

economy is by far not yet cured, we are entering upon a slow but entirely purposeful phase of reconstruction.

The limits of a short article do not permit us to deal exhaustively with all sides of our economic life. We shall therefore only attempt by a few statements to show the increase in the production of our country.

Let us take the textile industry: In 1921, especially at the end of the year, this industry passed through very severe times as a result of the market crisis. In 1922, we see signs of improvement. In the first half of 1921, our cotton factories produced a total of 589,000 puds of cotton thread and 100 million arshin of cotton goods (an arshin equals about 31 inches). In the first half of 1922, the production was increased to 1,675,000 puds of cotton thread and 232 million arshin of cotton goods.

Our naphtha industry from which we were effectively cut off until May, also shows marked signs of improvement. In the second half of 1920, the naphtha industry passed through very abnormal conditions in consequence of the insufficient food supplies prevailing at that time and the unfavourable condition of the national economy in general.

When in 1921, the situation improved, this improvement was immediately expressed in the output of naphtha.

It is to be seen from the statements as to the production of naphtha in Baku, that in the second half of 1920, 71,642,000 puds of naphtha were produced; in the second half of 1921 76,580,000 puds. As regards the activities of the factories in the Baku district there were in the 2nd half of 1920, 24,252,000 puds of naphtha prepared and in the second half of 1921, 59,435,000 puds. In the second chief centre of the naphtha industry, in Grosni, a similar growth is to be perceived. In the second half of 1920, the amount of naphtha extracted amounted to 34,432,000 puds and in the second half of 1921, this increased to 40,420,000 puds. A similar improvement is to be recorded in the Grosny district, in the manufacture of prepared naphtha. In the second half of 1920, the quantity prepared amounted to 16,176,000 puds and in the second half of 1921 to 28,889,000 puds.

Our coal industry is also making considerable progress. In the first half of 1920 the gross product amounted to 210 million puds; in the first half of 1921, to 261 millions puds; in the first half of the current year it reached 321 million puds. It is worth while mentioning that in 1920, the number of pit-workers, especially of coal miners continually increased, while in 1921 the number continually declined. The number of coal hewers in 1922, although a little more than in 1921, is still less than in 1920.

On the one hand we see a reduction in the number of workers and on the other hand an increase in the output. That proves in the clearest manner the raising of the productivity of labor, but as in the coal industry so also in the naphtha industry a gradual improvement in the technique of production and in the quality of the product itself is to be recorded. In the Don basin we are already about to introduce coke production.

Although the remaining branches of industry just as those mentioned are still very far from the normal standard of production, we can claim, that the danger point has been passed, that we are on the road to the restoration of our national economy and are advancing steadily.

The position of the proletariat is closely connected with the revival of our industry. Since July of this year, real wages have gradually begun to increase. The wages of the transport workers in relation to the real wages in March, have increased in June by 16.80% and in July by 22%. The real wages of the industrial workers increased during the same period by 12 and 9 per cent respectively. These facts should be taken into consideration by the workers in other countries.

While real wages in all the rich bourgeois countries have continually fallen, with us, the first steps in economic reconstruction have already brought about an improvement in the position of the working population. But in order to be impartial in estimating the results of our reconstruction we must observe that the process of reconstruction is chiefly carried on at the expense of the originally existing capital of the country. And for the time being there is no other source available. Foreign capital holds back from Russian operations. We have not succeeded up to the present in obtaining large credits. The restoration of our national economy which has been destroyed by the imperialist and civil wars, must therefore be solely carried out by means of our own powers and our own capital.

Comrade Rykov in his report to the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party of Russia, and in his article on the economic position of the country (*Ekonomicheskaya Shizn* No. 221 and 222) quotes some very plain figures concerning the diminution of our capital in connection with reconstruction.

Comrade Rykov states that our stock of steel which on the 1st of January 1921 amounted to 22 million puds had up to the 1st of January 1922, gone down to 8,263,000 puds. The same thing applies to our cotton reserves. On the 1st of January 1921, they amounted to 8,576,257 puds, but on the 1st of August 1922, to only 4,500,000 puds. Our store of rubber amounted on the 1st of January 1922, to 71,821 puds; on the 15th of September to only 60,000 puds, etc., etc. These are plain figures. But there was no other course; we have no other sources. Industry must, however, be restored at any price. This reconstruction is only possible at the expense of capital. It is true it is a dangerous phenomenon. In the event of the stocks not being replaced in the future we shall be threatened with the collapse of various branches of industry. It is a matter of course that in view of this, the Soviet government is doing everything in order to restore those branches of our economy which in the future will be able to replace these shortages in our capital. This task is by no means an easy one and demands the exertion of all our powers, the output of much energy, unceasing labor and a careful frugality with all our resources. Slowly but surely this process is going on, slowly but surely we are marching ever forwards.

Three Industrial Victories

By L. V. (Moscow).

The Utkina Electric Works.

Petrograd—which a number of foreign communists probably remember as a dead city—is being restored rapidly. The central telephone station, burned down last year, (probably by malevolent hands), is nearly rebuilt. Nearly all the bridges of the capital, which had been furrowed with deep ruts, have been put into good condition again,—and there are more than two hundred of them. And now a new electric plant has just been installed, the construction of which was begun in 1914, interrupted in 1916, and finally resumed in 1920 by the Supreme Economic Council under untold difficulties. It was necessary to gather together most expensive materials, and to call on the Army of Labor. Later there was a scarcity of skilled labor, which however trained itself right on the spot. Certain dock-yard workers became valuable technical aids to the engineers. Each day they had to invent and find more simple ways of doing things, for with the lack of materials and lack of knowledge, there were many mistakes made.

