

Notice!

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Bankruptcy of Imperialist Disarmament Hypocrisy at Geneva.

By Georg (Berlin).

The original plan of the imperialists, simply to stow away in a pigeon hole the Draft Disarmament Convention submitted by the Soviet Union, has failed. The whole of the 5th meeting of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission from the 15th to 24th of March turned simply and solely upon the Soviet proposals. For nine days the agents of imperialism wrote and spoke in all languages in order to prove to the workers that the disarmament proposal of the Workers' State was "not serious, was insincere and unrealisable". This great quantity of "counter-arguments" enforced by the Soviet delegation is a double success for the working class. The imperialists did not venture simply to reject the peace proposals without debate, because these proposals had already penetrated deeply into the mass of the people of all countries and because these masses are mobilising on the side of the Soviet government for the fight against imperialist armaments. In addition to this, these same masses have witnessed for nine long days the spectacle how, on the one side, the representatives of the proletarian State stood for peace, while the representatives of the imperialists came forward with hypocritical arguments to prove the necessity for armaments. That is of far-reaching importance, for these masses, with the exception of the Communists, still believed in the Geneva peace work.

This object lesson is bound to leave deep traces behind it. By the attitude of the Soviet delegation at Geneva the fight for peace has been brought to the forefront as an immediate and pressing task of the working class.

The delegation of the Workers' State has not spared the imperialist hypocrites who for years have talked of disarmament and at the same time conducted a competition in armaments. After the rejection of the first proposal, providing for immediate, general and complete disarmament, Litvinov brought forward a second proposal demanding an immediate partial disarmament, reduction of the armed forces of the big powers by one half and those of the smaller States by one third and a fourth. As both the capitalist rulers and their social democratic assistants constantly brought forward as the chief argument against the Soviet Russian proposals the assertion that the demand for a complete disarmament is not appropriate in the present political situation, but on the other hand a gradual limitation of armaments is both possible and necessary, it was needful also to tear this last mask from the face of the imperialist hypocrites.

The Communist workers are fully aware that the capitalist Powers will neither completely nor partly disarm. That portion of the working class influenced by the social democrats and

bourgeois pacifists still had, however, the faint hope that the Powers belonging to the League of Nations would agree, if not to total disarmament, to at least a reduction of armaments in order in this way to ease the pressing military burdens and to reduce the danger of military collisions. From the point of view of these workers, therefore, the second Soviet proposal and its brusque rejection by the capitalists was, it possible, still more significant than the fate of the first proposal.

The victorious Russian working class and the workers of the other countries mobilised by their action have compelled the capitalist governments to give plain answers to plain questions. A great part of the social democratic press, and not only of the "Left" tendency, could no longer continue undisturbed their campaign of calumny against "Red imperialism"; in fact they were partly compelled to show the class fronts as they are forming in the fight for or against imperialist war.

It is true there can exist no doubt regarding the actual views of the social democratic leaders. Although Paul Boncour avoided coming forward as champion of the imperialists against the workers' State, the "Peuple", the organ of the Belgian social democrats, expressed, on Vandervelde's instructions, all the more openly the opinion of the social-imperialist leaders of the Second International. Between the language of the "Peuple" and that of Lord Cushendun in Geneva there exists not the slightest difference. The "Peuple" described the attitude of Litvinov as a "Bolshevik diversion manoeuvre", whereby only "valuable time has been wasted and the real work of disarmament hindered". It joyfully endorses the declarations of the English Lord who showed how "childish and insincere" the Soviet proposals are. With the enthusiasm of a blue blooded lady, this social democratic organ observes "the amusing sport of the honorable Lord castigating the Moscowite rulers". That is the real attitude of the social democratic leaders, who are in the camp of the imperialist war mongers and therefore cannot fight against armaments but only promote them.

Before the disarmament discussion Lord Cushendun promised a "serious and careful examination" of the Soviet Russian proposals. He believed that by such trickery he could render their rejection more palatable to the English "man in the street". In fact the Paris "Temps" stated quite openly, that it appeared useful to have a long discussion on the Soviet proposals, the result of which had already been determined beforehand, in order to counter-act the Bolshevik propaganda among the "ignorant masses", which makes out that only the Soviets want disarmament, while the capitalist powers want armaments. The result of persistent communist work of enlightenment must show whether the imperialists have succeeded in preventing the Geneva debate having this, for them, so undesirable effect.

A certain confusion could be created in the heads of the workers by the fact that the representative of German imperialism at Geneva appeared to support the Soviet proposals. This could serve as an argument for social democracy that there are still pacifist capitalist governments. This sham must also be ruthlessly swept aside. The attitude of the German imperialists was a palpable manoeuvre. They believe they will be able the sooner to present their own disarmament demands, the sooner the pacifist hypocrisy of the imperialists of the victor States is exposed. They helped to expose it in order — as a glance at the leading press of German imperialism shows — to turn completely from the Soviet proposals and to place on the agenda not the disarmament of others, but their own armament.

The imperialists draw from the attitude of the Soviet Union at Geneva and the unbroken united front of all the capitalist governments against it, the conclusion that it is now necessary to set up in a closer form the imperialist bloc against the Workers' State and the insurgent masses of the colonies and of the capitalist countries under its leadership. "For the civilised world there now exists more than ever the necessity for a close solidarity of the League of Nations' States and their confident collaboration in all spheres of international politics", proclaims the "Temps" as a result of the disarmament debate.

The necessity for confident collaboration of the working class in the fight for peace is the command of the hour.

POLITICS

The Fight for the Amnesty in Germany.

By Emile Hölle-n (Berlin).

The Communist Party of Germany has been fighting for years for a comprehensive amnesty in favour of the condemned and persecuted revolutionary workers. From all the amnesties which have been issued in the course of the last eight years a greater number of revolutionary proletarians still remain excluded. The bourgeoisie obstinately refused to revise by means of an amnesty the monstrous class sentences pronounced against workers. For this reason, in addition to Max Hölz, numerous honest proletarians are pining in prison. Thus it comes that even at the present time, month after month, proletarians are condemned to severe terms of imprisonment on account of political offences dating from the year 1923.

In the meantime, however, a new political situation has arisen. By persistent campaigns of exposure and attack, the C. P. of Germany has enforced the prosecution of a number of Vehme (fascist) murderers. Their condemnation has brought about a sudden change in the camp of the Right parties, who had hitherto constantly opposed any amnesty for proletarian prisoners. The Nationalist associations from the ranks of which the fascist murderers came, have now for some months been exercising the sharpest political pressure upon the parties of the Right in favour of an amnesty. And as they know that a one-sided amnesty favouring the Right, or a speedy individual pardon of Vehme murderers is not obtainable at the present time, they are now coming forward openly and definitely for a general amnesty on account of political offences by Right or Left elements.

On the basis of this changed political situation the C. P. of Germany enforced the discussion of a motion for amnesty which the Party had already brought in in September 1927. In the Juridical Committee it became clear at the first meeting that the German Nationalists are prepared to vote for a complete political amnesty, provided the condemned fascist murderers are included in it. It was thus seen that such a complete amnesty is attainable in Germany at the present time if the social democrats vote for it. For the three parties, C. P. of Germany, S. P. of Germany and the German Nationalists possess together an absolute majority in the Reichstag.

The Communist Party declared at the outset that it did not intend by its motion to exclude the fascist murderers from the amnesty, to wreck the amnesty. In order to secure the release of the 325 political prisoners who are still pining in the prisons of the Republic, and to preserve from punishment a further 200 to 300 revolutionary proletarians who are now undergoing trial by capitalist class justice, the Communist Party, if it was impossible otherwise to obtain a majority for the amnesty, would not oppose the inclusion of the fascist murderers.

This situation was obviously disagreeable for the social democracy. It had the desire to wreck the amnesty. It wished on the one hand to stop the mouth of a great number of the best functionaries of the C. P. G. during the election campaign, and on the other hand, after the election, by means of an amnesty, to convince the German proletariat of the blessings resulting from the entry of the S. P. G. into a bourgeois coalition government. This political business spirit of the S. P. G. was so strong that at first, with the help of the centre parties, they succeeded in wrecking the amnesty. Then however, out of fear of their responsibility in the face of the proletarian public, they voted for a second reading of the Communist proposal. On the motion of the Communists a sub-committee was set up. In this sub-committee the deputy of the People's Party Dr. Wunderlich confronted the S. P. G. with the alternative: either to come to an agreement with the Communists and the German Nationalists regarding a common amnesty motion, or else to take upon itself the complete political and moral responsibility for the failure of the amnesty.

As a result of the Conference between the three parties a joint motion was drawn up which provided:

1. complete remission of sentences which have been imposed by the courts on account of offences committed out of political motives;
2. impunity for all political offences regarding which the courts have not pronounced judgment;
3. From these there remain excepted:
 - a) crimes of high treason committed for purposes of gain, and
 - b) murder, man-slaughter and participation in these crimes;
4. In pronouncing sentences on account of murder and man-slaughter committed out of political motives, the sentences imposed to be commuted to fortress arrest. In place of lifelong imprisonment the sentence shall be commuted to the half of the highest legal penalty (7½ years fortress), other terms of imprisonment will be reduced to a third of the originally fixed term; the period passed in prison while awaiting trial to be reckoned as part of the sentence; further ameliorations are permitted.

The social democratic Reichstag fraction have now set the crown on their shameful attitude with regard to the amnesty question. They have not approved the agreement which their representative, Dr. Kurt Rosenfeld, concluded with the representatives of the German National Parties. For them, therefore, even the compromise proposal in regard to the amnesty goes too far. As a result, hundreds of proletarian fighters must continue to languish in prison. In addition to this, German class justice has now the possibility to arrest again a number of comrades — who were hitherto protected by their immunity as members of the Reichstag or of the Provincial Diets — and render them "harmless" during the election campaign.

The rejection of the amnesty by the social democratic Reichstag fraction is also a challenge to the so-called "Lefts" among the social democratic deputies. Their representative, Rosenfeld, concluded the compromise agreement and was then repudiated by the social democratic leaders. It can be assumed that these "Lefts" will, as usual, come tamely to heel and help to throttle the amnesty in the Reichstag. This attitude of the S. P. G. is an object lesson for the proletarians of Germany, and of all other countries, on the character of social democracy in general.

Afghanistan and British Imperialism.

Amanullah in London.

By Georg.

The British Government press welcomed King Amanullah of Afghanistan to London with the remark that Great Britain had the "greatest interest in Afghanistan as an important bulwark against Bolshevism." This utterance is highly characteristic of the British plans in Central Asia.

In connection with the Afghan king's European tour, importance attaches primarily to two visits, those to London and Moscow. This in view of the situation of his country, which has the choice between friendship with the Soviet Union, entailing a confirmation of its independence, and a compromise with British imperialism, which would obviously make it a vassal State, a link in the chain of anti-Soviet adherents of Great Britain.

The British imperialists leave no stone unturned to catch Afghanistan by means of threats, intimidations, intrigues, and enticements. The interests of the country, however, point in another direction. In India and Egypt, Amanullah was hailed as a champion of the Oriental peoples. The British censor was obliged to suppress his not very Anglophile utterances in India. Now Great Britain is demonstrating the power of its air and naval forces to the king in England.

On February 28th, Afghanistan celebrated the ninth anniversary of its existence as an independent State. On this occasion the Afghan Government could not but remember that this independence was won and maintained in repeated fights against the British. For centuries Afghanistan was an object of British and Tsarist imperialist desire; it was a "sphere of interest" and its rulers vassals subventioned by the imperialist Powers. This also applied to the Emir Habibullah, the father and predecessor of the present king, murdered in 1919 by a progressive national-revolutionary group of conspirators in the Afghan army.

New social forces underlay this palace revolution, which in itself seems suggestive of a Shakespearean historical play. Their candidate Amanullah represented an anti-imperialist and Liberal policy. Privileges enjoyed by the feudal nobility and the reactionary caste of priests were abolished or restricted and steps taken in the direction of an economic development. It would naturally be wrong to imagine that this development has advanced at all far. It falls short, indeed, of that in Turkey or even Persia. Industry is altogether in its infancy. Feudal and reactionary tendencies still govern the greater part of economic life. The most fertile stretches of a soil which is relatively seldom arable at all, are in the hands of big landowners, who exploit the tenants by means of exorbitant rents. These fertile areas of land comprise no more than about two per cent. of a total area which is considerably greater than any West-European country, though populated by no more than ten millions. In so far as there are beginnings of an up-to-date industry, it is on a basis of State capital, and with the preservation, up to now, of the country's independence of foreign capital.

Such a development is hindered not only by the firm resistance of the feudal elements but also by geographical reasons. By reason of its situation, Afghanistan was until a short while ago a "buffer" State. From India and Persia it was subjected to British influence, from Russia to that of Tsarist imperialism. It was not until the outbreak of the proletarian revolution in Russia, which gave a strong impetus to the independence movements in the East, that the position was changed for Afghanistan. The Soviet Government welcomed the independence of Afghanistan, which it immediately recognised and did its best to promote. When, in the midst of the fight of independence against British troops, the Afghan declaration of independence was wired abroad in May 1919, Lenin hastened to reply to Amanullah as follows: "In the name of our Government of Workers and Peasants, I hasten cordially to congratulate the independent Afghan people, a free nation heroically fighting against foreign oppression." At the same time Karachan announced unconditional recognition on the part of the Soviet Government of the independence of Afghanistan, together with the sincere wishes of the Soviet Government for the speedy success of the emancipatory movement in Afghanistan.

The agreement concluded at Moscow on February 28th, 1921, between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union was the first to recognise the full independence and sovereignty of the former. It was at this time, too, that the development set in from the feudal to the centralised and national-progressive form of administration.

The menace on the part of Great Britain, however, is not wholly removed. The British military authorities are paying particular attention to the Afghan frontier. In the North of India great forces have been collected and strategic roads and fortifications have been built, so that in the event of a war access may be had to Soviet territory by way of the Khyber Pass through the Afghan mountains. Thus the independence of the country is greatly dependent on the fate of the Soviet Union.

The economic development of the country, meanwhile, is also greatly hampered by its lack of access to the sea. True, the foreign trade of the country is still small, consisting in the exportation of furs, skins, leather goods, textiles, carpets, and southern fruit, and in the importation of dyestuffs, household utensils, and bazaar trinkets. With the advance of industrialisation, however, this trade would also increase. In particular, machinery, motor-cars, and aeroplanes are to be imported and mineral raw materials, the rich deposits of which are still mainly unexploited, exported. Germany, which would be glad to see Afghanistan develop into a new basis of its colonial plans for the future, reckons with a considerable share in this trade. In the pathless wilds of the Hindu-Kush, Amanullah's technical advisers and engineers are opening up ways not only for caravans and motor-lorries but also for German capital.

