

# - INTERNATIONAL -

# PRESS

# CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 6 No. 61

9th September 1926

Editorial Offices and Central Despatching Department: Berggasse 31, Vienna IX. — Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered mail: Postamt 66, Schlessfach 213, Vienna IX. Telegraphic Address: Inprekorr, Vienna.

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## The Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union to the British Trade Union Congress.

The Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union has directed the following appeal to the British Trade Union Congress in Bournemouth:

The Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union sends you and through you the whole British proletariat its fraternal greetings in the name of eight and a half millions of organised workers in the Soviet Union. The workers of the Soviet Union send particularly hearty greetings to the heroic miners who, despite the furious attacks of capitalism, despite the treachery of some and the weakness of other leaders are continuing their struggle for their rights, for the maintenance of their standard of living and for their historical acquisitions. The Central Council expresses the hope that the first words and the first deeds of the congress will be to assist the British miners. To reject this assistance would be a step unworthy of a great proletarian organisation.

The Central Council regrets exceedingly the impossibility of sending a delegation to your Congress which is of extreme importance. The British government which under the mask of democracy embodies a dictatorship of the Conservative party, a dictatorship of the industrialists, bankers, mineowners and landowners, has not permitted our delegation to land in England. Through this it proved to the British workers that they have no right, that they may not determine who takes part in their congresses and who not. The Conservative government willingly permits representatives of the Amsterdam International and of the American Federation of Labour to land, who have either permitted strike breaking or have made shameful speeches

in defence of the interests on their loans, that is to say who extort usury from the privations of the miners, from the sorrows and tears of working women and children. The Conservative government does not permit the representatives of the workers of the Soviet Union to land, the representatives of those workers who have given their coppers under extremely difficult circumstances to support their class brothers in their great struggle.

The Conservative government insolently watches the policy of the trade unions. The "mother of democracies" refuses a great working class organisation the elementary rights of fraternal solidarity. The indignation of the workers of the Soviet Union against such treatment of the British trade unions by the British government is understandable. The workers of the Soviet Union are convinced that the crawling attitude of the trade union leaders of the type of Thomas towards the government is partly responsible for this. These trade union leaders were too loyal to capitalism and too disloyal to the working class. Now that the General Council should account for its activity during and after the General Strike, the chief instigator of the defeat of the general strike, Thomas, has commenced a long tour in order, in this way to avoid responsibility.

If the delegation of the Central Council had been permitted to land, if the British police and the British Foreign Ministry had not been able to snap their fingers at the elementary rights of the British trade unions, then the Central Council would have regarded it as its duty to account to the congress for its every step in connection with the British events. For the actual

course of these events proved again and again and still proves the absolute correctness of the opinions of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union which it expressed in its declarations and resolutions. We judged the unforgivable tactics of the leaders of the General Council during the General Strike upon the basis of historical experience and upon the basis of the experience of the general strikes which our working class carried out before it flung its own bankers and landowners on one side forever. One can accuse us of gruffness. If, however, we have to choose between empty compliments to the leaders and service to the working masses, then we will always choose the latter according to our working class conscience and our proletarian duty. Apart from the greatest possible material support we consider it also our proletarian duty to afford moral support.

The General Strike would have ended in a wonderful victory and you would have long ago have got rid of your government of aristocrats and landowners if the order of the General Council to end the strike had not broken it. If the miners had not been abandoned in their struggle, then they would long ago have broken the resistance of the mine owning clique and the capitalist parliament would never have had the insolence to attack the seven hour day of the miners. If the tactics and the leaders had been different, then the whole working class would not be placed upon the defensive, but would be advancing victoriously. Even a splendid and heroic army can lose a battle and be smashed if numerous members of its general staff and its whole officer corps avoid the battle, capitulate previously and even go over to the enemy.

We wish from the bottom of our hearts that the British Trade Union Congress draw the necessary conclusions, with proletarian honesty from the experiences of the great strike. Only an honest admission of errors is a protection against their repetition, only an honest admission of errors opens the eyes of the masses who are leading the struggle against the attacks of capitalism.

The Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union expresses its special regret that the British delegation to the Paris conference of the Anglo-Russian Committee definitely refused to discuss the question of assistance for the British miners. With equal regret the Central Council places the fact upon record that at the Berlin Conference the British delegation to the Anglo-Russian Committee completely rejected all our proposals to support the British miners, including proposals to prohibit the transport of coal and to collect regularly a one per cent levy to assist the fighting workers who do not wish to be the slaves of the mineowners.

The Central Council is of the opinion that there is no more important question for the working class not merely in England but in the whole world, than the question of support for the British miners. If the miners are defeated, then the capitalists will defeat all sections of the British workers one after the other. The "democracy" has now presented itself in the form of the Emergency Powers Act. This "democracy" of the "Diehard government" will not hesitate to crush the head of the whole trade union movement. On the other hand should the miners remain firm and should the working masses in the other trade unions support them, then the mineowners will suffer ever increasing losses without any hope of success, in which case the victory of the miners is certain, as also is the resignation of the greatest enemy of the working class, the Conservative government which gained power by a shameful forgery.

Without consideration for the refusal of the British delegation to the Anglo-Russian Committee to examine our proposals carefully to assist the British miners, (which from our standpoint is unexplainable) the Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union will continue its policy of supporting the miners from its own resources. The Central Council has decided to send a further three million roubles to assist the British miners, as an advance upon the one per cent levy which the overwhelming majority of the working class of the Soviet Union will contribute.

Proletarian solidarity can only be expressed in deeds. And just as the hundred nationalities which populate the territory of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics stand by one another in their struggles, so will the proletariat of the Soviet Union stand by its British comrades in their critical moment. We are firmly convinced that the British proletariat will stand by us also, in the moment of need. More than once it has forced the hand of the British bourgeoisie to one side, the armed hand

which threatened the Workers' State. The bond between the toilers of both countries will grow and strengthen and become an unshakable alliance as soon as a real workers' government is formed in Great Britain. The formation of this workers' government is unavoidable. We are firmly convinced that the British Trade Union Congress will do everything possible to consolidate the Anglo-Russian Committee, the symbol for the international unity of the trade union movement between the proletariats of Great Britain and the Soviet Union.

Long live international working class unity!

Long live the struggle against the offensive of capital!

## Declaration of Comrade Tomsky on the Refusal of the English Visas.

In connection with the refusal of the British Government to permit the delegation of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of the U. S. S. R. to the British Trade Union Congress in Bournemouth to land, Comrade Tomsky has made the following declaration:

The refusal of the British government to grant visas to the members of our delegation was not unexpected, it was in line with the general policy of the bourgeois government which is waging a class war against the proletariat of Great Britain, nevertheless, the refusal has caused the greatest indignation amongst the members of our unions, although nothing else was to be expected from a government which stands completely upon the side of the mineowners.

From the very first days of the strike it was clear to everyone who did not, like the proverbial ostrich, bury his head in the sand, that the miners' struggle had taken on the character of an intense class struggle between the capitalists and the working class of Great Britain. The class struggle is however always a political struggle, and only the General Council led by individuals of the Thomas type is afraid to recognise this.

The preparations of the two parties to this struggle were unequal. On the one hand, the whole forces of the bourgeoisie rallied around the mineowners and the British government which is in the hands of the strongest capitalist party in Great Britain, the Conservative Party which opposes the working class with all the means at its disposal. Further, there was the venal capitalist press which is distributed in millions of copies, the fabricated public opinion, the courts, the laws, etc. On the other hand was the General Council which showed its pusillanimity in oaths of loyalty to the bourgeois state.

It became ever more clear to everyone that the abolition of the Habeas Corpus, the nomination of district commissars with extraordinary powers, the ordering of troops on to the streets, the support of strike breakers, the arrest of working class leaders, etc., was by no means democratic, by no means constitutional, not even from the standpoint of the bourgeois British constitution. All these facts prove once again the real character of the notorious "democracy", they prove that the bourgeoisie, when its class interests demand it, takes no fetishes like constitutions, democracy, the law, etc. into consideration, and certainly not the opinion of the British workers and their trade unions.

The refusal of the British government to grant us visas is a further proof for the incorrectness of the policy of the leaders of the General Strike who wished to present an open and intense class struggle, a political struggle, as a purely economic strike. This false policy determined in fact the direct betrayal of the general strike by its leaders. Economy alone does not exist in nature and politics are simply the concentrated form of economy. This is proved, to put it mildly, by the "incorrectness" of the policy of the General Council, which assured the Conservative government above all of its "loyalty to the Constitution". Loyalty to the same constitution which the Conservative government had brusquely and cynically pushed to one side from the first moment of the strike on. The unforgivable and criminal error of the General Council in refusing the assistance of the working class of the Soviet Union which determined the direct betrayal of the strike, stresses this once again.

Everyone who grasps the interests of his own class and understands how to defend them logically (the Conservatives are well aware of their class interests and know how to defend them) only values the opinion of his own class. To take the opinion of another, a hostile class, into consideration and to run off slavishly as the General Council did when it rejected

assistance, means purely and simply to betray the interests of one's own class.

Considered from a logical class point of view the Conservative government acted logically and correctly according to its bourgeois class interests. It knows what it wants, and that what it wants, is the lowering of the standard of living first of all of the miners and then of the worker of Great Britain in the other branches of industry, for it is only the first blow which is being delivered at the miners. The representatives of the working class only value the opinion of the proletariat.

It is the duty of the leaders of the British Trade Union Congress to say frankly and openly what they have done in order to obtain the visas for the U.S.S.R. Trade Union delegation, what they think of this act of the Conservative government and how they intend to answer it. It is their duty to inform the workers clearly in this matter, for this act of the conservative government is not only a reprisal against the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union on account of the assistance which they have given the miners, but it is also an insolent demonstration of the capitalists against the friendship of the proletariat of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union, an insolent challenge to the British proletariat. This act proves that the capitalists carefully follow the international policy of the British trade unions and actually influence it.

I do not doubt that the representatives of the Amsterdam International and of the American Federation of Labor have received their visas without any objection. The Amsterdam International whose strike breaking role is clear to everyone and the American trade unions because they are "ultra loyal" did not permit themselves to "interfere in the internal affairs of the British trade union movement", instead they kept their hands in their pockets and watched curiously the unequal struggle of the British miners who had been left to their fate against the united forces of the capitalist class. The workers of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, even from the point of view of the leaders of the General Council, were very "disloyal", they permitted themselves to show an extraordinary degree of activity in the cause of the British workers. They participated morally to a tremendous extent and, considering the poverty of our country, contributed also a not inconsiderable amount financially. The leaders of the capitalist class recognised naturally the difference between the harmless attitude of the Amsterdam International which is even favourable to the bourgeoisie, and the active and energetic support action of the Russian workers. Every bourgeoisie and every bourgeois government recognise in us their enemy.

The only conclusion which the British workers can draw is: The enemy of my class enemy is my friend. The Russian workers are the enemies of the British capitalists because they are the true friends of the British workers in their class struggle. For this reason the British workers must value them as true friends and alliance in their struggle.

The refusal of the visas is a measure which has for its purpose the complete isolation of the British workers from the moral and material support of the workers of the Soviet Union. It must give all British trade unionists cause to think over the difficult situation in which the miners of Great Britain find themselves thanks to the shameful and cowardly attitude of the General Council. The miners are completely isolated and exposed to the furious attacks of the capitalists to whom all means against the miners are one. The attack upon the working day of the British miners sanctioned by the British Parliament according to all constitutional rules, is a direct and brutal attack upon the whole British proletariat and the first step against the working day in all branches of industry. After their victory over the miners, the capitalists will without a doubt place the British proletariat and the trade unions once again before the alternative: open struggle or capitulation and the complete destruction of the trade union movement.

