea appeared much later than the organization of the Comintern.

The crucial moments which brought a distinction into the labor movement were the following: The appearance of the Russian trade union movement and the creation of the Third International. With

* The word "Profintern" is a contraction of the Russian term "Professionalnye Soyuz Internationalnye" or, literally, "Occupational Union International."

the growth of the Russian trade union movement the problem of international connections arose before it. And already at the Third All-Russian Conference of Trade Unions, where a majority were Mensheviks, from June 20th to 28th, 1917, a resolution was adopted stating the necessity of renewing international connections.

The Bolsheviks, who brought in their own resolution, spoke of the need of unifying that wing of the trade union movement which does not subordinate the interests of the working class to the interests of the bourgeoisie and which conducts a revolutionary struggle against war and the ruling classes. In this formula, so far very vague, we already find the germ of the idea of future development of the left trade union movement as an international organization.

At the First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions, which was held from the 3rd to the 9th of January, 1918, where the Bolsheviks had already two-thirds of the votes, in the main resolution on the question of the problems of the trade unions there was a paragraph in which the necessity of reconstruction of the trade union international was stated. What kind of an international and how to organize it?

An answer to this question was not given there. The formulation of our position on these questions, the position of the Russian trade unions, was formed at a later period, at the time when the separate parts of the Amsterdam International participated in the drafting of separate paragraphs of the Versailles Treaty, the Washington Conference, etc. When this position of the Amsterdam International became clear, when it bound its future up to the International Labor Bureau, then the necessity arose of creating some kind of a center for the concentration of the left trade union movement all over the world.

The creation of the Third International greatly aided the formation of the left trade union movement. It is very well known that the Third International at its beginning placed before itself the problem of winning over the trade unions and capturing the laboring masses. This formation of the political international and later on the formulation of its tactics, program, and general line of conduct, called forth in the sphere of the trade union movement also, on one hand the formation of left-wing union organizations, and on the other concentrated into one all that existed in the international trade union movement.

And so the bankruptcy of the old trade union international, the going over of a majority of its leaders to the policy of class collaboration, the formation of the left-wing labor movement through Zimmerwald and Kienthal, and the crystallization of it through the Comintern, the Russian revolution which brought a certain clarification into the labor movement of the world, the further strengthening of the Russian trade union movement on one hand and, on the other, the continuation of the tactics of class collaboration which was the foundation of the newly

created International Federation of Trade Unions—the Amsterdam International and its industrial sections; these are the general causes which resulted in the creation of the new militant international.

THE BIRTH OF THE PROFINTERN

The organizational appearance of the Profintern should be dated about the middle of 1920. About that time the Second Congress of the Comintern took place and besides there were present at that time in Moscow representatives of trade union organizations from different countries (England, Italy, representatives of the minorities of the unions of France and Spain). From conversations with them, the possibility of creating at least a temporary center of revolutionary trade unions arose.

These parleys, in which I had to participate in the name of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Trade Unions, at first had a very uncertain character. Those at a conference held on the 15th of June, at which were present R. Williams, D'Aragona, Colombina, and representatives of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Trade Unions, nothing definite was accomplished. It was a conference to exchange opinions on the question of the possibility of uniting all the left elements in the trade union movement.

These parleys continued, and on the 15th of July were ended by an agreement between the Russian unions, the Italian Federation of Labor, Spanish, Jugo-Slav and Bulgarian trade unions. This agreement stated the dissatisfaction with the policies of the Amsterdam International, its treasonable tactics and the necessity of fighting it. At this conference the idea was also advanced of uniting all the revolutionary trade unions on the basis of recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the struggle for a social revolution.

This first declaration was drafted with great difficulty because D'Aragona opposed the clear presentation of every point. When we accentuated the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, mass action, etc., he did not feel very comfortable. Now we can understand the reasons for it. It seems that if he had no premonition of his future Fascist inclinations, at least this reformist was opposed to all revolutionary clarity. This declaration which was not sufficiently clear served as the basis for the creation of the first nucleus from which has grown the Red International of Labor Unions. The constitution was adopted, the methods of struggle against Amsterdam were definitely stated and a willingness to organize the general revolutionary trade union movement all over the world was shown.

Thus, in July, 1920, we created such a propagandist center, the purpose of which was to act as a beacon light to the whole scattered left

trade union movement. This ideological propaganda center was given the name "The International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions."

Our action brought forth a storm of protest from the Amsterdam International, which saw in this new tricks of "Moscow." The Amsterdammers at their London Congress passed a resolution of protest, a verbal assault. They disapproved of the wording of our manifesto where we called them "traitors" and less pleasant epithets. Such names, of course, do not awaken any sympathy. They paid special attention to our sharp tone, to our clear statements, and to our lack of "diplomatic style."

Our declaration brought a storm of protest, and from the beginning the Red International of Labor Unions appeared in the literature of the Amsterdam International as an "international insulter," as an organization which had for its purpose to insult the leaders of the trade union movement, and according to the Amsterdammers, the Red International does nothing else.

The reformists reacted against the organization of our international and against our first acts. Quite differently reacted the working masses of all countries.

The fact alone of the appearance of the new International, which directly opposed the Amsterdam International, won for us sympathies in all countries; The main reason for these sympathies was not, at the beginning, the character of our International, not in its statutes; not in its theoretical position, but in the fact that this International was of "Moscow"—born on the territory of the Russian revolution.

The same should also be said in regards to the Comintern. The Comintern was at first also considered as a "Moscow" organization, and the sympathy to the Comintern is usually accepted as sympathy for the Russian revolution. This is the way it occurred in our struggle with the reformists. It is understood thus, not only by the two reformist internationals, but also by the representatives of the bourgeois diplomatic world. The Comintern is based on the Communist Party, the Profintern on the trade union movement, and both of them on the Russian revolution, that is, on one-sixth of the land area of the globe. This whole thing plays a big role in international politics, and all that had, and still has, a special influence on the Western European proletariat.

Thus, the ideological alignment with the Profintern in its first year had a character of sympathy for the Russian revolution, for the Russian proletariat. Often such sympathy was shown to us in spite of the reformists who even then conducted a fight against the Bolsheviks. But even in the first year of our existence it became clear that the revolutionary international trade union movement does not appear as a unit. It has different currents which have to crystallize themselves,

and that would have to transpire after the new "International Committee for Propaganda" or the new international ideological center, worked out its program, its tactics, adopted its line of conduct, and took a definite theoretical, technical, and organizational position in the international labor movement.

The more was formulated our theory and our practice, the clearer became the necessity to fight on two fronts: On one hand against the reformist wing, and on the other against the anarchist confusion.

ORGANIZATIONAL FORMATION

These problems of the ideological formation of the new organization, and the organizational strengthening of it, the drawing of a line of definite program and tactics, was the task of the First (Constituent) Congress of the Profintern, which was held in July, 1921.

This Congress laid the foundation of the Profintern, gave it a definite constitution, a definite tactical line, drafted a definite program, and fixed the fundamental slogans for the whole international trade union movement. At this Congress, to which were invited all the revolutionary trade unions, it was decided to give to the new organization the name: "The Red International of Labor Unions."

OUR PROGRAM, AND THE PROGRAM OF THE AMSTERDAMERS

What are differences between this new international unit and the Amsterdam International? What are the most important questions that arise now before the revolutionary trade union movement of the world? First of all, we and the Amsterdam International have different points of departure and it is natural that from this alone comes all the rest. The leaders of the Amsterdam International look upon the present day situation as a temporary crisis, as a temporary disturbance in the capitalist organism.

They take up the problem of curing this sick organism from the viewpoint that only a full-blooded capitalism and a further development of capitalist relations can create the environment for a painless capture by the working class of political and economic power.

Thus, the starting point which decides the whole line of conduct of the Amsterdam International, is the estimation of the present conditions as a temporary and unstable but developing capitalism. But we consider this disturbance of the capitalist system, not as a temporary one, not as an accidental one which may be cured, but as a crisis which will bring present society to final catastrophe.

On one hand, therefore, we have an attempt to cure and in the future to attain the normal development of the capitalist organism, and on the

other, an effort not to remedy it, but to "cure it to death" if we may so express it. Not an attempt to revive it, but to destroy this society, which from our point of view is too slow in its dying. It is self evident that from this starting point we make our further conclusions in the concrete field of our tactics.

What are the methods of solving the problems confronting us? The Amsterdam International is convinced that the best method of solving the problems confronting the working class, is the collaboration with the left wing of the bourgeoisie and the development of democratic forms of the state, which will give the working class opportunity of obtaining the economic organism of the nations, which should bring about the so-called "industrial democracy."

This program stands out in sharp contradiction—not only to our viewpoint—but also to history itself and the logic of developing events, which leads not to gradual betterment but to the overthrow of capitalism, not to democracy but to the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is our point of view, briefly put, as contrasted to the viewpoint of reformism. It is natural that as long as our starting points and aims are different, that long are the problems arising in the world of reality solved in different manners by the reformist and the revolutionary trade unionists.

NEUTRALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

What are the most important questions which we had to decide at the First Congress in order to form the left wing which gathered around the Provisional International Council of Revolutionary Trade Unions? The first question which arose from the development of the left-wing movement itself was the question of the neutrality and independence of the trade unions.

What is the role of the trade unions in the class struggle? Are the trade unions independent and the only organs of class struggle? And what are their relations to the Comintern? These are the questions which could not have failed to arise as long as we united different trends in the left trade union movement (Communists, syndicalists, anarchists, etc.).

First of all we will take up neutrality. What is the essence of this theory? This is the tendency which places before the trade union movement only the recognition of economic problems and which is neutral to all existing political groupings. Thus neutrality is an attempt to separate the trade union movement from its general class-political problems, to concentrate the attention of the unions exclusively on economic problems and to force them to keep away from political parties and groups.

We see glaring forms of neutrality in America, England and Germany, etc. And always it happened as follows: The stronger a trade union would worship neutralism—that is, one and the same attitude toward all political groups—the closer it was found to be to the bourgeois parties. This, of course, is not an accident. The theory of neutralism brings those unions closer to bourgeois groups, because this theory is itself being advocated by the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, who always aim to “save the unions from political contagion” and to concentrate their attention on “purely economic” problems such as wages, hours, etc.*

Here, naturally, arises another question. Is it possible for the labor organizations to be neutral in reality? That is, to hold one and the same attitude toward all political groups? Is it possible? Such neutrality actually does not exist. The history of the labor movements of England, United States, Germany and those countries where neutralism had its greatest development shows that the labor organizations can never be neutral and every time when they attempt to be so, they played into the hands of the enemy class.

In reality, neutralism or its essence is supposed to keep the trade unions aside in times of political struggles. But what is political struggle? It is not merely parliamentary speech-fighting. In the political struggle the working class places itself in opposition to other classes. The working class cannot stand aside from the class struggle. If the working class will not conduct a class struggle it will lose those positions already gained. The tactics of political sterility play into the hands of the bourgeoisie and by no means are to the interests of the proletariat.

In order to show the nonsense of neutralism we will take an example from the Russian revolution. After the October revolution the Social Revolutionists, or “S. R.,” took an active position against us, part of the Mensheviks took a “neutral” position. Were the Mensheviks neutral in the struggle? Of course not! In the various moments they were on one side or the other of the barricades. In the social struggle there is no neutralism. So much the less can a labor organization be neutral.

Closely related to neutrality is the theory of the independence of the trade union movement. This theory in itself has very many variations. But in its clearer way it is expressed by the anarcho-syndicalists of France.

What is the essence of the “independence” of the trade union movement? Not alone that they exist parallel to the political parties of the

* Readers in the United States know perfectly well how this theory of the neutrality of trade unions as advocated by Gompers in his opposition to independent political action by the working class has always aided the capitalist political parties.

proletariat, but in that they are—in the opinion of the “independents” the chief force in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The unions, according to their opinion, will make the revolution themselves. They, themselves, will lead it and attain the final results of victory. Thus, under the formula of “independent” trade unions we have a competition with the revolutionary party, the idea of taking the place of the party organization and leaving to the trade unions *alone* all the problems confronting the working class.