The plant has been functioning since the 8th of October. At the present time it is producing 4,500 kilowatts of electrical energy per day. It will use up about twelve million puds of fuel per year, with which it will be furnished by the rich turf in the neighborhood of the city.

The construction of the Oukina Electric Works is a victory for the Petrograd workers and a step towards the reconstruction and electrification of the region.

The first automobile leaves the socialized factories

Another economic victory: The large automobile construction factory of the State, situated at Fili (8 kilometers from Moscow), the construction of which was begun in 1916, and only completed this year by the Supreme Economic Council, likewise celebrated on the 8th of October, the completion of the first automobile entirely constructed in its workshops. This vehicle has been offered by the factory to Comrade Kalinine, president of the All-Russian Executive of Soviets, who is still called more democratically the *Starosta* (The Elder). The car in question built by Russian workers, with only Russian materials, is a magnificent 40 HP seven-seater.

The factory at Fili expects to build twenty more automobiles in 1922. Its program of construction is much greater for the following years. In 1923 it hopes to produce two thousand cars and another thousand in 1924.

And the first aeroplane.

On the 13th of October, at the aerodrome of Khodynka, the first aeroplane of Russian construction, especially built for passenger transportation, made its first flight. . . . And accomplished the third victory of Soviet industry.

The aeroplane, which weighs 98 puds (one pud = 16 kilograms) can carry a load of sixty puds, and accomplish a continuous flight of five hours at an average speed of 140 kilometers per hour. It was built according to the plans, and under the direction of the inventor, the pilot V. N. Kijonk.

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"Five Years of Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution" (Comrade Lenin's Speech)

Plenary session of November 13th.

*** The session is opened at noon. The great Andreyevsky hall is crowded. Lenin's appearance is awaited with strained attention. When the leader of the Russian Revolution and of the world proletarian appears in the hall, he is welcomed with enthusiastic ovations, never-ending cheers. All present rise to welcome Comrade Lenin. The delegates sing the "International".*

Comrade Lenin delivers the following speech:

Comrades! I have been named as chief speaker on the list, but you will understand that after my long illness I am not in a position to give a long report. The theme: "*Five years of Russian revolution and the prospects of the world revolution*" is much too extensive to be exhausted by any one speaker in the course of a single speech. I shall therefore select a small part of the material,—the question of the *New Economic Policy*. At present this theme is of the greatest importance, at least for me it is of the greatest importance, as I am working on it just now. I shall therefore speak on the subject: *How did we begin the New Economic Policy, and what results have we obtained by this policy?*

If I am to begin with how we began this New Economic Policy, I must go back to an article written by me in the year 1918. At the beginning of 1918 I had polemically touched upon the question of what attitude we were to adopt towards state capitalism. At that time I wrote: "*State capitalism is a step forward compared with the present economic position of the Soviet Republic*"—that is, compared with the economic situation at that time. If we could introduce state capitalism within six months, that would be a great success, and the best guarantee that within a year Socialism would be firmly established and unconquerable among us."

In the year 1918 I was thus of the opinion that, in comparison with the economic position of the Soviet Republic at that time, *State Capitalism* would be a step forward. That may sound very strange and even absurd, for at that time we adopted new economic measures daily, as quickly as possible, probably too quickly, measures which were distinctly socialist measures. And despite this I expressed the opinion that *State Capitalism* signified a step forward as compared with the economic situation of the Soviet Republic at that time.

I explained the idea further by simply enumerating the elements of Russia's economic structure. In my opinion these elements were: in the first place patriarchal, that is, those furnished by the most primitive forms of agriculture; and secondly,

production on a small scale; to this category belong the majority of peasants dealing in corn. Thirdly, private capitalism; fourthly, state capitalism; fifthly, Socialism.

All of these economic elements were represented in Russia at that time. And so I set myself the task of explaining the relations of these elements to one another, and of ascertaining whether we should not perhaps estimate a non-socialist element, i.e., *State Capitalism*, higher than *Socialism*.

I repeat that it appears strange to everyone that a non-socialist element should appear to be higher, and should be acknowledged as higher than socialism, in a republic which has declared itself to be socialist.

But the matter becomes clear when you remember that we did not consider Russia's condition to be final, but fully recognized that: in Russia we have first the patriarchal system of agriculture, that is, the most primitive form, and then the socialist form. The question is, what rôle can state capitalism play under these circumstances?

I further asked myself which of these elements was stronger. It is clear that in a petty bourgeois milieu the predominant element is petty bourgeois in character. The question which I asked myself was: what is our attitude to state capitalism? And my own reply was: state capitalism, although not socialistic, would be more favourable for Russia than the present form. This means that even then we understood, to a certain degree, that it would be better for us to arrive soon at state capitalism, and later, to direct Socialism.

I must lay special emphasis on this part, for I believe that this alone enables us to explain what the present economic policy represents; secondly, we can draw from it very useful practical conclusions for the Communist International. I am not prepared to say that at that time we already had our plans of retreat ready. This is not what was meant. The few lines of my polemical article were no plan of retreat at that time. No mention was made of free trade—a most important point and one of fundamental importance for state capitalism—but nevertheless there is a vague general idea of a retreat in it. And I am of the opinion that we, as a Communist International, as the International of the Western European, advanced countries, must take this into consideration.