The only solution to the problem is to support the British miners, even to the extent of imposing a boycott upon the transport of coal, no matter how difficult that may be. Even in this stage of the conflict such an action promises certain victory, for to fling back the attack against the miners would hold up the offensive of capital along the whole front. In my opinion the Congress must come to this conclusion. I believe also that it must come to the following conclusion:

1. The economic offensive of capitalism cannot be separated from its political offensive, for the class struggle is a political struggle, and the class which has power and which is waging

an economic struggle will certainly defend its own interests with the help of the political apparatus which it has at its disposal. "Parliamentarism", the "democracy", the "constitution", are and will remain in practice a weapon in the hands of the capitalists against the workers. At the present moment everything is directed against the miners and it is impossible to conduct a victorious struggle against the offensive of capitalism if economic and political dominance remains in its hands. The working class of Great Britain must ask itself — and this is the question before which it stands — whether it is able to reconcile itself with such a government.

2. The second conclusion which the British proletariat and the Congress must draw, is the necessity for the creation of a real united active and class conscious Trade Union International together with the workers of the Soviet Union, the maintenance and consolidation of a firm alliance with them and the maintenance and activation of the Anglo-Russian Committee as the organ of the common struggle of the working class of Great Britain and the Soviet Union against the political and economic offensive of capitalism. A mutual active support is also necessary apart from all differences of opinion and without fear of honest and frank mutual criticism. I believe that the Conservative government will, with its attempts to isolate the British workers, in the least resort, gain very little if the trade unions grasp this lesson and draw the necessary conclusions. With regard to the workers of the Soviet Union, their great indignation at the insolence of the capitalists and the weakness of the "leaders" will result in an equally great preparedness to support the British miners in their difficult struggle to the very end.

## CHINA

### The Latest Developments in China.

By Tang Shin She.

The recent important events are: The retreat of the Kuomin armies from the Nankou Pass and from Kalgan, as also the victory of the revolutionary Canton troops over the Province of Hunan and their advance along the Shangsha-Wuchang railway to Wuchang and Hankou. According to the latest reports Wuchang and Hankou have been captured. Last year it was already planned that the Kuomin armies and the revolutionary Canton troops should meet in Hankou. The former were to advance along the Kalgan-Pekin-Hankou line and the latter along the Canton-Shangsha-Hankou line. The plan could not be carried into effect last year, because the English prevented the northerly advance of the Canton Government by the disturbances they constantly instigated in Hongkong. It is true that this year the Canton troops have got as far as Hankou, but, because the Kuomin armies have retreated from Kalgan, they can no longer use the Kalgan-Pekin-Hankou road, so that it is again doubtful whether the two armies will be able to join forces in Hankou.

But, although the Kuomin armies were obliged to abandon their original road, there is another favourable communication to permit them to join forces. They can advance from the Chiüan district, in the capital of which they now have their headquarters, to Shensi, where sections of the 2nd and 3rd. Kuomin armies command the situation from Northern to Central Shensi, and thence march to the Province of Hunan and there join up with other of their auxiliary troops, which, in the meantime, having been reformed with the help of 60,000 students, have caused great movements in Hunan and occupied 30 districts, and then set out with these reinforcements for Hankou. This road is certainly not so good in regard to railway communication as the Kalgan-Pekin-Hankou route, but it has the advantage that the Kuomin armies could everywhere come into contact with their own troops and meet with no serious resistance. When the Kuomin armies are once in South Shensi, they have railway communication from Lunghai to the Pekin-Hankou line and, furthermore, there is the tributary of the Yangtse, the Hansui, leading to Hankou.

The retreat of the Kuomin armies from the fortified Nankou Pass was undertaken for military and political reasons. In its previous position the Kuomin armies had been on the defensive since April. Besides this, they were threatened on three sides by enemy troops; from the North-East by Chang Tso Lin.

from the East by Chang Tso Lin and Chang Tsang Shang, from the South by Wu Pei Fu and the Shansi troops. For this reason they gave up the sections of Sachaörl, Chili and Shansi and withdrew to the district of Chüiyüan. They also assumed that the three allies — Chang Tso Lin, Chang Tsang Chang and Wu Pei Fu — would quarrel immediately after their victory concerning the distribution of power. For instance, each of them would lay claim to the governorships of Chili and Sachaörl. Wu Pei Fu has long desired a sphere of influence in Shansi; Chang Tso Lin, too, wants to advance on Shansi; both would meet with resistance from the model governor of this province. The dispute among the four chiefs would lead to a cleavage in the anti-Red front.

The political position in China is characterised by the fight against Wu Pei Fu. The Kuomintang had issued a manifesto that they wished to destroy Wu Pei Fu once and for all and that any one who gave him support was their enemy. This meant that for the sake of destroying Wu Pei Fu they would leave Chang Tso Lin and others in peace for the time being, provided the latter gave him no support. They met with success in the case of Sun Chuan Fang, and this so-called adherent of Wu Pei Fu withdrew his members from the Wu Pei Fu Cabinet at the beginning of August. Just recently Feng Yu Hsiang has become a member of the Kuomintang, and the Canton Government has even nominated him a member of the Government. Naturally, the Kuomin armies must also work in accordance with the decisions of the Kuomintang. Therefore, they withdrew from the position they have defended so long against Chang Tso Lin and Wu Pei Fu in order to have the possibility of taking up the offensive against the latter.

The disruption of the army of Tien Wei Chin, one of Wu Pei Fu's adherents, continues steadily. Since July sections of this army continually go over to the Kuomin army. Now that Wu Pei Fu has left the front, it is not impossible that his troops, just as some of them previously went over to him from the Peoples' army, will on this occasion go over en masse to the Kuomin armies. In this case, Tien Wei Chin's army might be withdrawn from Chili to Honan, but the Kuomin armies, too, will go from Shansi to Hunan, whereby the destruction of the remnants of Wu Pei Fu's troops would be assured.

As regards Wu Pei Fu's troops, they split into two portions in July. One portion turned towards the Canton army. And the other portion could not be of assistance to Wu Pei Fu in case of need, because big disturbances are occurring in Szechuan. Danger may, however, threaten the revolutionary troops, if the Imperialists give Wu Pei Fu the direct support of their warships, as the Japanese did at the commencement of this year for Chang Tso Lin. The English have already despatched warships to Hankou, ostensibly to protect their merchants there. In order to evade such complication, the Kuomintang is revealing to the population the intentions of the Imperialists; furthermore, the troops are instructed to avoid all provocation.

If the Canton troops really join forces with the Kuomin armies in Hankou, the Red front will then occupy from North to South the whole district right in the middle of China, namely the provinces: Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kuichow, Hunan, Hupe, Honan, Shensi, Kansu and Chüiyüan, from the last of which it has direct communication with the Urga People's Government. Yunnan and Szechuan will then be compelled to fall into line. The revolutionary front will then proceed with the assistance of Sun Chuan Fang against Chang Tso Lin and drive him out of China into Manchuria.

After the meeting of the forces at Hankou there will surely be a pause in the fighting. This is most necessary, as the troops which in the meanwhile have gone over to the revolutionary front are in urgent need of re-organisation; the military administration must also be formed afresh. Another important work is the political enlightenment of the soldiers.

The pause in hostilities must also be employed for the formation of a Central People's Government in Hankou. Hankou should have been made the capital after the revolution of 1911, because it is the very heart of China. It is an industrial town and a junction of all the principal railway systems of China, while waterways lead from this point to every portion of the country. The Government should be formed on the basis of Sun Yat Sen's plan of 1924, by a National Assembly comprising all the strata of the Chinese people. The "Society for the National Assembly", which is prohibited by Chang Tso Lin, Wu Pei Fu and Sun Chuan Fang, has already developed feverish

activity. In the revolutionary districts the population not only cheers the advance of the revolutionary troops but also shows a lively political activity and in several districts is forming People's Committees for the promotion of the liberation of the people and for participation in the district administrations.

## POLITICS

### English Intrigues in the Orient.

Leading Article of the "Pravda", 31. August.

In the whole of the East — from Turkey to China — world imperialism, and especially English imperialism, is securing its positions with feverish energy, strengthening its influence, and striving to incite the Eastern governments against the Soviet Union. Quite apart from the economic importance of the East to English imperialism as source of raw materials and labour, a powerful English influence here is one link in the general chain of English Conservative policy, which aims at the isolation of the Soviet Union, and the gradual preparation of a fresh intervention.

The imperialist attack upon the Soviet Union is most clearly observable in China. The occupation of Dolonor and Nankou by the Mukden troops, and the evacuation of Kalgan by the People's Armies, signify a strengthening of Chinese reaction and a firmer establishment of the influence of the imperialist powers, especially of Japan, which is supporting Tchang Tso Lin. It is to be feared that the Manchurian dictator, intoxicated by his easy if temporary victory, will attempt a fresh attack upon the East-Chinese Railway, for he has long had this in view, and has frequently provoked conflicts with this object. Chinese reaction is combining with the last remnants of the Koltshak army, that is, with the troops of the White Guard leader Nechayev, who recently fell in China. These men, the last of a corrupt and scattered band, paid menials of the imperialists, have absolutely nothing to lose, and are raging at will in the districts occupied by the imperialists, arresting and terrorising the citizens of the Soviet Union living in China, and deliberately provoking a conflict between the Soviet Union and the Peking Government.

In the other countries of the Near and Middle East world imperialism is pressing forward with the same energy, and shrinks from nothing in its efforts to weaken the influence of the Soviet Union. In Afghanistan the English government has taken every possible means to bring about a conflict between the Soviet government and Afghanistan by raising the contention of the ownership of the island of Urta Tugal in the Amu Darja river.

But it is in Persia that English diplomacy is working with especial energy. The insurrection which has broken out in Persian Kurdistan, is supposed to be led by the uncle of the former Shah, but in reality it is under the leadership of an English military force in Bagdad. The Shah, who is spending his people's money in Switzerland, could not remain in Persia without the active support of the English.

The English Conservatives, when drawing up their ultimatum, notes, speeches, and articles, are very fond of referring to the so-called "Bolshevist intrigues" in the East, and of ascribing the attempts at insurrection in India to these. But in reality it is the English Conservative government which has arranged a whole series of well organised counter-revolutionary risings in those independent Eastern countries which England would like to count among her colonies. It suffices to mention the insurrection among the Kurd tribes in Turkish Kurdistan, and the insurrection of the Mangal tribe in the South of Afghanistan. These risings were organised for the suppression of those countries which have refused to submit to English imperialism, and which are hated by English imperialism on account of their enlightened governments.

The present Salar Ed Doule insurrection in Persia is not expected to bring about the fall of the Reza Khan government, in this case the English imperialists are merely seeking to intimidate and terrorise the government by means of this insurrection, so that it will grant the concessions wanted by the English, and submit to the English yoke. The English imperialists are using every available means to urge Reza Khan

into an irreconcilably anti-Soviet attitude, and to make him a willing tool in the hands of the English.

But despite all temporary successes which may be won by the imperialists in certain countries of the East, successes due to the demagoguery of the upper classes, and to the manoeuvres of intimidation with the spectre of Bolshevism, the intrigues of English diplomacy are being unmasked by the events themselves. Such facts as the organisation of the insurrection in Persian Kurdistan with English money, or the organisation of the plot against the President of the Turkish Republic, **Kemal Pasha**, by the leaders of the Party in league with England, are calculated to reveal to the peoples of the East the true import of English "anxiety" for the welfare of the Eastern countries.

The Imperialists will not succeed in loosening the tie which binds the Soviet Union and the oppressed peoples of the East, for this anti-imperialist block is founded on the basis of the common economic and political interests of the Soviet Union and of the Eastern countries languishing beneath the Imperialist yoke. The objective course of the historical development of these countries is urging them forward to fight for their independence, and to do this in close and indissoluble alliance with the Soviet Union.

## The Political Background of the Birk Case.

By K. M. (Moscow).

The case of **Birk**, the Esthonian ambassador in Moscow, has aroused considerable sensation in the bourgeois press of Western Europe. As a matter of fact, it is an unusual case in the history of bourgeois diplomacy. The representative of the Esthonian republic was recalled by his government, but remained in Moscow, and published in the Soviet press the plans of his government and of the imperialist states of the Baltic. The European and American press cannot throw enough mud at Birk, and resort to the worst accusations against him as a means of weakening the effect of his revelations.