The British imperialists, meanwhile, are also trying to tempt the young country from the economic side, by holding out certain prospects of an access to the ocean. The way to such an outlet, however, would necessarily lie across British territory and thus Afghanistan would be included in the British sphere of interests. True, since the war, the plan of encircling Afghanistan has grown far more difficult in view of the existence of the Soviet Union and of the anti-British tendencies noticeable in India and Persia. With the Soviet Union, Amanullah concluded, in August 1926, an agreement of neutrality, non-aggres-

sion, and non-participation in hostile combinations. Treaties of friendship have also been concluded with Turkey and Persia, while friendly relations are entertained with the independence movement in India. From London, Amanullah is to proceed to Moscow, Angora, and Teheran. In London he is naturally exposed to all the lures and menaces of Great Britain. If he yields to these, he will be going the same way as Chang-Kai-shek, the betrayer of national independence, whereby he would place himself in opposition to the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, and progressive forces in his own country, forces which helped him to ascend the throne. The proletariat knows by experience that this danger even threatens bourgeois nationalist leaders of the type of Kemal Pasha or Riza Chan, who are by no means consistent and thoroughly reliable champions of imperialism. So long and so far as they remain so, they may be certain of the sympathies of all advanced workers.

The New British War Adventure.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

The treaty of Jeddah concluded last year between Great Britain and Ibn Saud did not in any way correspond to the wishes of the British. Ibn Saud, in spite of all the pressure and cajolery on the part of the imperialists, managed to preserve a certain degree of independence. Warned by the experience of his predecessor and opponent Hussein, he did not place too great trust in British friendship and did not permit himself to be degraded to a mere agent of Great Britain in Arabia, as the English had hoped he would when they supported him against the Hachimitic dynasty. In particular, however, Ibn Saud refused to ratify the unlawful occupation of the two districts of Maan and Akaba, formerly regarded as part of Hedjaz; the frontier arbitrarily drawn by the British between Nejd (the territory ruled by Ibn Saud) and the British mandatory territory of Iraq, as well as the change in the administration of the Hedjaz Railway proposed by the British Government, which would be to the disadvantage of the Arabs.

On the other hand, the attempt of the British Government to consolidate its influence in the Arabian mandatory areas by concluding treaties with Abdallad in Transjordan and Fiesal in Iraq has encountered the fierce and growing resistance of the population of these two countries.

These two facts provide the key to an understanding of British policy in Arabia. For British policy it is now necessary, on the one hand, to coerce Ibn Saud and to reduce his independence to an extent permissible from the British standpoint; to compel him to recognise the division of territories already carried out by Great Britain and to consent to further losses in North Arabia which are necessary for securing the new proposed railway from Basra to Akaba. On the other hand, for the British politicians it is necessary to curb the population of Transjordan and of the Iraq, to reduce to silence the inhabitants of these two countries who are rebelling against the British mandate, and to justify the British occupation.

What could be simpler than to make use of the antagonisms existing between Transjordan and Iraq on the one side and Wahabite tribes on the other side, and in this way obtain an opportunity for direct intervention by Great Britain? As a matter of fact the relations between the nomadic tribes of north Arabia are such that it suffices to stir the ever smouldering fires of war in order to kindle fierce and bloody strife. Blood vengeance between the tribes, the bedouins, lust for booty, the proselytizing fanaticism of the sheiks — all this continually offers occasion for raids, encounters and skirmishes. These affairs between the various tribes are however, invariably settled in some way or other, provided nobody has an interest in fanning them up and converting them into real wars.

When, however, a war adventure in Arabia is necessary for the realisation of British imperialist plans, then only the slightest impulse is necessary in order to bring it about. Hence, contrary to the reports of the British and other imperialist agencies and newspapers, it must be stated that it was the intervention of the Royal Air Force which converted the isolated raids of the Wahabite tribes on villages in Transjordan or Iraq (which, it should be mentioned, are counterbalanced by no less frequent raids by Iraqi or Transjordanian bedouins on the caravans of merchants from Hedjaz) into a serious war. For the bombarding not only of the belligerent bedouins, but also of

the camping grounds of the tribes has called forth unbounded bitterness in the whole of north Arabia.

How ruthless and barbarous this "war in the air", conducted in the name of the defence of civilisation, is in actual practice is proved by the reports of the British themselves, which after every attack by the R. A. F. speak of hundreds of bedouins killed, including women and children. Small wonder then that every one of these attacks evokes a campaign of vengeance against the villages or tribes defended by the British aircraft, which in turn involves the extermination of whole villages and tribes. The movement, which formerly was confined to isolated tribes of Bedouins, now already embraces thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of desert fighters, many of whom see in the campaign of vengeance against the "Unbelievers" a "Holy War".

Needless to say, those who are responsible for British policy in Arabia are endeavouring to make use of the war adventure for their own purposes. In the first place they are able to demonstrate beyond doubt by means of the Wahabite raids that Transjordan and Iraq would be lost if it were not for British protection. Hence there can be no talk of a reduction of the British occupation troops, but if possible fresh troops must be sent.

Ibn Saud, however, is being pressed to the wall. If he leaves his warlike tribes in the lurch, then he will be threatened with the danger of a revolt which, even if it does not deprive him of his rule, will at least throw him completely into the arms of the English. The English will then be able to dictate to him their terms, which are, to make the changes of frontier necessary for them in north Arabia and if possible to place divisions of the R. A. F. at his disposal for his personal protection. If on the other hand, he takes active part in the fight, then he offers the English the welcome opportunity to send an expedition against him, which is bound to end at least in securing the frontiers necessary for the British plans.

It is true, British plans do not always turn out as intended. A fierce attack by the Wahabites, exceeding expectations, an intrigue on the part of one of the imperialist rivals (France or Italy, who have recently again become active in Arabian politics), increased disturbances in the British mandatory territory — any of these can easily nullify the calculations of the English in their adventurous policy. The risks are increased by the fact that the British forces are at the same time involved in a war in south Arabia with the ruler of Yemen, Iman Jihje, who is supported by the Italians.

UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS

Questions of Soviet Economy.

By A. I. Rykov.

We publish below the most important of such parts of the speech delivered by Comrade Rykov at the Plenum of the Moscow Soviet on March 9th, 1928, as refer to economic questions (save for that portion of the speech dealing with the counter-revolutionary economic conspiracy in the Donez Basin, which we published in full in our last issue).
Ed.

The Provision of Grain and the Market Position.

To what economic reasons can the difficulties experienced in the provision of grain be attributed? The chief reason was the dearth of goods, which has also on former occasions acted as a serious deterrent to our grain traffic.

It is extremely difficult to establish exactly the extent of the shortage of goods, since the methods of calculation employed for the purpose of ascertaining the extent of supply and demand are unreliable and altogether conditional. According to the computations of certain economic statisticians, the shortage of goods in the last quarter of 1925/26 and for the first quarter of 1926/27 can be put at a value of approximately 200 million roubles. The extent of this shortage again for the last quarter of the previous year and the first quarter of the current year can be estimated approximately at 500 million roubles, or at two and a half times as much as was assumed for the corresponding section of the preceding year.

From July to December last, the peasantry realised rather more than 1,700 million roubles out of the sale of their produce, and for the corresponding section of this year more than 1,900 millions, or about 11 per cent. more. From side occupations, such as constructional work, forestry, and the like, the peasantry increased their income over the preceding year by about 100 million roubles.

On the other hand, the extent of taxes collected from the peasantry has not increased over the preceding year, so that the accretion of income remained at the disposal of the peasants. If we deduct from this revenue the tax and insurance dues and the expenditure for the purchase of non-industrial goods, the increase in the purchasing fund of the rural districts for industrial goods figures at approximately 300 million roubles or 11 per cent.

And what happened in the cities? Here there was a similar process of increase in the effective demand (in connection with the increase of wages and the price reduction) to the amount of about 10 per cent.

And what have we to counter-balance such a big increase in demand both in the urban and in the rural districts? The output of industry receded in the fourth quarter of last year (as a result of the lack of raw materials and of a number of other causes) by 11 per cent. as compared with the first quarter. The output of the first quarter of the current year also proved smaller than all our calculations. Numerically there was an increase in industrial production, but since at the same time a price reduction of 10 per cent. was effected, the volume of industrial products augmented in value (according to retail prices) by no more than 0.4 per cent. over the corresponding period of the preceding year.

This resulted both from causes independent of industry, such as delay in the importation of some raw material or other from abroad (especially as regards wool), and from causes dependent on industry. To the latter may be counted the faulty distribution of raw materials and the introduction in the cotton industry of new and increased standards and assortments, which entailed a delay in output; likewise the organisational deficiencies noticeable in the wool industry etc.

Such were the market conditions accompanying the sale of the crops. The stationariness in the output of the light industries in the face of a vigorous increase in the effective demand of the rural and urban districts, inevitably caused an acute aggravation of the shortage of goods and a weakening of the feeblest links in the traffic of goods between country and town. This weakest link proved to be the grain provision, which receded in comparison with the preceding year, whereas all other products of cultivation were forthcoming in quantities in advance of those of the previous year.

From the beginning of the campaign until January inclusive, the accretion over the preceding year in the provision of goods figured at 70 per cent. as regards hemp, 28 per cent. for small hides, 15 per cent. for large hides, and 58.5 per cent. for oil seeds. In the first few months the provision of flax was fairly satisfactory, though a decline set in as soon as ever the flax producing areas experienced a deterioration in the supply of grain (in December). Subsequently it began to rise again, but at present the position as regards the provision of flax is by no means stable.

The supply of a number of other goods, too, has increased (butter, eggs, etc.). In the first quarter of the current economic year, the supply of butter amounted to 398,000 poods as against 385,000 in the preceding year, while 1,446 waggon loads of eggs were forthcoming instead of 855 waggon loads. In general the provision of all agricultural goods, with the exception of grain, was on a higher level than in the preceding year. And if there were and are instances of delay in the provision of the cities with certain foodstuffs, butter and eggs in particular, this is to be explained by the great increase in the demands of the town population, and by shortcomings in the work of our commercial organisations. According to a report of the Peoples' Commissary for Trade, the sale of butter in the first quarter of the current year increased from 256,000 to 323,000 poods at Moscow and from 140,000 to 178,000 poods at Leningrad, while the sale of eggs increased by 40 per cent.

The impediments in the provisioning of the towns with these products also result partly from the fact that we have, admittedly, somewhat underestimated the growth of the requirements of the cities in this regard. It is extremely difficult

to establish exactly this growth of requirements occasioned by the great changes in progress in the households of workers and employees in the direction of an improved standard of living. The change from the predominant use of black bread to that of white bread, from vegetable to milk butter, ensues with such rapidity in this country, that it is very easy to make mistakes in regard to the calculation of the probable quantities likely to be required for the purpose of satisfying the rapidly growing demand. Mistakes made one year must serve for the guidance of provisions in the next. The improvement in the alimentation of the working population is a tremendous positive factor in the life of our Soviet Union, and naturally the programme of our supply organs, i. e. our entire commercial and co-operative system, must include as a task of prime importance the satisfaction of the ever increasing demands of the working class.

Nor must it be forgotten that we cannot at present fully renounce the exportation of such products as eggs. The total volume of exports had to be restricted on account of the suspension of grain exports. The suspension of grain exports meant the creation of a "gap" in the export scheme, which had to be filled by something or other. Had we fully discarded the exportation of agricultural produce, this would have entailed a restriction in the textile industry.

What has just been said enables us to conclude that there neither was nor is a general crisis in the goods traffic between town and country, save for some delay in the provision of grain, the revenue from the sale of which commodity, however, constitutes barely more than 20 per cent. of the total income of the peasant population. How is it that the lack of industrial goods has found expression most pronouncedly in the provision of grain? It appears to me that one of the reasons is the relation between the prices of the various agricultural goods.

As a matter of fact, the price index in the first quarter of the current economic year was as follows: Rye 100.5, wheat 110.7, all cereals 109.4, technical plants on the other hand 140.1, eggs 217.7, meat 172.6, big hides 161.6, small hides 210.

We must now put ourselves in the position of the peasant to understand why, with a view to obtaining money, he does not in the first place sell grain, but those agricultural products which will fetch the highest prices. If the peasant has to pay the agricultural taxes and gets 100.5 for rye according to the index, while he gets 210 for small hides, it is obvious from his standpoint — the standpoint of a seller and the only reasonable economic standpoint — that it is more to his advantage to sell leather than to sell rye. And wherever he has the choice, the peasant will naturally sell what brings him in most. Seeing, however, that we could not offer the peasant a sufficient quantity of goods, while the level of taxation remained as low as in previous years, he was not sufficiently interested in getting rid of all his produce and sold only what brought him the greatest profit.

But selling grain merely to get paper money in return was not attractive to many. Our currency has undoubtedly been growing stronger and stronger year by year. Nevertheless, the peasantry has not altogether forgotten the experiences of the late war, which showed how a rouble could dwindle into a six copeck piece. The more we spoke of war and the war menace, therefore, the smaller grew the number of those who were inclined to sell grain merely for the sake of having paper money.

If the competitive properties of the cereals has proved smaller in comparison with that of cultural goods, the proportionate value of agricultural in relation to industrial goods has improved over last year. According to calculations by members of the Supreme Economic Council, the difference between the value of industrial and agricultural goods was last year 70 per cent. above what it was in pre-war proportion. This was an outcome of the campaign for reducing industrial prices, which effected a diminution of 10 per cent. in the case of the more important goods, and also of a certain appreciation of the prices of agricultural products.

Re the Kulak and the Measures of January 1928.

The objective difficulties in the direction of grain provisioning have enabled the richest kulak elements in the villages to exploit the situation for the purpose of speculation and of a fight for higher prices, which has made the supply of grain yet more difficult. Generally speaking, difficulties in procuring grain are also conceivable without the existence of a single kulak in the villages. If we supply no goods to the

rural districts and fail to provide a price proportion making the sale of grain profitable, we shall immediately be faced with difficulties in procuring grain, even if there is not a single kulak in the area in question. On the other hand, the nature of all and every goods traffic, whether it be simple or capitalistic, is such as can only be developed on the basis of the sale of a surplus of commodities.

In the present case we are faced with attempts on the part of the wealthiest elements in the villages to exploit these difficulties in the interest of a fight for higher prices, to which end all holders of marketable surpluses of grain are being mobilised. We have observed a number of cases of the purchase of grain by the kulak elements, of the refusal to sell stocks of grain, and of increased agitation for a raising of the grain prices. In our fight for the solution of the grain crisis, therefore, we were obliged in the first place to proceed against those elements which acted as the organisers of the sabotage of grain provisioning and originators of the demand for higher prices.

From this consideration there resulted those well-known methods of procuring grain, which have been the subject of so many communications on the part of the peasants.

Apart from an increase in the price of grain, which would entail a revision of price in general, there is one other conceivable expedient, viz. the importation of grain from abroad. But both of these expedients would, it seems to me, have been far worse than the campaign we have undertaken for a more vigorous provisioning of grain.