At the present time, for instance, we are occupied with the program. For my part I believe that we should do best if we were to first subject all programs to our judgment,—and not come to any hasty decision this year. Why? One reason is of course that in my opinion we have not yet thought out everything thoroughly. But a special reason is that we have scarcely taken the thought of a retreat, or of securing the retreat,

into consideration at all. We should not only consider how we are to act when we make an attack and are immediately victorious. In revolutionary times that is not so very difficult. In the course of a revolution there are always moments when the enemy loses his head. If we utilize this moment for attack, we may easily gain the victory. But there is no certainty in this, for the enemy, having thought the matter over, collects his forces. He is then very likely to provoke us to attack, and then to defeat us for many years. The idea of the necessity of providing for a retreat is of great importance, not only from a theoretical standpoint. From a practical standpoint it is also necessary that all parties thinking of making direct attacks on capitalism in the near future should occupy themselves with the need of securing the retreat.

I shall now pass to the

Results of our New Economic Policy.

I repeat: At that time, in 1921, this was still a vague idea. After we had brought the most important phase of the civil war to an end, and to a victorious end, there came a great—and I believe the greatest—internal political crisis in Soviet Russia; not alone were great masses of the peasantry dissatisfied, but also great masses of workers. What caused this discontent? The cause was that we had gone too far with our economic demands, that we had not secured our base, that the masses felt what we did not yet know how to consciously formulate.

After a very short time we also realized that the direct transition to purely socialist distribution of goods exceeded our powers, that we should break down if we could not find a line of retreat enabling us to confine ourselves to easier tasks.

In the spring of the same year we decided unanimously—I did not observe any great differences on the subject—to adopt the New Economic Policy.

What is the result? Has our line of retreat really benefited us and saved us? Or is this not the case; is the result indefinite? I believe that this leading question is of the highest importance for all communist parties, for if it is to be answered in the negative, we are all ruined. I believe that we can all reply in the affirmative to this question with an easy conscience. The one-and-a-half years which have passed since that time have positively demonstrated that we have passed this test.

I now pass to the proofs. To do this I must make a brief survey of every part of Russian economics.

First I shall take up the financial system and the famous Russian rouble. I believe that we can call the Russian rouble famous, if for no other reason, then because the number of these roubles now exceeds a quadrillion. That is something in itself. An astronomical figure. . . I am sure that you do not even all know how much that is.

But from an economic standpoint we do not consider the number of roubles of importance, the thoughts can be crossed out. . . We have already performed wonders in this direction, and I am convinced that during the further course of events we shall perform even greater ones. What is really of importance is the stabilization of our currency. If we succeed in stabilizing the rouble for a long period, and then permanently, we have won. Then these astronomical figures, the trillions and quadrillions are nothing whatever. Then we can establish our economics on a solid ground, and practice them on a firm basis.

With regard to this question I believe I am in a position to state rather important and decisive facts. In 1921, the period during which the paper rouble was stabilized lasted less than 3 months; in 1922, the period has already lasted over five months, and the year is not yet ended. I believe that this fact speaks for itself. The figures which I have just stated prove that since last year, when we stood at the beginning of our New Economic Policy, we have learned how to advance. When we have once learned that, I am sure that we shall know how to make further progress, unless we commit some particularly stupid errors.

Thus, although our really systematic and properly formulated economic activity is only commencing now, we have none the less been successful in increasing the period of stabilization from three to five months, so that I think I have a right to say that we can be well satisfied. For we stand alone. We received, and still receive, no loans. Not one of these wonderful capitalist states, which have arranged their capitalist economics to such good purpose that they now do not know where to turn, lends us a helping hand. With the Versailles Peace they have created a financial system which they themselves do not understand. If these wonderful capitalist states carry on their economics in such a manner, then I am sure that we, the backward, the uneducated, may be well satisfied with having known how to accomplish the most important feat,—the stabilization of the rouble. And this is not merely proved theoretically in discussion, it is an actual fact.

I now pass to our social factors. The peasantry is of course the most important. In 1921 the great peasant masses were dissatisfied. After this came the famine, the very hardest trial for the peasantry. And naturally all the foreign countries exclaimed with one voice: We told you so. That is the result of socialist economy. . . . They naturally ascribed the famine to the civil war. All the landowners and the bourgeoisie, who attacked us in 1918, maintained that the famine was the result of the socialist economics. And how is the matter now, after this unusual and unexpected misfortune? It seems to me that the answer lies plainly before us, for the peasantry has not only succeeded in overcoming the famine in one year, but has also delivered up the taxes in kind to such an extent that we have up to now received hundreds of millions of puds, almost without the need of using force. The risings among the peasantry, (of common occurrence in Russia up to 1921) have almost completely ceased. We may confidently assert that the peasants are now satisfied with their condition. And we believe that such proofs are much more important than any statistical proofs. The position among the peasantry at the present time is such that we have no fear of any movements against us whatever. It is of course possible that the peasantry may have complaints against or be dissatisfied with our regime, but there is absolutely no thought of any serious complaints against us in the peasantry as a whole.

As regards light industry, I may confidently state that a general improvement is to be noted. This all-round improvement in the position of light industries is accompanied by a distinct improvement of the position of the workers in Petrograd and Moscow. This is less the case in other districts, where heavy industry predominates, and the position is not so favorable.