**Birk** was Minister for Foreign Affairs in Esthonia three times, he was ambassador in Moscow for four years in succession, he was at one time Vice President of Esthonia's Constitutional Assembly, and before this he was the President of the Provisional National Council of Esthonia. He may thus be counted among the most influential statesmen of the young republic, in which he held a high and perfectly secure position. What "selfish" motives could those have been, which have induced him to leave his high position for his present modest existence as a refugee? What could the Bolsheviks offer him (quite apart from the fact that the bribery of foreign ambassadors forms no part of their work) in comparison with his position? The legend about Moscow gold finds fewer and fewer believers.

**Birk** is said to have become a communist. But does his conduct not prove the contrary? **Birk** comes forward as a patriot of bourgeois Esthonia. There is no trace of social radicalism about his attitude. Here we may refer to a witness authoritative in this case, the Latvian ambassador in Moscow, **Osols**. In an interview granted by **Osols** to a representative of the Latvian press, he made the following statement: "I am very sorry to hear the remarkable and sensational assertions made about the Esthonian ambassador. He is respected in the diplomatic circles of Moscow as a far-seeing statesman and as an honest citizen of Esthonia." **Osols'** opinion is the more authoritative that he, in his capacity as representative of Latvia, the ally of Esthonia, met **Birk** frequently, and had the opportunity of getting to know him well. Besides this, **Osols** referred to the reputation enjoyed by **Birk** in the diplomatic corps in Moscow. Those who are determined to see either a Bolshevik agent or criminal in **Birk** must thus assume that **Osols** is a Bolshevik as well. As a matter of fact, this idea has already struck some of the Latvian newspapers.

How is **Birk's** attitude to be explained in reality? By what motives has he been led? It is not so difficult to explain the matter, if we approach it without prejudice. **Birk** is in actual fact a bourgeois patriot, his conduct is dictated by anxiety for the welfare of his fatherland. **Birk** has differed from many of his fellow bourgeois politicians in thinking out to their logical conclusion the consequence of the programme of which he has been an adherent. It is true that what has happened to **Birk**, could not possibly happen to a real bourgeois professional diplo-

matist, the incarnate combination of the official with the representative of a special "elect" caste. It is easier to bribe a diplomatist of this kind than to find for him a political programme which he is prepared to carry to its logical consequences.

However this may be, the position of Esthonian ambassador in Moscow has been held for four years by a political statesman who has been before the public since 1911, and not by an official of the diplomatic corps. This statesman has had his own programme, which he has made no attempt to conceal, and which he has endeavoured to put into practice. **Birk** states:

"The ideas by which Esthonia permitted herself to be guided during the conclusion of the peace agreement, have formed the principle upon which I have acted during the whole of my time of service as ambassador. I have invariably been actuated by the natural and to me simple fact that the young republic of Esthonia, small in size, must make it its endeavour, as neighbour state of the Soviet Union, to maintain and promote neighbourly relations to the U. S. S. R., and that at the same time it must avoid measures likely to lead to a violation of Esthonia's neutrality in the case of a conflict between our neighbour in the East and the states pursuing high political aims."

**Birk** is thus in favour of a rapprochement between Esthonia and the Soviet Union, but not because he is in sympathy with the Communists. He grasps the fact that Esthonia's independence can only be maintained by such a policy as that adopted by him, and that a policy dictated by the "great powers" against the Soviet Union, would be to the disadvantage of the Esthonian people. So long as **Birk** could hope that Esthonia would pursue the course which he held to be the sole right one, he worked unwearingly for the rapprochement between Esthonia and the Soviet Union. But when he became convinced that all his efforts were in vain, that the general staff in Esthonia was pursuing a very remarkable policy, and that the minister for foreign affairs, **Pip**, was playing the same part with regard to Poland and England as his predecessor **Pusta** played with regard to France, then **Birk** felt it to be impossible for him to support a policy so detrimental to his country. He pursued a consistent course, and the result has been the "Birk Case".

For us the chief point of interest is the political conclusions to be drawn from the "Birk Case". We learn from it that the small Baltic states are mere playthings in the hands of the great powers, and are forced by these into courses of policy actually injurious to their own interests. We learn from it that it has been actually true that Poland has been carrying on an aggressive policy, mainly against the Soviet Union, in the Baltic. **Birk** has raised the veil a little, has slightly drawn aside the curtain behind which every imaginable intrigue is being woven, and fresh wars and fresh enslavements of the peoples are being organised.

## The General Election Campaign in Canada.

By Maurice Spector (Toronto).

After a career of less than a year old, the Fifteenth Parliament of Canada was dissolved under dramatic circumstances. After the October election of last year no Party had been returned with an absolute majority in the House, although the Conservatives were slightly the largest group. The Liberal leader, **MacKenzie King**, was therefore able to form a government basing itself upon the support of the Progressives (Farmers) group and the Independents composed of the Nationalist Bourassa and the two Labour representatives, by the promise of a program of legislative concessions such as Rural Credits, building of the Hudson's Bay Railway, etc. to the farmers and Old Age Pensions, Repeal of the Anti-Labour Legislation passed during the Winnipeg Strike of 1919 etc. to the Labour men. The government was able to make these promises of course with its tongue in its cheek, knowing the Senate which has a majority of Conservatives, would exercise its full veto power to block their realisation.

The Conservatives impotently bellowed against against this "bargaining" which was "ruining the honour of parliament", and there were several close calls for the government on successive votes. The Conservative Board of Strategy worked hard to split



the Progressive Group and find an "issue". It was finally able to do both by means of the Customs Scandal. The Tories charged that wholesale smuggling at the Border resulting in appalling losses in national revenue was being connived at by the administration of the Customs Department, charges borne out by the resulting investigation. After some hectic manoeuvring to avoid receiving the formal vote of censure proposed by the Tories, Premier King advised the Governor General to dissolve Parliament as neither he, nor in his opinion, anybody else would be able to command a stable majority in that House.

Following British precedent, dissolution should have been granted to the Premier asking for it. But to the chagrin of the Liberals the Governor General turned down their request and instead entrusted the Conservative Leader, Meighen, with a formation of a new government. This was a severe blow to the Liberals, as in Canada the government controls the election machinery. Did Baron Byng refuse dissolution to King because he really believed that Meighen could form a "stable government"? As a matter of fact events gave the lie to this, for the dissolution refused to King was granted to the "Shadow Cabinet" of Meighen when 65 hours later he was himself defeated on a vote in the House.

What then prompted the Governor General to act in the way he did? The reason seems to lie in the present position of the Empire. Byng's intervention bears all the earmarks of a Downing Street policy of imperial self assertion against centrifugal tendencies. Canada particularly is one of the weakest links in the imperial chain as a result of the post-war situation involving British imperial decline, Domination industrialisation, American economic and cultural penetration, dragging internal economic development, etc. all of which makes the Dominion very cautious of imperial commitments.

The Imperial Conference has been set for October of November, at which important problems of Foreign Policy and "Imperial Defence" are to be discussed. What "Imperial Defence" means is suggested by Admiral Jellicoe's semi-official proposal that Canada contribute some 36 million dollars a year towards the cost of maintenance of the Imperial Navy. "Foreign Policy" in this case hinges largely on the attempt to saddle the Dominion with accepting the obligations of the Locarno Pact. In preparation for this Conference Premier King had moved slowly before the Parliamentary crisis a resolution to the effect "that for the acceptance of any treaty, convention or agreement involving military or economic sanctions, the approval of the Parliament of Canada should be secured" — a resolution not at all to the liking of the British Imperialists. Under the circumstances the Conservatives under the leadership of Meighen are much more palatable to England.

This is not the first time that Imperial influence has been brought to bear on the course of Canadian politics. There was a case like this in 1921 when Sir Willrid Laurier disagreed with the Dreadnaught Program of Winston Churchill. Then away back at the time of the South African War, Laurier reversed himself on the question of sending troops, saying, in spite of the fact that he had only recently been elected, "Il fallait se soumettre ou se démettre" (Submit or be kicked out). As a result of Byng's intervention, the Liberals were also provided with an excellent issue — the Constitutional Issue. There has been an outburst of Liberal resentment against Byng, thinly veiled as a direct attack on Meighen who was responsible for giving the Governor General "misleading advice". The whole question of Canadian status is being raised anew. Has Canada complete self government? It would seem that Byng's action has set Canada back to the Colonial status she had believed she had outgrown.

What is the position of Labour in this campaign? The Labour Party is not as yet a centralised mass movement on a national scale, as it is in Great Britain. We have only the skeleton of a mass Labour Party, but in all provinces where there are sections of the Party, candidates have been placed in the field to bring out the class issue above all others. The Communist Party is an affiliated unit of the Labour Party, and Communists are in several localities, such as Toronto, Port Arthur, Edmonton, running on the general Labour Party ticket. In the case of the Province of Quebec where a reactionary group of the Labour Party was able to exclude the Communist Party, the Communists in the Cartier division of Montreal have placed a straight Party candidate in the field. The Canadian Labour Party machinery is weakest in the Province of Manitoba. The two Labour representatives in the last Parliament, Messrs. Woodsworth and

Heaps, were elected on the platform of the Independent Labour Party in Winnipeg.

So far as the issues are concerned, the Labour movement as a whole is not impressed with the Conservative outcry over the Customs Scandal which is only an incident in the long tale of Capitalist Party corruption and maladministration. "Our whole economic System in the last twenty years," rightly remarked the Nationalist Bourassa in the House, "has put a premium on theft — theft organised by some of the leading men of this country, bank directors, railway promoters, men who have been rewarded by senatorships, men who have received decoration from the King..." The Tories are no less corrupt than the Liberals.

Arthur Meighen, the Conservative leader, is certainly no greater friend of Labour than MacKenzie King. The Labour Party and the Communists are conducting a campaign for the abolition of the anti-Labour legislation passed by Meighen during the Winnipeg Strike of 1919 in the short space of 14 minutes, legislation enabling the government to deport British born "agitators" secretly without trial by jury and without appeal, and making any fundamental criticism of the government seditious. Labour is quoting a very famous telegram sent by Meighen to A. J. Andrews, Prosecuting Attorney, in 1919 following the arrest of the Winnipeg Strike leaders: "Notwithstanding any doubt I have as to the technical legality of the arrest and the detention at Stony Mountain (penitentiary), I feel that rapid deportation is the best course now that the arrests are made, and later we can consider ratification".

King, too, on several occasions sent troops into Nova Scotia to break the strikes of the miners and steelworkers against the British Empire Steel Corporation.

Other issues which are being strongly stressed by Labour is that of Old Age Pensions and the abolition of the Senate. The Dominion is one of the most reactionary countries in the world in point of social legislation. Yet the Senate rejected the very niggardly Old Age Pensions Bill passed without division through the House of Commons. It is recognised so long as the Senate exists, it will continue to block the path of any measure in the interests of workers or farmers. The Canadian Senate is composed of 96 old Capitalist politicians appointed for life, each at a remuneration of \$4,000 a year and absolutely irresponsible, except to the vested interests. It is idle to talk of "reforming" the Senate. Labour is calling for the abolition of the Senate and its veto power entirely.

All sections of the Labour movement are agreed in demanding the repeal of all anti-Labour legislation contained in sections of the Immigration Naturalisation Acts and the Criminal Code: the abolition of the use of troops in industrial disputes, the right of trade unions to assess themselves for political purposes, non-contributory state unemployment insurance and the legislation of peaceful picketing by amendment of the Criminal Code.

The Communist Party and the Left Wing generally also demand the eight hour day and the five day week, full recognition and credits for the Soviet Union, a capital levy to wipe out the war debt and the annulment of the British North Africa Act, the present Colonial Constitution of Canada.

So far as the Constitutional Issue is concerned, the Communist Party emphasises that Canada is self-governing at least. Byng's intervention has demonstrated that Canada is still a colony. The Communist Party asks why Byng should be here at all as representative of an outside power to meddle in Dominion affairs? Why should Canada be automatically involved in wars of British Imperialism? The last war saddled the country with a debt of two and one-half billions of dollars, which debt is used as a pretext for withholding social legislation and has intensified the post-war economic slump in the country. The workers are confronted not only with the exploitation of capitalism, but with the burdens of capitalism and imperialism. The Party therefore takes a stand for the complete independence of Canada and a separation from the Empire.