This campaign has undoubtedly all the characteristics of what may be termed a forced campaign. If you ask me whether it would not have been better to employ more normal methods instead of having recourse to such a forced campaign, I must openly admit that it certainly would have been better to do so. The fact of the matter was, however, that we had a very limited time at our disposal in which to overcome the crisis in the procuring of grain, which had to be effected by the commencement of the spring season, i. e. in a period of three or four months. It must be admitted that we had wasted time, that we had allowed the beginning of difficulties in procuring grain to pass unnoticed and that we had failed at an earlier moment to undertake a whole series of measures which ought to have been undertaken in the interest of a successful development of our campaign, so that we had a very short time before us in which to solve the highly important and very complicated question of collecting the grain and furnishing the country with grain products.

If we had recourse to a forced campaign, it was because it appeared in the circumstances to be the only and most advisable expedient. In pursuing this campaign we were obliged, as in the case of every forced campaign, to employ at short intervals a whole series of combined methods of an economic and extra-economic nature. We threw great quantities of goods into the rural districts, thus depriving the cities of commodities. We altered the tax liabilities of the peasants for the purpose of extracting all surpluses of means, we put through a law in regard to self-taxation, we had recourse to an invigorated campaign against the secret spirit distilleries, we mobilised all the available local Soviet, Party, and village organisations in the interest of grain provisioning, and we transferred a great number of central and local collaborators to the grain producing centres. The Party and Soviet organisations transferred their operations to the grain areas and the whole provisioning apparatus was revised and purged of a number of alien and malignant elements.

All this together formed the contents of that campaign which has been carried on of late and which has led to a complete revolution in grain provisioning.

Among the positive results of this campaign we must count the fact that the question of the grain crisis has been eliminated from the programme. In January we already bought 75 million poods as against 57 million poods in the January of last year and in February 115 million poods as against only 53 millions last year. In March the collection of grain has also proved satisfactory, and in all probability we shall by the end of this month have succeeded in buying up all the grain we had intended to buy up, i. e. 250 million poods. This will practically mean the solution of the problem of eliminating the menace of stoppages in the grain supply of the country.

Another positive result of this campaign lies in the fact that, thanks to the testing (on the basis of the experiences of this campaign) of the activity of all our organisations in the rural districts, including not only the grain-collecting and co-operative, but also the Soviet and Party organisations, a far more rigid adherence to class directives is guaranteed in the activity of these organisations than hitherto. This campaign has practically promoted one of the main principles set up at the 15th Party Congress, in regard to intensifying work among the village poor, strengthening the alliance with the great mass of middle peasants, redoubling our attacks on the kulak class in the villages and restricting their tendencies towards exploitation. In this sense the significance of the grain provisioning campaign far exceeds the limits of a mere elimination of a crisis in the supply of this commodity.

The New Economic Policy and the Regulation of the Traffic in Goods.

We must ask ourselves, however, whether this campaign has engendered other than satisfactory results. Of course, it has. Among its negative results, which have often enough been enumerated in the papers, we have seen attempts to introduce an immediate barter of goods, to force the placing of the peasants' loan, to organise sequestration detachments, and the like. In short, certain comrades have thought fit in certain cases to revive the methods of war Communism. All such steps are unsatisfactory and must be most decidedly opposed. The revival of war Communism in the rural districts and in their relation to the towns is impossible, and all talk of such a revival is nonsensical. In its instructions in regard to the grain provisioning campaign, the Central Committee issued the following regulations in this connection:

"All the talk to the effect that we are abolishing the New Economic Policy and introducing a system of requisitioning and the like, is nothing but counter-revolutionary twaddle, which must be most energetically opposed. The New Economic Policy underlies our entire economy and will remain so for a long historical period. The New Economic Policy permits of a traffic in goods and the sufferance of capitalism on the condition that the State retains the right and the possibility of regulating trade from the standpoint of proletarian dictatorship. Without this, the New Economic Policy would be tantamount to a simple restitution of capitalism, which the counter-revolutionary talkers, who jabber about an abolition of the New Economic Policy, will not recognise."

In spite of the repeated declarations by the Central Committee and the Government and in spite of the articles on this subject in the press, the talk of a restoration of the regime of war-Communism in the rural districts continues. A few days ago I was told by some workers in a certain district of Moscow that letters are still arriving from the rural areas in which the peasants express their misgivings as to a restoration of the system of war-Communism in the villages. I am convinced that in the majority of cases the reasons of such misgivings are to be sought not in omissions and abuses on the part of the local organs of Soviet power, but in the fact that attempts have been made to represent the pressure which has been brought to bear upon the grain speculators and the committal to trial of certain grain-speculating kulaks as a general attack upon the peasantry. The kulaks like to present matters as if not they themselves but the peasantry in general are the object of attack.

In spreading these rumours and in their attempts to convince the other peasants that the attacks directed against the kulaks are a menace to the peasantry in general, the kulaks are naturally actuated by the desire to obtain the support of the broad masses of peasants for their own speculative interests. Such malicious attempts on the part of the kulak elements in the villages, to sow dissension between the working class and the broad masses of the poor and middle peasants, must be counter-acted most energetically. In their policy against the speculators, exploiters, and kulaks in the rural districts, the Soviet Government and the Communist Party have been, are, and will continue to be, guided by principles of reliance on the broad masses of the peasantry and co-operation with the middle peasants.

We have asked ourselves whether in the coming year an organisation of grain provisioning would not be possible on the following lines: The State to establish definite grain prices binding on every one, and to appoint an organ which alone will be authorised to purchase grain in a given district; to this organ the peasants are obliged to sell their grain and will be liable to punishment if they do not sell their grain. Can anything be found in this method which is contrary in any way to the fundamental policy of the Soviets? It would seem to me that such a policy should be theoretically altogether conceivable. In the current year and for the next few years, however, it is unfeasible and therefore not permissible.

Such a system, which does not leave the peasants the possibility of manoeuvring freely within the limits of the local market, presumes an absolute and unconditional monopoly of the State both in regard to grain provisions and in respect of grain distribution. In the latter regard, however, considerable quantities are already passing through the local markets and circumventing our grain-dealing organisations. The extent of the internal grain turnover which does not pass through the State and co-operative organisations, cannot be accurately established. There can be no doubt, however, but that a considerable proportion of the grain-purchasing peasants, the regions of domestic industry, the small towns and market-villages are even now frequently supplied immediately by the grain producers or by the mediation of private traders. We are not in a position to establish exactly what and how many peasants have sold directly to dealers or in the grain markets and bazaars, nor yet who purchased their grain of them.

A complete grain monopoly in the hands of the State would shift onto the shoulders of the latter not only the distribution in the cities but also the distribution in all grain-consuming rural districts and among all grain-purchasing classes of the peasantry. To take over such a burden we are at present not in a position, nor is this really necessary. Any such relationship with the rural districts would certainly lead to an estrangement, not only from the kulaks but also from the broader classes of the peasantry.

In the provisioning of grain, the rôle of the private dealer has continued to decline for several years and has declined quite particularly in the last twelvemonth. As far as our means and powers allow, we must continue to diminish it in the future too. The co-operative and State purchase of grain must increase; year by year the number of those grain consumers must grow who cover their requirements solely from State and co-operative sources. With a view to a successful collection of grain, we must also strive to eliminate that competition between the individual grain-collectors which has so greatly impaired the work of grain-collection in the past few years. We must be more emphatic than ever in maintaining the stability of grain prices on a definite level determined by the State.

But all this has been done and will continue to be done within the limits of the New Economic Policy. We have never understood our New Economic Policy to stand for complete freedom in matters of trade. If bourgeois States have recourse in certain cases to regulating commercial traffic by methods of administration and of the courts, the proletarian dictatorship must do so all the more. In cases of emergency, it is true, we have always resorted to administrative measures, amounting in some instances to judicial condemnations, and this we shall continue to do. This means we employed in the towns against the foreign-exchange jobbers, the speculators in textiles and other goods. This neither was nor is an infringement of the principles of the New Economic Policy and of the traffic in goods. Such methods are also indispensable in dealing with malignant kulak elements in the rural districts.

As the fundamental system of our relations to the rural districts, the New Economic Policy continues to obtain on the basis of goods traffic, and all such extravagances, abuses, and stupidities as are perpetrated in a number of cases by local functionaries, entailing the spread of malicious rumours as to the liquidation of the New Economic Policy, are both harmful and dangerous. We must wage a bitter and systematic fight against them. The entire peasantry must know that the traffic in goods between town and country is to be maintained just as rigidly as the revolutionary legality in the internal affairs of the rural districts.

Ways towards Strengthening Peasant Economy.

The question presents itself as to how great the rôle is which is at present played by the socialised elements in agriculture. If we count the collective farms and the Soviet farms together, we have for the year 1926/27 a total of 2.7 per cent. of the entire production; in the current year it may be assumed that their share will have increased to about 3.5 per cent. In the aggregate volume of goods in agriculture, these socialised factors represented about 8 per cent. in 1926/27. In the current year the rôle played by the Soviet farms and the collective farms together may be expected to figure at approximately 10 per cent. in regard to the goods turnover.

Naturally the process of strengthening agriculture by collective methods is a lengthy one and cannot be effected by any coercive measures. It is just for this reason that we must most energetically take all the necessary steps for the purpose of promoting and accelerating the process of a transference to collective economy. We must keep in mind that we shall be in a position to achieve important successes in this direction, if we develop a systematic, energetic, and persevering activity. It is naturally on the collective farms in particular that the prospects of a development of Socialist elements are the most favourable. Last year already the Government contributed considerable sums towards the support and development of the collective undertakings. In the current year, these contributions have been raised to more than the double, and the attention of the Party and of the Soviets must be concentrated particularly on the solution of the task of consolidating and strengthening the collective movement in economy.

At the close of my remarks on the subject of grain provisions and on questions of our rural policy, I should still like to dwell on one particular factor. The last time we experienced economic difficulties was in 1925. We overcame them thanks to a considerable augmentation of the grain prices, thanks to the revision of all plans of agricultural development, and thanks to restrictions in our investments. The difficulties of the current economic year have been overcome without recourse to any such measures. The crisis in grain provisioning has been eliminated without a revision of our industrial investments and without an augmentation of the grain prices, in short without making any retreat.

The most serious danger ahead of us is the possibility of an insufficient expansion of the area under cultivation. Those rural elements which have suffered most as a result of their attempts to force up the grain prices (i. e. the kulaks), will perhaps desire to restrict the area under cultivation. Together with the middle peasant class and the poor masses in the villages, we must put up such a fight for the expansion of the summer sowing, as will ensure the increase of the area under cultivation. For the summer seed campaign of the current year, the Government has already earmarked considerable funds besides adopting a number of other measures towards attaining the extension of the cultivated area and the increase of the output of cereals.

This year the campaign for the summer sowing will be far more pronouncedly political in character than hitherto. It will consist mainly in a fight against the kulaks. I am in possession of information from several districts to the effect that the kulaks are already refusing to lease ground they have been in the habit of leasing, filling, and sowing. Also that they are restricting their employment of seed-corn. This tendency has not yet spread very far, but in general the kulaks are agitating for a smaller cultivated area. The sowing campaign must therefore be so carried through that, relying on our alliance with the poor and middle peasant classes and on such material sources as are at the disposal of the State and co-operative organs, we shall be able to carry the day in our fight against the kulaks.

The success of our forced campaign in the interest of grain provisioning and of our summer seed campaign will be greatly determined by the fact that the situation in the rural districts has changed considerably from what it was a few years ago. This alteration consists mainly in the fact that the organisations of the village poor have been strengthened, our alliance with the middle peasant class has improved, economy in general has advanced, our Party, co-operative, and other organisations in the rural districts have materially gained in experience, while their significance in the villages and their importance in agricultural production have grown substantially greater than was the case two or three years ago.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Meeting of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament.

(The following special telegraphic reports have already been communicated to the Press.)

Geneva, 19th March 1928.

The speech of Comrade Litvinov is generally regarded as an event of first rate importance for the conference. It will probably be very difficult for the delegates of the capitalist countries to steer the discussion into a side line now that the soviet delegation has put forward the question of disarmament in such a sharp form. The conclusion of Litvinov's speech with the reference to the United States has created particular sensation.

The embarrassment of the League powers was so great that no single delegation was able immediately to take up any attitude to Litvinov's speech. A number of delegations request the floor, but only for the next session. Only the German delegate Count Bernstorff spoke and pointed out the significance of the soviet proposals which he declared should be carefully examined. He expressed a desire that the discussion of the soviet proposals should be conducted together with the second reading of the so-called disarmament convention of the League of Nations. Count Bernstorff pointed to the necessity of fixing immediately the date for the disarmament conference.

The speech of the representative of the Turkish delegation was politically important because it supported the initiative of the Soviet delegation and recognised without reservation the honest will of the neighbouring and friendly Soviet State for disarmament. The Turkish delegation expressed its opposition to any proposal to hand over the Russian proposals to a sub-commission and proposed that they be immediately discussed in public. By its proposals the Soviet Union has placed itself at the head of the struggle against imperialist war. The workers of all countries regard the Soviet Union as the only leader in the difficult struggle for the maintenance of peace.

Geneva, 20th March, 1928.

The course of yesterday's session, the speech of Comrade Litvinov and the support of his proposals by Germany and Turkey, is generally regarded as a great success for the Soviet Union. The statistics given by Litvinov concerning the previous lack of success by the League in the disarmament question were particularly effective. The speech of comrade Litvinov has answered all opposing arguments in advance. The negotiations for a united front of all the capitalist powers against the proposals of the Soviet Union have not been successful.

Geneva, 20th March, 1928.

The discussion in to-day's session began with a speech of Marini (Italy) who declared: Not only military security, but also economic and social security must be considered. He, Marini, would be prepared to accept the Russian proposals if Litvinov could clear up his, Marini's, doubts about what would happen after complete disarmament had been carried through.

After a short speech by Clauzel in which he said nothing in particular, followed the great counter-speech of Lord Cushendun, the British representative: He, Cushendun, wanted to ask quite plainly what were the objects of the Soviet delegation in coming to Geneva? Up to the present the Soviet government had only sneered at the League of Nations. Russia did not want to join the League of Nations. Litvinov's speech had also made the League ridiculous. The Soviet government wanted to expose the League and sabotage its work. Thus the British representative openly admitted that the proposals of the Soviet Union are dangerous for the League. Cushendun then complained that according to the Soviet project the ratification of complete disarmament could not be deposited in Geneva. The council of the League of Nations was not even mentioned in the proposal, and that was very impolite. What sort of peace did the Soviet Union want? Did it also want to abolish civil war with its proposal, did it intend to abandon its previous policy of provoking insurrections in other countries? Cushendun then made poor jokes about certain parts of the Soviet proposal. The British police were only armed with truncheons. The Soviet proposal also wanted to forbid the study of war science,

thus a re-issue of the military works of Caesar and Napoleon would be a crime. He would ask whether the Soviet proposal was reconcilable with the League of Nations pact? This question and the Soviet draft should be presented to the governments and this would last at least six months.