The third question is the heavy industry. I must say that the position is more difficult here. A slight improvement took place in the year 1921 to 1922. We may thus hope that the near future offers better prospects. We have already collected a part of the requisite means for this purpose. In a capitalist country an improvement of the position of the heavy industry would certainly demand a loan of hundreds of millions. There would be no thought of an improvement otherwise. We have obtained no such loan, we have obtained nothing. Everything which has been written about concessions and so forth is only paper up to now. Despite this we succeeded in making a modest beginning, and our commercial activity has gained for us a certain capital, of about 20 million gold roubles. At any rate a beginning has been made. Our commercial activity gives us the means which we require for the improvement of our heavy industry. But this is still a dream of the future. At present our heavy industry is in a sad condition. But I believe it is of decisive significance that we are able to save something, and that we shall continue to save. It will often enough be at the expense of the population. We are working towards decreasing our state budget, our state apparatus. I shall say a few words later on the state apparatus. We are aware that without the restoration of heavy industry we have no industry at all. Without the heavy industry we are completely lost as an independent country, this we know. The sole salvation for Russia is not only good crops for the peasantry, not only favourable conditions for light industries. We require the heavy industry. And it will take several decades of work to set it properly going. If we have no heavy industry we are ruined as a civilized country—I will not even speak of a socialist country. And in this respect we have taken the decisive step. The commencement made this year is but small. The sum which we have collected is less than 20,000,000 gold roubles.

I believe I am justified in drawing from the above the general conclusion that the New Economic Policy has already yielded a plus quantity. The proof is already given in that we are in a position to carry on trade as a state, to maintain firm positions in agriculture and industry, and to make progress. Our practical activity proves this.

For five years we have held our power, and we have been at war for almost the whole of the five years. This is comprehensible, as the peasantry as a whole was in our favor. They perceived that behind the Whites stands the landowner, whom they hate beyond anything on earth. But this was nothing much, it was only a question of whether the power should be in the hands of the landowners or of the peasants. That is not enough for us. They comprehend that we have taken over the power for the workers, and that we aim at the development of a socialist state of society by means of this power. For us the most important question has therefore been, economic preparation for applied socialism. We could not take a direct course for this preparation, but have been obliged to take an indirect one.

The state capitalism which we have created is a peculiar one; it does not correspond to the usual conception of state

capitalism. We have all the highest positions of command in our hands, we have the land and soil; this belongs to the state. This is most important, though our opponents pretend that it is of no significance. They are entirely wrong. It is very important that the ground belongs to the state; it is also of the greatest practical significance, for economic activity and for other reasons. We have already been successful in rendering our peasantry satisfied, in improving trade and industry. Our state capitalism differs from state capitalism literally understood, in our having not only the ground in the hands of the proletarian state, but all the most important branches of industry. A few small parts only, mostly small and medium industrial undertakings, have been leased by us; everything else remains in our hands. With regard to trade I should like to emphasize that we are endeavouring to found mixed companies, and have already founded such,—that is, companies in which one part of the capital belongs to private capitalists, these being foreigners, and the other part to us. In the first place this gives us an opportunity to learn what we need to do if we are to carry on trade, and in the second place we always possess the power of dissolving the company, so that we risk nothing, so to speak. There is no doubt that we have committed an enormous number of foolish errors, and will doubtless commit more. Nobody can judge of that better or more objectively than I. . . . Why do we commit these foolish errors? This is comprehensible: 1. we are a backward country; 2. education is at a minimum; 3. we are without help. No civilized country helps us; on the contrary, they all work against us; 4. there is the question of the state apparatus. We took over the old state apparatus. But that was our misfortune. As a matter of fact it often happens that at the top where we possess state power, the state apparatus functions well; but further down the machinery works against us. Here nothing can be done in a short time, that is certain. Here we must work for several years, to perfect the apparatus, and to develop new life forces which we must bring into it. We are doing this at a fairly rapid pace, perhaps too rapid. Soviet schools and workers' faculties have been established, many hundreds of thousands of young people are learning, are learning too quickly perhaps. If we are not working too rapidly, then within a few years we shall have a large number of young people capable of changing the apparatus down to its foundations.

Should our opponents perhaps be inclined to throw it in our faces that Lenin himself admits that an enormous number of foolish errors have been committed, I should like to reply: Yes, but do you know, our foolish actions are of a very different kind from yours. We have just started to learn, and we are learning so systematically that we are sure of attaining results. But if our opponents, that is, the capitalists, and the heroes of the Second International, relate the foolish errors we have committed, I can give here an example taken from a famous Russian author. I shall alter this example a little, so that it has the following aspect: When the Bolsheviks do anything foolish, the Bolshevik says: Twice two are five. But when the opponents, that is, the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, do anything foolish, they say: Twice two is a tallow candle. This is not difficult to prove. Let us take for instance the agreement with Koltchak, the treaty agreed to by America, England, France, and Japan. Are there any states in the world better educated or more powerful than these? And they promised to help Koltchak. That was a fiasco which even humanity's liability to err cannot explain. And as a second example: the Versailles Peace. What have the civilized powers done here? How can they now find any way out of the confusion and absurdity? I believe it to be no exaggeration when I repeat that our foolish actions are as nothing in comparison with those committed by the capitalist world in combination with the Second International. I am therefore of the opinion that

the prospects of the world revolution are good.

And, with one condition, I believe they will become better still.

In 1921 we passed a resolution at the Third Congress, relating to the development of the organization of the Communist Parties and to the methods and content of their work. The resolution is excellent. But it is almost completely Russian, that is, it originates entirely from the Russian phase. Therein lies the good of the resolution, but also the bad, for it is almost incomprehensible to a foreigner. 1. it is too long, it has 50 or more with the Russian spirit; and 3., should an exceptional foreigner can understand it; it is too Russian, too completely impregnated with the Russian spirit. And 3., should an exceptional foreigner understand the resolution, he cannot fulfil it. We have not found the way of passing on the results of our Russian experience directly to the foreigner. And if we cannot do this, we can make no progress. I believe it to be of the greatest importance for us all, Russians and foreigners alike, that now, after five years of

Russian revolution, we have the opportunity of learning. I do not know how long the capitalist powers will allow us the possibility of learning quietly. But we must utilize every moment in which we are free from military activity, from war, for learning. We Russians know how to learn. . . .