It is quite natural that the theory of “neutralism,” that the theory of “independence,” could find no sympathy at our First (Constituent) Congress; because the former as well as the latter is strange to the working class. What are the roots of the theory of “independence?” In setting forth “economics” as in opposition to “politics.”

For the anarcho-syndicalists who advocate the “full independence” of the trade union movement, the political struggle “does not exist.” There is an economic struggle of the working class which is all-embracing, and they call a “social struggle” what we call a “general class struggle.” They deny politics, confusing politics with parliamentarism, and, fighting against the latter, they repudiate all political struggle.

But what is “politics” and what is “economics?” Can these two be divided? In the program of the Russian Communist Party there is a very excellent definition of “politics.” It is stated: “Politics is concentrated economics.” And, in reality, what do we understand by “political struggle?” We understand such a clashing of class forces in which—instead of separate detachments of the workers coming to blows with separate detachments of the bourgeoisie—a class as such meets the other class. Thus, every step of ours, in which the general class formation and methods of struggle are reflected, is in fact, a political struggle.

Can we separate from the political struggle economic moments and say, for example, “The fight for an eight hour day, for the seizure of the factories, is a purely economic struggle?” Can we here divide politics from economics? It may be done in the confused anarchist minds. But in reality, in the everyday class struggle, this cannot be done.

We have the struggle of the British coal miners to keep their wage scale, for those forms of nationalization in the mining industry which they advocate—what’s that, an economic or political struggle? When a million coal miners are participating in a struggle which is shaking the whole colossal power of the British Empire—what is that, economics or politics?

We see a colossal economic battle in America for the eight hour day, for labor insurance, demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of workers against the lengthening of the work day—what is it: economics or politics? The attempt to sub-divide economics from politics is pure

metaphysics, a purely mental division. We may create in our practical struggle all kinds of organizational forms to serve one or another side of the labor movement, but an attempt to substitute one organization for the other, an attempt to set them in conflict, is purely anarchistic—that is, a senseless disorganization of the labor movement.

It is natural that we cannot adopt this metaphysical point of view. The First Congress had to state its position on neutralism in very clear terms, which would not permit any misunderstanding, and give to the world revolutionary trade union movement a definite analysis. But if independence is pure metaphysics, why, then, are there in existence separate organizations, separate trade unions and separate party organizations? If economics and politics are so tightly connected, why, then, for a period of over one hundred years, has there been created separate forms of organizations: On one hand, economic ones—trade unions, on the other, political?

If we consider the development of the labor movement we will see that the working class has been creating its organizations gropingly, along the lines of least resistance. Its organizations began to appear as organizations of benefit societies, sick and death benefit associations, etc., and those organizations would not overstep the borders of their trade; would often limit themselves to one factory or shop.

All these organizations have been the type of first elementary connections, the first elementary unity among the workers, and only further along as the struggle sharpened these benefit societies turned into unions. Later, after these nuclei had been created, political movements began to appear.

Concurrently with the appearance of the idea for the organization of benefit societies, the ideology of class began to take form; the later these class ideas appeared, the later began the formation of different types of organization. Firstly, the idea of economic self defense appears in labor organization, and later on, political. Historically, the working class created three types of organization: First, for the defense of its labor power—the trade unions; the second for self defense, as a consumer on the market—the co-operatives; thirdly, for the struggle against the apparatus of bourgeois society—political organizations.

If we take the whole world's labor movement we have three different forms of relations between the parties and the trade unions. We have countries where the trade union and the parties are independent of each other and even fighting among themselves—this is mainly among the Latin countries, mostly in France and in Spain. Then we have the following type; organizationally the party and the trade unions are separate, but politically the trade unions are under the leadership of the party—this is the type of the Russian and German trade union movement; and last, we have the third type, when the trade unions are

creating political parties, as in England, Norway and Belgium. In Norway, one and the same meeting elects two committees, one for the trade union and one for the party. We have also other forms of relations between the party and trade unions, but these are the fundamental ones.

Where do these types lead, historically? To the strengthening of separatism or to some kind of unity? There is no doubt that the existence of these parallel organizations is a temporary character of the international trade union movement. The more it will develop and the more the masses will come to revolutionary consciousness, so much closer will be the relations between the different forms of the labor movement, and, at the proper moment, all these lines will come together into a united organizational form which will unite all the different organizational groupings, political, trade union, etc.

Thus, the historical development of the labor movement is toward a synthesis, a blending, of all forms of labor organization. If we correctly consider the development of the labor movement, we will have to oppose strongly the idea of separatism, which is trying always to preserve existing relations. We have to remark that not only on account of these causes are we opposed to separatism—to independence; but also because separatism as well as neutralism does not exist in fact. There cannot be a trade union organization which would stand aside in case of definite class conflict. Neutralism and independence are also "politics" but a bad anti-labor politics.

THE DESTRUCTION OR THE WINNING OVER OF THE UNIONS?

Another question which also defined the tactics of the revolutionary labor movement was the question of our attitude towards the old, reformist trade unions. In the Red International we collected all that was revolutionary in the trade unions: Independent unions, separate national centers, revolutionary minorities in the old unions, etc.

We had to give an answer to the question: Are we going to create new trade unions, or fight for the winning over of the old unions? At present this question is not of such importance as it was at that time. At that time we had to state clearly: Are we for the destruction of the reformist unions, or for the winning of them over to us?

Our First (Constituent) Congress gave a reply: Not for the destruction but for the winning over of the old trade unions. Why did that question arise at all? It was because at the end of 1918, the German Communist Party at its First Congress in Heidelberg, decided to call upon the workers to leave the old unions and create new ones. Thanks to this decision a small union was created in Germany which tried to replace the powerful organism of the reformist trade union movement which embraces about ten million members.

The Communist Party, later on, changed its point of view; but a part of the Party split away and organized the German Communist Labor Party, one of the main slogans of which was. "The destruction of the old trade unions." The Comintern at that time was categorically against this decision. But how did it happen that the German Communist Party adopted the slogan—not to win over but to destroy the trade unions? It happened because in all the struggles of the German proletariat after the revolution, the conservative machine which split the revolutionary movement was the trade unions, which fell upon the revolutionary movement with all its weight.

Basing themselves upon the unions, former members of the Social-Democratic Party, such as Noske, shot down thousands of workers. All this brought about pessimism and despair in the more revolutionary and impatient German workers. From that was created a whole theory: The old trade unions are rotten through and through; they are reactionary, and in order successfully to fight the bourgeoisie it is necessary to destroy them completely. If this colossal apparatus is being used against the revolution, if it is so entwined with the bourgeois state, it is necessary to destroy it before the power of labor can be established.

In reality, the trade unions, especially in the post-war period, *have* been closely entwined with the bourgeois state. We notice this all over Europe. We could illustrate that graphically in the form of a pyramid, the apex of which is organically attached to the bourgeois state apparatus.

In deciding upon our line of action in this regard, we followed the Comintern which was categorically opposed to the theory of destroying the unions, but was for winning them over. Why? Did we not equally estimate the reactionary character of the trade unions? Did we not recognize the fact of the interlacing of the bourgeois state with the heads of the trade unions? Did we not see their reactionary role? Certainly, we saw all that, but we are approaching the trade unions from an entirely different point of view than our German comrades then were.

What is a union? A union is an organization which unites laboring masses. And we have to consider that in Germany where the slogan of destroying the unions was proclaimed, they united nine million workers. If we come out with the slogan for the destruction of the unions what will we do? The mass will not follow us, because they came to the union in order to gain something real. With the tactics of destroying the unions we can only bring a couple of thousand workers out of these organizations. We may create a "pure" Communist little union, which will have all the Communist virtues, but which will not embrace the laboring masses. This is not Communist tactics. We must be there where the workers are. Such a seeping out of the revo-

lutionary ferment from the mass organizations would mean the unquestioned rule by the reformists of the old unions. The winning over of the trade unions means the winning over of the working class, the winning over of those millions which are there, and as long as this is our aim, we cannot propagate a slogan for the destruction of the unions.

There was another reason why we were opposed to that slogan. What does it mean to consider the trade unions as "hopeless" in the revolutionary sense? If the nine million workers of German are "hopeless," then the revolution itself is "hopeless." Thus, we come to unexpected conclusions which are of a Menshevik character.

These are the motives on account of which we were against the destruction of the unions, and why we came out with a clear and unambiguous slogan: The winning of the unions, the winning of the masses. I may say that the last year glaringly proved our point of view, the correctness of our tactics, and mainly in German herself. The leaders, especially the trade union bureaucracy, are hopeless; but the laboring masses are not, for their consciousness is created not by abstract considerations but by the increasing capitalistic contradictions which we have in every country.

This by no means guarantees us against a split. We have all reasons to expect that the bureaucracy of the trade unions will split the unions as soon as this bureaucracy begins to feel the danger to its rule, but if such a split will take place it will be against our will and against our wishes.

LECTURE No. 6

The Red International and the Process of Clarification

FACTORY AND SHOP COMMITTEES

THE next question, which life itself put on the order of the day, and which we had to answer, was the question of factory and shop committees. In Russia the Factory and Shop Committees appeared at the time of the February revolution. At that time it seemed that such a form of organization is a specifically Russian one, that is, it belonged specifically to a country where, at the moment that labor organization became possible, there were no labor unions.

But the German revolution has already shown that the Factory and Shop Committees appear not only where there are no trade unions, or where they are weak, but also where the trade unions are strong and where they have a great influence on the masses.

Thus, their appearance and development does not depend on the existence or non-existence of trade union organizations, but is explained by entirely different reasons. It is plain that the Factory and Shop Committees have some different kind of functions which even the strong trade unions cannot fulfill. What are these functions?

First of all, control of industry. The Factory and Shop Committees represent those organs which strengthen the victory of revolution in the sphere of production. Labor control was born in close connection with the Factory and Shop Committees, being their main function. It is the first elementary form which precedes socialization of production, the seizure of all tools of production and distribution.

This role of the Factory and Shop Committees showed itself especially marked in the October revolution. In the countries of Western Europe which lived through revolutionary upheavals, in Austria, in Hungary, in Germany, Factory and Shop Committees, in the period of their appearance, had a varied character. They were something between the Russian Labor Soviet* and the Factory and Shop Committees. This confusion lasted for quite a while.

From the above the question of Factory and Shop Committees presented itself in the following complex way: First, in general to clarify our attitude toward the Factory and Shop Committees; second, the

* The Labor Soviet in Russia is an integral part of the trade unions and, at the same time, participates in the administration of production in the given factory.

question of the Factory and Shop Committees created legally in Germany and Austria, etc.; thirdly, the question of the functions of Factory and Shop Committees. Our attitude toward the Factory and Shop Committees was dictated by the role they played.

We considered and still consider that, during the time of and after the social revolution, the Factory and Shop Committees play an exceedingly important role. In the second question, about our attitude toward the existing Factory and Shop Committees created by law, we had differences of opinion among ourselves. That part of revolutionary workers affiliated with us, in whom revolutionary instinct served in place of tactical clarity and persistence, considered that we could not go into these Factory and Shop Committees, because they were elected according to law; participating in these Committees, we, to a certain degree, give influence to these organizations, which we should destroy because they are against us.

We did not agree with these comrades, for we cannot adopt a formal revolutionary point of view. Our aim is to develop the functions of the Factory and Shop Committees, to urge them on in overstepping the legal bounds, to revolutionize them and thus to make of them a basis for revolutionary action. The First Congress expressed itself in that sense, rejecting the tactics of boycott against the legal Factory and Shop Committees which, in fact, are inherently the organs for unity of the working class.