By its emphasis too, that the workers and farmers will only find a way out of the exploitation they suffer at the hands of Capital through means of socialisation of the basic industries and by raising the demand for a Workers' and Farmers' Government as possible of achievement, the Communist Party adds the socialist coming stone to its entire election propaganda. Nor has the Party forgotten while urging the need for class conscious independent political action on the part of the workers and farmers, that they must be warned against the illusions of so-called "Parliamentary democracy".

## ECONOMICS

### America can give no Help.

By Eugen Varga.

The opinion is often expressed that although European capitalism is passing through a severe crisis, this crisis can be overcome with the "help" of the rapid uplift of American capitalism. As a matter of fact, American capitalism has already "helped" various European countries to overcome the production crisis, and has granted them loans for this purpose, that is, it has passed on to them some of its surplus means of production. This "help" is entirely capitalist in character, and is given in return for high interest and economic subordination. There is however no possibility of a repetition of this in the future; European capitalism is suffering from over-production everywhere today. American banking capital will still have the opportunity of lending a "helping" hand in the stabilisation of the currencies in France, Belgium, and Italy. This however will be followed by increasingly acute struggles between American industrial capital and European; American capitalism will be drawn into the crisis of the European.

Comrade Ossinsky, in a series of articles<sup>1)</sup> which must incontestably be counted among the most valuable contributions made of late years to the world's economic literature, throws much light on the economic development of the United States and their relations to Europe. His main train of thought is as follows:

1. The speed at which America's productive forces developed between 1913 and 1924, was slower than before the war, and altogether much slower than is generally supposed. This applies especially to the period since the war.

2. The inner wealth of the United States has increased but little since the beginning of the war. The growth of external wealth (America's transformation from a debtor country into a creditor country), has been chiefly the result of the sale of goods at usurious prices during the war.

3. With respect to the output of the most important products (coal, iron, textiles), the comparative participation of America and Europe is similar to that of before the war. (Ossinsky rightly observes that the addition of the Soviet Union, with its rapid uplift, has altered the proportions to the advantage of Europe.)

4. The improvement in the economic situation in Europe is due in a very slight degree only to the aid lent by American capital.

5. The American loans granted to Europe have but seldom taken the form of direct participation in undertakings by means of the purchase of shares, but have mostly been in the form of loans at a fixed rate of interest. Thus American capital does not "control" European industry.

6. The capital of the United States is obliged to seek markets abroad for its superfluity of industrial goods. The general crisis in capitalism makes this difficult. The United States will encounter the competition of the European countries, and these will coalesce against this mighty competitor as they did in 1914 against the apparently too mighty Germany.

Ossinsky substantiates his arguments with ample statistic material. We cannot repeat all of this here, but may however observe the following:

The selection of separate data to illustrate the development of production in general, or of the forces of production, is always very unsafe ground. To cite only one example. If we were to take steel for our illustration, instead of the crude iron which Ossinsky selects, our results are greatly modified to the advantage of America! The index figures issued by the Department of Commerce<sup>2)</sup>, taking 1913 = 100, are as follows:

	Monthly averages					
	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Iron . . .	120	54	87	130	101	118
Steel . . .	135	64	114	144	122	146

Besides this, we must take into account the fact that the

consumption of coal is not a permanent indication of production, for — apart from the extended use of crude oil — heating techniques now enable a greater amount of energy to be obtained from the same quantity of coal. Whilst the coal output of America was almost the same in 1919 and 1925 (1919: 515 million tons, 1925: 524, increase 5 per cent), the statistics of production published by the Department of Commerce, and comprising 64 descriptions of goods, show production to have increased from 100 in 1919 to 126 in 1926<sup>3)</sup>. Thus the coal output has increased by 5 per cent, that of industry by 26<sup>4)</sup>.

With a few reserves with reference to the quantitative aspect, we are in agreement with Ossinsky on points 1, 2, and 3. We are however of the opinion that the "help" given by America has been of great importance for the improvement of Europe's economic position, and that American capital "controls" European economics to a wide extent.

We are of the opinion that Ossinsky's judgment, based on purely quantitative considerations, is erroneous. An undertaking may be in possession of 95 per cent of its requirements, but the lacking 5 per cent of cash may drive it to bankruptcy. This was Europe's situation after the war. The credits which Germany received for the stabilisation of her currency, and for the completion of her circulating capital, were infinitely small sums in comparison to Germany's total capital; but without these small sums German capitalism would scarcely have succeeded in overcoming the inflation crisis. If I may so express it, it is not the statistic significance of the credits which has been decisive, but the dynamic.

I am also of the opinion that American capital actually does "control" much of European capitalism. It does this in two ways. In the first place through the "state"; the grants of American loans for stabilisation purposes enables American capital to dictate the economic policy of the states which it aids. This was the case when the London agreement on the Dawes Plan was made. This is what is happening at the present time in Belgium, where the budget has been altered and the state railways reorganised on an "economic basis" on the commands of the American bankers. And it will presently be the case again in France. American capital, by means of the interallied debts, the Dawes Plan, and the stabilisation aid, is actually exercising control over the economic policy of the majority of the states of Europe.

American capital is also able to control important sections of European industrial capital by means of private transactions. Ossinsky emphasises the fact that the American capitalists have lent their capital to European undertakings for the most part in the form of loans at a fixed rate of interest, but this does not necessarily mean that they have thus no influence over the business itself. This may be observed plainly in Germany. Where an undertaking is absolutely dependent on American capital, then the form in which this capital is lent, whether as participation in the share capital or as loan, plays no decisive rôle. But when the demand for capital can be met to a great extent in the country itself — as has been the case during the last few months — then the bourgeoisie offers considerable resistance against American influence.

But although I differ from Ossinsky in my estimate of the degree to which European capitalism is dependent on American at the present time, I am in complete agreement with his judgment on the main line of development.

1. The speed at which productive forces are developing in America, is slowing down; American industrial capital is being obliged to seek markets outside of America to an increasing extent.

2. Here it encounters the growing competition of European industrial capital, whose dependence on American capital has diminished since the most urgent loan requirements have been

<sup>2)</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>3)</sup> The cause of this, apart from the better utilisation of coal, and apart from the technical improvements enabling the same results to be obtained with less expenditure of energy, is doubtless the previous consumption involved in the system of payment by instalments. Whilst at one time goods were not bought until the full purchase money was already in the possession of the consumer, and served up to this point in one form or another as loan capital accelerating accumulation, goods are now consumed before their price has been worked for. This previous consumption extends unproductive consumption and postpones accumulation.

<sup>1)</sup> "Pravda", 1926. Published since, in Russian, in pamphlet form. It would be very useful if it were published in other languages as well.

<sup>2)</sup> Survey of Current Business. February 1926. p. 2.

met. American "help" is falling into the background, and competition is coming more and more to the fore. The antagonism between Europe and America is becoming more acute.

This tendency — we must emphasise this in order to avoid misunderstandings — is counteracted by many cross currents, as is always the case under capitalism. The present cross currents are the following:

a) The attempt being made to form a united front of all European "debtor" countries against America is constantly being undermined by the antagonisms among the European powers themselves: England and France, France and Germany, Germany and Poland, in endless combinations.

b) On the other hand all the revolutionary forces of the world are gathering round Soviet Russia, and all capitalist and counter-revolutionary forces round the United States as the strongest capitalist power. When the decline of European capitalism takes acuter forms again, and when the rule of the bourgeoisie has been overthrown in other states, then a united front may be formed by the United States and the remaining capitalist states of Europe, against the revolutionary proletariat led by the Soviet Union. This is probable. But the idea of a fresh uplift of European capitalism, built up on the aid of America, is an illusion. Not only is American capitalism unable to carry European capitalism along with it on an upward path, but American capitalism itself is already showing signs of decline, of slower progress; it will be drawn into the crisis of European capitalism.

It is just possible that if the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in Europe were to last undecided for a long time, and the "superfluous" human beings and surplus means of production were to be destroyed in wars and civil wars, then European capitalism might hang on to a miserable existence as an appendix of American capitalism. But an uplift with American help is absolutely inconsistent with the antagonistic character of the capitalist method of production.

## "Sanitation" in Belgium.

By A. Habaru (Brussels).

The Francqui-Vandervelde Government which has been in office only a few months, has taken some important steps towards the stabilisation of the currency.

The chief of these is the law concerning the two milliards of new "provisional" taxation. This taxation schedule doubles the ground rent, increases indirect taxation and facilitates speculation. It hits the workers, the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie hardest of all. The big landowners who pay their taxes four years in advance with depreciated francs are really relieved by about 30%.

The Railway Bill transfers the railways to a stock company of mixed character, in which the State and private capital hold the shares and participate in the management, though, in reality, private capital will reap all the profits and the State will be saddled with the losses only. This is the first step towards handing over the railways to the bankers.

There is also the law which gives the king a free hand in matter of finance, which really means that Mr. Francqui has the free hand. For he is the ruler of the Government. On the basis of this law the Government may, without bothering about Parliament, take all the measures necessary to adjust the financial situation. There is nothing now to hamper the commands of the banker Francqui, behind whom are ranged all the interests of national and international high finance.

The first decree was aimed against attacks upon the credit of the State and threatens with six months' to three years' imprisonment anybody doing anything that might damage the credit of the State. It might appear that this decree is directed particularly against the speculators and usurers, but in reality it is directed expressly against the revolutionary Press and the Communists, a number of whom are already being prosecuted for public attacks upon the Government.

And finally, there are retrenchment, reduction of staffs and de-mobilisation. A moral atmosphere of "sacrifice" and of "great

penance" is to be created. The impression is to be given that all classes are tightening their belts, so that the workers may assume the more easily the burden which is being thrust upon him. The bars and similar places of public entertainment are to be closed at midnight. For the gambling hells on the sea exception will, of course, be made. Warm meals may not be obtained in restaurants except at the specified meal hours. The measure which affects the workers most, as the chief consumer of bread, is that rye is to be mixed with all bread-flour in order that imports of American wheat may be reduced. This rule is to be strictly observed.

Public expenditure is also to be curtailed. Thousands of civil servants will be dismissed. And to complete the comedy, the king is selling his villa at Ostend and the Cabinet Ministers are beginning to save.

Another ridiculous effort is the voluntary loan for the saving of the franc; millionaires are subscribing 500 francs, female teachers 32,50 francs; war-profiteers magnanimously sacrifice even as much as 300 francs from the war-profits. And one fine day, with the suddenness of a cannon shot, Francqui ordered the compulsory consolidation of the floating debt. The Government had simply arranged that it would not liquidate the six milliards of Treasury bonds. The holders must either have their bonds stamped or exchange them for shares in the new railway company. The holders of a few bonds are faced with the fact that they can no longer realise on their holdings. The big bankers naturally enjoy special facilities which render it possible for them to escape the chaos of this compulsory consolidation.

This is the fashion in which Belgium is "setting things right" and "stabilising" at the cost of the poor and in the interests of the wealthy.

## THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

### The Third Annual Conference of the National Minority Movement in Great Britain.

By S. R. Appleby (London).

In the Battersea Town Hall, the hall that has housed so many historic working class conferences, assembled at 10.30 on Saturday, 28th August, the delegates to the Third Annual Conference of the National Minority Movement.

The hall was decorated by the banners and slogans, artistically prepared by comrade Rutland Boughton, for the last Conference of Action, and harmonised effectively with the hard-bitten working class fighters that were assembled.

At the time when the conference was opened by comrade Tom Mann, there were present, delegates to the number of 710. Many hailed from the mining areas and came fresh from the struggle in the coalfield. The lack of finance forced many to cover the dreary miles between the coalfields and Battersea on bicycles, and many more, lacking even this proletarian method of transit, had to come to the conference by road, on foot, or on any chance vehicle whose driver had the courtesy to give them a lift.

Many organisations too, found the finance difficulty insurmountable, and 43 letters were produced by comrade George Hardy from organisations which desired to be represented, but were unable.

The veteran President of the Minority Movement, comrade Tom Mann, hero of many a hard-fought working class battle, and still fighting vigorously despite his 73 years, opened the conference by calling upon comrade West, chairman of the Battersea Trades and Labour Council, to officially welcome the delegates. Comrade West performed this function in a short and vigorous speech.