The whole party, and all social strata in Russia, prove this by their striving after education. It is a moot point whether it is proletarian or bourgeois culture. I do not exactly see how that is to be decided. But in any case, in my opinion, what we first need is reading and writing, and proper comprehension of what is read. Abroad they do not require this any longer. They need something higher. And what is required most of all is that which we wrote regarding the development of the organizations of the Communist Parties. Our foreign comrades signed this without reading it, without understanding it. To learn to understand it should be their first task. They must absorb a piece of Russian experience. How will this be done? Perhaps the Fascists in Italy may for instance render us good service in this connection, and enlighten the Italians on the point that they are not so very cultured, since black bands still pervade the country. I am convinced that in this sense we must say not only of the Russians, but that for other countries too the exigencies of the coming period demand above all that they learn. We learn at a general sense. They must learn in a quite specific sense, in order to really comprehend the organization, the construction, the methods, the substance of the revolutionary work. When they do this, then I am convinced that the prospects of the world revolution will not only be good, but excellent.

Conclusion of Clara Zetkin's Speech

(Radio to "Inprecorr.")

Moscow, November 14.

Comrade Neurath (Czecho-Slovakia) opens the session. Comrade Zetkin concludes her speech: "Five years of Russian revolution and the prospects of the world revolution". The Bolsheviks have employed force, but they have not maintained themselves by force only. Communism can only be realized on international lines. The world revolution cannot advance at a run. Errors of calculation in the pace can be compensated again by perseverance and manoeuvring. A *modus vivendi* had to be found in dealing with the Russian peasantry and with world capitalism.

The speaker goes on to refer to the new economic policy, and points out that the agrarian policy of the Russian revolution is an object lesson of Marxist thought. The hunger for land under which 80 per cent of the peasant population suffered was utilized as a revolutionary factor. The weakness of the central power, the lack of modern large-scale agricultural undertakings, and of an up-to-date peasant proletariat, determined the agrarian policy adopted by the Russian government. The electrification of the country is the best agrarian reform, accelerating the evolution towards communism. The initial aim of the Russian revolution was the socialization of large industrial undertakings, of the means of transport, the banks, and foreign trade; also the control of production. Russia was forced into war-communism by the counter-revolutionary interventions. Despite this it has maintained more than its initial position. The concessioned industries will never become masters of the house, as the state power is always on the side of the worker. In Soviet Russia the political power of the proletariat rules. The eight hour day, the socialized industries, the development of social legislation, and the education of the people, have brought about an improvement in the position of the proletariat. In Germany, on the other hand, the coalition is working towards placing industry in the hands of the Stinnes party, towards doing away with the eight hour day, and for abolishing the social laws; the masses of German workers, unable to ward off the catastrophe of the falling mark, sink into utter want and destitution. Soviet Russia is the highest type of the proletarian state. The policy of the Russian Communist Party is the consequent realization of Marxism. At the same time unity with the masses is preserved. We must learn from the revolutionary idealism of the Russian proletariat. (Applause.)

Bela Kun

Bela Kun speaks to the following effect: The task of the participants in the congress is not only to deliver speeches, but to make history. Erroneous theories have been derived from Russian experiences. The communists of the west must learn the actuality of revolutionary policy from the experiences of the Russian revolution. The reason why the Hungarian Soviet power was unable to maintain itself lay not only in the circumstance that the small country offered no line of retreat,

but in the lack of leadership through an organized communist party. That was the chief deficiency of the Hungarian Soviet republic. The Russian Communist Party is the creation of decades of revolutionary struggle. It has adhered strictly to its class character, and has become a real party of the whole working people. At Gorlitz the German Social Democratic Party maintained that it was the people's party, but in reality it is the party of the petty bourgeoisie, and thus simultaneously the servant of the greater bourgeoisie. The Russian communists are the representatives of the Russian working people. The first conditions rendering this possible were first, the carrying out of a revolutionary policy, and secondly the mobility of the party organizations. All opportunists were removed from the party before the revolution; the Mensheviks in contact with the workers went over to the Bolsheviks during the revolution. Only the intellectuals remained with the Mensheviks. Faith in the leaders is the first premise or discipline. Moscow is no school for Prussian corporals. But those who cannot keep discipline are bad recruits for Communism. The subjective premise for the world revolution depends on the creation of revolutionary groups of real workers' leaders. These groups will form the vanguard of the communist army.

Trotsky

The evening session opened at six. Comrade Trotsky in his speech said that the central political aim of every party was the conquest of political power. In the Second International this was merely a directive idea having very little bearing on practice. In Russia, on the other hand, this idea was a practical fact of revolutionist political strategy. The civil war did not begin in Russia until after the conquest of political power by the proletariat. It was only after the proletariat had seized power that the real significance of political power became clear to the Russian bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, the middle peasants, and the petty bourgeoisie.

In western countries there is a reversed sequence of events. In Italy, said Comrade Trotsky, we see a complete counter-revolution, although there has not been a complete revolution. In the west, the bourgeoisie is already organizing all its forces against the revolutionary proletariat, and the result of this will be that after the victory of the proletariat the counter-revolution will no longer have any reserves. The Communists of western lands will find the conquest of power more difficult than did the Russians, but it will be easier for them to maintain power.