After the sharp speech of Cushendun, which was obviously intended to weaken the propagandistic effect of Litvinov's speech, the Japanese representative declared that he had never carried a revolver in his pocket in Paris and Geneva so great was individual security. In Moscow he had also carried no revolver, but there were certain people who would gladly secure themselves against other dangers. Complete disarmament was not provided for in the League of Nations Pact and this pact would first of all have to be revised and this was beyond the competency of the commission. The discussion will be continued to-morrow.

To-day's session showed no clearness about the methods to be used to get rid of the Soviet proposal. No one dares to propose its rejection openly. The fact that the British representative was compelled in a long speech to take over the leadership of the opposition to the Soviet proposal shows how dangerous the situation has become for the League by the attitude of the Soviet delegation, which has put the question of disarmament concretely for the first time. The Soviet delegation will compel the conference to take up a clear attitude to the practical question of disarmament.

Fifth Session.

Geneva, 21st March 1928.

The second day of the discussion in the Preparatory Disarmament Commission showed that after the sharp speech of Lord Cushendun the capitalist representatives have recovered their courage and commence to attack the Soviet proposals energetically. For the moment however, they are not at all clear as to how the rejection of the Soviet proposals is to be carried out, because they do not want to compromise the League of Nations too badly.

The Dutch representative rejected the proposals very sharply. He was of the opinion that if the proposals were carried out, strongly armed police forces would gain considerable importance.

Gibson the representative of the United States declared that it would be useless to discuss the Russian proposals together with the previous convention of the League of Nations or to hand them over to the governments for discussion. Surely we don't want to destroy the previous work of the League of Nations, he declared pathetically.

Sokal the representative of Poland is also not willing to risk all the wonderful fruits of the previous work of the League. The Russians should consider the insurmountable difficulties. Otherwise they would bear the responsibility for the fiasco of the League of Nations. Let us defend the League, said Sokal.

At the beginning of the afternoon session the Belgian Rollin made an extremely provocative speech against the Soviet Union. He had the effrontery to declare that the Russian project was a work of sabotage against the activity of the Disarmament Commission of the League of Nations and that it damaged the cause of peace. The Russian proposal was a result of Russian hatred of our civilisation which has been expressed in every word the Russian representatives have spoken. Therefore the simple rejection of this proposal, so dangerous to our work, was the only correct way to deal with it.

The representative of Cuba desired a discussion of the Russian proposals in detail.

The representative of Bulgaria was of the opinion that the Russian proposals could not be carried out to-day. The frontier conflict between Greece and Bulgaria in 1926 had shown the danger which exists when a country which is too strongly armed adjoins another country which is disarmed.

The representative of Yugoslavia, Marcovitch, replied to the reproach of Litvinov that the non-recognition of the Soviet Union by Yugoslavia was a hostile act, by declaring that this was not the case. The Russians themselves were responsible for their international methods which endangered the social situation in other countries. The results of the previous work of the League of Nations were, it was true, very moderate, but the responsibility for this was partly on the shoulders of the Soviet Union because it was not a member of the League. The Soviet Union should take complete part in the work of the League.

Holsti, the representative of **Finland**, expressed the opinion that even with relative complete international disarmament conflicts would occur and for this reason armies were necessary.

Politis, the representative of **Greece**, made a long speech upon the juridical side of the construction and duties of the League of Nations. The Russian proposal was not reconcilable with the fundamental principles of the League. These principles made it the duty of the members of the League to maintain a certain minimal armament for the purpose, if necessary, of carrying out a common action for a definite purpose (a clear enough hint at the possibility of armed action against the Soviet Union by the States in the League of Nations!). The proposal of the Soviet Union violated Article 8 of the League of Nations Pact. The preparatory disarmament commission was not competent to discuss this project. Further, the Russian proposal would render any application of Article 16 of the League of Nations Pact referring to sanctions quite impossible. The Russians only thought of military sanctions, but there were other kinds of sanctions. If the Soviet project were accepted the Russians would have to provide some other international organisation in place of the League of Nations.

In conclusion **Politis** sang a hymn of praise about the previous methods of the League of Nations with regard to the questions of security and arbitration. There was much to be done still and no date for disarmament could be fixed now. The Russian proposal however, should be carefully examined so that the necessary amendments might be proposed at the second reading. Now, however, it was more expedient not to fix any date for the next session of the disarmament commission and for the second reading of the convention.

Geneva, 21st March 1928.

On the 22nd March in the forenoon the detailed answer of Comrade **Litvinov** will be made. It is not probable that then a simple rejection of the Soviet proposal will follow. It is probable that the proposal will be rejected in principle and that then the Soviet delegation will be given the opportunity of presenting individual proposals in the discussion.

In any case it was a great success for the Soviet Union that the representatives of the capitalist powers have been forced to discuss the Soviet proposal openly and in detail before an international tribunal, after weeks of previous discussion as to the best ways and means of letting the Soviet proposal disappear speedily and silently. These discussions will show the working masses of all countries perfectly clearly what the reasons and difficulties in the way of disarmament actually are. During the whole of the discussion the representatives of the capitalist powers were driven to the defensive. The concluding remarks of **Politis** showed that it is no longer possible to continue the old tactics. The imperialists admit openly that the "League of Nations is in danger!" Hence the cry of distress: "Let us defend the League!"

Comrade Litvinov's Speech in Reply to Discussion.

Geneva, 22nd March 1928.

In the session of the preparatory Disarmament Commission on Thursday afternoon, the representatives of **Argentina** and **Chile** made speeches of no particular importance. Amongst other things they both declared that brains must be disarmed before hands.

Comrade **Litvinov** then commenced his very detailed answering speech. First of all he expressed his thanks to the 17 delegates who had spoken in detail concerning the proposals of the Soviet delegation. He thanked in particular the representative of **Great Britain** who had considerably enlarged the discussion and put a number of important questions. **Cushendun** had put questions which had no direct connection with the subject under discussion. However, he, **Litvinov**, would gladly answer them. **Cushendun** had asked what was the secret motive of the Soviet Union in putting forward its radical proposals for disarmament. With what intentions and in what spirit had the Soviet delegation come to Geneva, **Cushendun** had asked. Of course, it was possible to ask much the same question concerning the attitude of **Great Britain**. Had its delegation come to Geneva out of pure love for peace? What had **Great Britain** previously done to secure disarmament? And was it not the fruits of the sabotage of **Great Britain** that the commission had not been able to commence with the second reading of its own draft?

For ten years the Soviet Government had interested itself in the problems of peace. The Soviet Government was the first government to draw its people out of the mass slaughter of the world war, and appealed to other nations to do the same. When the Soviet State had been attacked by its erstwhile allies it had agreed to peace as quickly as possible under great sacrifices. In 1922, at **Genoa**, the Soviet Government had raised the question of disarmament for the first time, whilst the other governments considered that the restoration of private property in Russia was a much more important question.

The Soviet Government has never attacked its neighbours, never declared war on any one and never participated in any war.

The Soviet Government had immediately accepted the invitation of the League of Nations to participate in the Disarmament Conference despite the disapproval felt by the Soviet Government for the League. If the Soviet Union had been a member of the League of Nations it would have been compelled to participate in the work of the Commission. The fact that the Soviet Union is participating in this work voluntarily, proves its honesty. The Soviet delegation has always taken an active part in the work of the Commission. The only aim of the Soviet Government in taking part in the work of the Commission is to bring peace to the peoples and lighten the military burden resting upon their shoulders.

The Soviet Government has never made any secret of its real attitude to the League of Nations, and has always openly declared how much of the Statutes and the decisions it could be prepared to accept. The Soviet Government is completely free as regards all the decisions of the League. There are other members of this Commission who are not members of the League. In the third session of this Commission the **United States** expressed its independence of the League in no uncertain terms. Why does **Cushendun** speak of sabotage? It is not to be assumed that **Great Britain** wishes the entry of the Soviet Union into the League. Any such wish would be in contradiction to the present-day policy of **Great Britain** towards the Soviet Union. The League of Nations Council knew very well when it issued the invitation to participate in the work of this Commission that the Soviet Union was not a member of the League and had no intention of becoming one.

The ironical article in the "**Isvestia**" did not please **Cushendun**. Very well, it depends upon the Commission itself and the results of its work to refute the scepticism of this article. But there are also bourgeois circles which share the same scepticism. A French reactionary newspaper has just written that the solemn speeches and promises made in the League of Nations will be as effective against war as the songs of negroes against thunderstorms.

Cushendun considers that any solution of the problem of disarmament outside the League would be dangerous and undesirable. He mentioned himself the **Washington Convention**, but he seems to have forgotten that this also was nothing to do with the League. The **Three Power Naval Disarmament Conference** was also quite independent of the League. **Cushendun** reproaches us that our proposals contain no mention of the League, but he forgets that very many international acts have been performed with the participation of **Great Britain** without having been registered with the League. The **Lausanne Convention**, the **Washington Convention**, the **Poison Gas Protocol**, the **Convention concerning the transport of arms** etc., all these have been deposited other than with the League. **Chamberlain** for instance, is opposed to depositing the **Anglo-Irish Treaty** in Geneva.

In his anxiety to discredit the participation of the Soviet Union in the work of this Commission **Cushendun** asks what is the attitude of the Soviet government to civil war. It must be assumed that this question was put deliberately in order to provoke the Soviet delegation to defend civil war and revolution and then to accuse them the day after of propaganda. This question is completely superfluous because the Soviet project only refers to wars between nations. We have never thought that one of the aims of the League was to prevent civil and class war. We say perfectly openly that the Soviet government would never have consented to sit at one table with the government of **Great Britain** or of any other State with a view to discussing questions of the class war. It would be naive to expect this of a government which resulted from the greatest revolution in the world.

and whose main aim is to defend the results of this revolution. The governments represented here will have to settle these questions without our participation. Did Cushendun want to suggest that the standing armies also serve for the struggle against revolution? This argument is in any case illogical, for the February and the October revolutions both took place at a time when a gigantic army was in existence, and this army actively participated in the revolution. If the delegations attach great importance to the question of social security, then they must make their standpoint a little clearer and more detailed.

Cushendun not only asked questions, he also put preliminary conditions; he wants guarantees from us. The Soviet Government should guarantee that armed insurrections never again take place in other countries. As though the practice and permanent policy of the Soviet Government were the organisation of such armed insurrections.

The British representative openly accuses us of so-called propaganda, as his government has done many times before him. Cushendun should see himself how careless he has been. It is a well-known fact that in a number of capitals, institutions and offices of Russian emigrants exist for the purpose of producing forged documents. A historic example of their work is the "Zinoviev Letter", which was brought up again in these days in the British parliament. The falsity of this document has long ago been proved, if by nothing else, then by the very fact that the British Government rejected the request of the Soviet Government for an examination into the question. 132 members of the British parliament have also recently demanded an enquiry, but the British Government has also refused this demand. The British Government bases its accusations of "propaganda" and "interference in domestic affairs" upon just such documents.

As far as the question of "interference in domestic affairs" is concerned there is no common language between the British and the Soviet Governments. For the British government such "interference" is any speech made or any article published in Moscow dealing with the situation in another country; but it is not "interference" when Gt. Britain sends its warships to towns like Nanking with all the consequences of bombardment for the civil population. It is not "interference" when the British Government demands that an independent country cease its operations against counter-revolutionary rebels. The Ultimatum to the Persian Government in 1924, the Note to the Persian Government in 1921, these things do not constitute any "interference" in the eyes of Gt. Britain. The Soviet Government of course cannot accept Gt. Britain's definition of "interference in the domestic affairs of other countries".

Gentlemen, you will perhaps ask what connection there is between this old dispute between the government of Gt. Britain and the Soviet Union and the question of disarmament? I am compelled to admit that there is no connection between the two things. I must point out, however, that the affair was not raised by me, but by the representative of Gt. Britain. It would have been wanting in respect on my part not to have answered his question.

Various delegates have raised the question as to whether our proposal for general and complete disarmament is not irreconcilable with the Statute of the League of Nations. They were all of the opinion that it was not reconcilable with the Statutes, but if that is the case, then I cannot understand why the preparatory disarmament commission did not reject our proposal in its November session and why a discussion is permitted to-day. The delegates in question are convinced of no more than the political correctness of their answer. It is constantly said that the League must guarantee general peace. Article 8 of the League Pact is no hindrance to general disarmament if the members of the League wish it. It seems to me it would be difficult to find a better means of discrediting the League of Nations than the declaration that the League is an obstacle to complete disarmament. Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man. Gentlemen, you will do the League a bad service if you make a fetish out of it to cloak the wishes of your own governments. The League of Nations Pact is no eternal law. Alterations have already been suggested by the League itself. If you really approve of complete disarmament and recognise the splendid results which would come of it, then you will not permit yourselves to be hindered by breach of an article.

Some have criticised the Soviet project because it gives no economic and social guarantee for a just peace, does not solve all international differences and is no panacea for all ills. This criticism would be justified if it were our task to find a panacea for all the ills of human society and to turn this earthly vale of tears into a paradise. We cannot recommend you such a panacea, because if we did you would not accept it. We have limited ourselves therefore to proposing a certain means against the greatest evil, the Moloch war. Our proposal is in accordance with this limited aim. That is the end we have in view.

The "arguments" brought against our proposal according to which the peoples would continue to fight with primitive means, or that industrially higher developed peoples would find new means of warfare and subjugate smaller nations, are all invalid. The best example of this is our country, the Soviet Union which is bordered by numerically much stronger countries such as China and India, but nevertheless has no fear. The other argument is also poor, for in any case weaker States are economically and politically dependent upon the more powerful States, as we can see everywhere to-day.

It is not possible, as has been suggested, that new weapons of war could be easily produced in a short space of time, particularly not when a good international control exists, such a control as for instance exists for the defeated countries Germany, Austria etc., through the Versailles Treaty. These "arguments" are a result of the deep mistrust existing between the various nations. And further, all these "arguments" could be used with equal validity not only against a proposal for complete disarmament, but also against any proposals for partial disarmament.

The representative of Italy spoke of a "just peace". Does he wish to suggest with this expression that the peace we have to-day is unjust? An alteration of the existing state of affairs is possible in two ways, either by war or by the revision of the existing treaties. The latter way is by no means excluded by our proposal. Further, Italy is a member of the League of Nations and can demand an alteration of the peace treaties.

Lord Cushendun has a habit of basing all his arguments upon false premises. He has presented the matter as though the Soviet Union demands that its proposals be accepted as a whole and complete. That is not true. The Soviet government has often received ultimatums, but it is not in the habit of delivering any. Our letter to the various delegations proposed only that our project should be taken as a basis of discussion. In my speech I enumerated the conditions under which the project should be discussed, therefore it follows that I have never rejected the possibility of discussing the project either as a whole or in its component parts, as Cushendun has suggested. It is true that I demanded that the fundamental principles which form the basis of the Soviet project should be accepted or rejected. Any examination or discussion of the Soviet project without the recognition of basic principles would be a waste of time. The Italian representative remarked very correctly that all the articles of our project are held together by the main principle of the destruction of all armed forces. If one rejects this basic principle, then of course the individual articles lost their significance and the project ceases to be a united whole.