Fraternal greetings were read from the R.I.L.U. and from the Trade Union Educational League of America.

Tom Mann, in his Presidential address, said:

"We stand whole-heartedly by the miners. (Applause.) We have helped them, we are helping them, and we shall



continue to help them. We believe in helping them to resist the encroachments of the boss class, on every point submitted. We are opposed to an increase in working hours (Applause). We are opposed to District Settlements, to any reductions in wages. (Applause) . . . . . There are several ways in which help can be rendered. There could be collected easily £ 250,000 per week for the miners, by the organised workers of this country in employment. All that is required is that the officials of the respective unions, including the General Council, shall take the requisite action and insist upon the requisite levies being imposed. We must use all our influence on the coming Trade Union Congress, (and we do not hesitate to express our viewpoint on this) to secure the imposition of an embargo on coal (Loud applause). We stand definitely on the side of the miners, but we say to the M. F. G. B. that it is absurd in the extreme for Miners' officials to be appealing to 5 or 6 thousand men in one district, contrary to their temperamental disposition, to be willing to go down the mines and put out gob-fires. The safety-men are there for the advantage of the boss. Let the bosses put out the gob-fires! (Applause). Withdraw the safety-men! (Applause)."

The first resolution on the agenda, "**The General Strike and its Lessons**" was moved by comrade **Aitken Ferguson**. Comrade Ferguson outlined the salient points in the weaknesses of organisation that had been disclosed by the General Strike. He emphasised the need for a complete change of leadership, not only of the Right Wing Leaders of the Thomas type, but also the Left Wing leaders who had identified themselves with Thomas in the betrayal of the working class. The rallying centre of the opposition to Thomasism was to be found in the Minority Movement, and those leaders calling themselves left-wing, who failed to identify themselves with the Minority Movement, had to be considered as potential traitors to the working class.

Comrade **Alex. Gossip**, National Secretary of the Furnishing Trades Association, in seconding the resolution, designated as criminal the action of the General Council in failing to prepare for the struggle between July 1925 and May 1926, in refusing assistance from the Russian workers, and in shutting down the working class press.

The resolution was carried after discussion, without dissent.

A Resolution on the **Future of the Trade Union Movement**, moved by comrade **Nat. Watkins**, was also carried without dissent.

Resolutions on the **Mining Struggle, the West Ham Board of Guardians, International Trade Union Unity, Anti-Labour Legislation, and Unemployment**, were moved, seconded and carried unanimously.

Early in the Sunday session, comrade **Tom Mann** expressed the appreciation and thanks of the workers of Great Britain and the miners in particular, for the splendid financial aid and other assistance rendered to the British workers during the General Strike and the Miners' Lock-out.

A resolution condemning the General Council on its attitude towards the General Strike was moved by comrade **Frank Smith** of the A. E. U. The conference heartily condemned the efforts of the T. U. C. General Council in endeavouring to evade the responsibility of its own failure in the General Strike, by its endeavour to sabotage the discussion on the General Strike at the coming **Bournemouth Trade Union Congress**.

Comrade **George Hardy's** speech in moving the resolution on **International Unity** was received with acclamation. He stressed the necessity for the withdrawal of the conditions that the Trade Union Congress General Council was endeavouring to force upon the Russian side of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, that the manifesto of the Russian Trade Union Congress on the General Strike should be withdrawn.

A splendid reception was given to the fraternal delegates who addressed the conference during the latter part of the Sunday session.

Comrade **Michael** addressed the conference on behalf of the C. G. T. U. (**United General Confederation of Labour**) bringing greetings from the revolutionary industrial workers of France to their comrades-in-arms assembled in conference in Great Britain. He outlined the activities of the revolutionary industrial workers of France in support of the British miners. Unfortunately a lot of their activity had been sabotaged by the

officials of the reformist unions, but they had received great assistance from the rank and file.

Comrade **Dr. Bhat** addressed the conference in English on behalf of the workers of **India**, receiving a great ovation.

Comrade **Nat. Watkins** read the translation of a speech by a fraternal delegate from the Minority workers of **Germany**.

A speech of comrade **Browder** representing the Executive Committee of the **R. I. L. U.** aroused great enthusiasm.

The Third Annual Conference of the National Minority Movement, marks a new era in the history of the struggles of the **British workers**. Coming as it did, at the moment when the whole organised might of the British bourgeoisie, openly backed by the Tory Government, is using all its power to suppress the rising revolutionary power of the workers, and at the time when the workers are offering the unprecedented resistance to the bosses' attacks, this conference marks a distinct cleavage from the old reformist tactics of the British industrial movement, and the consolidation of the new revolutionary industrial unionism that is, in the near future, to break the power of the capitalist class, and prepare the way for the final victory of the workers, and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The conference saw the knitting together as a disciplined force, of the revolutionary minority in the Trade Union movement, which, numbering as it does, one fifth of the whole of the organised workers, will, when using its power in an organised manner, eradicate the leadership from our movement of these reformist traitors and agents of the bourgeoisie, who have for years done their best to hand over the working class bound hand and foot, as a peace-offering to their masters, the capitalists. As **Nat. Watkins** pointed out at the conference, the workers that now adhere to the Minority Movement, wield sufficient influence to grasp the control of the unions, and mould them into fighting organs of the working class.

The Minority Movement has established itself as the centre that attracts to itself all the opposition to Thomasism and class collaboration. It has established itself and its policy, as the only alternative to the weak and treacherous policy of the General Council of the T. U. C.; and, as the struggle develops, and the capitalist oppression becomes more and more bitter, so must the National Minority Movement continue to attract to itself in greater numbers those workers, being crushed by the iron heel of the capitalist dictatorship, whose primary necessity is for a revolutionary lead and a revolutionary policy.

Despite the financial difficulties that faced the workers who desired to be represented at the Third Conference, caused by the poverty of the workers resulting from the General Strike and the Miners' Lock-out, more delegates were present at this conference than at the Conference of Action held in June, which itself established a record. The final Report of the Credentials Committee informed us that there were present **802 delegates**, 264 of whom came from the provinces, and representing altogether **956,000 workers**. When we bear in mind too, that the machinery of the Trade Union movement, in the hands of the official bureaucracy, had placed in the way every obstacle it possibly could to the success of the conference, these figures give us an indication of the rapid development of the influence of the National Minority Movement.

## THE WHITE TERROR

Save the Bessarabian Fighters for  
Independence — Pavel Tkachenko and Boris  
Stefanov.

By Vasile Spiru (Kishinev).

In one of the recent man-hunt drives of the Bukharest Siguranza, two of the best, noblest and most self-sacrificing fighters belonging to the Roumanian proletariat have fallen into the blood-soaked fangs.

A pack of Siguranza agents fell upon the Bessarabian fighter for freedom, Pavel Tkachenko, and the former member of the Roumanian Chamber, Boris Stefanov, in their apartments and took the two of them prisoners after cruelly abusing them.

In order to give the appearance of a fight with the prisoners, the Siguranza brigade of 30 men fired off several hundred revolvers shots at the scene of the arrest; fortunately,

Tkachenko and Stefanov were not killed though they suffered wounds.

The prisoners were taken to the building of the Siguranza on the Boulevard Pache and were there subjected to three days incessant torture, while the whole of the Democratic and reactionary Press of Roumania slandered and abused them outrageously.

At present Boris Stefanov with a number of undressed wounds is being kept in the notorious underground fortress prison of Jilava, where, according to all reports, his torture is being continued under the leader of the bloodhounds, Major Aghir.

Pavel Tkachenko, who suffers from advanced consumption, was kept back by the Siguranza and transferred to the "top floor".

The "top floor" of the Siguranza has only become known to the Roumanian public through the suggestive narratives of a few Siguranza Officials. Not one of the victims who have entered here, has ever come out again alive. On the "top floor" of the Siguranza there is a most varied collection of instruments of torture, representing the bloody experience of torturers of all ages.

The "top floor" of the Siguranza contains a kind of "iron virgin" (iron armour, lined with spikes, in which the victim is pressed) and electric appliances used for passing current through the nose, ears and other members of the victims. There are also the most ingenious torture and frames, as well as hundredweight stones on chains which are hung to the feet of the victim while he is suspended by the arms, the tension thus brought to bear upon him stretching him as on a rack. Then again there are the most modern central heating bodies in the form of chairs, upon which the prisoners are seated; the temperature being regulated as desired by the torturer.

According to the most recent reliable reports, Pavel Tkachenko has been taken to this "top floor", the creation of the spirit of torment-invention of the general director of the Siguranza, Romulus Voinescu.

Tkachenko's life is in the gravest danger, and only the quickest action can save him.

In all the Bukharest factories and in the Roumanian industrial districts, and especially among the Bessarabian proletariat, who have already heard the news of Tkachenko's fate, indescribable indignation and bitterness prevails.

Despite the overt attempt of the Averescu Government to give the decisive blow to the united trade unions of Roumania, the workers are protesting violently against the projected assassination of Tkachenko. But these protests can be effectual only if they call a loud echo abroad.

Rescue the Fighter for Bessarabia's Freedom Pavel Tkachenko!

The projected assassination of Tkachenko must be prevented!

\* \* \*

#### Pavel Tkachenko's Career.

Pavel Tkachenko, born in Bender (Bessarabia) in the year 1892, comes of a family of railway workers which is known throughout South Ukraine for its revolutionary strength. Early in life, Pavel learned from his father and brothers the aims and fights of Socialism. In Odessa and Leningrad, where he studied law and economics, Tkachenko was regarded even before the February revolution of 1917 as one of the most determined fighters of the then Social Democratic Workers Party of Russia (Bolsheviks). He took an active part in both of the revolutions of 1917. When the counter-revolutionary forces became active in his home country, he hastened at once into Ukraine and fought as a Red Soldier against nearly all the White Armies which at that time endeavoured to quash the young Russian revolution.

In the year 1920 Tkachenko was arrested in Kishinev by the Siguranza for organising revolutionary groups of workers, but he succeeded very shortly afterwards in escaping from prison.

In the year 1921 he was again arrested in Jassy and figured, after a number of painful hunger strikes, as the principal accused in the trial of the 300. On account of the pressure brought to bear by the proletariat at home and abroad, he was sentenced to no more than one year's imprisonment. In the prison of Constantza, where he served his sentence, efforts were made to do away with him and his fellow prisoner, S. Buznovski, at any price. An attempt to poison them failed, as also did the attempt to shoot them "while attempting to escape". The two of them

then decided to get away. The plan succeeded, but they were arrested again a fortnight later in Bukharest. A fresh conspiracy trial was staged for them in Kishinev, as it would be easier to put them out of the way there. Once more Roumanian and international Labour saved their lives. As soon as he was liberated Tkachenko went abroad, and immediately on his return to Roumania he was arrested in the manner described above. It should be stated that one of Tkachenko's brothers died in a Siberian prison, while his father, mother, two other brothers and his sisters were murdered by Denikin's soldiers.

#### Boris Stefanov's Career.

Boris Stefanov comes of a peasant family in the Dobruja. He studied agriculture in Sofia and abroad, and he, too, while a young student, entered the (Left) Social Democracy Party of Bulgaria. Here he won the reputation of a tough and successful propagandist. When the Dobruja became Roumanian territory in 1913, he continued his Socialistic work there. In 1916 he went to the front as a lieutenant and narrowly escaped from a trial for high treason. In 1921 he was elected, practically unanimously, member for the district of Darostor in the Roumanian Chamber. Immediately after the founding of the Third International he advocated by speeches and writings the affiliation of the Social Democratic Party to this International.

When the general strike broke out at the end of 1921, despite his immunity, he was arrested and kept 16 months in solitary confinement in Jilava.

In the trial of the 300 he was released after the amnesty.

Subsequently, Stefanov rendered imperishable service to the Roumanian proletariat by his theotic investigation of the land reform and its effects, as also by his ruthless exposure of its character as neo-serfdom. As Stefanov is also a farmer, he has a big following among the serf-like Roumanian peasants. His arrest has caused great excitement among the peasantry.