Our tactics in the civil war were sound because we secured the support of the peasantry, whereas the democrats were the organizers of the counter-revolution.

For the building up of a new economic system, these factors were of primary importance: the degree of development of the forces of production, the cultural level of the proletariat, and the political situation upon a national and upon an international scale. Russia was in such a situation that political necessities often made it impossible to pay due attention to economic considerations. That was why War Communism had come into existence.

War Communism was not adopted for the development of the forces of production. If the world revolution had taken place in 1919, evolution would have taken a different course in Russia. Nevertheless, we have secured noteworthy results. The land is in our possession; the Workers' State has the means of transport at its disposal; foreign commerce is a State monopoly. We have the Red Army, the administration, the schools.

When the civil war came to an end, we were compelled in the capitalist environment to apply capitalist methods. We had to build up the new economic system of a new class by the old methods of the old capitalism. This led us to NEP. (New Economic Policy) which was not merely a concession to the peasantry, but was a necessary phase of socialist evolution.

In Russia both a socialist and a capitalist accumulation are now in progress. What are our means of power in this struggle? The Worker's State has political power and a socialized large scale industry; Russian capitalism is supported by world capitalism. Despite the unfavourable economic situation, more than one million workers are engaged in State enterprises. There are only 80,000 workers employed in the undertakings that have been leased. The State undertakings are better equipped and worked than the private undertakings. As far as commerce is concerned, the situation is less favourable; but even here State commerce comprises 70 per cent. of all the commerce in the country.

As to the concessions, I must own that there has been much discussion of this matter, but the concessions have not been extensive. There is no opportunity for the capitalists to work in accordance with broadly conceived plans; they live only from day to day; the danger involved by capitalism in Russia is much less serious than the danger which in western States

threatens the capitalists from the approach of the world revolution.

Otto Bauer prophesied as long ago as the year 1917 that Soviet Russia would become a democratic republic. In 1919 he recognized the dictatorship of the proletariat and prophesied the victory of the world revolution. Bauer always has his wallet full of prophecies; now he announces that our willingness to recognize the old debts is tantamount to a capitulation. We reply that anyone who wishes to incur new debts is obliged to recognize old ones.

If Bauer thinks that the Soviet Power is an unsuitable form for the development of capitalism in Russia, we reply: That is the very reason why we defend the proletarian dictatorship. Every dominant power, the bourgeoisie no less than others, has made concessions to subordinate classes. The working class, which is now the dominant power in Russia, is making concessions to the bourgeoisie. We are not making concessions in perpetuity, but merely for a transitional period until the world revolution comes to our aid.

The yield of our labor is at the present time inadequate. This might be thought a strong argument against us. We point out, however, that revolution has always been an expensive way of transforming an economic system, and that the French bourgeois revolution made the condition of the people worse for several decades.

But the cost of the revolution is not in productive expenditure. The characteristic of the present situation may be summed up by saying that the working class is not yet competent to seize power, whereas the bourgeoisie has already become incompetent. But the chief reason why the working class is not competent to seize power is that the influence of Kautskism over the working class is still far too great. The present crisis of capitalism is not due to any accidental concatenation of circumstances; it is the historical crisis of capitalism. When the Third Congress was held, there was still a danger of Leftism; now we have to defend the Communist International against the danger of stagnation. Should the coalition of the Left come into power in France, and should the liberals and the Labor Party form a joint government in Britain, there is a danger of the coming of a new period of democratic illusions. In that event, we must remain a Party of naked truth, the only Party which does not attempt to humbug the workers.

Frossard says that the Party is "a great friendship"—but the Party can only become a great friendship when it has undergone a thorough weeding out.

Bordiga on Fascism

(Radio to "Inprecorr".)

Moscow, November 16.

After the sitting was opened, Bordiga (Italy) spoke of Fascism. He pointed out that Fascism is a classical example of the capitalist offensive. Fascism was founded by the war interventionists. The economic crisis of the post-war period encouraged this trend of feeling in the bourgeoisie. Fascism first took up the offensive in the agrarian districts, where socialist communal authorities, the Socialist Party, and the trade union organizations, had locally almost realized the dictatorship. Villages and small towns were not able to defend themselves against the military expeditions of the Fascists. It was not till later that the Fascists proceeded to exercise terror, incendiarism, ejection of the workers' leaders, and murder, in their campaign against the industrial centres. The associations of industrial magnates, the large agrarian owners, as also the medium landowners, officers and petty bourgeoisie, tradesmen and half-proletarians, all joined the Fascists. Fascism rules on the pretence of representing national unity. It is supported by three factors. Firstly by the state, which gained time to organize the Fascists and the Royal Guard by means of democratic pseudo-concessions during the demobilization crisis. Where the Fascists did not defeat the workers, there the state disarmed the workers. At the time of the occupation of the factories, Giolitti and Nitti embodied the pseudo-democracy. The second supporting factor is the aid of the greater bourgeoisie and the big landowners; the third factor is the skilful organization of the disappointed middle class. The bourgeois parties possessed no serious organizational program. Fascism created such. Fascism has no positive program. All it brings is new men, a new organization; but it follows the old bourgeois policy. The Fascist trade unions, formed with the aid of the employers, work with national demagoguery. France assisted Mussolini not only during the war, but is still assisting him with money.

The main lesson to be learned from events is that, during the period of revolution, the state apparatus alone is inadequate for the bourgeoisie. A firmly organized party is required as well. Fascism was pressed forward to a rapid seizure of power

by an international party crisis, and by the exhaustion of the party treasury.