With regard to the criticism of the organisation of internal security, I know how important it is for your countries and for the maintenance of private property. Lord Cushendun showed a special interest for the question of the armament of the police. He concludes from our proposal that it is more suitable for us, because in our country the police is allegedly better armed than in other countries. That is not in accordance with the facts. The Soviet militia is armed with revolvers like the police in almost all other countries. If I am not mistaken the police here in Geneva are also armed with revolvers. Are the police in Great Britain really only armed with batons? A report which I have just read in the "Manchester Guardian" of the 19th March would seem to contradict this. According to this report demonstrations have occurred in Belfast and large forces of police were concentrated. In order to prevent a repetition of violence the police were distributed in the main streets of the town whilst other armed police drove up and down in the streets in armoured cars. As one can see from this report the police in Ulster, which is still a part of the

British Empire, are very well armed. What is the situation in Bombay, Calcutta etc.? Lord Cushendun should admit that the proposal for armed police is particularly in Great Britain's interest. And in any case, if the other nations do not want armed police then the Soviet Union is prepared to abolish armed police also.

In the question of personal defence of citizens, Cushendun suggested that this was only necessary in the Soviet Union where the State allegedly failed to offer its citizens sufficient security. I can only say that in the Soviet Union private citizens do not carry weapons, because this is unnecessary as crime is less rampant there than in any other country. Lord Cushendun seems to forget that in all other countries, including Great Britain, shops exist for the private sale of arms to all and sundry. The representative of Japan has told us that it is dangerous to go out with a revolver in certain countries. What has Lord Cushendun to say to that? Representatives of the Soviet Union have been murdered in extremely civilised countries and diplomatic couriers of the Soviet Union have more than once had to defend their luggage with arms in their hands, and these things have all occurred in European countries which are members of the League of Nations. But if Cushendun wishes to propose a complete prohibition of the carrying of arms, including weapons for hunting, good, then the Soviet delegation will offer no objection to it.

The representative of Holland suggested that the continuation of the discussion of our proposal would be useless. On the other hand many of the delegates have expressed the opinion that it is necessary to continue the discussion. Our delegation is so much in favour of the idea of complete and general disarmament that it would not refuse to continue the discussion so long as the faintest hope of the carrying out of disarmament remained. But the discussion can only then be useful if the Commission declares itself first of all in agreement with the principle of complete and general disarmament.

Should this Commission accept general disarmament in principle, then I propose that the discussion of the Soviet project should take place article by article. Should the commission, however, reject general and complete disarmament in principle, then I would be opposed to any further discussion, for that would only be a waste of valuable time.

I have no illusions about the result of the negotiations. This has already been shown by the criticism to which our project has been subjected by the representatives of various nations. This criticism was based upon deep international mistrust. The utterances of the representative of the United States, Gibson, also showed this.

The representative of Poland declared that our proposal was "seductive" for the common people, the "man in the street". There is, however, no question of seduction, for it is just the masses of the common people, the toilers, who suffer from the burden of militarism and who are hardest hit by the Moloch war when it breaks loose. The Soviet delegation makes no claim to represent the so-called upper sections of society. The Soviet delegation represents here the interests of the workers and peasants. The interests of these classes are dear to us. The workers and peasants have the greatest interest in the radical solution of the problem of disarmament. The Soviet delegation is convinced that its project represents the interests of these classes.

I am able, however, to reassure the Polish representative. It is not probable that the friends of peace will set all too great hopes upon this session of the Preparatory Commission. The fact may be denied that the sympathies of the masses of all peoples are on the side of complete disarmament, but we are convinced that the time is not far off when these sympathies will express themselves so that they will even penetrate into the consciences of all governments and compel them to deal with our proposals in a different spirit than that shown by them to-day.

Geneva, 23rd March 1928.

To-day was a black day for the League of Nations. In to-day's session the abcess burst (as the "Temps" put it), the abcess however was the abcess of pacifist hypocrisy. The most important event of the session was the sharp attack made by Bernstorff upon the inactivity of the League of Nations in the question of disarmament and towards the new proposal of the soviet delegation.

In the morning session Gibson (United States) declared: Success is only possible after many difficulties have been overcome. Direct negotiations between the governments have shown no progress; it would be useless therefore to fix a date for the next session, otherwise we should again meet without success.

The pessimistic attitude of the United States is remarkable when one considers that the United States put forward the proposal to "outlaw" war.

Ruchdy (Turkey) declared that all projects, including the project of the Soviet delegation, must be carefully examined.

The Dutch representative delivered a new attack upon the Soviet Union and talked about the armed police which, he declared, would be the forces used to conduct new wars. In his opinion it was useless to continue the discussion (laughter).

Politis (Greece) declared that to-day the Soviet project could not be carried out. By saying that the League of Nations was a hindrance to disarmament Litvinov aimed at discrediting the League. The League did not intend to promise anything impossible. Police were necessary against criminals, in the family of the peoples there were criminals against whom it was necessary to defend oneself.

In the further course of the debate Comradé Lunarcharsky spoke for the first time. He pointed out that the Russian proposals went further than any previous proposals. It had been said that before a general disarmament could be brought about, mental disarmament must take place. The Soviet delegation was of the opinion that the proposal for complete disarmament was received with great enthusiasm by the peoples. Even if the Soviet project were rejected, that would not end the debate about the matter on the part of the general public.

The President of the Commission then proposed a resolution declaring that the preparatory Disarmament Commission rejected the Soviet project because, although this project represented the ideal of humanity, it was not possible to put it into operation to-day. For this reason the project could not be adopted by the Commission as the basis for its work and the latter would have to be continued upon the previous lines. That was the unanimous opinion of the members of the commission. On the other hand numerous members of the Commission were of the opinion that the provisions of the Soviet project should be examined by the various governments with a view to utilising parts of it for the second reading of the draft worked out by the Commission for the reduction and limitation of armaments. The Commission decided to examine the third point upon the agenda.

The afternoon session commenced with the discussion of the last point of the agenda, the discussion of the stage of the previous work of the commission.

Bernstorff argued in favour of the German proposal for the supplementing of the military year book issued by the League in order to secure that the undertakings of mutual publicity with regard to armaments should be carried out.

Cushendun suggested that the proposals should be dealt with at the second reading. Bernstorff had no essential objection to offer to this suggestion. A resolution was then adopted with the following contents:

"The commission takes notice of the German proposal for extending the military year book, reserves a discussion of the proposal until the next session and in the meantime recommends the examination of the proposal to the various governments. The commission empowers the President to decide when the circumstances make the convention of a new session appear desirable at which session the second reading of the draft convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments shall take place. The work of the security committee and the committees of the governments upon the proposals of the Soviet delegation and the German delegation shall be taken into consideration".

Bernstorff then declared: After the rejection of the Soviet project he thought that an insuperable wish existed in the com-

mission to take the first practical step towards disarmament. Instead of that however, a new resolution had been proposed to continue doing nothing. With this decision the commission had thus decided for the third time to do nothing and Bernstorff was of the opinion that it should at least give the reason for its inactivity. In Versailles a bill had been filled up which contained the promise of disarmament. If this bill is to be continually prolonged, the question at least arises, Why? Germany is an obliging creditor, it only demands one step forward, but even this is refused. Yesterday Politis declared that complete disarmament was in contradiction to the pact which contained certain military undertakings. Germany is completely disarmed. Thus, this is in contradiction to the pact. (Laughter.) The German delegation cannot vote for the resolution now before the commission.

The speech of Bernstorff made a deep impression, it was understood as a quasi-threat to demand a revision of the Versailles.

Amidst general surprise comrade Litvinov then declared that the Soviet delegation would present an altered draft either to-day or to-morrow. The formulation of the resolution had removed the last doubts as to the fate of the Soviet proposal. The Soviet delegation was compelled to declare that the majority of the delegations at the instance of their governments had rejected not only the Soviet proposal but also with all clearness the idea of complete disarmament. The Soviet government could undertake no responsibility for any partial usage of its proposal. As most of the delegations had rejected the Soviet proposal, then the Soviet delegation would at least search for a common basis for a partial disarmament which however, it could only regard as a first step. The commission was faced with the complete failure of its previous work, and this caused the Soviet delegation to put forward a new proposal. The Soviet delegation would propose the first reading of this new draft in the present session. Once again it would attach most importance to the acceptance or rejection of the basic principles of the draft. It regarded its new proposal purely as a first step towards complete disarmament and reserves to itself the right to propose new projects upon the acceptance of the first. Further the Soviet delegation reserves the right to come back to its first proposal at the conference.

Cushenden then opposed the statement of Bernstorff that nothing had been done for disarmament. Great Britain had always had a small army and further, it had considerably reduced its fleet. Bernstorff then replied.

Politis opposed the interpretation placed by Bernstorff upon the voting.

Clauzel polemised against Bernstorff on account of his attack upon the Versailles Treaty. He declared that the disarmament in France and the recent military laws in France were proofs of the will of the French government to peace. He regretted the confusion that had now been created. The cause of disarmament had taken a great step backwards. He addressed a lachrymose appeal to Litvinov and declared *inter alia* that Litvinov had only wished to demonstrate to the world that great confusion existed in the League of Nations.

Bernstorff again spoke and reminded the commission that the former inactivity of the disarmament commission had always been excused by saying that the absence of the Russians was the reason. Now that the Russians were here, an attempt was being made to say that the cause of the confusion was their presence!

The discussion then became still more confused. When Bernstorff proposed that a new resolution be adopted calling upon the League of Nations Council to convene the disarmament conference, the Argentine delegate Perez aroused great amusement by rising and declaring that he could understand nothing whatever any more about what the discussion was.

In conclusion comrade Litvinov polemised sharply against the President of the commission because the latter wished to get rid of the Soviet proposal. Why should we go home with empty hands? he asked. He declared that the Soviet delegation would eventually support the German proposal.

Amidst great confusion the session was then adjourned until the 24th March.

Proposal of the Soviet Delegation for Partial Disarmament.

Geneva, 23rd March 1928.

The new proposal of the Soviet delegation for partial disarmament is as follows:

Having regard to the fact that the tremendous growth of armaments weighs heavily upon all the peoples of the world and depresses the cultural level and material conditions of the peoples, having regard to the fact that the bitter struggle between various States to secure the hegemony in the sphere of armaments and that the tendency to increasing the means of warfare are factors which increase the possibility of armed conflicts, and desiring to protect the working population as far as possible from the immediate danger of war, the undersigned States have agreed upon the following convention in order to make a serious and practical first step towards complete disarmament is as follows:

General Provisions: As a limited number of the most powerful States who are striving for world dominance expend a considerable part of their budget on armaments and are at any time in a position in consequence of the high state of development of their industry to increase their armaments for aggressive purposes, the undersigned States recognise that the only just way is to secure a progressive reduction of all forms of armaments. For this is the method which least damages the interests of the small and weak States which are dependent economically upon the larger States.

The first chapter of the project refers to the armed land forces. All States shall be divided into four sections. Section A includes all nations which maintain a standing army of over 200,000 soldiers and 10,000 officers and 60 regiments. Section B includes States which maintain an army of over 40,000 men, 2,000 Officers and 20 regiments. Section C includes all nations with less than the above numbers, and section D includes all those nations which were disarmed in consequence of the world war.

Article 2 provides that the simplest and justest method for the reduction of armaments is the application of equal co-efficients per section. It shall therefore be decided that in section A the number of troops maintained shall be reduced by half, in section B by a third and in section C by a fourth. A special convention shall be concluded for section D. The reduction according to these co-efficients applies to all ranks, officers, non-commissioned officers and men and troop sections. The limits of the troop sections, the number of men, and the details for the reduction of each category of the armed forces, infantry, cavalry, artillery, the depots of the troops, the number of troops in the colonies, etc., shall be determined in a special convention. In order to prevent the accumulation of trained reserves, the number of trained men in each section shall be reduced according to the co-efficients for the sections. Laws shall be passed in all countries to prohibit the existence of all public military formations and the military training of the civil population.

The war-material of January 1928 shall be maintained as the model for armament, with the exception of tanks and heavy artillery, as these weapons only serve for a war of aggression. The arms which particularly threaten the civil population, for instance, the air force, chemical war means, etc., must be destroyed. A special convention containing the details of this destruction shall be drawn up. The limits of the arms supplies per thousand reservists shall be specially determined for each State. The maximum number of arms and tables for all categories of arms shall be laid down in accordance with the above provisions in a special convention. Arms in the countries signatory to the convention which exceed the previous provisions shall be destroyed.

The second chapter regulates armaments at sea, also according to categories. Fleets above 200,000 tons shall be reduced by half, this proportion applies to the whole fleet and to all arms of the fleet. Fleets under 200,000 shall be reduced by one quarter. All aircraft carriers shall be destroyed. All vessels to be destroyed must be disarmed within the space of one year in accordance with a special technical convention to be concluded. All fresh naval construction shall only take place for purposes of replacement and only then after a certain specially determined period of service. Special lists shall be made of all ships according to displacement and armament. The parties to the agreement shall undertake never to use disarmed ships

for war purposes or to sell them to other States or to tolerate the building of warships exceeding the provisions of this agreement upon their own territory nor to cause ships to be built beyond these provisions in foreign shipyards, or to supply mercantile vessels with equipment for use in case of war. Special regulations shall control the supplies of naval war material.

The third chapter deals with air armaments. Within the course of a year after the conclusion of this agreement all dirigible aircraft must be disarmed and placed in a condition in which they could not be used for war purposes. In accordance with the general provisions of this convention all States shall be divided into groups according to whether they maintain in service more than 200, above 100, but less than 200, or under 100 military aircraft. Disarmament shall take place according to these groups. The arming of civil lighter or heavier than air machines or any equipping of such machines for war purposes shall be prohibited. All supplies and dumps of air bombs and other means of destruction intended to be discharged or dropped from the air shall be destroyed within the space of three months. A further article regulates the details of the distribution of the air forces in the capital towns and in the colonies.

The fourth chapter deals with chemical means of warfare, the means of its application and bacteriological means of warfare. All these must be completely destroyed within three months. All chemical undertakings for this purpose shall be dismantled. The States undertake to sign the Geneva convention in this respect within three months.

The fifth chapter deals with military budgets. The total figures of the military budgets shall be reduced in accordance with the proportional disarmament provided for in groups A, B, C and D. A proportional reduction must be carried out for personal and material expenditure. All secret funds for extraordinary purposes shall be excluded from the military budgets. All expenditure for armaments shall be contained in a single chapter of the State budget which shall always be published. The reduction of the military budgets shall be carried out from the year 1929 parallel with the reduction of armaments. From 1930 on maximal figures for the military budgets of each State shall be fixed. In the future military budgets shall never increase.