## Protest Against the Imperialist Terror of the French in Syria.

### To all European Workers,

The insurrection in Syria is still in progress; the French generals are suffering one defeat after another. But at each defeat their cruelty increases. Their atrocities surpass those of the Cossack bands of Czar Nicholas in Galicia, and of Wilhelm's Yankers in Belgium. Villages and whole districts in towns are being burnt down, a practice which is senseless from a military point of view; it is the outcome of thirst for vengeance. The newspapers report shocking acts of violence on the part of the French generals against the unfortunate Syrian population:

"As soon as the enemy perceived," writes the Syrian Revolution Committee, "that the whole of his strength was exhausted, he began to take revenge by ruining the unprotected villages and fields, killing women and children and emulate Nero. And all this took place in our century of enlightenment and liberty."

While the French generals are raging bloodily in the field, the bourgeois executioners are busy in the hinterland behind the front. The country is devastated; industry and trade are dislocated. The depreciation of the franc caused a shocking rise in the prices prevailing in the country. The workers are faced with starvation and in several branches of production there have been strikes. These strikes were of a purely economic character until the blood-thirsty colonial officials interfered. But the French generals and commissaries provoked the insurrection, converted every peasant into an insurgent, every worker into a revolutionary and every striker into a Communist. Against insurgents, revolutionaries and Communists there is but one law and one remedy: terror, jail, deportation, mass trials, the gallows — day after day. Dozens of Fellahs and workers are being condemned to hard-labour and to death. Within the last few days in Beyrut alone 15 strikers have been arrested and three of them have been shipped without any trial to Ruad, the Isle of Tears of the Syrian revolution.

Before the very eyes of the "bearers of European culture" most terrible massacres and revolting violations are taking place. Will you remain silent? All this is happening in the name of civilisation, culture and progress, and if you continue to be

silent spectators, are you not just as guilty as your executioners? Will you still remain indifferent, cold-blooded?

Proletarians of Europe! With your hands you are making the bombs, grenades and aeroplanes which are spreading death and destruction over our country and turning our pleasant fields, gardens, villages and towns into graveyards. Through your labour and sweat these plunderers and executioners are being maintained. Hundreds of thousands of widows and orphans in Syria turn to you with their cry: Stop your bourgeoisie from further bloodshed! The oppressed, enslaved Syrian Fellahs and workers appeal to you and expect your fraternal aid in the fight against their and your oppressors.

To you, honest prolet. to you, upright friend of freedom, we turn with the cry: Make a fighting alliance with the revolutionary of Syria! United we are strong. We, the millions of oppressed colonial peoples; you, the European wage-slaves; we have a **common enemy** — European Imperialism.

We are not approaching you with fantastic plans, we come to you with bloody facts, with bloody, terrifying reality. For nearly a year now the flame of revolution has been alight in Syria. Neither bombs, nor bullets, nor streams of blood have been able to quench the flame. The revolution is spreading. Just a little help from the European Proletariat — and the revolution in Syria will be triumphant!

**Workers, protest against French Imperialism!**

**Stop the raging of the bloody hangmen in Syria!**

**Long live the revolutionary, anti-imperialist alliance!**

**Long live the alliance of the European proletariat with the national freedom movement in the colonies!**

The Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Syria and Palestine (Sections of the Communist International).

## IN THE COLONIES

### The Forces of Revolution in Syria.

By A B u s i a m (Beyrut).

After a pause, the Syrian revolutionaries have resumed their advance, and have gained a number of victories over the French. In the **Hot** district the French lost over 700 men, in **Djebel Drus** the French were obliged to evacuate **Sueida** for the third time.

The question arises of the forces behind the Syrian revolution; how can the vitality of the Syrian revolution be explained?

Up to about the end of 1925 the flame of revolution has seized upon only a limited sphere in Syria. Geographically the revolution was limited by the mountains of **Djebel Drus**. The free **Druses**, the inhabitants of the mountains, were the first to begin the struggle against Imperialist violence. The mighty caves in the mountains hid them from the sharp eyes of the French aeronauts. This movement was carried on by the peasant population only, mainly by the mountain dwellers, and partly by the shepherd tribes of **Bedouins**. The movement did not touch the strata of town and village dwellers. The French secret police, the **Sûreté**, took care of this. Not only the inaccessible mountains, but the everlasting national and religious schism and hate have helped to isolate the movement!

After the lapse of eight to nine months, and after repeated defeats for the French, the French generals finally succeeded in ending their campaign victoriously in **Djebel Drus**.

The French soldiery have exterminated, in the most brutal manner, that part of the population which had remained quietly in the villages. The fields are desolate, the houses burned down, the wells filled up, the herds scattered. But now comes the unexpected. The French army, marching in triumph through the country, itself carried the fire of revolution in every direction. The greater the victories of the French generals, the greater the devastation following in the wake, then the broader and deeper the wave of revolution pouring across the country. From the mountains of **Djebel Drus** the wave has dashed across the Syrian steppes, from here to the southward and westward, to the great cities, to **Damascus** and **Hot**, **Aleppo** and **Beyrut**. But in the cities the wave of revolution has broken against the resistance of the **Christian** population, against the acute religious antagonisms. The wave of revolution has had to struggle long against the traditions of centuries, against the distrust and

schism sown by the artifices of French capital. The national excitement and the protests raised by the people after the severest blows, for instance after the bombardment of **Damascus**, have been damned back. Every movement has broken on the rock of religious schism, and has ebbed away.

The memory of the cruel massacres in the last century, in 1880 and 1881, is still too fresh. It has seemed as if **Libanon** is truly an impregnable fortress of French imperialism. It was this indeed so long as the movement was confined to the **Fellah** peasantry. But what was unattainable for the **Fellah** movement has proved to be well attainable for the revolutionary working class.

The **Communist Party of Syria** comes on the scene. The Party, born on the eve of revolution, was forced by the raging fire of the enemy to reorganise its ranks, to create an illegal apparatus, and to accomplish its tasks by subterranean means.

It could not do much by taking an immediate part in the revolution. But it accomplished much towards the fraternisation of the quiet city population with the tempestuous and insurgent rural population. It has been eminently successful in bridging over the eternal religious antagonisms. It is interesting to note that **Musselmen**, **Druses**, and **Maronites**, have all begun to regard the **Communist Party** as the guarantee of joint action against imperialism.

The labour movement is beginning to make progress in the cities. The Syrian labour movement differs from the European and American labour movements in having excellent and purposeful leadership from the beginning. The **Communist Party**, as faithful guardian of revolution, has stood by the cradle of the labour movement of Syria. This is a fact which has to be reckoned with. The labour movement in Syria has come into being as a communist movement, and it will develop further as such, or it will not develop at all. This is in itself easily comprehensible: a labour movement whose goal is the defeat of foreign imperialism, is inevitably bound to tread the path of revolutionary struggle, for it allies itself to the movement for national emancipation, that is, the sole path open to it is the broad path of Leninism.

Reformism, the compromise with Imperialism, would be synonymous with open treachery, with the blackest corruption, under the conditions of the present struggle in Syria.

Thus reformism cannot struggle into existence in the glowing temperature of the revolutionary East.

The labour movement is growing. The proof of this lies not only in the arrests of dozens of revolutionary workers, or in the suppression of revolutionary newspapers and appeals, but in the wave of strikes which has spread all over the country. We may here mention the most important of these: the strike in the great furniture factory in **Beyrut** (150 workers), the strikes among the dock labourers, the leather workers, and the typographic workers, the railway strike in **Aleppo**, etc. We must first have an idea of the backwardness and unenlightenment of the Syrian workers who are on a lower level than the **Fellahs**, if we are to appreciate the enormous energy and unwearied effort required by the **Communist Party** achieving such results.

The first period, the period of purely political activity on the part of the Party, was artificially hampered by the reprisals of the French secret police. And even now the French government does not shrink from terrorising as one of the means taken to crush the strike wave. Twelve workers on strike have been arrested, and three of the strike leaders, members of the **Organisation Committee**, sent to the Island of **Ruad**.

The result has however been very different to that expected by the imperialists. We can repeat Lenin's words without exaggeration: However insolent and arrogant French imperialism has been, this insolence and arrogance has only swelled the ranks of our allies.

At one time the **Druses** struggled alone; then the **Fellahs** and **Bedouins** of the other villages joined them; now the city population is coming to their aid, headed by the proletariat. Within the last few days there have been bloody conflicts in **Aleppo** and **Homsa**, during the protest demonstrations against the French agent **Ahmed Ali Bey**.

The forces of Syrian revolution are growing and developing. With only a little help from the international proletariat, the revolution in Syria will be victorious.

## FOR THE UNITY OF THE C. P. S. U.

### The Leningrad Nuclei on the Wages Question.

**Increase of wages by means of industrialisation, reduction of prices, and a firm alliance with the peasantry.**

On 26. August the question of "Prices and wages" was discussed in all the Party meetings in Leningrad. The Leningrad Party organisation again joined with the Leningrad Youth organisation in decidedly condemning the demagogic and un-Bolshevist proposals of the oppositional block, and again demonstrated its unconditional solidarity with the C. C.

The Leningrad communists replied to the disorganisatory propositions of the opposition in the question of the price and wage policy as follows:

"After hearing the report given by comrade Stetzki on the price and wage policy, and after the discussion, the Plenum of the Party collective of the C. P. of the Soviet Union of the "Red Putilov" works expresses its complete and unreserved approval of all the measures adopted by the C. C., both with regard to the reduction of prices and to the regulation of wages.

The Plenum calls upon the whole of the Party members to support unanimously a policy based on the fundamental prerequisites for the successful accomplishment of the industrialisation of our country advocated by the XIV. Party Conference, and for the firmer establishment of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry; the Plenum is further of the opinion that only the correct policy of price regulation as carried out by the C. C. can secure a normal increase in the workers' wages, since the relations between prices and wages are close and reciprocal.

The policy of high prices, as proposed by the opposition, is impossible of acceptance, not only from the standpoint of our momentary interests, but even more from the standpoint of the ultimate interests of the working class, for the whole of the proposals made by the opposition represent an anti-Leninist policy, and tend to a rupture of the alliance between the workers and the peasantry.

The Plenum calls upon the whole of the members of the Party to carry out, energetically and unanimously, all the measures dictated by the XIV. Party Congress and the last Plenum of the C. C., and declares categorically that the Putilov communists will repulse unanimously any attempt to derail the Party from the path of Leninism.

The Plenum expresses its absolute readiness to support the C. C. in its struggle against all attempts to take it by surprise or lead it from the right path, from whatever source these attempts may come."

(Passed unanimously, 4 abstentions.)

"The Metal Works' meeting draws special attention to the obvious erroneousness and demagoguery of the line taken by the opposition, which proposes a general rise in wages at the expense of higher prices for industrial goods. This would not only threaten our relations with the peasantry, but would not lead to any real rise in wages, for the consequence would be a general tension in prices, the fluctuation of the Chervonetz, and fresh economic difficulties." (Plenary Session of the Metal Works' nucleus.)

"The Plenum of the Party collective of the works 'Red Tranzonnik' is of the opinion that the decisions of the XVI. Plenum of the C. C., in favour of the maintenance of the real wage level by means of a regime of economy in expenditure, of a further increase in the productivity of labour, and of a further reduction in retail prices, have been proved by actual practice to be entirely efficient. The policy of reducing the retail prices is one of the measures promoting the industrialisation of the country and the firmer establishment of the alliance between the working class

and the peasants. The policy of the opposition, aiming at an increase in wholesale prices, would lead to a further rise in the retail prices of industrial products and to a lessening of real wages; it would even lead to a rise in the price of grain, and would endanger the export of agricultural products."

The Party members and Youth comrades attending the group meeting of the "Co-operator" works, the Murmansk railway, the "Red Stamp Worker", the "Svoboda" factory, and some of the sections of the October railway, condemned the policy proposed by the opposition, as calculated to lead to a rupture between the workers and the peasants, and undertook for their part, in the name of the alliance with the peasantry, to exert their utmost efforts for the increased productivity of labour, for the rationalisation of production, the reduction of the cost of production, and for the increase of production.