We have, especially in Germany, among workers of one and the same factory, members of different unions; for instance, in any big German factory, we have members of the "Free Union," members of the "Catholic Union," members of the "Hirsch-Dunker Union," and the "Union of Hand and Brain Workers." It is natural that even a pure economic struggle in this factory meets great organizational obstructions. It was necessary to find such an organ as would directly represent *all* the workers of the given factory, but here we met with great interference, thanks to the reformists.

We took the position that all the workers should fully participate in the elections of the Factory and Shop Committees. The reformists were opposed. They insisted that only members of the "Free Unions" should be elected to these Committees, but no members of the Catholic, Hirsch-Dunkers, or workers who are members of any anti-class units. Externally it appeared that revolutionary logic was on their side. We wanted to create a class organ and to it would be elected not only members of class unions, but also members of the Catholic unions who are absolutely not interested in the problems of the working class.

But, in reality, in this seemingly class purity there is, on one hand, misunderstanding of the problems of the Factory Committees, and, on

the other, a striving to remain in the old, conservative frame-work. If the Factory and Shop Committees are to become organs of struggle, it is possible only when they are elected by all the workers of the given factory. Is there a danger that in such a case this organ may become anti-class in character? Of course there is.

But it is our purpose to elect to each of these Factory Committees the more advanced and revolutionary workers through our propaganda and agitation in each factory. As long as the workers are electing the reformists, it shows their backwardness. If they elect Catholics, that shows still more backwardness. But we take the working class as it is. It has to be educated, united on the basis of certain political action, and not phrases. That is why we were categorically opposed to "leftism," which was suddenly shown by the reformists.

In France, at the time of the last conventions of the Metal Workers and Mine Workers, at the discussion of the Factory and Mine Committees, there were three points of view. Some said that in the elections only members of revolutionary trade unions should participate; others were of the opinion that these Committees should be elected not only by members of the revolutionary unions but also by the reformist unions. The last—our point of view—was adopted, that the Factory and Shop Committees should be elected by all the workers of the given factory or shop, independent of whether they belong to any union at all. Digging into this question is enough, in reality, to arrive at our point of view.

Let us admit for a moment that the Factory and Shop Committees should be elected only by members of revolutionary unions. But what is the use to elect them at all; the workers who are members of revolutionary unions are already organized, so what's the use of organizing them along some other system? Our aim is that, for example, one hundred revolutionary organized workers shall have an influence on another nine hundred workers, and it is clear by putting the question in such a way, all limitations of participating in the elections of Factory and Shop Committees do not stand any criticism. The First Congress of the Profintern in its resolutions on the organizational question, opposed all limitations, advocating the idea of creating Factory and Shop Committees through general and equal franchise in the factories and shops. The Congress also advocated the slogan of labor control through these Factory and Shop Committees, which control is a powerful instrument of the working class for the seizure of shops and factories.

THE SOCIALIZATION OF PRODUCTION

It is necessary to stop a moment on the definition of the "socialization of production," which, for the last two years has been subject to various explanations. We think that under the definition of the "socialization of production," should be understood such a system of productive relations by which the private owner is expropriated and the working class becomes the owner of the establishment. But this is our "barbarian" Bolshevik point of view; the reformists, under the term "socialization of production" understand something entirely different.

In Germany, directly after the November revolution of 1918, the question of socialization of production arose the second day of the revolution. But there the question did not present itself in such a manner as it did to us. We, on the second day after the October revolution, began to seize the factories and shops, "offending" the owners, because it was very difficult not to offend them. But in Germany, they advocated the idea of a gradual socialization of the means of productions.

The German reformists at that time advocated not the forcible seizure, which only the "wild" Bolsheviks could permit themselves, but a buying up for compensation to the owners for the property seized. We first seized the factories and then began to talk about how to work out "socialization." The reformists, on the other hand, stood on the viewpoint of "gradualization," spent their time in talking about socialization, and its realization they postponed indefinitely.

The following happened. Scientific commissions on socialization were created, in which, alongside with Kautsky and others, the owners also worked, and the longer these Commissions worked the deeper they got into jungles until, finally, they reached the conclusion that, "Socialization is a very difficult thing."

They chewed that question for one year, then they chewed it for another year, until, as a result of this chewing they made a couple of thick volumes of all kinds of theoretical investigations—and socialization did not only not forge ahead, but it disappeared entirely from the scene.

It is clear that such a form of socialization, which turns itself into a discussion about socialization, without any practical results, could not be acceptable to our Congress. We consider Labor Control as the first step to real socialization. We did not think it possible to possess Labor Control while the bourgeoisie was still in power. We considered it as a means of seizing the establishment. We had enough reasons to ap-

proach this question from that point of view, because we had before us the experience of the Russian revolution, quite rich in that regard.

THE INDUSTRIAL UNION

It would be proper to halt on another question which, again, was of interest not only to us, the revolutionary International, but which took up almost all the attention of the Amsterdam International. This was the question of organizational structure. If we take the organizational structure of the trade unions we will see that the unions, from narrow craft organizations, are turning into wider units and later into industrial unities. This process is very slow.

At the First Congress of the Profintern the trade unions were understood as organs first for the defense of the interests of the working class, later, as organs of attack on the bourgeoisie, and, finally as organs for socialist construction.

As long as the trade unions, for many years, were confronted by a very strong enemy, and as long as that enemy—the bourgeoisie—changed the forms of its organization, the working class had to do the same. Otherwise, it would lag behind the bourgeoisie organizationally.

In reality, the bourgeoisie has, besides the apparatus of the state, which is a very powerful tool for the suppression of the labor movement, its own employers' organization, united according to industry. The employer who, for instance, owns a big metal factory, cannot join two or three unions merely because he has laborers, pattern makers and others working for him. He joins only one certain union, which corresponds to the industry generally.

The employers are always perfecting their organization, adapting it to the conditions of struggle, giving it the forms which make it the most effective fighting instrument against the working class. In this respect the working class has always been lagging behind the employers. While, for instance, we have in England, all the employers' societies organized on one hand according to industry and—on the other hand—into one "British Federation of Manufacturers," the working class of England only a year and a half ago organized the whole British Federation of Trades Councils, outside of which there are yet over a million workers.

For the revolutionary International, which has to confront such a problem as the social revolution, it is necessary to create an organizational prerequisite for such revolution. It is necessary to rebuild the trade union movement on a new basis. This is why we adopted a

slogan of industrial unionism: *In one industry, one union.* And this slogan was carried into every country by revolutionary workers.

I will not stop to detail other organizational questions, which are very numerous. I will only point out that at the First Congress a program of action was adopted which in sixteen paragraphs formulated briefly the problems of the revolutionary trade unions.

THE SPREAD OF THE PROFINTERN'S INFLUENCE IN THE EAST (ORIENT)

I have mentioned that the Amsterdam International was mostly an European organization; of the non-European countries participating in the Amsterdam International are only the trade unions of Canada and part of the unions of Argentine. That is all that the Amsterdam International has outside of Europe. That is why we, without exaggeration may say that the Amsterdam International could more correctly be called a federation of European unions than a real international.

At the same time, the particular attribute of the Profintern as well as of the Comintern is precisely that the Profintern became the central point for the revolutionary trade union movement, not only of Europe but also of America, Asia and Africa. The Russian revolution awoke all the oppressed Near and Far East, and in many of the Eastern countries the organized labor movement reckons its birth from the date of the Russian revolution. The fact that the Profintern is organically connected with the Russian revolution in itself was a reason for the attraction of the sympathy of labor unions of the Near and Far East.

It is true that some of the unions of various countries which are affiliated to the Amsterdam International also made attempts to organize unions in the East. The British trade unions attempted to influence the growth of the trade unions of India by creating ideological and organizational connections with the trade union movement of the large cities.

The British trade unions never considered the problem of aiding the liberation of India from the clutch of the British Empire, but on the other hand, acting in full contact with their government, definitely helped the success of the imperialist policy of the British bourgeoisie, using the apparatus of the trade unions for that purpose.

When we confronted the problem of connection with the East, with its labor organizations, we based ourselves not only on the sympathy of the laboring masses of the oppressed East, but also on certain labor organizations which were leaning toward the Russian revolution as to a bright light. This connection with the East should be remembered in order to get a clear understanding of the particular attributes of the revolutionary trade union movement as compared with the reformist.

THE CONSTITUENT CONGRESS OF THE PROFINTERN

We thus considered the fundamental questions which were on the agenda of the Constituent Congress of the revolutionary trade unions and this is, in a general way, the ideological, theoretical and practical equipment with which the Profintern began its struggle for influence on the masses.

First of all, it met with opposition from the reformists, which was quite natural, as this Congress was aimed against them. We also met with opposition from a part of the anarcho-syndicalists, who saw a too close connection between the Profintern and Comintern. The fight on this point which began right after the First Congress is still continuing.

We will dwell on the characteristics of the Constituent Congress itself, on our slogan: *The fight for unity of the trade union movement.* The Congress itself, according to its composition, had a very original character. There were representatives of independent organizations and representatives of revolutionary minorities within the reformist unions. Such minorities we have in all countries. We also had there separate unions of revolutionary workers which split away from the old unions. Also those who have been expelled from reformist ranks. Thus, the Congress by its composition was in fact a congress of such organizations an exact estimate of whose members could not be made, because for that purpose it would be required to form our minorities organizationally, which would have brought a split in the old unions.

At our Congress were official representatives of the revolutionary parts of those organizations which participate in "Amsterdam." This peculiarity of the Profintern should be remembered when we consider the specific gravity and the practical influence on the world's trade union movement. The creation of a new international must find its justification in the objective conditions of the class struggle.

In general, internationals are created with great difficulty, and it is natural that there must be very serious objective reasons in the world's labor movement in order that such may be created, and, which is more important, may live and develop.

Above we characterized those conditions in which the labor movement has been in the last couple of years. Now, arises the question: Has the Profintern grown for the last two years, since its Constituent Congress?

It is enough briefly to compare the Profintern with the Amsterdam International in order to see a steady, undeviating growth of our influence. How can we explain that growth? By the ideological, organizational and political disintegration of reformism and by that bankruptcy which has appeared recently especially in connection with the

occupation of the Ruhr, in the reformist internationals in general and in the Amsterdam International in particular.

In order clearly to understand the internal struggle of opinions which exists in the world's trade union movement, we will, on one hand, have to consider briefly the fundamental questions which were agitating the labor movement in the last year and a half, and, on the other hand, we will have to take these same questions which we took for the Amsterdam International and see how we answer them. First of all, we will consider around which questions and slogans the struggle of the Profintern was shaping itself in the world's labor movement.

THE PROFINTERN AND THE ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS

We stated above that the decisions of the Constituent Congress of the Profintern brought forth, right from the start, opposition not only from the reformists but also from the anarcho-syndicalists, many of whom it seemed stood on the platform of proletarian dictatorship.

The anarcho-syndicalists are divided into a few categories: First, there are anarcho-syndicalists who learned much from the Russian revolution and the world war; they are called revolutionary syndicalists or plain syndicalists. They recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the forcible overthrow of the bourgeoisie; they recognize the soviet form of government and in general the necessity of the state. But the anarcho-syndicalist movement has also many other variations: There are anarcho-syndicalists who learned nothing from the war or from the Russian revolution. These so-called "pure syndicalists" have been preserved from the pre-war time in such a condition that it seems they have been all that time in pickle.

What is this "pure syndicalism?" The anarcho-syndicalists are advocating the same program which they advocated in 1906, 1907, 1908 and other years, being convinced that their platform is adaptable not only to their own countries, but that, in general, their point of view and tactics are most correct for the whole international.

Directly after the First Congress, began the struggle on the question of relations between the Profintern and the Comintern. What was the argument about? The anarcho-syndicalist section held the viewpoint that the Profintern should have nothing in common with the Comintern; the Profintern should not participate in any kind of politics and should not be under the influence of any political party; the Profintern should not stand on the platform of proletarian dictatorship, for every dictatorship is an evil.