The speaker describes how comrade Topliati, the chief editor of the Communist central organ, was almost shot at the time of the fascist seizure of power, but is still working further for the party despite this. The position is now clearer than during the period of pseudo-democracy. The bourgeois parties support Mussolini, the Turati group makes compacts with Mussolini, and the state apparatus has entered into a compromise with the Fascists. Mussolini intends demobilizing the Fascists. Despite official freedom of the press the party organs (*Comunisti*, *L'Ordine Nuovo*, and *Lavoratore*), can only appear illegally at present. The Communist Party is not disbanded, the trade unions are still working. Fascism will not be able to solve the difficult problems. Disappointment will soon be felt. The struggle of the working class will be severe, for Fascism fights against the proletariat with the aid of the state apparatus. The first conditions for our victory is strict discipline, the creation of a well organized Communist Party.

Smeral (Czecho-Slovakia) points out that the bourgeoisie of Czecho-Slovakia is not only planning a 50 per cent reduction in wages, but also the closing down of the textile industry. The rise in the exchange value of the crown is a means of doing this. The economic crisis has given rise to wide-spread social discontent. At the same time the hegemony in its democratic form is threatened by the national minorities, and by the growth of the Communist Party. The next election will give no national Czech majority. The result will be a crisis in parliamentary democracy. The present government is the last stand of the bourgeoisie. A fight to the death will follow with the bourgeoisie, leaning on the aid of the white guard legions and Sokolists, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Our main task is to diminish the social basis of the Czech Fascists before it comes to this. The slogan of the united front and the workers' government is a suitable medium for gaining the national socialist working masses, who may otherwise become an aid to the Czech Fascists. Our chief task is to win over the masses. To do this, the primary necessity is inner consolidation of the party, and a party executive which is not disturbed by the mistrust of an opposition, and is supported by the confidence of the members.

Urbans (Germany), contradicts Radek. He maintains that Radek had rendered the opportunists excellent service by his words. The capitalist offensive was much too strongly emphasized. On the other hand, the defensive of the workers was not sufficiently accentuated. According to Radek the possibility of fighting in community with opportunism exists. For us it is impossible, for opportunism is incapable. Radek attaches too much importance to negotiations with the heads. But in actual fighting the united front of the workers is only possible from below, by which the heads can be temporarily forced to work with the workers. A disposition already exists towards an action of the proletariat. The speaker points to the German Soviet movement and the creation of control organs.

The Avant-guard

By O. W. Kuisinen.

What were the principal dangers that threatened to strangle the first Proletarian Revolution in Russia during the first years of its existence?

First of all, the external and internal enemies of the Proletarian Revolution were at the door. The second danger lay in the fear that the revolutionary forces might be dissolved and dissipated in chaos.

The external enemies at the beginning were divided into two hostile camps, and the Soviet Government at that time succeeded in tying the offensive force of its nearest principal enemy—German Imperialism—by means of the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk. To the other enemies of the Proletarian Revolution who were continually cropping up in fresh legions like the notorious Czecho-Slovakian legion, an insurmountable barrier was erected through the formation of the Red Army. The latter task in itself necessitated everywhere the guiding activity of the politically conscious elements. The same thing applies to the other branches of Soviet activity. The entire Soviet organization was originally a loosely connected elemental force which necessitated tremendous efforts to transform it gradually into the mighty Soviet system. Who was capable of giving uniform guidance to this work?

This was accomplished by the Russian Communist Party. The saving of the Proletarian Revolution was the work of millions of proletarians. The victorious leadership of these millions was the task of the Russian Communist Party.

A retrospective glance at the task and difficulties of the young Soviet Power in its gigantic scope is sufficient to give an inkling of the danger of disintegration of the revolutionary

forces. When now, in little Austria the great masters of the 2½ International and the foremost experts of social-treachery are continually whining: "we could any day take power into our hands, but the thousand and one difficulties of governing that would immediately arise would cause us to relinquish the power", one cannot help reflecting: "Well, what ought our Russian comrades to say about their difficulties?"

Our Russian comrades threw themselves into the immense Soviet activity without even having a moment's time to talk about their difficulties. Towards the middle of 1918 this slogan was recognized in all its scope and poignancy, and the slogan of: "Back into the Party" was the rallying call to the political vanguard. The Party organization had for a long time been relegated to the background by the stress of excessive Soviet work. But it became evident that only the work of the Party could bring uniformity into the revolutionary activity. The Party was confronted with the dilemma of either being driven by the elemental process of the revolutionary forces. Without reliable guidance the revolution was heading for failure, and only a strongly welded party organization could effectively assume the leadership.

The role of the revolutionary workers' party as the leader of the class struggle is on the whole one of the most important facts brought home to us by the example of the Russian Communist Party. At the same time the Russian Communist Party carried forward the development of Marxist theory and practice. It is true that the "Communist Manifesto" in its day gave a theoretical outline of the essential tasks of the Communists, by describing them as "the most resolute and constant force for progress in all countries", who "fight for the achievement of the immediate aims and interests of the working class, yet at the same time see in the present phase of the movement also its future". Yet Marx could not lay down any fixed lines of party organization. At the time of the Communist Manifesto and the First International, the Labor parties were as yet either little sects or loosely connected groupings and currents, not one of which represented "the Party in the larger historical sense".

In the period of capitalist development which followed, there sprang up in most countries the big Parliamentary Labor parties which pursued a reformist policy and were opposed by a narrow-minded, non-political or politically indifferent, trade-unionist movement. The onward march from this embryonic stage to that of a revolutionary workers' party was effected only through the Russian Bolshevik Party.