"The next task is the struggle for a real rise in wages on the basis formed by the reduction of retail prices and the increased productivity of labour. The fulfilment of this task is only possible when the production conferences unfold a greater capacity for work, when waste and carelessness are combated, when there is a social control exercised over the workers' co-operatives, when expenses are lowered, and the economy regime is put into actual practice, with the participation of the working masses." (Plenum of the "Yegorov" works.)

"We condemn with the utmost decision the demagogic attitude adopted by the opposition, and call upon the C. C. to carry out its decisions with the utmost strictness, for these point out the way for the improvement of the standard of living of the worker, and for the realisation of a socialist state of society." (Plenary meeting of the nucleus of the III. State Tobacco Factory.)

"We are fully in agreement with the line taken by the C. C. in the question of the price and wage policy. We reject decisively the propositions of the opposition, as these would mean the undermining of the proletarian dictatorship." (Collective of the Zinoviev Printing Works.)

## THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

### Results of the International Conference on Work among Women.

By Hertha Sturm (Moscow).

On 30. July the Org. Bureau of the E. C. C. I. discussed the results of the Fourth International Conference on Work among Women, and confirmed the theses and resolutions drawn up and passed by the Conference.

The Conference, which was held in Moscow from 29. May till 10. June, was the first opportunity since the Fifth Congress for a comprehensive and thorough survey of the work which has been done, and enabled the first tasks now to be accomplished by the Communist International among women to be laid down definitely and purposefully. The Conference, as befitted the present stage of the work and its demands, was almost business-like in its strict adaptiveness to the matter in hand.

The composition of the Conference contributed to the concentration on definite subjects. The participants were a small circle of leading women comrades from the most important sections of the West and East, and a number of experienced working women from the bases of the Parties, intermediaries connecting the Parties with the masses in the factories and trade unions. Other participants were the representatives of the Secretariat and of the departments of the E. C. C. I., of the Communist Youth International, of the International Red Aid, and of the International Peasants' Council. This ensured for the most vital questions the guidance and control of the highest political authorities, and at the same time the actual co-operation of those most interested in every secondary branch of work. This well adapted composition of the Conference gave it a great advantage over former similar conferences.

The Conference, in accordance with the international decisions and working plan issued by the Women's Department of the E. C. C. I. concentrated its attention on three fundamental tasks of the present period.

The first of these leading ideas is the imperative necessity of inducing women to take part in politics; this is the incontestable duty of the Communist Parties in their totality, and an inseparable part of the workers' struggle for emancipation. Every subject discussed by the Conference, whether dealing with the political or the economic problems characteristic of the world's present position, mirrored this fundamental idea. The great movement for the expropriation of the princes in Germany, the crisis in Poland, the war in Morocco, Fascism, the rising of the Eastern peoples, etc. were taken by the Conference as criteria of the work accomplished during the last two years, and the experience thus gained taken as signpost for future work. The general strike and the lockout of the miners in England, the most striking world historical event of our times, formed one of the chief points for discussion, and roused an initiative for the organisation of an international relief action, among the broadest masses of working women, in aid of the wives and children of the locked out miners.

The political background of the Conference, and the tasks involved for the Comintern, were outlined with both breadth and depth of conception in a letter from Clara Zetkin.

In this fundamental question — the intensified combination of political work among women with the great general tasks — the Conference exposed the fact that there are still many great faults, as also remnants of petty bourgeois ideology, to be found even within the Communist Parties. At the same time the Conference demonstrated the existence of a united determination to overcome these weaknesses by means of real enlightenment.

The second leading idea discussed by the Conference was the even greater emphasis laid upon the slogan proclaimed two years ago: that the Communist Parties should devote their concentrated attention to winning over the women in the factories and trade unions. The inadequate success of this work during the period which has since elapsed, was subjected to criticism, the extent to which works nuclei have been formed and developed, was accurately ascertained, an instructive report was heard from a Moscow working woman on work in a nucleus in a large factory employing a great many women, and a practical programme was discussed for the nature and methods of the work to be done in the trade unions.

The third of the main themes discussed by the Conference was the organisation of the Meetings of Women's Delegates, a question closely bound up with that of the mobilisation of the women workers.

This question is somewhat novel in comparison to the others, it has been little discussed in the broader circles of the Communist Parties, and reports on experience won have been scanty — with the exception of course of the Soviet Union. At this stage of the work it is no longer a matter of the theoretical acknowledgement of the importance of this form of work, but of the most practical way of carrying it out, and on this subject there were some lively and even heated debates. Two views were expressed deviating from the lines laid down by the Women's Department of the E. C. C. I.

At the beginning of the discussion the French delegation maintained that in France the special conditions obtaining there prevented the carrying out of the idea of the Meetings of Women's Delegates, and that the other proletarian organs and organisations already existing rendered these Delegate Meetings superfluous. This extremely pessimistic and passive view contrasted strikingly with the attitude of the delegate from Finland, who urged the immediate and unreserved organisation of Meetings of Women's Delegates, without earnest inquiry into their prerequisites or possibilities of success. This delegate threw doubts upon the capacity of firmly established organisatory bodies, especially of the works nuclei, to afford a guarantee for the control of the Meetings of Women's Delegates, and thus converted these Delegations from a means towards a particular political object into a fetish.

The detailed debate ensuing refuted both of these opposing standpoints as deviations from the right political path. The debate afforded a survey of the amount of preparation which has been accomplished, and of the prospects

of the work in the various Sections; it enabled an excellent idea to be gained of the different stages of development, the successes, and the errors of the work, so that the Sections have now actual experience to go upon when estimating the value of the work already done and the next steps to be taken.

In all these main questions, embodying the political line pursued by the Women's Department of the E. C. C. I., the Conference proved to be unanimously and decidedly in agreement with the theses submitted. The whole of the particulars and new factors discussed in the extremely practical debates of the Plenum, and in the numerous Commissions, confirm and emphasise the correctness of this line.

In individual questions, relating chiefly to the organisatory forms of the work, points were raised at the Conference which were not entirely clear, and agreement was not always reached on these.

When discussing the trade unions, the Conference left one question open, that raised in the theses with respect to the formation of trade unionist women's auxiliary organisations on the Anglo-American pattern for influencing the wives of the workmen organised in trade unions. This question is to be studied more exactly.

In the question of co-operative guilds among the women, the Conference accorded very careful discussion to a novel idea included in the theses, the idea that under certain conditions the initiative of the Communist Parties may be employed for the formation of new co-operative guilds among women. After thorough consideration the Conference expressed its very cautiously formulated agreement.

The formation of extra-Party women's organisations was the sole question laid before the Conference in which unanimous agreement was not attained. The lines laid down by the Women's Department of the E. C. C. I. maintain the standpoint that in certain situations the founding of sympathising proletarian women's organisations by the Communists may serve as suitable auxiliary for inducing broad masses of women to join the class struggle and the general class organisations of the proletariat. The opposition, represented by the woman comrade Kasparova from the Women's Department of the E. C. C. I., and by the Finnish woman delegate, rejected this standpoint on principle, and declared that the question involved the fundamental principles of the Women's Department. The Women's Department theses were accepted in principle against the two oppositional votes. The Org. Bureau, on the other hand, passed the following amendment on the motion of comrade Kuusinen:

"The formation of new general women's organisations is not recommended, but the formation of proletarian women's organisations may very well be approved of where these are to serve for some definite purpose, some action involved in the economic and political events of the moment."

Special emphasis must be laid on the utility of the direct exchange of experience between the Sections and the Women's Department of the E. C. C. I., and between the Sections themselves.

Another point of paramount is the close co-operation and exchange of ideas between the Russian women comrades and the delegates from the West and East made possible by the Conference, and widening the horizon of all in the discussion of the most various questions. The report of the women leader of the Central Women's Department of the Soviet Union dealing with the fundamental problems and tasks of the C. P. S. U. among the masses of the women, enabled a clear idea to be obtained of the essential differences in the work to be done in the Soviet state and in the capitalist countries, whilst the supplementary reports given by Russian working women, on the secondary questions of practical work, afforded many hints on methods which may be followed in any country, whatever the national differences.

The Conference has accomplished the tasks set it, and has met the expectations of those taking part in it. It now lies with the Sections to utilise the results of the Conference.



## WORKERS' DELEGATIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION

### Statement of the Belgian Workers' Delegation.

Before departing from the Soviet Union, the Belgian Workers' Delegation addressed the following statement to the Moscow proletariat:

When on July 26th. we left Moscow to continue our work in the Caucasus and in other districts, the question occurred to us whether in all these districts too we should find the same determination among the workers, the same conditions of labour and the same achievements as we had found in Moscow. We left Moscow with the impression that the working class is revolutionary through and through and indisputably arbiter of its own fate.

In view of the campaign waged against the proletarian dictatorship by the Press in our country and the allegation that the Republics affiliated to the Union are oppressed by Moscow, it is no difficult matter to conceive that we awaited with impatience the time when we should be able to get into communication with the workers of the other Soviet Republics and learn the truth and see for ourselves whether the minorities really lived in "anarchy and misery".

We visited successively: Kiev, Kharkov, Artemovsk, the Donetz Basin, Svyatogorsk, Rostov, Vladicavcas, Tiflis, Baku, Borshom, Batum, Yalta, Sebastopol.

In every place we saw the same picture as we had seen in Moscow. The whole Union of the Soviet Republics is permeated with the same revolutionary spirit; labour conditions and social achievements are the same everywhere.

We admired most of all the extraordinarily clear solution of the national question, which satisfies every individual citizen.

Invariably we met the same marked endeavour to increase production going hand in hand with the work of improving conditions of labour. Side by side with the old factories new ones have been built or are in the course of erection in accordance with the latest technical and hygienic requirements.

In every district the workers assured us of their unshakable faith in the Soviet Power and everywhere they appeared happy.

In Moscow and elsewhere we were surprised at the differences in the wage rates of the various categories of labour. Naturally, we understand the reasons which moved the Soviet Power to maintain such conditions, but we are of the opinion that the minimum wage is much too low in comparison with the maximum wage.

In Tiflis we expressed the wish to visit the prison where the Menshevist leaders are kept. Our request was granted: We were given the possibility of putting several questions to the Menshevist leaders. Among other questions we asked them what led to the insurrection. The answer we got was a deplorable one. They refused to give us explanations and expressed the offensive suggestion that we would misrepresent the truth. The president of our delegation told them that any of them who were class-conscious and fought for honest ideas should be glad to have the opportunity of publishing these ideas. Subsequently, a Menshevist deemed it necessary to explain that it was not their intention to offend us and that it was on this account that they did not wish to reply to us or to our questions.

We learnt later upon looking up their biography and studying the national question that the greater part of these leaders are nobles and then we understood why they did not wish to answer us. These counter-revolutionaries know that all the workers and peasants are acquainted with the dealings of Jordania & Co. and that they support the Soviet Power with body and soul.

The truth of this was confirmed by a former noble who is now working as an engineer in Tiflis. "The Menshevists" he said,

"have done nothing towards the solution of the national question. On many occasions they were more cruel than the Czarist officials. The Bolshevists, on the other hand, gave great prosperity and more freedom. Labour reigns here to-day."

We questioned peasants, members of the Red Army, commanders, peoples' commissaries and others. In every case we saw the same ironic smile as answer to the questions dressed up by the bourgeois Press. Below we give a few of these questions:

Is it true that — as Jordania stated — the Georgian Army is composed exclusively of soldiers and officers of the Red Army and that, if this army were withdrawn, the workers would again set up a Menshevist government?

Is it true that Georgia is oppressed by the Soviet Power?

Is it true that the peasants are against the Soviet regime?

Is it true that Bolshevism brought the people nothing but privation and anarchy? etc., etc.

After comparing the reports of the bourgeois and Social Democratic Press with the real conditions which we had the opportunity of seeing in workers' districts in the various Federal Republics, we declare emphatically that all these assertions are lies from beginning to end. The existing social achievements themselves refute all these lying reports of the reactionary bourgeoisie.

Concerning the social achievements, in every place, and particularly in the Crimea, we were surprised to find how many convalescent homes and sanatoria have been opened for the use of the working class.

The excellent humanitarian institutes are adequate proof that the Soviet State does not regard the workers as beasts of burden.