The struggle centered itself mainly not around the principle questions, not around the question if, in general, the working class can conquer without the dictatorship; but around the decision of our Con-

gress for mutual representation between the Comintern and the Profintern. In this mutual representation the anarcho-syndicalists saw a tendency of the Profintern and Comintern to violate every law of God and man, and a plain attempt to ignore the principle of independence of the trade union movement.

Thus, the struggle within the Profintern began around the question of the relations between the two Internationals. I have mentioned our point of view of the relations between the trade union and the party. From that it is clear what relations in our estimation should exist between the Profintern and the Comintern. However, as long as the anarcho-syndicalists are of the opinion that the trade unions are the exclusive organizations for leadership over the whole labor movement, so long, naturally, the anarcho-syndicalists not only questioned the mutual representation, but came out actively in opposition to it.

We will not dwell here on all those documents which appeared as a result of this inner struggle. It is necessary only to remark that within the Profintern, for the period of its first year of existence, the struggle around the form of mutual representation between the Profintern and Comintern was a very sharp one. And it ended at the Second Congress of the Profintern, which struck out the Eleventh paragraph of the Constitution, that had authorized such representation. By that exclusion a bloc was arranged between the Communists and the healthy part of the international syndicalists.

THE INTERNATIONAL PROPAGANDA COMMITTEES

We had to reply to another question which arose before the international trade union movement; the question of uniting the workers along vertical lines. Another question was that of tactics: If we created our International, should we also create such internationals according to industry? We came to the conclusion that industrial internationals should not be created. At the same time, it is necessary to create international propaganda committees according to industry, whose purpose shall be to unite all the workers of the given industry into their proper international.

In this question there seems to be a contradiction: On one hand we have two parallel, competing internationals, the Amsterdam and Profintern; and, on the other, we are issuing a slogan to all revolutionary unions to join their proper industrial international. Is it logical? What was the aim of creating our Profintern? It was for the purpose of penetrating more deeply in all labor organizations. If we created our center of the world's trade union movement, it was not because we considered the parallel existence of the two International a virtue, but because there was no other means to centralize the struggle of all the revolutionary workers. Our aim was also to see that all the separate

revolutionary unions, as well as our minorities in the ranks of the old unions, by joining the industrial internationals, should influence the whole reformist trade union movement.

In order that this going into these industrial internationals should not have a disorganized character we created the Propaganda Committees. The name in itself "Propaganda Committee" proves that it is not a dual organization, but an ideological center the purpose of which is to unite the elements for influencing these industrial internationals. The International Propaganda Committees according to industries are a logical addition to the Profintern and, thus, by our work we are embracing the laboring masses along both the horizontal and vertical lines.

LECTURE NO. 7

Politics and Tactics of the Profintern

THE ATTITUDE OF REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS TOWARD THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

IN order clearly to understand the differences between the Profintern and the Amsterdam International we will dwell on the fundamental questions we touched upon when dealing with the latter.

Our attitude toward the Versailles Treaty, the League of Nations, the International Labor Bureau, may be stated in few words: The worst possible. Perhaps this is not enough to explain our attitude, but I think that there can be no question for a revolutionary international of collaborating with the League of Nations or institutions created by it.

Let us remember that Vandervelde, in one of his many speeches, tried to prove that the Versailles Treaty is not so bad after all, because it contains the Thirteenth Paragraph, which defends the rights of labor. Now, with this Thirteenth Paragraph or without it, we consider the Versailles Treaty the greatest robber treaty which human fancy ever created. We do not intend to make it better; instead of that we, from the beginning, adopted the slogan: "Down with the Versailles Treaty, which should be destroyed together with all created by it, as well as the Treaty of Sevres and other similar treaties."

The same holds true of the League of Nations and commissions created by it. One of them is the Commission on Disarmament. We already stated how beautifully the leaders of the Amsterdamers were talking in this Commission. If we are opposed to this Commission it is not because we consider it improper to make speeches in the presence of cabinet ministers: No, there may be such circumstances when it is proper and even necessary to make speeches in such surroundings. The question is only if we shall make up our speeches and actions in such a way as to help the ministers to fool the laboring masses, or if we speak so as to destroy the illusions of the masses.

Only from this point of view do we consider our every strategic step. As long as the Commission on Disarmament has a collaborative character, as long as the representatives of the bourgeois governments in that Commission clearly are fooling these so-called representatives of the workers, so long for a real revolutionist, there can be no question of participating in all this international chicanery.

The International Labor Bureau, which is, according to the reformists, the "greatest attainment of the working class;" this International Labor Bureau, at the head of which stands Albert Thomas, recently

expressed its sympathy for Fascism. It is an organization which spends its time in the collection of documents, and even here, we may state, it specializes in falsification.

It is true the International Labor Bureau is attempting to draft proposals for laws, but nobody now takes this organization seriously. Right after the war, the International Labor Bureau had to demonstrate the social liberalism of the victors, distracting the attention of the working masses from the struggle. For the bourgeoisie it was a diversion, for the leaders of the reformist trade union movement it was a "conquest." But as soon as the immediate danger passed, the International Labor Bureau was, in fact, turned into a society of amateurs of social science who are spending their time in useless and timid talk.

If the bourgeois governments of Europe and America are still donating money to the upkeep of this institution, simply because they still expect to make use of this apparatus against the proletariat which is again raising its head—then the *workers* at least should have nothing in common with this "joint" created by the trust of the victors.

REPARATIONS PROBLEMS

We will take up the problem of reparations. Above I have stated the Amsterdam viewpoint of that problem, the crux of which was and is: The Germans must rebuild the destroyed districts. Why the Germans alone? Why should only Belgium and France be reconstructed? Have not Russia, Austria, Bulgaria, Turkey, Germany and Poland also been destroyed? These are the first "impudent" questions which we usually ask the Amsterdamers. But there is still another impudent question.

From the documents already published it is clear that the international bourgeoisie is guilty of the world war, so, logically, if there is going to be compensation, let them all pay. The Hamburg Congress of the Second International adopted a resolution which proves that international imperialism as a whole is guilty of the war. It seems that from this they had to make a logical conclusion that all the imperialists, and not only the Germans, should pay. But, in the end, this very same resolution demands that—"The Germans should pay."

The reformists' logic that only the Germans have to pay, is beyond our comprehension. But this is not the only thing on which we disagree with the Amsterdamers. Let us say that Germany should pay. But who in Germany should be the ones to pay? Germany does not represent a class unit. Who, in particular, should pay in Germany? According to our opinion the German bourgeoisie should pay, but this can be done only when we seize the bourgeoisie by the throat.

Our stand on the question of reparations can be formulated in the following way: Of course it is necessary to reconstruct all destroyed areas, but such a reconstruction should be done at the expense of the bourgeoisie of all countries, the victors and the conquered. In practice it is quite clear that Germany alone can never compensate all the damages or, as the French say, "for all the broken pots."

When we talk of the great losses in the war, of the hundreds of billions spent in the war, these expenditures are composed of different parts. There are losses purely economic in character: Destroyed homes, factories, shops, fields. Then there come losses on account of destruction of the whole economic organism caused by the war, in exports, imports, etc. Then come losses in human lives. If, to estimate a human life at \$50.—and the bourgeois economists are busy now with that— even from this purely commercial point of view, if we consider the ten million murdered men and figure out the loss in dollars, we will see what a gigantic loss it was to the public economy.

In the losses brought about by the war there are those which cannot be replaced. Human lives are lost forever. The loss of working capacity of invalids also cannot be replaced. The used-up guns, military equipment and powder cannot be collected again, etc. But part of the spent capital does remain somewhere. When the state ordered the guns, airplanes, tanks, automobiles, cars, food and guns for soldiers; all that was made by somebody at a *profit* which remains somewhere.

Where are these hundreds of billions? They are held by the ruling class, they are held by the munition makers and factory owners. The debts of the present governments are only partly external and a great majority of them are on internal loans (Liberty Loans in the U. S. A.). And who furnished the money for those loans? Those who made hundreds of millions.

Thus, if we take up the matter in a practical way, and force the bourgeoisie of the victorious countries to pay, the problem of reconstructing the destroyed areas may easily be solved. It is true it would be necessary to act in a somewhat indelicate way, it would be necessary to annul the mutual debts, to repudiate the internal and the external loans, to bring about a progressive income tax. The reparations question can be settled in such a way only if the proletariat takes over power into its own hands.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WAR

One of the most important questions which arose before the workers in the last couple of years is the question of measures and means of fighting against war. We all know very well that there are no such workers or such labor organizations as want war. The question here is not of moral indignation against international slaughter and not of

protesting resolutions; the question is somewhat different. It is in the problem of the working class leading a fight against war with some expectations of success.

What are the difficulties in the fight against war? I think we will better understand them if we acquaint ourselves with the role which the workers organizations and the workers themselves played in the imperialist war.

First of all, there is no doubt at all that the war itself was made possible only because the working masses, at least in the first period, were for war. The leaders of the labor organizations were for war, and more than that, helped their governments to carry it on. Thus, the struggle against war leads to the struggle against all war ideology.

On the other hand, it is impossible to conduct an anti-war propaganda if we will not at the same time try our best to liberate the workers from *all that helps to create* the war ideology. It is natural, therefore, that as the first thing in our plan of struggle against war we always put forward the necessity of fighting against all nationalistic superstition, against the idea of "fatherland," and the defense of "our" country.

It is known that the anarchists are also against war. It is true that during the last war a great majority of them were for war. But at any rate they are, in general, against it, not as revolutionists but as pacifists. That means that they are against war because war brings along death and destruction. We are not against every war, but against those conducted in the interest of the bourgeoisie. It is our aim to instill into the minds of the workers this seemingly plain, but in reality profound, difference between nationalist and class war.

It is our aim to prove to the workers that without the creation of a class-militant army, without declaration of decisive war against the bourgeoisie, the workers cannot liberate themselves, they cannot conquer. Thus, the struggle against the whole nationalist ideology, the struggle against the idea of defending "our" country as such, and the advocacy of the necessity of war for the defense of a socialist country, for our own proletarian state—this is the foundation of our anti-war tactics.

But, on the other hand, in our anti-war agitation, we have to reckon on the connection between the workers and "their" country. Thus, we have repeatedly to express the opinion that to organize a strike of protest in the moment of the declaration of war is utopian, because at that moment the bourgeoisie is armed to the maximum and the working class is disorganized.

Therefore, we see that the question is not that of organizing a strike at the moment of the declaration of war, but in preparing the working masses before the war against it. As long as the class struggle sharpens itself we will be creating the power which may interfere with the very

beginning of war and if the war does start may end it in the interest of the working class.

In order to struggle against war it is necessary to conduct a systematic, steady agitational and propagandist work within the army. At the Peace Congress at the Hague, our proposal to conduct anti-military propaganda among the soldiers called forth a sharp protest from the reformist leaders of the Congress.

Such an attitude toward our proposal is quite clear, for the reformists consider the army as a necessary organization for the defense of "the fatherland." Therefore, the disintegration of the army is the disintegration of the defensive and offensive forces of their "fatherland" itself.

The propaganda in the army, open or secret, at the present time plays a great role, because, the bourgeoisie feels less and less assurance of starting a new war and hurling the workers of one country against the workers of another. But in connection with that, in the struggle against war, there appears a new problem. On what, at present, are based the forces of the imperialist countries?

They are based on the exploitation of the colonies, and the colonial armies which already have played some role in the last war and are now becoming of new significance as a powerful tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie for crushing internal "disturbances." Not without reason does the French bourgeois press discuss the question of establishing compulsory military service for the colonies. A part of these colonial troops are at present participating in the French occupation of the Ruhr, and another part of them are within France itself.

As long as these military units are composed of the most backward elements (all the colored soldiers are illiterate) the bourgeoisie is sure that in case of trouble they will be a good tool in its hands.

Out of this, we can see that the question of fighting against war is related to the question of fighting against the imperialist colonial policy. Work within the colonies, the creation within the colonial countries of labor unions, appears as a practical question because the colonial power of the bourgeoisie threatens us with death, giving the bourgeoisie the opportunity in case of necessity to hurl these colored armies into military action, and then onto the internal front in case of a civil war.