The sixth chapter regulates the periods for the carrying out of all the details of the convention. The convention shall be carried out within two years from the date of validity.

The seventh chapter provides for an international permanent control commission and sets down the regulations for the control of the carrying out of the convention. This chapter also provides for measures against such States as shall violate the convention. It also regulates how public opinion is to be informed about the carrying out of disarmament. The international control commission shall be composed in equal numbers of representatives of the legislative bodies and of the trade unions and other working class organisations which fight for peaceful relations between the States. Side by side with this commission a permanent committee of military experts shall be operative.

Professional solidiers or sailors, officials of ministries of war, owners of shares in the war-material industry, owners of shares in large-scale banks, all who are interested in the war-industry or the transport of war-material and high officials of all these undertakings shall not be eligible as members of the International Control Commission. In order to guarantee a real control it is the right of the I. C. C. in the case of well-founded suspicion to conduct investigations by special commissions. In the war-industries factory committees of the workers or other trade union organs may organise a permanent workers control in order to limit the possibilities of any violations of this convention. A similar control shall be organised in the chemical industry. The States undertake to provide the I. C. C. with all information concerning their armaments in accordance with the special regulations.

The eighth chapter regulates the ratification and the application of this convention. The ratification originals shall be deposited in five copies in each capital of a State of every portion of the globe.

CONGRESS OF THE R. I. L. U.

Discussion on the Speech of Comrade Losovsky.

(The following telegrams have already been communicated to the press.)

Moscow, 20th March 1928.

The discussion upon the speech of Comrade Losovsky commenced this morning.

Comrade Heckert (Germany) declared:

Comrade Losovsky said very correctly that a number of right wing digressions had taken place in Germany. However, we have since corrected these mistakes. These digressions were the result of the complicatedness of the situation, the pressure exercised by the reformists, and the wrong attitude of various comrades to the left-wing social democrats, to Amsterdam etc. We also suffered a left-wing digression, for instance in the struggle for the eight-hour day. With regard to the question of the 8-hour day, we cannot declare ourselves in agreement with the slogan contained in the theses of Comrade Losovsky of the 7 hour day, because this latter slogan is not concrete and is not in accordance with the relation of forces in Germany at the present time.

Heckert then polemised against certain critical remarks made by Comrade Losovsky which Heckert finds exaggerated. He pointed out the successes won by the revolutionary trade union opposition in Germany in recent years, and declared that all forces must be used to build up the R. I. L. U. so that it could defeat Amsterdam both ideologically and organisationally.

Comrade Horner (Gt. Britain) declared:

The economic situation in Great Britain is becoming ever more acute. The employers are fighting on two fronts. They are supporting the little yellow unions and at the same time negotiating with the leaders of the General Council. The reformists themselves are carrying out a coalition policy and are seeking to make the trade unions useful to capitalism. In this situation every labour struggle becomes a political struggle. Our chief task is the struggle for the conquest and the leadership of the masses, for the establishment of a close contact with them. At the same time we must not forget to support with all the means in our power the oppressed workers in the colonies. We consider it necessary to strengthen the Minority Movement in the trade unions with all possible means and to increase the activity of the International Committees of Action, which we regard as one of the most important weapons for rallying the trade unions around the R. I. L. U.

Comrade Martinez (Latin-America) stated:

The capitalism of the United States wants to swallow Latin-America whole, from the economic point of view. The Pan-American Federation which has recently been formed and which enjoys the support of the American Federation of Labour seeks to carry out the imperialist policy of the United States. The American workers must fight against this organisation. The workers of Latin-America see their greatest task in the fight against the American Federation of Labour which supports the imperialism of the United States.

Comrade Jeffer (Australia) declared that the fairy tale of the Amsterdam International, according to which Australia was a happy land under a labour government, was false. The so-called Labour Government in Queensland had passed a number of laws during the last six or seven years which were directed against the working class. This government was in permanent conflict with the working class. The compulsory arbitration law caused very considerable damage to the working class. Unemployment was growing. Wages were being reduced despite the resistance of the fighting section of the proletariat. The R. I. L. U. was becoming ever more popular amongst the working masses. At the present moment a new law was being prepared to limit the rights of the trades unions. This new law was being resisted

energetically by the revolutionary section of the proletariat of Australia.

Comrade **Dombicki** (Poland) declared:

The illusions which had been cherished by certain sections of the working class and the peasantry that a betterment would come about with the seizure of power by Pilsudski, had now been finally dispelled. Legal workers and peasants organisations were being destroyed in Poland. At the same time the revolutionary spirit of the working masses was growing. The 1928 elections showed that the masses were turning to the left. The reformists were attempting to pretend that they opposed the government in order to deceive the masses. These attempts of the reformists would have to be exposed.

Comrade **Monmousseau** (France) declared:

We are completely in agreement with the analysis which Comrade Losovsky gave of the general situation. The reformist leaders are preparing an agreement with the capitalists. This rapprochement between the reformist leaders and the bourgeoisie shows itself particularly clearly in France. This rapprochement shows itself in the Economic Council in the form of an official bloc between the reformist trade union leaders, the representatives of industry and the government. This right-wing swing of the reformist leaders however, produces a strong process of radicalisation amongst the working masses. We considerably assist in this process of radicalisation by exposing the reformist leaders.

Our greatest weakness is the insufficient organisational connection with the masses despite the growing influence of the C. G. T. U. Some of our comrades estimated the rationalisation incorrectly and underestimated the fighting spirit of the workers. We have taken the measures necessary to correct these mistakes and in the recent struggles the organisations of the C. G. T. U. were at the head of the fighting workers everywhere. Our strike strategy must be of such a nature that through it we can develop and strengthen our organisations. We must also try to increase our basis in the large factories and to extend our influence over the unqualified workers, the young workers and the women workers. The persecution by the government and the employers against the active members of the C. G. T. U. is being increased, and this proves that the C. G. T. U. is the only mass organisation which represents the interests of the masses.

Comrade **Tomann** (Austria) quoted many facts which showed the co-operation between the reformist trade union leaders and the bourgeoisie. Otto Bauer had announced the slogan of the reconstruction of industry, but in reality this slogan meant a worsening of the present conditions of the workers and a lengthening of the working day. This same tactic was being applied by the reformists in the neighbouring States also. Fascist unions were being formed in Austria, particularly in the heavy industry. The conflict between labour and capital was inevitable, the working class movement was faced with the danger of being bloodily suppressed by the bourgeoisie. The reformists, however, were doing nothing to counter this danger. Unfortunately the influence of the reformists upon the working masses was still very strong. The revolutionary wing of the working class was making the greatest efforts in order to expose the fascist policy of reformism.

Comrades **Kugler** (Switzerland) and **Rodrigo** (Cuba) then spoke. The discussion is being continued.

Moscow, 23rd March, 1928.

In the discussion upon the speech of Comrade Losovsky, the Czech delegate Comrade **Dvorski** declared that the Czechoslovakian delegation was in agreement with the analysis of the international situation contained in the speech of Comrade Losovsky. The situation of the Czech working class was very difficult. Recently the workers had gradually gone over to the offensive. The influence of the reformist leaders was gradually being weakened which was shown particularly in the recent strikes of the textile workers and the miners. The present strike wave in Czechoslovakia was different from that of the previous year by the fact that to-day the revolutionary unions were gaining members despite partial lack of success. One of the

failings of the work was the fact that up to the present no strongly organised Left-Wing existed inside the reformist unions.

Comrade **Gomez** (Uruguay) welcomed the great attention paid by the R. I. L. U. to the trade union movement in the Latin-American countries. The forces of the revolutionary trade unions in Latin-America were steadily growing. At the present time the revolutionary trade union movement had 100,000 members in Cuba, 100,000 in Brazil, 100,000 in Chile, over a 100,000 in the Argentine, 75,000 in Columbia etc. Amongst other insufficiencies were bad centralisation, the underestimation of the work amongst the non-organised workers and also from time to time a lack of unanimity in carrying out strikes. The influence of the American Federation of Labour was not strong in Latin-America, but it should not be underestimated. As far as co-operation with the bourgeoisie was concerned, there was no difference between the Pan-America Federation of Labour and the Amsterdam International.

Comrade **Su** (China) who was greeted with storms of applause described in detail the situation of the working class movement in China and declared that the remarks of Comrade Losovsky concerning the mistakes which had been made upon the declaration of strikes, were justified. The yellow trade unions had no influence upon the masses, and this could be explained partly by the fact that the so-called aristocracy of labour which forms the chief support of the reformist trade unions in the countries of Western Europe, had a bad reputation in China. The less paid workers hated this section of labour aristocrats supported by the bourgeoisie. The struggle of the working class for better working conditions was making progress despite the blackest reaction. The working class movement did not retire after the coup d'Etat in Wuhan, on the contrary, it was steadily developing and embracing ever broader and broader masses. The white terror in China was growing in a threatening manner. Although the Canton insurrection was crushed it was nevertheless of tremendous significance because it opened up a new stage of the struggle of the Chinese toilers for the Soviet power.

After pointing out the facts which characterised the united front between the imperialists and the Kuomintang, Comrade Su stressed the importance of last year's congress of the trades unions of the countries bordering upon the Pacific Ocean for the formation of a united front of all the toilers in these countries against the united forces of the reaction.

Comrade **Ramos** (Spain) declared:

The lack of influence of the R. I. L. U. upon the working class movement in Spain was due to the raging terror of the fascist government. He pointed to the necessity of forming a central committee of the supporters of the R. I. L. U. in Spain and founding unity committees in all the Spanish centres.

Comrade **Dunn** (United States):

Apart from the formation of new revolutionary unions, it is necessary to capture the old ones under reformist influence. At the present moment the number of unemployed in the United States was 5 millions. The yellow unions followed the same aims as the company unions. The growing dissatisfaction of the American working class must be utilised to strengthen its revolutionary class consciousness. Therefore it is necessary to strengthen the work of the R. I. L. U.

Comrade **Gossip** (Gt. Britain) pointed out that the number of unemployed in Gt. Britain had again risen to 1,300,000. The situation of the working class was also made worse because the cost of living was 62% higher than before the war. With the present policy of the reformist trade unions, even a boom period would not result in any betterment of the conditions of the workers.

A Chinese working woman from the textile mills in Shanghai was greeted by the congress with tremendous applause. She described the unfortunate lot of the Chinese working women. In the Shanghai textile factories 105,000 women and 22,000 children were working. A woman was paid from 3d. to 10d. for a working day of 12 hours. Should the workers be guilty of even the smallest offences they are robbed of even this small wage by fines etc.

Comrade Ginsburg (Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions) described the gains of the workers in the Soviet Union. The industrialisation in the Soviet Union, in contradistinction to industrialisation in capitalist countries, led to a continual improvement in the economic situation of the working masses and a rise in their cultural level. The rationalisation of production in the Soviet Union was closely connected with the shortening of the working day and the improvement of working conditions (storms of applause).

Comrade Vitkovsky (Poland) spoke about the tasks of the revolutionary unions in Poland. Strike strategy must be so applied that it leads to the winning of the strike by the revolutionary unions. The opinion of some German comrades that we must first win the masses ideologically and then lead them in the struggle was wrong. The masses should be shown by concrete actions that the revolutionary unions really represented their interests; only then would it be possible to win them ideologically. With regard to the united front tactic, Vitkovsky stressed that this tactic must be directed to the winning not of the leaders but of the masses, and must be carried out in opposition to the leaders of the reformist unions with the support of the broad masses.

Comrade Sachno (Italy):

The reformists worked systematically for the liquidation of the General Confederation of Labour in Italy, and now they have declared the Confederation dissolved. The workers, however, have by no means agreed to this and in a conference the decision of the reformist leaders was annulled and it was decided to carry on an energetic recruiting campaign amongst the workers to obtain more members. Despite the increased fascist terror, this recruiting work had already shown good results. Many local organisations had been rebuilt and successful wage struggles had been carried through.

The Amsterdam International played a double role towards the General Confederation of Labour and proved by this that it wanted nothing to do with any real struggle against fascism. The Confederation referred the question of its international affiliations to its next general congress. Nevertheless it decided to send a delegation to the congress of the R.I.L.U. in order to show that the Confederation is well aware of the value of the support accorded to it by the R.I.L.U. in its struggle against fascism. By sending its delegation the Confederation also wanted to express its solidarity with the workers of the Soviet Union and declare that the proletariat of Italy will do all in its power to defend the Soviet Union against outside attack. The Confederation will work for the international unity of the trade union movement and afford the R. I. L. U. all-round support.

Comrade Brisset (France):

The main aim of the Congress was to find the best methods of struggle against the capitalist rationalisation, against the danger of war and for the defence of the Soviet Union. In this connection the speaker, a French working woman, pointed to the growing rôle of women in the process of production and stressed the necessity of organising the working women, particularly in the war industry.

Comrade Nin: declared himself in complete agreement with the theses and the speech of Comrade Losovsky. He pointed out that the R.I.L.U. had, unfortunately, only great work to show in the Orient. He also declared that a number of right-wing digressions has been seen in a number of countries in recent years. These would now be corrected by Comrade Losovsky's theses. Nin then declared that the part taken by the Soviet labour unions in the work of the R.I.L.U. was not sufficient. The labour unions movement in the U.S.S.R. was much too optimistic and paid too little attention to its own faults. They should strive to come closer to the masses and carry out democracy in the unions more energetically.

Comrade Koselev (Central Committee of the Metal Workers Union of the S.U.) answered the criticism of Comrade Nin. The Soviet labour unions did not ignore their faults, on the contrary the sharpest criticism was published in their own press against these faults. The great achievements of the Soviet labour unions must however, not be overlooked. In no other country was the

percentage of organised workers so high as in the U.S.S.R. Over a million organised workers were active as officials in the unions. Trade union democracy was carried out on a wide scale in the meetings, production conferences and other arrangements.

The united front tactic which had been laid down at the III. Congress of the R.I.L.U. had proved correct. The theses of Losovsky only laid down the best methods of carrying out this tactic. The Soviet labour unions had completed the theses by the suggestion that the work of the revolutionary wing inside the reformist trade unions be increased. This work was difficult but necessary. It was the task of the R.I.L.U. to get into close touch with the masses in the large-scale undertakings, to take the spirit of these masses into consideration and to do everything possible to raise the revolutionary class-consciousness of the working class.

Comrade Carney (Ireland) described the situation of the Irish trade union movement and then complained about the lack of solidarity shown by some sections of the R.I.L.U. towards the Irish Workers League, and about the lack of discipline in the R.I.L.U. with regard to the carrying out of instructions in this question.