Our general impression is that the Soviet Union has completely overcome all the difficulties and evils accruing from Czarism, the counter-revolution and the blockade, that it is now in the spring-time of reconstruction, that the efforts being made in this direction are worthy of the enthusiasm and that they are really constructive of Socialism.

Before our departure from the "Red City" we desire to convey our fraternal greetings to the revolutionary workers of the Capital of the Socialist Soviet Republics.

Long live the social revolution!

## WORKERS INTERNATIONAL RELIEF

### Five Years of Workers International Relief.

By Willi Münzenberg (Berlin).

In autumn of this year the Workers International Relief will have been in existence five years. On August 12th, 1921, the first proclamation was issued by the Foreign Committee for the organising of workers relief for Soviet Russia. On September 12th, 1921, the First International Conference of the W. I. R. was held in Berlin.

The founding of the Workers International Relief was undertaken in connection with the Russian famine in 1921.

In the summer of 1921 the results of a severe winter catastrophe in Soviet Russia threatened over 40 million people with starvation. Foreign Capitalist countries did little or nothing to help cope with the situation. On the contrary, several Capitalist countries made preparations to exploit Soviet Russia's distressed position for purposes of a military attack upon the Soviet Republic. Soviet Russia was left alone to fight against the catastrophe which had befallen her through no fault of her own. The only help which could come from abroad was that of the world proletariat which was so zealous for the Soviet Republic. The proletarians hastened with their small means to the assistance of Russia. Proletarian Relief Committees were formed everywhere and linked together internationally by the Workers International Relief. The W. I. R. was not, therefore, built according to the speculative plans of individual persons, nor yet upon the basis of theories, it was born of the harsh force of circumstances.

The continued existence of the W. I. R. was, furthermore, an imperative necessity on account of the post-war privation which threatened the world proletariat.

The period of Capitalism's decline is characterised by widespread economic catastrophes which are more ruthless and devastating than those which characterised the period of Capitalism's commencement.

During the year 1920-21 hundreds of thousands of workers literally starved in Austria; in 1923-24 hundreds of thousands of people in Germany died of malnutrition or its concomitant, typhoid, or committed suicide in their desperation. The continued aggravation of the economic stress and the steady decline in the standard of living compelled the workers in almost every country to resort to defensive strikes.

The existing labour organisations did not suffice to afford any help worth mentioning for the unfortunate, struggling millions.

The great idea which in recent years the Workers International Relief has sought to realise through the development of its organisation is that of an organisation unifying all toilers, without distinction of party or trade union attitude, during the present phase of extraordinary fights and mass privation, so that at any given moment all available economic and financial strength may be focused upon the danger point on the common front, an ambitious scheme which has been received enthusiastically by millions of workers of all continents and countries.

The relief works which have been carried out by the W. I. R. during the five years of its activity belong to the most brilliant and magnificent solidarity demonstrations and relief measures in the history of the labour movement. In the annals of the proletarian class fights there is no international action which compares in extent, duration, enthusiasm and efficiency with the great Russian relief work carried out by the W. I. R. during the years 1921 to 1923.

In those unhappy days the W. I. R. actually succeeded in rousing millions of workers and groups of artists and intellectuals who sympathised with the endeavour to make it their chief tasks for several months, and, as regards some of the groups, for years, to work to save Russia from starvation.

But also the other great international relief works of the W. I. R. — we will recall only that in favour of the starving German workers in the year 1923-24, that in support of the Japanese workers and that for the benefit of the English miners began in the summer of 1926 — were upheld by the workers of all nations and were contributed to by millions of workers of nearly every country.

During the five years of its existence, the W. I. R. has raised for the international works which it has undertaken, no less a sum than £1,250,000. This total does not include such amounts as were collected in individual countries for local or national tasks and expended there. At a low estimate, these amounts must represent a total of £250,000, to which can be added £500,000 for relief work in England, i. e., the W. I. R. by means of contributions of coppers gathered from individual workers has raised a minimum £2,000,000 and distributed this sum to the poorest of the poor, to those enduring the severest economic struggle, to the persecuted and to proletarians threatened with starvation.

The international economic crisis has not yet terminated. There is every indication that the privations of the broad masses of the workers will become even more acute and that new and greater economic fights are inevitable. This circumstance alone makes the W. I. R. indispensable. For years the W. I. R. was alone in its efforts to propagate the Leninist thought of the organisation of international solidarity as a weapon in class warfare. It has been attacked as a "Red Salvation Army" by the Communist Workers Party leaders and by the so-called left wing in Germany. It has also been set upon by the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders of the Second International for interfering with "peaceable" trade union work. According to Social Democratic notions, the trade unions are the sole representatives of the workers even in times of distress and catastrophic misery, a conception which underwent necessary correction — to some extent, at least — during the summer of 1926. The Amsterdam Trade Union International finally came to the view that the available trade union funds and relief arrangements would not stand the strain of the big, recurrent fights. It was decided to create special funds to maintain such extensive economic fights.

The decision of the Amsterdammers has little significance in view of the fact that in supporting big strikes, such as that in Germany in 1923, the one in China in 1925 and the English strike of the current year, it is not only those organised in trade unions who are concerned, for all workers, as well as the peasants and petty bourgeois groups who sympathise with the workers, participate. These strikes also have in general a political significance for the whole of the proletariat.

The inevitable course of development will, without doubt, compel the Amsterdam people to a thorough rectification of their untenable attitude towards the W. I. R.

The foundation, of the W. I. R. and, more especially its development into a mass movement with far-reaching organisations, was a matter of grave dispute throughout the Labour movement. The so-called "Left Wing" regarded the W. I. R. as superfluous. In those circles it is believed that it is possible to put an end to the Capitalist world by shouting at it.

The right-wing, circles of social-chauvinistic leaders of the Second International, who are so closely related to the bourgeoisie and who fear nothing quite so much as a close-knit united front of the proletariat, dread that a weakening of their prestige and a reinforcement of the unity movement which they like so little, might ensue as a consequence of the W. I. R. forming a common cause among Social Democratic, Communist and non-party workers. On this account they have circulated the fairy-tale that the W. I. R. is merely another manoeuvre on the part of the Communist International. The Executive of the Second International formulates anathema after anathema against the W. I. R. The Social Democratic Parties of Germany and Austria have made membership and participation in the W. I. R. punishable with expulsion. But all these measures have failed to check the W. I. R. in its development and triumph.

It started in 1921 as a few detached committees which were designed to fulfil a temporary need, but the W. I. R. now has a powerful organisation in most countries. Social Democrats, trade union members, Communists and non-party workers are members of the W. I. R. Millions sympathise with the institution. There are, furthermore, collectively affiliated to the W. I. R.: 8,000,000 Russian trade unionists, 600,000 trade unionists in Japan, the General Trade Union League in India, etc. There are sections of the W. I. R. working in all the countries of Europe, as well as in North and South America, the Argentine, Australia, South Africa, India, China and Japan.

More than 15,000,000 women and men are organised in the W. I. R., either individually or collectively. The W. I. R. is an indispensable organisation; its national organisations are indissolubly associated with the revolutionary labour movements of their respective countries. The W. I. R. is an international proletarian relief organisation, which does not desire to distribute alms, but wishes to work through the proletariat for the proletariat.

The Workers International Relief knows that it is only through a re-organisation of economy that social privation and economic misery can be eliminated. The W. I. R. will continue to use its provision-column in practical and effectual support of the struggling labour battalions until the day of deliverance.

After five years of activity, the W. I. R. looks with pride upon the tasks it has completed and the relief works it has carried out. It has helped to protect Russia and foster its development and to strengthen the defensive will of the German workers, and, by means of the China Alliance, it has built a bridge between the proletariat of the East and the proletariat of the West. The Workers International Relief which has inscribed upon its banners: "International Solidarity helps to Liberate the World!", is thoroughly convinced of the soundness of the Leninist views. It is the ambition of the institution to demonstrate the truth of the expression:

"The international solidarity of the revolutionary proletariat is a fact, despite the dirty froth of opportunism and social-chauvinism."

Animated by this thought, aflame with holy enthusiasm for the fulfilment of proletarian duties, the W. I. R. is preparing itself after five years of activity to use in the future in a still greater measure and still more effectually the feeling of international solidarity as a lever for the liberation of the international proletariat.

## AGITPROP.

### Obstacles to Communist Propaganda in Brazil.

By Octavio Brandao (Rio de Janeiro).

The workers of other countries can hardly comprehend the difficulties which propaganda in Brazil has to surmount. The Communists must work chiefly beneath the surface; certain cases are almost reminiscent of Czarist Russia. But despite the many difficulties, we have distributed since the beginning of 1926 no fewer than 254,923 copies of various literary products. For this purpose we have set up an illegal apparatus. In the matter of secret propaganda we have gathered considerable experience.

Since 1921 and more particularly since 1922 our life in Minas Geraes (one of the largest coffee-producing districts of Brazil. Ed.), has had much in common with that of ants. But these ants, too, undermine the whole of the ground. Now and then the enemy discovers the entrance to the ant-hill; we must then beat a hasty retreat, as we did recently in connection with the Marxist-Leninist courses. On three occasions we were compelled to suspend the courses we had instituted.

When we first set them up, the lectures on the Russian revolution were interrupted after a few weeks through several arrests. The comrade in charge of the course was imprisoned, too.

At the second attempt, an agent provocateur managed to slip into the very first lecture. The provocateur was trounced, but a number of Communists were locked up and the course again came to an end.

The third try was more successful: this time the course lasted from October 16th, 1925, to May 16th, 1926 — seven months. The Central Committee of the Party and the District Executive of Rio de Janeiro decided to organise 11 weekly courses, one for the youth, another for sailors, one for bakers, another for metal workers, one for building workers, two for restaurant employees and four for the textile workers.

We began with five courses a week and gradually increased the number to eleven. This made an average of 8 courses a week. During the 30 weeks (seven months) a total of 240 lectures were given.

In the beginning there were only six persons to a course but attendance was increased until we had 1440 people interested. If we had been able to hold the courses openly, we might have had 48,000 attending, instead of 1440, i. e. 200 for each course; such was the interest which the lectures on questions of theory and tactics aroused among the workers.

The programme which we arranged was carried out in detail. We also organised preparatory courses. Naturally, police persecution often prevented us from exhausting the programme.

We made a point of illustrating the lectures with examples taken from the revolutionary fights in Brazil. The lectures were of a concrete nature and dealt with problems of the day. At the conclusion of some of the lectures discussion was encouraged. The problems of Imperialism and the revolutionary theory were thoroughly threshed out. As a basis for the course on questions of tactics we took Lenin's book: "Radicalism, the Infantile Disease of Communism". In the lectures on religion we treated the subject in general and the individual religions in the Marxist-Leninist manner. This course ended with the discussion of dialectic materialism. At the end of the course the participants had to sit for examination; the examinations resulted in the discovery of some very useful collaborators for the Communist Party.

The course was interrupted on account of our campaign against the anarchist Carlos Dias. His friends, including the president of the Metal Workers' Union, ran to the police and told them the day, hour and place of the course. Four times the police tried to lead the participants of the course into a trap, and on three occasions they failed. The fourth time, on May 6th, 1926, the Communist hunt was conducted personally by the president of the metal workers. The selected comrade was just holding a lecture on the alliance of the Socialists, the Anarchists and the Anarcho-Syndicalists with Capitalism and the police against the Communists when the house was surrounded by the police. Most of our comrades managed to get away in the general confusion, but four were arrested.

Such is the lot of the whole proletariat of Brazil; one form of persecution after another. We have no legal Press. With the aid of the emergency law and of the police, the Government closed down the Brazilian workers' paper "A Classe Operaria" (The Working Class). It was not permitted to appear again to educate the working masses for the revolutionary class fight. We have done everything possible to get the ban removed, but, so far, without success.

The reactionary party of Brazil will not celebrate its triumph much longer. Even though we are compelled to carry on under cover, we nevertheless manage to keep alive Communist agitation and propaganda in accordance with the principles laid down by Lenin.

### Pavel Tkachenko.

In the moment of going to press, we hear that Pavel Tkachenko (see p. 1039) has been murdered "while attempting to escape".

Save Boris Stefanov!