Within the last few years the question of fighting against war, arose before us—not as a theoretical task, but as a practical one. We had to give an answer to the wide working masses, and to show how to conduct this struggle in an organized way. In connection with this, at the Frankfort Conference and at the Berlin Conference of the Transport Workers, we advocated practical slogans. We advocated the idea of creating at all the border points, Control Committees for the control of all shipments of military equipment from one country into another

and for connection between the labor organizations of the different countries before the beginning of any military action.

At the time of the past war the struggle of the revolutionary workers against it was difficult because Europe was divided by a line of flame into two parts, and it was very difficult to keep the workers of the two combatant countries informed about the actual situation. In this respect the bourgeois press played a tremendous role: It was in the full sense of the word the "Fourth Estate," as it perfectly performed its function of creating hatred between the working masses, and of smothering class consciousness. We should learn the lessons of this imperialist war and should organize to counteract the bourgeois press.

These are, in a general way, the problems which confronted us in the struggle against war. Of course we never reject such action as the general strike, but we consider it in a practical light. While the reformists at the Hague recited on the theme of declaring a strike in case of war, we said: It's a good idea, but, in order that this strike may be a success, it should be prepared beforehand. And for this purpose it is needful to conduct a struggle against all nationalist superstitions, it is needful to break all coalitions with the bourgeoisie.

It is quite clear that as long as labor organizations are connected with their bourgeoisie, the latter will use these connections in every way possible for the military mobilization of the working class. Thus, the problem of promulgating the general strike should logically be the result of the work of the revolutionary trade unions and the Communist Party, the work aimed at the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD DISARMAMENT

In connection with the question of anti-war propaganda, is the idea of disarmament. Stating the point of view of the Amsterdam International on disarmament, we have already mentioned our point of view on that question. We consider the abstract idea of disarmament as a very injurious one, anti-proletarian and anti-communist; because we are not for the disarming but the arming of the working class. In this respect it is interesting to note the stand of some pacifists.

When we had to conduct a struggle against the right wing of the French Communist Party, we had to pay attention to the fact that even it was infected with pacifist notions. Thus for instance, one of the former leaders of the party expressed his opinion that it would be easier to fight against war if there would be no standing armies—not even a revolutionary one. In this sentence is contained the crux of pacifism.

In reality what is this problem for the working class? Of course, it is not the simple blowing up of all guns, tanks, etc., but in seeing to it

that all the armament under the control of the bourgeoisie shall be turned over to the hands of the working class. Therefore, the whole ideology of pacifist disarmament is aimed completely against the interests of the working class.

We are categorically opposed, not only to the pacifism of the reformists, but also to the pacifism of the anarchists. In connection with that, at the last session of the Executive Bureau of the Profintern, we had to adopt a decision in connection with the action of the French anarchists. The story of it is as follows: In France there exists a so-called Committee for the Fight against Imperialism and War, in which are participating representatives of the parties, C. G. T. U., and also the anarchist federation.

When the Anglo-Russian dispute began, in the Committee of Action this question was put on the agenda in the sense of mobilizing the French workers for the defense of the Soviet Republic. At this point the anarchists brought in a special resolution in which it was stated: "The working class has no business with any military conflict, it is against the defense of any country, and therefore it should not mix in any commercial squabble between England and Russia. By our mixing in we may set the Russian people against the English, or *vice versa*."

What is the essence of this small but typical resolution? Here are, firstly, the anti-soviet character of the anarchist declaration. The French anarchists as well as others have an anti-soviet position, because the soviets are a state power, and the anarchists are against all kinds of states. Secondly, they are against every kind of army.

"Let us assume" said I, in a personal discussion with the French anarchists, "that the bad Communist Party does not exist, that the Communist International has been exiled to the devil's islands, or even to Mars; that in France there are only such trade unions of which you alone are the head, and, one fine day, you will overthrow the bourgeoisie. What will you do next? You will agree that the counter-revolution will not at once lay down its arms?"

The anarchists answered, "Of course."

"That means that it will be necessary to fight against them."

"Yes," they agreed, "it will be necessary."

"Are you sure that when the revolution will occur in France, the United States fleet will not bombard your ports?"

"No," they replied, "we are not sure."

"The French bourgeoisie will have its regiments and battalions?"

"Of course."

"That means that you will have to create something to fight against your own and the foreign bourgeoisie? It matters not if you call them

anarchist groups or companies, you may call them anything you wish, but it will have to be an armed power in order to fight?"

"Yes," they answered, "it will be necessary."

"Will you be able to fight if you will not centralize your apparatus, if you will have no organization, if you will be unable to weld the proletariat into groups, battalions, etc.?"

When we came to this point the anarchists dismissed all logic and stated—"We are against organized violence, the workers should defend *individually* their factories and shops, *every* state is a vampire, *every* army, including the Red one, is aimed against the working class," etc.

This anarchist ideology which finds sympathy in some circles of the French workers, represents a counter-revolutionary ideology, for it strives to distract the workers from the possibility of revolution. Those labor organizations which do not have as their aim the organization of the proletariat in such a way that it may be able to hold in its hands the seized factories and shops, are aiming at defeat and not at victory.

All this talk of the anarchists is in direct contradiction with the construction and aims of those international organizations which approach the methods of struggle not metaphysically, but are striving, from the given relation of forces, to reach a necessary conclusion of the struggle.

Thus, we are opposed not only to the reformist pacifists, but also to the anarchist ones, because we have never been pacifists: Pacifism is not in the nature of Communism. It has nothing in common with the revolutionary labor movement.

OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

The next question on which the revolutionary labor movement conflicts with the reformists, is the question of struggle against Fascism. What is Fascism? We have already explained it. How the reformists fight against it is also known. How do we propose to fight against Fascism? Of course, the best method, the best medicine, would be the Red Army. This is a very strong but efficient remedy. But to our regret the Red Army, so far, remains on the territory (it is true a very great one) yet of only one country.

We have to find a method of struggle where there is no Red Army, and where Fascism is fighting in order to prevent such an army. If we take the Fascist literature, we will see that Fascism very cleverly conducts its agitation and propaganda for the winning over of the working masses. We have shown above that Fascism is based mainly on the middle classes, but that at the same time is trying to penetrate the working class. Therefore, our first aim should be to drive Fascism out of the labor trenches, that is, to destroy the labor organizations created by Fascism.

As long as Fascism in its clearest form can be observed in Italy, we should, by working out our methods of struggle against it, consider the methods and technique of the Italian Fascisti. Fascism succeeded by a strong demagoguery in organizing large trade unions there. And in our struggle against Fascism the question arose: Is it permissible for revolutionary workers to join Fascist unions and to create therein underground Communist nuclei? Is it permissible in such unions which are, in fact, strike-breaking organizations, which are assisting the bourgeoisie, etc., to create nuclei as a base of our propaganda?

We answered to that: Of course it is permissible. We must fight the enemy with those methods which are dictated by objective conditions. The creation in hostile unions of our nuclei is being carried out methodically, and we have very many cases, as in Italy, where the Fascist unions take steps against the employers and begin to use against them the same methods which they formerly used against the labor organizations.

There can be no objection against such a method of influence upon the Fascist organizations. The evolution of the Fascist organizations depends on the penetration of them by revolutionary elements, which will bring into them that which does not harmonize with the Fascist theory and practice.

But this, of course, is not sufficient. The underground work is calculated for a very long period of time. The other and more rapid method is the open mass struggle against Fascism. Where Fascism has already conquered the question is of overthrowing it, and where it is developing, the question is of not allowing it chance to grow up.

And here, while applying our tactics, we come in conflict with not only the Fascists, but also reformists. In order to make the slogan of the fight against Fascism understood by the masses, it must be made concrete. The laboring mass feels the oppression of Fascism where it has conquered, but where it has not yet conquered, wide circles of labor do not comprehend what Fascism is. Here the question of anti-Fascist propaganda plays a big role in the sense of ideological mobilization of the wide masses.

WORKERS' DEFENSE GROUPS

The second phase is the creation of the workers' defense groups. These organizations are purely defensive in aim. To prove to the working masses the necessity of such defensive organization, is much easier than to get them into offensive organizations. On the other hand, as long as Fascism is an aggressive organization, and is striving to seize power where it has not yet conquered, it is natural that the question of self-defense receives more sympathy from the working class.

There are Fascist documents which prove that the Fascists are preparing not only a simple upheaval, but have certain plans; which cities

to seize, how to conduct movements, whom to send to the other world, which districts are most dangerous, etc. In Germany, where the danger is very great, on the basis of struggle against Fascism we succeeded in creating a big movement for workers' defense groups.

But here we meet with opposition from the reformists. They are against such workers' defense groups, because, on some fine day, these self-defense groups may turn to attack. If the workers are armed, the class logic pushes them ahead, for the old strategic rule says, "The best method of defense is attack."

The reformists understand that out of these self-defense groups there may arise such organs which will lead the struggle against the whole capitalist system. No wonder, therefore, that the first action of the reformist Social-Democratic unions of Germany was aimed against the creation of such groups. But when a mass movement began among the workers, and the Communists succeeded on the basis of creating such groups to unite workers of different views, the Social-Democracy proclaimed a slogan for the creation of purely Social-Democratic groups.

This was purposely to exclude the Communists because groups in which there are Communists cannot be anti-Communist, but purely Social-Democratic groups may be anti-Communist. The Social-Democrats of Germany figured that they would have to fight with arms in hand against the Communists, and the German Social-Democratic cabinet ministers and government leaders are taking every precaution against the creation of such self-defense groups, especially against such mixed groups.

METHODS OF STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

Beside creating the self-defense groups and active agitation and propaganda, we advocated the creation of anti-Fascist Committees of Action. These Committees of Action, according to our opinion, had to embrace the workers of all tendencies, because war and Fascism are of equal interest to the working class as a whole and to all its political groupings. But this idea of creating Committees of Action, the strong agitation and propaganda, the pressure of the whole international proletariat against Fascism—always meets with opposition from the Social-Democrats.

We now confront the fact that just as Bolshevism calls forth sympathy in the working class of all countries, creating similar organizations for struggle, so does Fascism, in the countries where it conquered, play the role of organizer for international reaction.

It became an international phenomenon which is in complete opposition to Bolshevism. Therefore, the struggle against Fascism should be conducted not only on a national but on an international scale. The attention of the working class of all countries, should be concentrated

on the destruction of Italian Fascism, the same as the attention of the bourgeoisie of all countries is concentrated on the destruction of Bolshevism. It is necessary to state that the bourgeoisie in this respect (as well as in others) is much more conscious than the working class, and sees clearly the international significance of Bolshevism.

The bourgeoisie sees in the Bolsheviks the enemy of the whole capitalist system, and on the other hand, no doubt, they see their friends in the Fascisti and in the Fascist governments.

Therefore, the problem of the international proletariat is to sharpen the struggle against Italian Fascism, and here many methods are possible, on condition, of course, of some kind of unity between all the labor organizations. Here is possible a demonstration, and many other actions which could have influence on the Italian government. It could be done in Berlin, Paris, New York, etc. Such demonstrations would play a colossal role in the sense of influencing Fascist policy within Italy itself.

Besides that, we raised the question of anti-Fascist propaganda among the Italian immigrants in the United States. In the United States there are a few million Italians, in France there are over a million Italian workers. Out of these millions of Italian workers it is possible to recruit people who would be useful in the struggle against Fascism in Italy itself, for Fascism is attempting and threatening to create its groups all over the world.

These are the slogans which we advocate in the struggle against Fascism. The fundamental slogan and at the same time the best method against Fascism, is revolution, for where the revolution conquers Fascism is crushed. Fascism is as impossible with us as the revival of monarchism. Therefore, the best means against Fascism is the social revolution.

But the social revolution is such a strong means that not only the bourgeoisie but even the reformists cannot stomach it, and the problem in this sphere is contained in "liberating" the reformist leaders from the masses. It is true that this is not a special problem in the struggle against Fascism, because other problems than Fascism will be solved when this "liberation" is accomplished.