Comrade Mayer (Germany) declared that in connection with the carrying out of the rationalisation of German industry the number of women in the process of production was being steadily increased. Male workers were being squeezed out of many factories. The women workers were subjected to tremendous exploitation and oppression. They must be organised for the struggle against capitalist rationalisation.

Comrade Watkins (Gt. Britain):

On the whole the British delegation is in agreement with the theses of comrade Losovsky but finds that the question of unemployment was not dealt with sufficiently. The question of the international trade secretariats was also not mentioned in the theses. The congress must definitely and clearly define the attitude of the R.I.L.U. to the trade secretariats. This was all the more necessary as the decision of the Paris congress of the I.F.T.U. made the affiliation of the Soviet labour unions to these secretariats impossible. The trade secretariats are the only weapon of Amsterdam for the carrying out of its reactionary policy. The best policy for the R.I.L.U. under the circumstances would be the formation of Anglo-Russian, Russo-German and other industrial committees, the nuclei of future international trade secretariats.

Comrade Kohn (Czechoslovakia) complained that the speech of Comrade Losovsky had not sufficiently criticised the revolutionary trade union movement in Czechoslovakia. We want severe criticism, he said, for the decisions of the III World Congress have not been carried out in our country.

Comrade Vymiens (France) described the dockers strike in Dunkirk. After the loss of this strike many dockers who had previously belonged to the reformist unions left them and joined the C.G.T.U. That was the consequence of the treachery of the reformist leaders and of our correct united front tactic.

Comrade Gitlow (United States) described the critical economic situation in the U.S.A. which was accompanied by growing unemployment and an intensified offensive of capitalism. The reformist leaders were the direct agents of the capitalists and were in favour of imperialism, capitalist rationalisation, class-collaboration and industrial peace. A hard struggle was necessary against these reactionary leaders. Everything possible should be done to win both the organised and unorganised masses. The revolutionary union movement recognised the importance of organising the leather workers and had already taken the necessary steps. The influence of the revolutionary unions in the U.S.A. was growing, but could not grow so fast as in other countries on account of the pressure of capitalism and the State apparatus which was particularly strong in the U.S.A.

Moscow, 23rd March 1928.

In to-days session Comrade Alves (Portugal) described the increasing reprisals used by the fascist government of Portugal against the trade unions. The activity of the supporters of the

R.I.L.U. in Portugal was hindered by the lack of experienced leaders. A new national central committee of the trade union movement would have to be formed as the old anarcho-syndicalist union had practically ceased to exist.

Comrade **Tichomirova** (Soviet Union) described the situation of the working women in the Soviet Union. 900,000 women were employed in the industry of the Soviet Union. In the last three years the wages of these working women had increased by 60% and now amounted to 65% of the wages of male workers. The number of women organised in the labour unions was 2,700,000. The labour union organisations in the other countries should make use of the great experience of the soviet labour unions with regard to the work amongst the women.

Comrade **Blavier** (Belgium) described the difficult conditions under which the revolutionary unions in Belgium had to conduct their work. The communists in the unions were persecuted. Despite this however the revolutionary trade union movement was developing from year to year. A number of reformist trade unions were already under the influence of the revolutionary minorities.

Comrade **Brandler** (Germany) welcomed the fact that the theses of comrade Losovsky contained a programme of action for all sections of the R.I.L.U. The absence of such a programme of action had considerably facilitated the appearance of right and left-wing digressions, for instance the slogan of comrade Walcher who thought to win the masses with the slogan of entering into the Amsterdam International. Brandler then sharply attacked the attitude of Walcher which he declared was not suited to the present situation. He pointed out in conclusion that the general programme of action would have to be applied to the special working conditions existing in the individual countries.

Comrade **Smolan** (Norway) pointed to the continual revolutionisation of the working class movement in the Scandinavian countries in recent years which had resulted in an approachment of the trade unions of Scandinavia towards the Soviet Union.

Comrade **Alimin** (Java) described the development of the trade union movement of Indonesia. The rapid strengthening of the revolutionary trade union movement had frightened the Dutch bourgeoisie which had adopted the most brutal methods of suppression in order to destroy the revolutionary movement. The resistance and the fighting spirit of the Indonesian proletariat was not broken despite the continuous and terrible persecutions. Alimin appealed to all the delegates to conduct an international campaign for the release of the imprisoned and deported Indonesian workers and peasants whose numbers went into thousands.

Comrade **Ungar** (Hungary) declared that the trade union movement in Hungary which was imbued with fascism was in the service of capitalist reconstruction, worked for the rationalisation of industry and industrial peace and did everything possible to throttle all strikes and wage movements. This attitude of the reformist leaders resulted in a mass flight of the workers out of the trade unions. Once powerful unions had utterly collapsed and all unions were recording a steady sinking of their membership. The P.C. of Hungary was trying to lead the masses back into the unions and to prevent the introduction of fascism into the unions by the trade union bureaucracy. The successes obtained in this connection recently justified the hope that success would be obtained in the efforts to bring the workers back to the unions and to establish a revolutionary leadership in the unions.

Comrade **Vernochet** greeted the congress in the name of the Educational Workers International and declared that the methods and the aims of this latter body were identical with those of the R.I.L.U. The speaker promised that the E.W.I. would fight shoulder to shoulder with the R.I.L.U. for the victory of revolution.

Comrade **Rosov** (Bulgaria) reported that despite the brutal terror of the fascist government, the influence of the unitarian

(revolutionary) unions was increasing and that they were the only organisations in Bulgaria which carried on wage struggles on behalf of the workers. The declaration of comrade Nin that there were right-wing digressions in Bulgaria, Rosov described as untruthful. By his slanders against the soviet labour unions Nin had placed himself in a line with the reformists and can no longer be regarded as a comrade.

Comrade **Johnstone** (U.S.A.) declared that the influence of the left-wing movement in the U.S.A. was growing on the whole, particularly amongst the miners. The national conference of the left wing which had been convened to take place in Pittsburgh would work out the measures and directives necessary for the organisation of the unorganised workers. This conference will show us the means and the way to win the leadership of the miners organisation.

Comrade **Yaglom** (Soviet Union) polemised with Nin and declared that in the ranks of certain organisations two harmful digressions existed. The first digression consisted in efforts to adapt oneself to the backward reformist mentality of the workers belonging to the Amsterdam unions. Thus our attention was directed away from the real class-struggle. Our task is to show the workers the harmful nature of reformism upon the basis of concrete facts and thus promote the process of revolutionising the masses. The second digression consisted in underestimating the forces of the reformists and this resulted in a practical abandonment of the struggle for unity. On the one hand we should stabilise our own ranks and on the other hand fight for unity inside the reformist organisations.

Comrade **Germanetto** (Italy) sharply condemned the attitude of Nin. The opinion that there was no democracy in the Soviet labour unions was of a defeatist character. Whoever knows anything about the reformist unions of western Europe, he knows how much "democracy" in these unions is worth. Whoever was in Soviet factories and workers conferences in the Soviet Union, he saw the fruits of real democracy carried out by the Soviet labour unions. The workers of the Soviet Union had built up their organisations from their own strength and were carrying out a tremendous work upon all fields of economic and cultural constructive activity. There was no question of any limitation of democracy in the Soviet Union. All such accusations were slanders.

Comrade **Reinharden** (Holland) spoke in the name of the opposition to the Dutch N.A.S. (revolutionary trade union federation) which completely supports the policy of the R.I.L.U. Despite the fact that the leaders expel the supporters of the revolutionary wing, the struggle for the revolutionisation of the working class movement would be continued.

Comrade **Poiet** (France) dealt with the strike tactics of the C.G.T.U. In his opinion the chief error made was the failure to prepare the strike sufficiently in advance. The main principle of strike leadership he declared, must be a merciless struggle against the employers. The eight hour day and wages must be defended and a fight must be conducted against the oppressive measures of the employers.

Comrade **Hardy** (Great Britain) read a declaration of the British delegation in which the accusations of Carney (Ireland) against the leaders of the British minority movement were rejected. The declaration stresses the necessity for a strong left-wing minority movement in Ireland. Hardy then treated the question of the relations between the trade unions and the co-operatives. He pointed out what great services the co-operatives might render the trade unions during strikes and declared that the co-operatives must be placed completely at the service of the class struggle.

Comrade **Crisostomo** (The Philippines) dealt with the economic and political situation and the strength of the working class movement in the Philippines. The discussion on the report of Comrade Losovsky was then closed. Comrade Losovsky will hold his closing speech to-morrow.

THE WHITE TERROR

Against the Murder of our Comrades in the Italian Prisons!

Appeal of the E. C. Y. C. I.

Young Workers and Peasants!

Italian fascism has committed a new and monstrous crime.

Our Comrade Gastone Sozzi has been murdered by the fascist militia in a prison cell in Perugia. Although he was cruelly tortured in order to extort a confession from him, he heroically withstood all the mishandlings. Therefore he was murdered.

The responsibility for this horrible crime falls upon the hangmen of the military tribunal and upon Mussolini himself. Upon the direct order of Mussolini the prisons of Perugia have become the scientifically organised centre of tortures and cruelties.

Gastone Sozzi, the brave fighter of the revolutionary proletariat of Italy, is not the only victim of the fascist murderers. Many of our comrades are pining in the terrible prisons of Perugia and nobody knows their fate. Their lives are in danger, they must be rescued! Everywhere where there are young proletarians, energetic protest must be raised for the defence of our heroic Italian comrades.

Young workers and peasants!

Fascism is furious because, in spite of the terrible reprisals against the Communist Party and against the Young Communist League, these are organising and leading the masses for the fight against the capitalist system. Whilst the social democrats have betrayed the working class and have deserted the path of struggle, our comrades are showing by their great sacrifices the way which must be pursued in order to overthrow capitalism. They are indefatigably organising the working masses for the fight against bloody fascism.

Young workers and peasants!

Honour to the leaders of the proletarian world revolution!

Protest in masses against the crimes of fascism! Mobilise everybody for the campaign against the cursed regime of fascism, for the rescue of our imprisoned Italian comrades!

Down with the fascist murderers!

Long live international proletarian solidarity!

Long live the Young Communist League of Italy!

Moscow, 15th of March, 1928.

The Executive Committee of the
Young Communist International.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Meeting of the C. C. and of the National Conference of Party Workers of the C. P. of Germany.

By Ernst Schneller (Berlin).

On the 14th March the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany held an important session which was followed on the 15th and 16th March by the National Conference of the Party Workers. The object of these Conferences was the attitude of the Party with regard to the decisions of the Ninth Plenum of the E. C. C. I., to the experiences and tasks of the economic struggles and the preparations for the future fights and for the election campaign.

The report of Comrade Dengel on the Plenum of the E. C. C. I. dealt with the intensification of the class contradictions which find expression internationally in the increased offensive against the Soviet Union, and in the various countries in the increased capitalist offensive against the working class. Whilst the working masses are responding to the increased pressure with a general movement to the Left, the reformist leaders are

more and more marching to the Right, are allying themselves more and more firmly with the bourgeoisie and the capitalist States. In this objective situation it is justified when the Comintern demands in all countries an intensification of the fight against reformism; the strongest insistence on the independent role of the Communist Parties and sharpest fight against the opportunist deviations within the various sections of the Comintern. A part of the intensified struggle against the Right danger is the fight against Trotzkyism, which cannot be designated as a "Left" grouping but as a Menshevik auxiliary troop of the bourgeoisie which attacks the Communist Parties and the Soviet Union from the Right.

Comrade Dengel illustrated this fact especially by the attitude of the German Trotzkyists, the Maslov, group, which announces the formation of an independent party ("Lenin League"). Within the Wedding Opposition there is to be seen a division of opinion, the "leaders" Weber and Riese are tending towards Maslov, whilst the greater portion of the workers who up to now adhered to this group are beginning to approach the Party.

The decisions of the E. C. C. I. were unanimously approved both by the Central Committee and by the Conference of Party workers.

Some comrades, (among them being only two representatives from the provinces) expressed their apprehensions that the general intensification of the struggle against opportunist dangers might lead to an unjustified struggle against individual comrades and thus hamper the concentration of the forces of the Party. Comrades Thälmann, Dengel, Braun and other Comrades refuted these objections, emphasised the necessity, arising out of the objective situation, of an intensified struggle against Right dangers, which of course must not degenerate into a general incitement "against the Right!", and emphatically expressed the intentions of the Party leadership to continue as before the line of concentrating all the Party forces which stand on the basis of the decisions of the Comintern and of the Party.

In spite of the approaching election campaign the centre point of the deliberations was not the question of the election but that of the economic struggles, on which Comrade Braun reported. He made a very thorough analysis of the present economic situation and the tactics of the bourgeoisie and the reformists resulting from it, and developed our tactics on the basis of a concrete analysis of the past movements and of the mistakes and shortcomings of the Party which were revealed during these movements. Among the next tasks there was specially discussed the preparation of the miners' movement in the Ruhr district.

In the discussion the Comrades described their experiences in the districts and enumerated a number of concrete facts showing how the reformists are trying to check the growing influence of the Opposition by organisatory means of violence (Removal from office of the Communist Chairman of the German Metal Workers' Union in Solingen; discharge of the Oppositional local administrations of the Metal workers' Union in Remscheid and of the Railway Workers' Union in Königsberg etc.). It was the unanimous opinion, expressed both in the report and in the discussion on this question, that the general line of the Party in the economic struggles is correct, but that the extremely complicated situation, the increased offensive of the reformists in the trade unions and our growing influence, which compel us to fight with increased energy for the practical leadership of the strike movement, demand from us a more careful preparation of all the movements, a more concrete and less schematic elaboration of our strategy and tactics more adapted to the situation.

Comrade Schneller reported on our tasks in the election campaign. He characterised the policy of the new German imperialism which found expression in the provocation of Stresemann against the Soviet Union, in the secret military armaments exposed by the Phœbus affair etc. It is specially characteristic that the German social democratic party is unhesitatingly joining the front of the bourgeois bloc just at the moment when the bourgeois bloc coalition is becoming shaky in view of the approaching elections, in order to demonstrate their worthiness for coalition (Anti-Soviet campaign of the "Vorwärts", assistance of the Reichstag fraction of the S. P. G. in cloaking up the

Phoebus scandal, in preventing the amnesty etc.). The election campaign must be conducted with greatest energy against the Social Democratic Party as the most dangerous auxiliary troop of the bourgeoisie within the Labour movement.

This Conference again demonstrated the firm connection of the German Party with the Comintern and the unanimity and the determination with which the C. P. Germany is facing the approaching fights.

Appeal of the C. P. of France to the Workers of France.

Defend Your Party. Defend Your Trade Unions. Defend Yourself!

In the factory, in the country, in the offices the bourgeoisie is attacking the toilers with redoubled energy. Every day it is robbing them of their political and trade union rights which they have won in heavy fights. Hundreds of them, sailors and soldiers, are pining in prison because they have risen against imperialism and defended the proletariat.

The bourgeoisie intends to proceed still further. In order to carry out rationalisation and its war policy, every resistance of the workers must be broken.