THE STRUGGLE FOR A UNITED FRONT

We now come to one of the central questions of our differences with the reformist labor movement. This is the question of the United Front. How do we understand the United Front? Instead of theoretical talk on that theme, it is sufficient to bring two international facts which show how the Communists understand the United Front and how they practice it: That is, the international conference at Frankfurt and the international Transport Workers conference.

The international conference at Frankfurt was called by the Rhenish Westphalian Convention of Factory and Shop Committees, where the Communists had a major influence. The problem of this conference, which was called by the initiative of the Comintern and Profintern, was to unite on generally accepted programs all the labor organizations of the most important countries.

The Committee on Arrangements sent invitations to the labor parties and labor unions of England, to the Communist Party, to the reformist and revolutionary unions of France, to the Social-Democratic and Communist parties of Belgium and many other organizations. There were invited the Comintern, Profintern, Second and Second-and-a-Half Internationals, the Amsterdam International and the international industrial units. It was an attempt, from a non-partisan organization—the Convention of the Factory and Shop Committees of the districts occupied by France—to drag the reformist organizations into the struggle against war and international reaction and together with them to work out a plan of action.

Right from the start it became apparent that all the reformist internationals and parties were categorically opposed to this conference. They insisted on picturing the United Front as a "dirty maneuver of Moscow," to which they would not agree.

There is a "maneuver" all right, but it is contained in our attempt to make the reformist organizations act instead of talk. We want them to conduct the class struggle along with us on a platform acceptable to them. This is all the "trick" there is in our proposals. But, as the reformists do not want any struggle, it is natural for them to decline our proposals, and as a result all the reformist internationals did not come to the Frankfurt conference.

Nevertheless, the workers' representatives from the factories and shops mainly of Germany, came to this conference. Greetings were received from the workers of Glasgow and other English cities. Here the workers parted ways with their leaders, they understood the importance of this conference and expressed their sympathy in the attempt to find a common platform in the struggle against war.

The Frankfurt conference in itself is characteristic in that, besides the Communists, there was a Social-Democratic section; also there were the Independents, under the leadership of Ledebour. The Social-Democratic faction at this conference organized itself from factory representatives. These Social-Democrats came to the conference breaking the discipline of their international, their Social-Democratic parties, and their own trade unions.

The Social-Democratic Party of Germany and the trade unions, and those internationals which they supported, were categorically opposed

on the destruction of Italian Fascism, the same as the attention of the bourgeoisie of all countries is concentrated on the destruction of Bolshevism. It is necessary to state that the bourgeoisie in this respect (as well as in others) is much more conscious than the working class, and sees clearly the international significance of Bolshevism.

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The Social-Democratic Party of Germany and the trade unions, and those internationals which they supported, were categorically opposed

to participation in the Frankfort conference, threatening even to take disciplinary action against those who violated that decision. But anyhow, a fraction was organized. It was a small one compared to the other delegates, nevertheless the Communist majority did not force upon the conference such questions which generally are not acceptable to Social-Democratic workers.

We do not see in the resolutions adopted at Frankfort the questions of the proletarian dictatorship, of joining the Comintern—all those questions were not even placed on the agenda. The questions there were the struggle against the occupation of the Ruhr, the struggle against Fascism, etc.

In the resolutions adopted at Frankfort an attempt was made to formulate the idea of a United Front organizationally. The significance of the Frankfort conference was that it promulgated the idea of creating committees for the struggle against Fascism, the creation of Port Committees, the creation of self-defense groups, etc.

This conference has shown that by the United Front we understand the creation of a platform adaptable to both sides aimed against the bourgeoisie. We leave out all which would separate both sides which are trying to come together. The Frankfort conference, which had a great practical significance, has shown, by the resolutions and decisions adopted, our honest wish to create a United Front. It had an influence upon the workers who formerly did not trust the Communists, and who thought that under the idea of the United Front there was hidden some kind of an injurious "soviet trick."

By these resolutions the workers could convince themselves of our honest intentions. The Frankfort conference also had an influence on the working masses because it was the only international conference after the occupation of the Ruhr which adopted a clear and generally acceptable platform of struggle against the occupation of the Ruhr.

What did we see in connection with that question in the resolutions of the Second, Second-and-a-Half and Amsterdam Internationals? Protests, in general, and reference of it to the League of Nations. But we adopted a method of struggle against occupation. This had a great influence on the wide masses, and brought to the Communist and revolutionary workers—to the Comintern and Profintern—the sympathy of the wide masses who formerly did not trust our tactics of the United Front.

The second example is more characteristic—the international conference of Transport Workers. At this conference we had to do, not with the representatives of shops and factories, but with the representatives of centralized organizations. We had representatives of the International Federation of Transport Workers, with whom we conducted official parleys for the creation of a United Front.

What is most typical in this conference of Transport Workers? It is the complete unity, if not with all representatives of the International Federation, at least with a majority. Again, on what questions did we unite? On the questions of the struggle against Fascism, on the struggle against war and the methods for that struggle. And again, which is a very great gain—on the question of reconstruction of unity in the world's trade union movement.

The resolutions and appeals adopted do not contain anything specifically communist. But they do have a definite program of action, that is, the thing which any reformist international or any reformist organization did not and cannot give. Why were these resolutions filled with definite, concrete things? Because we can talk to the representatives of the Amsterdam International only about concrete questions. Would we ever be able to come to an understanding with them about events and perspectives? We may agree on the struggle against Fascism, on the struggle against capitalism, and as long as there is a will on their side to fight we could adopt definite resolutions. And again the wide masses can see how foolish are the statements of our opponents that the United Front is only a maneuver, that in reality we do not want any United Front and that we ourselves have broken it.

We say to our opponents: If you think it is only demagogy on our part, then make a United Front with us and prove that we are breaking it. But they cannot prove it, because the creation of a United Front with us would break their United Front with the bourgeoisie. And this is the whole essence of the question. It is a question of breaking the coalition with the bourgeoisie, for they do not expect to drag us into any coalition with the bourgeoisie. Therefore, the Amsterdamers are opposed to the United Front.

But even by the left wing the United Front was not adopted without difficulty. In some of the opposition we met in our ranks there was something extraordinary. The labor organizations are not used to the international taking upon itself any initiative on an international scale. Only with the creation of the Comintern and Profintern did they begin to accustom themselves to the idea that the experience of all countries should belong to each and every one. The opposition that we met was centered in the syndicalist organizations of the Latin countries.

It is known that the most active opponents of the United Front were in France, Italy and Spain—even in the Communist parties of those countries. Why was the opposition to the United Front centered in the Latin countries? This has a definite explanation. The Communist parties of the Latin countries have been composed of different elements. We have there few Communist parties which have grown up organically and gradually through the years. In this respect only the Russian

Communist Party has such long history. All the others have grown out of the Social-Democratic parties after the war, and some of them have absorbed part of the superstitions of the latter.

In the Latin countries the Communist parties absorbed anarcho-syndicalist elements. Thus, in these countries, the Communist parties were composed of two ideological tendencies: On one hand, the Social-Democratic element and, on the other, the anarcho-syndicalists. The origin of these different strata was the cause for the existence, within these parties for a short period, of anarchist leanings. There was something of a "left sickness"—a superficial revolutionism—which is quite common with the anarchist world viewpoint. From the point of view of formal revolutionism, of course, the United Front is impossible, because we have to deal with reformists, to sit with them at one table, etc. A shallow revolutionist cannot comprehend the whole necessity of the United Front, and as a certain part of such element joined the Communist parties in the Latin countries, we met there with opposition.

But there were other motives. It was said that we were too weak to allow ourselves such a maneuver, which demands strength, unity and great discipline. It was claimed that if we will put the Communists together with the reformists the latter may exercise the greater influence upon the former. These parties were afraid of themselves when they talked against the United Front. The same idea found its reflection within the revolutionary trade union movement. But already at the Second Congress of the Profintern (November 1922), all opposition to the United Front had disappeared from our ranks.

The opponents to the United Front saw that the latter is not an empty invention, and that for the period mentioned was a very effective, strategic maneuver for bringing closer unity between the advance guard and the backward mass of the proletarian army. They saw how vital the idea was in reality, and by experience they received proof of the correctness of our general tactics. Thus, at the Second Congress of the Profintern, there were no more opponents of the United Front.

The unity on that question among ourselves is now proven by the international conference of the Transport Workers. At this Conference there were present only the Russian unions, which, however, spoke in the name of the revolutionary unions of all countries. And the revolutionary unions accepted our stand and line of action and adopted all our decisions after they were published. This shows the inner unity, the absence of discord which previously interfered with our struggle. In general, we may say that the United Front has passed the stage of agitation and propaganda and that now it is in the phase of realization, in the organization stage.

In regard to the organizational strengthening of this front, we have shown at the conference of Transport Workers how practically we

consider it. Although it is true we did not succeed in realizing it in full. There we decided to create an International Committee of Transport Workers for the struggle against war and Fascism, to organize an anti-Fascist fund, port bureaus, control committees, etc., but all that was frustrated by the sabotage of the reformists. The idea of the United Front has been spread among the masses and there are no workers among the reformist organizations who would be opposed to the United Front.

The tactics of the United Front already have given tangible results in almost all countries. As long as the United Front is being created, it is being created for struggle and, at the head of the struggle, stand the more active elements—the followers of the Profintern and Comintern.

The struggle has its logic, and the working masses, when they join in it, cannot stop at a certain place as the reformists want them to. The reformists are trying to break up the movement for the United Front, but every such attempt makes them weaker and makes the revolutionary movement stronger. We succeeded in penetrating the hostile organizations and creating basic points within them for the Profintern and Comintern. It is natural that all tactics which lead to the strengthening of our organization is without doubt correct and virile.

THE PROFINTERN AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The last question on which we have to dwell in order to finish the characterization of the revolutionary trade union movement, is the attitude towards revolution in general and to the Russian revolution in particular. We gave above an explanation of the stand of the Amsterdam International on that question, and I doubt that it is necessary to review it further.

Our organization, which also embraces millions of non-Communist workers, is, of course, not such a clear-cut organization as the Communist Party. The Communist Party has its definite ideological and programmatic boundaries. We, thanks to the structure of our minorities, do not even know the exact number of our membership in various countries. In the R. I. L. U. are many non-partisans, sympathizers, etc.

It is plain that the tactics of an organization which is composed of different elements cannot be as clear cut as the tactics of organizations which are purely Communist. It is conducting Communist work, but in peculiar, non-partisan surroundings. Our International, although it is non-partisan in character, has for its aims the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is stated in our constitution and in the main resolutions of our Congresses. There can be no doubt on that. From this our attitude toward the Russian revolution is clear.

How do we, an International which has all kinds of groups and tendencies, consider the Russian revolution? To the Profintern, the Russian revolution is the beginning of the world revolution, as the first step, and one of our main aims is to defend and strengthen the Russian revolution.

We conducted a decisive struggle against the anti-soviet and anti-Communist elements, which have formerly been members of our International and later on organized their own international. These groupings left the Profintern because we did not take an anti-soviet and anti-Communist position. This alone is enough to define the character and physiognomy of the Profintern in regards to the world revolution in general and the Russian revolution in particular.

LECTURE NO. 8

The Relation of Forces of the Reformist and Revolutionary Trade Union Movements and Their Perspectives

THE FORCE OF THE PROFINTERN

IN the former lecture we dwelt upon the fundamental questions which face the working class, the different attitudes towards which divides the international trade union movement into a few camps. Let us now estimate the specific gravity and compare the real power of each of the existing internationals. I have pointed out that the peculiarity of the Profintern is in that part of its army is found within the ranks of the trade unions of the reformists' International.

The Profintern has eight types of affiliated organizations:

- 1) General trade union centers which embrace all of the trade union movement of the given country: Russia, 5,000,000; Australia, 400,000; Bulgaria, 40,000; Egypt, 50,000; Persia, 20,000; Esthonia, 25,000, etc.
- 2) General trade union or district revolutionary centers which exist alongside the reformists and conducts a struggle against them, where our organizations are stronger than the reformists': France, 450,000; Czecho-Slovakia, 300,000; Java, 27,000; China, etc.
- 3) General trade union centers which play a smaller role in the trade union movement of their countries than the reformists': Holland, 20,000; Belgium, 12,000; Germany, 150,000; United States, 25,000, etc.
- 4) General trade union centers which stand on the platform of the Profintern, but on account of the White Terror are not affiliated with it: Finland, 50,000; Roumania, 60,000; Jugo-Slavia, 100,000, etc.
- 5) Separate independent unions which are not affiliated with the general trade union centers of their countries or have been expelled from them: Germany, 40,000; Austria, 10,000, etc.
- 6) The minorities within the reformist trade unions, united under the direct leadership of the Communist fractions: Germany, 3,000,000; Japan, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, etc.
- 7) Oppositional blocs which unite all the left elements within and without the reformist and the anarcho-syndicalist unions: United States; Great Britain; Spain; Austria; Argentina; Mexico, etc.
- 8) Finally, the left elements united in the Councils of Unemployed as in England, Shop Steward Committees, etc., which usually support the policies of the Profintern.

This varied organizational structure of our followers does not give the possibility of getting a complete and exact number of the adherents

of the Profintern. In many countries we have to use approximate figures as they change almost every day to our advantage. Most important it is that there is not one country, not one serious labor organization in the world, where the Profintern does not have its followers.

THE FORCES OF THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL

Now let us attempt to compare our figures with that of the Amsterdam International. The leaders of the Amsterdam International repeatedly in their statements declare that they unite 20,000,000 workers. And we repeatedly pointed out that this figure was a statistical mirage, that the Amsterdam International has not such numbers of members.

If we take these figures formally, perhaps such a number may be reached. But if we figure realistically, we will get something entirely different. As was stated, the Amsterdam International is mostly an European unit. In Germany, for instance, it numbers 8,000,000 members, but in fact there are no less than 3,000,000 of these who are followers of the Profintern. In England they count 5,500,000. But to this figure we have to make a few corrections: First, at the end of 1922, this figure was lowered by over 1,000,000. Second, out of the remaining 4,500,000, not less than 12 per cent are followers of the Profintern. In Austria the Amsterdam International counts 1,079,000 members, but the opposition bloc composed of our followers has over 10 per cent of that amount. In Belgium the reformist unions have 698,000 members, but here our followers are between 5 and 8 per cent. In Bulgaria, according to the Amsterdam International, they have 14,000 members, but in reality the reformist unions have at most 1,000 members. In Denmark the reformist unions have 242,000 members, out of which 10 per cent are followers of the Profintern.

In Spain the reformists unite 240,000 members, out of which about 25 per cent are followers of the Profintern. And at that there are two dual trade union centers; One a reformist, the other revolutionary-Syndicalist. We have followers of the Profintern in both these organizations. In general we may say that in both Spanish Confederations we have from 30 to 35 per cent of our followers. In France the Amsterdam International counts about 756,000 members, but in reality the reformist Confederation of Labor has at most 250,000. In Greece, according to the Amsterdam International, they have 170,000 members of the trade unions; but, firstly, this figure is exaggerated because there is no such number of organized workers in Greece, and, secondly, half of the members of the Greek trade unions are affiliated with the Profintern.

Hungary has 152,000 organized workers, but it is difficult to define the minority there, because the Horthy government makes continual

and murderous attacks upon the Communists. In Italy at the present time, thanks to the Fascist pogroms, there are probably not more than between 250,000 to 300,000 organized workers, 50 per cent of which stand on the platform of the Profintern.

Norway left the Amsterdam International yet has not joined the Profintern—she is on the road between the two and the question is not yet settled. Holland has now 200,000 members in the trade unions. Among them we have not many followers. In Poland there are 365,000 organized workers, about 50 per cent of whom are with us although it is hard to find our exact numbers there, thanks to the continuous raids on the Polish trade unions. In Sweden there are 313,000 members in trade unions, 15 per cent of whom are followers of the Profintern.

In Switzerland there are 225,000, and about 25 per cent of them are our followers. In Czecho-Slovakia the reformists unite 350,000 members and an equal number is united in the revolutionary unions. In Canada the Amsterdam International counts 164,000, and 40 per cent of them are our followers. Argentina and Peru are figured together with 100,000 members of reformist unions, and a good half of them are in the Profintern. And last, in South Africa, we have between 15 and 20 per cent of the 50,000 members of the Amsterdam unions.

Thus, if we estimate our forces, using the figures of the Amsterdam International itself, the number of its members who are ideologically or politically following us, we get between 30 and 35 per cent.

But we already know that the Amsterdam International does not embrace all countries. Thus, America is not represented, as well as many other countries. For a more correct estimate of our forces, I will dwell on those countries whose unions are not affiliated with the Amsterdam International.

From the European countries; in the syndicalist unions of Holland we have 15,000 followers; in Portugal, where the majority are organized in the anarcho-syndicalist unions, we have about 30,000 followers; in Roumania, the majority is on our side; the Esthonian trade unions are altogether for us.

In the United States of America, the American Federation of Labor is not affiliated with the Amsterdam International because the latter is "too left." But both within and outside that Federation the influence of our followers has definitely affected over 2,000,000 workers.*

* This estimate is based upon the number of organized workers that have, through action of Conventions and delegate bodies, been placed on record for the immediate program of the R. I. L. U. adherents organized in the T. U. E. L., such as amalgamation, the labor party, recognition of Soviet Russia, etc.

In Mexico we have about 30,000 followers; in Argentina, about 40,000; in Chile, 60,000; in Uruguay, about 15,000; in Egypt our influence affects about 50,000 members.

I will stop on Asia. From the countries which are part of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, it is sufficient to point out only Bokhara and Khiva, where we have small units. In Dutch-India we count 27,000 of our followers; in Persia, 20,000; in Japan, 60,000; in China about 100,000 workers are connected with us; in New Zealand, about 50,000 stand on the platform of the Profintern.

Thus, although the Amsterdam International is numerically stronger than the Profintern, still a point of special importance, the followers of the latter are all over the world. Therefore, the Profintern is an International in the full sense of the word.

The calculation of our forces along the industrial, vertical line, will give us the following picture: We have one half of the Transport Workers; about a half of the Metal Workers; between 40 and 50 per cent of the Building Trades; over a half of the Wood Workers; about 40 per cent of the Leather Workers.

THE TENDENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFINTERN

Thus, we confront two Internationals, the numerical relation of whose forces may be characterized the following way: The Amsterdam International unites between 14,000,000 and 15,000,000 members. Its bases are the British and German unions; these two countries embrace 70 per cent of all organized workers within that International.

We unite between 12,000,000 and 13,000,000. If we would describe these two Internationals graphically, by comparing two lines, the line of the Amsterdam International would be longer than ours. But the tendency for development of the Amsterdam International and of the Profintern, if we take the last years, is different in that the membership of the Amsterdam International is steadily getting smaller and that of the Profintern is growing larger.

And, because our unions are more active—they are revolutionary for that purpose—independently of the fact that they are generally smaller in numbers, they are politically more influential. Their specific gravity is greater, they are more united, not being torn with nationalist contradictions and craft jurisdictional squabbles.

The forces of the Profintern are also stronger because the Amsterdam International has no followers within our organizations, while we do have followers within the Amsterdam International.

Now, if we exclude from the Amsterdam International all those having our point of view, the remainder will be divided in two camps over the question of the United Front. The representatives of the left

tendencies, Fimmen and Williams, consider it necessary to unite with us, and, in the right wing, are the British and French reformists, opponents of the United Front with Communists.

The remaining 65 per cent of the Amsterdam International are not a unit within their national groups because of inner jealousies and competition; and also along political lines because there are serious disagreements over the question of the immediate means and methods of the class struggle. It is natural that under those conditions it is easy to say whose organization has the greater specific gravity, the Amsterdam International or the Profintern.

For that purpose we can depend on the Amsterdam International itself. A sketch of the Communist influence on the world's trade union movement happened to fall into our hands. This sketch was made by the Central body of the German trade unions and was proposed to the Amsterdam International for publication. But the latter decided not to publish it in order not to advertise the Profintern and Comintern. In this chart the Comintern and Profintern are painted in the form of a spider covering the whole world in its web, capturing the trade unions, the unions of ex-service men, the unions of unemployed, the workers' athletic associations, co-operatives, factory and shop committees, the youth movement, the union of war victims, invalids, the tenants' movements, mutual aid societies. Thus, the Communist web is covering all forms of the labor movement. All this is very well drawn in a detailed way, which is characteristic for the German bureaucrats.

This is an estimation of our activities by our opponents, and as long as they are not interested in magnifying our forces, but in the contrary, we need no better compliment for our work.

There is another thing to which we should pay attention. The fundamental question is the tendency for development. If the status of the world's trade union movement, external, statistical expression is against us so far, what is the dynamic feature of this movement? In which direction does it develop?

Here we may refer to definite historical facts. We organized three years ago. The Profintern has no old traditions. It is a new organization. What are the results of the three years of work? We were blockaded for a long time. We are still blockaded because the Profintern cannot develop legally in Europe. In Hungary, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Finland, Italy and other countries the police terrorizes and smashes the organizations affiliated to the Profintern; and, in spite of this colossal apparatus of the bourgeoisie, which is aimed at the revolutionary trade unions, in spite of the fact that all opportunities are on the side and in the hands of the Amsterdam International, in spite of all that, there is a steady lessening of the influence of it and, at the same time, a steady growth of the influence of the Profintern.

This is explained by the correctness of our political tactics and by the correct estimation of the relation of forces between the working class and its enemies. We may very definitely say that the development of the international labor movement will lead to the creation of one single trade union international. This international will be created upon the final disappearance of the Amsterdam International.

Such is the logical development of historical events, against which the Amsterdamers can do nothing.

THE ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST INTERNATIONAL

Do these movements we have described exhaust all tendencies there are in the international labor movement? Are there some other small streams along side the great rivers? There is one other organization which pretends to lead the international labor movement. This organization calls itself the "International Workingmens' Association," that is, they adopt the name of the First International, organized by Karl Marx.

This organization appeared at the end of 1922 at the initiative of the German syndicalists. Why was this international organized? It was organized as an opposition to the Communist tendency of the Profintern. This international is opposed to our slogan of Proletarian Dictatorship and against our policies, against our methods of struggle, and against our bloc with the Communist parties.

There is opposition against us in Spain, among the French syndicalists, among the "Industrial Workers of the World" of the United States and the syndicalist organizations of South America. To these few syndicalist organizations are added small groups of Italian, German, Dutch and Swedish syndicalists.

These anarcho-syndicalist groupings, come out against the Profintern with a few accusations. First, the connections of the Profintern with the Comintern; second, its political orientation; third, that the Profintern is advocating as one of its main slogans the dictatorship of the proletariat; fourth that it is for violence, that it is upholding Soviet Russia.

The peculiarity of anarcho-syndicalism in the post-war period is in that its pre-war unity, its pre-war clarity of principles, are gone. The war and the revolution brought colossal changes into the anarcho-syndicalist organizations. Among them appeared a faction which is for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Part of the anarcho-syndicalists went over to the Communists, another part is for co-operation with the Communists.

Thus, this period of ideological crisis definitely affected the anarcho-syndicalist wing of the world's trade union movement and brought into its ranks a great internal confusion, dissolution and sharp variation.

It is necessary to point out that among all these anarcho-syndicalist groupings only a small part remains fixed to the old point of view. The peculiar attribute of this group is that neither the war nor the revolution has had any influence on it. Perhaps it is a virtue but, at the present moment, a very doubtful virtue. They are striving to create their own "international" on the basis of the pre-war pure syndicalism, being sure, as before, that only the trade unions are revolutionary organizations, and all other organizations, including the Communists, are the tools of the capitalist class.