Towards a New Plot.

The employers are introducing a spy system in the factories; they are dismissing the militant workers and systematically boycotting them. At their behest the police forbid factory meetings, arrest the sellers of workers' papers, exert regular pressure on the proprietors of halls in order to prevent the workers from organising in the fight for their demands.

The government of National Unity, to which Painlevé and Herriot belong, which was elected in the year 1924 on the basis of its promise to recognise the right of the state employees to organise in trade unions, now refuses to receive their unitary trade union delegations and declares through Poincaré in the Chamber of Deputies that it does not intend to permit any trade union activity on the part of the state employees.

The offices of the C. G. T. U. have been raided; meetings of nuclei and trade union sections have been dissolved. The foreign workers belonging to the unitary trade unions have been ordered by the police, under threat of their expulsion, to abandon these organisations.

Those foreign workers known to be members of the Communist Party are at once driven out of France.

Soldiers, sailors, reservists are thrown into prison and sentenced because they have attended workers' meetings and fought for their demands, whilst Marshals and Generals, with the approval of the government, take part in the whole activity of the fascist organisations directed against the proletariat.

Hardly has the government dictated to its judges the sentence to be pronounced in a frame up, when the police is already concocting a new one.

Acting on the hint of the government, the capitalist press has just commenced a campaign the object of which shall be the arrest of fresh fighters and the suppression of the Communist papers.

What is the reason of the measures of repression?

The bourgeoisie is raging more and more against the working class because its resistance to capitalist rationalisation is becoming stronger, because this resistance finds expression in numerous strike movements and because this resistance is a hindrance to the realisation of its plans.

The energetic action of our Party for the defence of the Soviet Union and of the colonial peoples hampers the bourgeoisie in the development of its policy to prepare for war and to dominate in the colonies.

The enthusiastic reception accorded the slogans of the Party at public meetings and factory meetings and the extra-Parliamentary character of our campaign during the election period are disquieting the bourgeoisie; it realises that we are summoning the masses to the direct fight against the bourgeoisie and

that in this period our increased activity means a serious danger to it.

The bourgeoisie is not only raging against the workers in their work places, but in order better to settle accounts with them it wishes to destroy their defensive organs: the Communist Party and the C. G. T. U.

In order to confuse the workers it accuses our Party by means of its papers, which are capable of anything, of being a "spy undertaking" and, adopting this calumny first spread by the socialist leaders, it puts the question of whence it obtains its funds.

Proud to be supported by the pennies of the workers and rendered strong by their increasing confidence in it, our Party will not permit itself to be checked in its fight by the accusations and threats of which it is the object. The Party will not permit the treachery of 1914 to be repeated; it remains the trustworthy leader of the workers. In order to be able effectively to defend them it intends to remain in contact with the workers even after they have been called up for military service.

The Responsibility of the Social Democratic Leaders.

The social democratic leaders maintain that the attacks, the object of which are the revolutionary organisations of the proletariat, are only an election manoeuvre in order to make a bogey of communism. These shameful assertions have no other object but to conceal their responsibility with regard to the National Unity, for the capitalist reprisals and their acceptance of the rationalisation plan. Here it is the question of presenting the bill for the effective assistance which they have rendered French imperialism by their calumnies of the Soviet Union and by their participation in strengthening the bourgeois armies, as well as by their refusal to recognise the independence of the colonies.

The social democratic leaders, by attempting to divert the attention of the proletariat from the repressive measures, are undermining the organisation of its resistance, leaving the bourgeoisie a free hand and playing its game.

United Front against the Bourgeoisie!

The working class must realise that the attacks directed against its Party and its trade unions are directed against itself.

Toilers!

Your protest must assume determined forms!

To permit your class party, your C. G. T. U. to be touched, to permit the newspapers that defend you to be touched means to permit the bourgeoisie to disorganise your resistance against its rationalisation and against the war dangers.

For the defence of your organisations, for the defence of your political and trade union liberties, for the defence of the Soviet Union, for the united front against the bourgeoisie!

The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of France.

The Defeat of the Opposition in Belgium.

By P. C. (Brussels).

The Conference of the Communist Party of Belgium, which took place on the 11th and 12th of March, resulted in a shattering political and moral defeat for the Trotzkyist Opposition. As the Trotzkyist "International" attaches a special importance to its Belgian agency, it is necessary to describe the development of the fight against it, which contains peculiar features.

The offensive of the Belgian Trotzkyists began at the end of November when, by taking the Central Committee of the Party by surprise, they managed to slip through a resolution protesting against the expulsion of Trotzky and Zinoviev from the C. P. S. U. In order to make this resolution acceptable to the C. C. its introducers declared in the resolution itself that they did not adopt any attitude with regard to the views of the Opposition, and that they undertook strictly to adhere to the

discipline of the C.I. and of the Party. This resolution was then adopted by 15 votes against 3. But already at the beginning of January, when the Opposition, headed by the General secretary of the Party, **Van Overstraeten**, were compelled to show their colours, their resolution, which although with reservations adhered to the Trotskyist platform, obtained 13 votes against 13 votes cast for another resolution which solidarises with the C.P.S.U. and the Comintern. At the same time it was decided to organise a broad discussion both in the press and in the Party organisations down to the nuclei, in order afterwards to bring about a decision at a Party Conference.

The discussion in the press was conducted in such way that the Opposition and the tendency adhering to the standpoint of the C.I. alternately had the discussion column in the "Drapeau Rouge" at their disposal. The freedom of discussion on the part of the Opposition was so unlimited that there was great joy over it in the papers of their French friends. In the district meetings which had to elect the delegates for the Party Conference on the basis of a strict proportional system, there was always present a speaker of the Opposition and another of the Comintern adherents, both speakers appointed in advance. The result of the voting was that more than 70 per cent. of the votes were cast for the C.I. and less than 30 per cent. for the Opposition. In order to be able to appreciate the significance of this defeat of the Opposition, it must be borne in mind that the whole Party apparatus was in their hands, beginning from the two secretaries of the Party down to all district secretaries. The defeat of the Opposition was greatest in the districts: thus it obtained 7 delegates in **Brussels** against 20, 3 in **Lüttich** against 15, and one in the **Borinage** against 12; altogether 33 in the whole country against 75.

Although the Opposition became more and more insolent in the discussion, it stubbornly refused to give a clear statement with regard to the **question of discipline**, in spite of repeated and public requests to express their attitude in this respect; the Opposition realised that it would repel many vacillating elements by giving a clear answer. But when the Conference met, the leaders of the defeated Opposition decided to provoke their expulsion from the Party by declaring their complete solidarity with the Trotsky group. They calculated that by their expulsion on account of their "opinions", they would rally all their adherents round them and would have the possibility, by means of a split, of founding a not insignificant oppositional "Party". But the Conference did not fall into the trap. A resolution was adopted which states that although the expulsion of the Opposition would be completely justified by a number of facts, it is more to the advantage of the Party to demonstrate to every member of the Party the real nature of the Opposition. For this purpose the Conference suspended seven of the most prominent leaders of the Opposition, with **Van Overstraeten** at the head, from every responsible office in the Party for at least six months, and demanded especially from **Van Overstraeten** that he resigns his Parliamentary mandate. The resolution further instructed the new Central Committee and the Political Bureau to proceed with the sharpest measures, up to expulsion from the Party, against any breach of discipline.

While the Conference was still sitting, there occurred an incident which greatly contributed to expose the nature of the oppositional leaders. The premises of the Party secretariat were broken into during the night and important Party material and property were stolen. Although there was no doubt who were the burglars and at whose behest they acted, the Conference set up an investigation commission; in this commission an oppositional delegate was elected who, immediately after the burglary was known, had openly protested against it.

Three days after the Conference **Van Overstraeten** was formally excluded from the Party by a decision of the Political Bureau because he refused to resign his Parliamentary seat. On the next day three Party members, among them the former organisational secretary of the C.C., **Hennaut**, were likewise excluded from the Party on the basis of the findings of the investigation Commission on account of their participation in the burglary in the Party secretariat.

These facts had as a result that a great number of those comrades who had been caught by the phrases of the Opposition, are now deserting them and remain as disciplined members in the Party.

The leaders of the Opposition announced, according to the French and German model, the formation of an opposition group outside of the Party and the publication of their own "organ" as a weekly. They will, however, hardly be able to gather round them more than a dozen people, among them outspoken anarchist elements. Their plan to bring about a split in the Party has been brought to nought.

The newly elected Party Central, freed from the sectarian-opportunist elements of the type of **Van Overstraeten**, is now faced with the responsible task of activating the Party which has been paralysed during the last few months, and to lead it in the fight against the bourgeoisie and the social democracy of the former and the future ministers. We do not doubt that the next months will show the results of this work.

IN THE CAMP OF OUR ENEMIES

The End of a Liquidator.

The Renegade **Cristescu** Goes over to the Social-Democrats.

By **D. Fabian** (Bucharest).

The miserable end of the Roumanian liquidator and renegade, **Cristescu**, has again proved in a striking manner that one cannot sit between two stools in the present period, that as soon as one turns away from the Communist Party one must take the path of counter-revolution and finally embrace perfidious Social-Democracy.

Cristescu belonged to the school of Roumanian pre-war Social-Democracy, which, in the undeveloped conditions of Roumania and under the political leadership of **Rakovsky**, permitted the proletarian class struggle to sink into the marsh of vague, petty-bourgeois "Democracy" and demagogy.

Even in the year 1920 **Cristescu** was not really in agreement with the separation from the social patriots and social traitors, from those social traitors, who, like **Fluerasch** and **Jumarcka**, were members of the cabinet, which throttled the Hungarian Soviet Republic and overthrew it by war. **Cristescu** took part with the Communist Party in opposing the social patriots and reformists, but without being convinced of the accuracy of the Party's views, for he was a typical representative of petty-bourgeois characterlessness and demagogy, and still is such. When, however, the mighty wave of the proletarian revolutionary movement in Roumania was thrown back **Cristescu** also began to cast off his snake skin and to expose his genuine, petty-bourgeois, careerist figure.

He then declared the illegal activity of the C. P. to be thoroughly useless and hopeless, in fact even to be the "cause of the Terror and of the persecutions on the part of the bourgeoisie", and thereby took the side of the bourgeoisie against the hundreds and thousands of imprisoned comrades. However, his liquidatorship disclosed itself completely when he advocated the affiliation of the Unitarian (Red) trade unions to Amsterdam and their secession to the reformist trade unions. Naturally, he got the proper answer immediately from the trade unions themselves: with complete unanimity they voted down all **Cristescu's** obviously liquidatory proposals.

But once on the slippery slope of liquidatorship **Cristescu** was unable to stop himself. During the elections of 1926 **Cristescu** issued the slogan — naturally through the bourgeois newspapers — "The workers must not throw their votes away"; they should vote with the "opposition" (bourgeois) anti-liberal coalition and not give their votes to the worker' and peasants' bloc — the only consistent revolutionary representatives of the proletariat and of the broad strata of the toiling peasantry in a position to appear openly and legally.

In this way **Cristescu** severed himself from the Party and opposed the advanced strata of the working class of Roumania. The Bucharest organisation of the C. P. expelled him; the Executive confirmed the expulsion, but as **Cristescu** was also a member of the Executive of the Comintern he was able to execute a manoeuvre at the last moment and publish in the Roumanian press his "resignation" from the Comintern (which, by the way, was never sent to the Comintern) — to the malicious joy of the Social-Democrats and of the bourgeoisie.

After his "resignation" he first of all declared his intention to form an "independent" party. It soon appeared, however, that his "Socialistic Party" consisted of himself, his son and his son-in-law, and nobody else; there was no sign of any workers, still less of members of the C. P.

The object, which Cristescu and his social-democratic principals pursued in going through the performance of establishing an "independent" party, was not achieved. At the last "sessions" of this "party" no organisations were represented either of the Cristescunians or of the C. P. Altogether, there were 13 "friends" present; 15 had absented themselves demonstratively from the "session". They decided to dissolve their "party" and to go over to the Social Democratic Party and so take "a first and earnest step on the path towards union."

The Social-Democrats wished to celebrate this "union" at a "big" public meeting in Bucharest. Cristescu was also to speak there. The workers who were present proclaimed in unmistakable fashion what the opinion of the workers was concerning Cristescu and this union. Feeling was such that Cristescu did not even dare to speak at the meeting. The shining lights of Social Democracy were duly impressed with the opinion of the workers. For windows were broken, the furniture of the assembly hall flew in all directions and the meeting ended in complete uproar.

Nor did Sassenbach fare better recently when, in the company of his toady Cristescu, he proclaimed at a meeting held in Bucharest the death of the Communist Party of Roumania. Even at this meeting, sifted as it was by the Siguranza and gendarmerie, the workers told them what they thought of Social Democracy and its new agent.

The renegade Cristescu did not, however, escape humiliation. The official organ of Social Democracy published a declaration written by the Social Democrats and signed by Cristescu, in which the latter does penance:

"I have sinned. On orders from Moscow I split the movement. I am guilty, but I now acknowledge my transgression."

Thereby the renegade became a common liar. It is of course untrue that the Comintern issued "orders" to "split" the Roumanian Labour movement, and Cristescu knows quite as well as every worker that it was not the Roumanian Communists who split the Labour movement, but that the reformists did so with the help of the police at the trade-union congress of Klausenburg (September 1923); all the delegates to this congress who were against the raising of the question of international affiliation on the part of the reformists were forcibly deported from the town.

At the same moment as Cristescu goes over to the social traitors, the latter go over to the bourgeoisie by joining the "democratic" wing of the bourgeoisie: the Social Democrats recently made a pact with the National Zaranists for the purpose of a common "fight" against the Liberals for stabilisation and

for foreign capital. The renegade will in this way become in the ranks of the Social Democratic Party a tool of the bourgeoisie. (Furthermore, Social Democracy has acquired in Cristescu a valiant "fighter" against the Liberals: on the Bucharest Municipal Council he voted against the Social Democrats and the National Zaranists for the budget proposed by the Liberals. When brought to book he stammered: "I am in favour of positive and not negative work on the Council".)

It is a sign of the times, and not least of all a merit of the Communist Party of Roumania, that Cristescu was and is a solitary renegade. The working class are rallying round the Communist Party as the only leader against reaction, exploitation, oppression, and betrayal of the workers.

Correction.

In my report at the XV. Congress of the C. P. S. U. on the activities of the E. C. C. I. (published in the "Inprecorr" of 5. I. 28 and the "Pravda" of 14. XII. 27 No. 286) I spoke among other things also about the mistakes of a former leader of the Japanese Party. I referred to that comrade in my report by the initial K. Insofar as some workers both in Japan and in Korea received the impression that I referred to Comrade Katayama, I wish to state hereby, in order to avoid any further misunderstanding, that Comrade Katayama had nothing to do with those mistakes and that I did not refer to him.

Bukharin.

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The Business Manager.