What does this international represent? It embraces the German syndicalists, 30,000; the majority of the anarcho-syndicalists of Spain, about 100,000; a majority of the Portugal Confederation of Labor, about 40,000 members; a minority of the Unity General Confederation of Labor (C. G. T. U.) of France; finally, small separate groups in Sweden, between 15,000 and 20,000; in Holland, about 5,000; and smaller groups and organizations in South American countries: Argentina, Mexico and Brazil. These are all the forces of the anarcho-syndicalist international. I have already mentioned the character of their platform which was adopted by their constituent congress.

In every international one country is playing the leading role—this defines the physiognomy of the international unit. In the Amsterdam International the leading role is played by the British trade unions. In the Profintern the leading role is played by the Russian trade union movement. Who is playing the leading role in the anarcho-syndicalist international?

This role is played by the syndicalist-Tolstoian organization of Germany. The leadership in this international belongs to the German syndicalists, the main attribute of which is absolute passivity. What are the German syndicalists doing? Nobody knows. They are busy with advocating individual improvement, preaching non-resistance to evil, non-resistance to violence, defending Russian anarchists against the soviet power, they are attacking the Soviet government for its "crimes." In short, these people are busy, on one hand, with self-improvement, and on the other, in agitation that is absolutely harmless to the bourgeoisie.

More than that, this international is striving to split its followers from other organizations. It is, on principle, for splitting the trade unions and withdrawing from them all the more pure—from their point of view—elements. The organization which leads this international—the German syndicalists—is as "dangerous" to the German bourgeoisie as is, for instance, the Esperanto Association or the Skating

Societies. Such societies may be very useful, but by no means represent any danger to the bourgeoisie.

From this characterization of the leading organization of the anarcho-syndicalists' international, it is possible to draw a conclusion as to the whole international. This international was created exclusively for the purpose of splitting away a certain part of the trade union elements of the Profintern, its aim is to fight against the Profintern and the Russian revolution.

But, to their regret, they embrace a very small number of workers. In the whole world they count only a couple of hundred thousand. Moreover, they play no role in the great battles which are being fought. This international itself, reflecting the weakness, the lack of political foresight, the backwardness of its members, represents more a society for the passing of resolutions, than an international organization for the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

THE CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT AND OTHER LABOR UNIONS

To give a full picture of the world's trade union movement it is necessary to dwell upon, also, those unions which are by no means, even verbally, connected with socialist ideology.

First of all, what is the origin of these unions? We have here attempts of the bourgeois classes, and mainly Catholicism, to exercise influence over the laboring masses and to strengthen themselves within the labor organizations. It is true these unions are nowhere strong, but of course they play a certain role. Let us take Germany, for instance. In Germany, alongside the reformist and other unions, there are about 2,000,000 workers organized into Catholic unions. There are, also, 650,000 workers organized into the democratic unions. In Italy there are also Catholic unions.

In some countries these unions play an important role, as for instance, in Holland there are six general trade union centers: Of the reformist unions with 200,000; Catholics, with 150,000; Evangelical, with 80,000; Democratic, with 50,000; and the syndicalist union which stands on the platform of the Profintern with between 15,000 and 20,000 members; and one more unit which recently split away from us and joined the anarcho-syndicalist international, with 5,000.

Thus, in one small country, there are six central trade union organizations, among which the Catholic, Democratic and Evangelical unions unite about 300,000 members.

It is understood why every bourgeois party is trying to find a foothold in the laboring masses, but why does the latter go into these unions? What are the reasons that the working class produces an element which gathers around such organizations?

What are the principal bases, let us say, for the Catholic unions? The principal basis for these unions is contained in the formula: "Love one another." If, in general, this is not a bad principle, in the class struggle it plays a definite role, weakening the fighting spirit of the workers. In the education which is being received by the members of the Catholic unions, religion is dominant.

The confessional unions are trying to connect politics and economics with religion and to inject into the demands of the workers a somewhat religious Catholic or Protestant outlook. The harmfulness of these organizations is very clear, but why are there certain kinds of workers who join them? This is, first of all, because the working class is not all of one kind, is not homogeneous. It is not sufficiently united. It is in different stages of development: It is partly connected to the petty bourgeoisie, partly with the peasantry and the individual producers. The culture of the present society—the universities, schools, literature—all influences the working class which is a participant in this society. The children of the workers are studying in bourgeois schools, going through history with certain text-books.

Thus, the varied and heterogeneous composition of the proletariat, the existence of different layers within this class which is termed the working class—all this shows itself in the form of different ideological groupings. By this is explained the existence, alongside the Communists of the reformist and Catholic labor organizations.

The practical work of these Catholic unions does not differ much from the work of the reformists. The difference, perhaps, is that the former talk about God, while the latter talk about the League of Nations—that is, that from somewhere outside the unions, some aid should come to the workers.

In fact the tactics of the reformist and the Catholic unions are the same, and not as an accident do we find in Germany a bloc between the reformist and Catholic unions, a bloc not only on the question of wages, but also a political one. Both these organizations—Catholic and reformists—always find common ground, because the fundamental principle of both is the same—it is class collaboration and merciless struggle against Communism.

THE INFLUENCE OF BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY

Such anti-proletarian activity by proletarian organizations we see in many countries. In the United States, the American Federation of Labor is a reactionary organization whose slogans are anti-Communism and anti-Socialism. The officials of the American Federation of Labor call themselves "independents," but in reality they are completely dependent on the bourgeois political parties. It is known that in America,

where anti-socialism has reached its peak, corruption has also its peak. We see there such a case where a deceased leader of a yellow union left a property of \$500,000 which he had "saved up" within the fifteen or twenty years of his leadership. Of course, such money the "leaders" received, not as wages, but from the bourgeoisie as reward for some kind of successful treason to the interests of the working class.

There were many proven cases where a leader of a union—its secretary—at certain moments would break a strike, receiving for it a definite amount of so many thousands of dollars. Some employer would pay money in order to cause a strike against his competitors, etc. In America there is a whole system invented by the bourgeoisie for the corruption of labor leaders and for crushing of the class struggle and diverting it into another channel.

This influence of the bourgeois state, has, in every country, its peculiarities. Each country has its method for the corruption of the working class, and the bourgeoisie of each country uses these methods very successfully for its own interests. But the opportunity itself of having such an influence on the working class, proves that the bourgeoisie has a foothold within the working class, just as we, for instance—the Profintern—have our foothold within the Amsterdam International.

Thus, the power of the bourgeoisie is contained not only in its army, police, courts, but also in its ability to influence and control a section of the working class, and to undermine the labor organizations which should conduct the struggle against it. For, if the world's 50,000,000 mass membership of the trade unions would be a really united army, the bourgeoisie would long ago have been smashed to pieces. The reason why we have not smashed it before now is not only because we have within the working class some elements of bourgeois ideology, but because it has an organized foothold within the working class.

The difficulty of the revolutionary labor movement is in the necessity of dislodging these organized bourgeois footholds from within the working class. Almost all the leaders of the reformists are infected with bourgeois ideology. We have to create new staffs of leaders who will feel themselves representatives of the always-fighting working class. The difficulty of creating such new staffs and instilling into them revolutionary ideas is one of the main causes which is delaying the victory of revolution all over the world.

PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

At last, we will dwell upon the prospects of the world's trade union movement as a whole. The picture of the international trade union movement which is given here, may seem at first glance, somewhat

pessimistic: If the bourgeoisie is so strong, can we overcome its influence? What are the methods for that conquest, and how do we visualize the further existence of the trade unions and all other labor organizations?

For those who are active politically—and you know that the Communists are such—for revolutionary fighters, pessimism has no place in the analysis of historical events.

We have given a real analysis of the relation of forces and we see our strength and our weakness. We see the power of resistance of our enemies. We see the fact of existing footholds in our ranks of the bourgeoisie, and we have to work out methods of future struggle.

No one can tell how long it will take until we will win over this numerically gigantic mass, and will bring it to consciousness of its own interests. The only thing that we Marxians may reply to is the question: Does the labor movement really proceed on the line of eliminating from its body all that now clogs it?

We can, on account of the experience of the last few years, say that we made a colossal step ahead. If we would compare the labor movement at the time of the great French revolution with the present day movement, we can frankly state that during the six years, from October 1917 to 1923, the labor movement had greater successes, than during the period from 1789 to 1917, that is, during the 130 years from the Great French revolution until our October revolution in Russia.

Thus, from the historical point of view, events are proceeding with lightning rapidity. We think that this movement should bring about a fundamental change in all existing labor organizations, co-operative, political, trade union, etc.

What does a political party represent? What causes a political party? It is an organ of class struggle. It exists as long as the class struggle. But when classes will disappear, when a developed form of Communism will spread all over the world—will the Communist Party exist then? No. Thus, within a certain epoch of time (we cannot define it in exact figures) political parties will disappear, because all that which created them will also disappear—the classes and the class struggle.

And what will happen with the unions? They will also disappear, but along an entirely different line than the parties. Where do the tendencies in the labor movement lead? They lead to a first stage of development of the working class, when the working class conquers and organizes a dictatorship, which is a temporary dictatorship.

When we speak about a temporary dictatorship, we do not mean that the dictatorship will last five or ten years, but we mean a whole historical epoch. The dictatorship will end when there will be no more classes. The end of the dictatorship means the disappearance of all

the apparatus and organs of state enforcement. While the transition from the dictatorship into the Communist society is going on, there is going on a gradual blending of the economic organs of proletarian dictatorship and the trade unions. A new synthetic organization is being created which directs all production.

From the trade unions, on the basis of trade unions, is being developed in society that organ which will direct and regulate production—will grow the economic organs for directing society. And as, in a developed Communist society, there will be no state organs except the organs of economic production and administration, thus, the trade unions in the process of their development become a new organ, the name of which we cannot know, but which will deal with production, regulation, distribution, accountancy, statistics, etc.

Thus we come to the conclusion that all forms of the labor movement, developing in the moment of revolution, expanding and embracing wide masses with the development of the revolution itself, in its process are changing; when the time comes of the general victory of Communism, they to a certain degree are absorbed in the new society, changing their forms, becoming filled with a new content and responding to the needs of the time.

Such are the prospects of the development of the world's trade union movement. That is about the way we active workers in the present revolution visualize the future relations between different organizations and the destiny of different forms of the labor movement created by the working class in the process of its historical development.

This analysis, or, if you please, this prognosis of future development, comes from our Marxian estimation of the relation of forces. Of course, life in the future will bring many changes into these relations. But if our fundamental analysis is correct, that we are moving toward a non-class society; if it is correct that the proletarian dictatorship is a temporary historical epoch, then it is absolutely correct, that the organs created by a class society must disappear because there will be no basis upon which these organs can exist.

For our generation, these questions will not make themselves felt practically. But we Communists have one peculiarity, we are not afraid to confront the future face to face, and in the sphere of estimating the development of events, we always follow realistic logic, no matter what the conclusion may be.

We do not know how the developed Communist society will look, but there is certainly no doubt that the historical forces, which started millions to moving and heaved up tens and hundreds of millions of people, will without fail lead humanity to that system of society.

The social revolution which began in Russia had a great influence on the whole Near, Middle and Far East. All colonial and half-colonial

countries—China, Korea, India, Java and others—who have been dreaming for a thousand years, have been dragged into this liberating movement.

We are present at the very beginning of the dissolution of the system of exploitation which has been built up for centuries. Disintegration, the destruction of the old, and the creation of the new society—all is an historical process which will last many and many decades.

For the case here depends upon the reconstruction of social relations around the whole globe. When that process will end we do not know, but one thing is clear: The stronger, the more united, the more elastic and aggressive the revolutionary wing of the labor movement will be, the more objectively we, the Communists, estimate the relation of forces outside and inside the working class—the more correct will be our conduct—the sooner will humanity arrive at the developed form of Communist society.

THE END

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