The Russian comrades affectionately described their party as a vanguard. Indeed this mental picture describes both sides of the role of the party: marching forward at the head of the fighting masses without losing contact with the masses,—standing in the first firing line of the masses fighting for their vital interests, without merging themselves in the masses.

This conception of the role of the party, thanks to the efforts of the Russian Communist Party, has become the dominant viewpoint of the revolutionary labor movement in most countries. It is true that in the ranks of revolutionary (and semi-revolutionary) Syndicalism a struggle is still going on against the principle that the party should play a leading role in the revolutionary class struggle. Yet at bottom it is not so much a struggle against the actual leadership of the party, but rather a wrestling, within the minds of the undeveloped revolutionaries against their old prejudices. Within the ranks of the Communist Party the viewpoint introduced by the Russian Communist Party is no longer questioned in debate (except perhaps for a few individual and stubborn opponents).

Yet it is one thing to recognize the correctness of a principle, and quite another thing to carry it out. It can hardly be claimed that all sections of the Comintern have adopted this principle in practice. On the contrary, in most countries there is keen discussion on this question, and partly even on the question whether "under present circumstances" there should be any innovations at all introduced in our old working methods. Properly speaking this was the cause of much of the factional strife in many sections of our Party, and the differences of opinion which have arisen temporarily between Parties and the Executive of the Comintern. This strife and clash of opinion is mostly a stimulus to the party on the forward march towards becoming a truly revolutionary Workers' Party.

Thinking of the important lessons the other Communist parties (without exception) have already learned in this regard from the activity of the Russian Communist Party, one comes back to the idea of the urgent necessity of making the most important experiences of the Russian Communist Party widely known through popularly written publications.

This of course, does not mean, that the Russian Communist Party in its development as the vanguard of the proletarian revolution has reached the point of perfection. It is no secret that the Russian comrades themselves are of an altogether different opinion, as can be seen from the frank self-criticism

in all their party discussions. No other party reveals such courage in its self-criticism—and this of course is a sign of the political maturity of the Party.

The development of the Russian Communist Party is far from complete, yet the way and the manner of its development are to us extremely edifying. "Through work and struggle"—Oh yes, it is quite a simple matter to write this down on paper, but how uncommonly complex in practice. The Russian Communist Party has proved capable of asserting its authority through work and struggle, without any considerable friction or conflicts in the ranks. This is one lesson. It took its leading role in all seriousness, moulding the formal relations of Party members to their tasks and to the masses as an organized whole and substituting technical guidance for bureaucratic interference. This is another lesson. It has constantly striven to bring about the proper division of labor between the Party and the Soviet organs, finding the fitting work for party members in every field of activity, finding the suitable forces for any new and difficult tasks, and so on. Finally there is much to be learned from the way in which the leading organs of the party have always been anxious to make timely discovery of any mistakes that may have been committed, constantly revising, and improving, and if need be, altering their forms of activity.

The most weakly developed part of Russian politics was the ability to make judicious use of the forces available. Comrade Lenin twenty years ago, in his "Notes on the Consolidation and Development of Revolutionary Activity" gave prominent place to the importance of a proper division of labor and proper use of all available forces. In the course of the last twenty years, Lenin has done more than anyone else in the matter of organizing the leadership of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Everyone is aware of the enormous experience he has gained, particularly since 1917. And yet, after all his experiences, what was his main watchword at the last Congress of the Russian Communist Party?

Proper choice of men and control over the execution of the work!

Speaking of the lessons to be learned from the Russian Communist Party, it would be altogether inadequate to limit oneself to the one subject of the role of the Communist Party. Indeed, there are equally valuable lessons to be learned in many other directions. It is instructive to know how the Russian Communist Party has found the happy way of uniting revolutionary fighting ardour with revolutionary adaptability: how it made this happy combination effective whenever and wherever it was put to the test. Then comes perhaps the most important lesson: the Marxian strategy of the revolutionary class struggle. Mention should be made of the manner in which the Russian Communist Party adopted the Marxian method and developed it further in the practice of the greater proletarian revolution.

The Mussolini Government

By Gramsci.

The factors of the Italian crisis, which was lately settled in a rather violent manner by the Fascist Party assuming power, may be briefly summed up as follows.

The Italian bourgeoisie has succeeded in organizing its State not so much by its own intrinsic strength, as by the fact that its victory over the feudal and semi-feudal classes was favored by a series of circumstances of an international character (the policy of Napoleon III in 1852-1860, the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, the French defeat at Sedan, and the subsequent development of the German Empire). Thus the Italian bourgeois State developed differently and more slowly than many others. The Italian régime was purely constitutional. On the eve of the war the division of power had not yet taken place, the parliamentary prerogatives were very limited and there were no great political parliamentary parties. At that time the Italian bourgeoisie had to defend the unity and integrity of the State against the repeated attacks of the reactionary forces, which were chiefly represented by an alliance of the great landowners with the Vatican. The big industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, led by Giolitti, endeavored to meet the situation by an alliance between all the urban classes, with the class of the agricultural laborers (the first proposal of collaboration with the government was made to Turcati in the early part of the century.) This could not however be termed a step forward in the development of the constitutional State towards parliamentary democracy. This was rather in the nature of urgent concessions made by a paternal government to the working masses organized in trade unions and agricultural co-operatives.

The world war destroyed all these attempts. Giolitti, in agreement with the Crown, had pledged himself in 1912 to act in conjunction with Germany in the 1914 war (the military convention signed in Berlin in 1912 by General Pollio, chief of the

Italian General Staff, came into force precisely on August 2nd, 1914. This general committed suicide during the period of Italian neutrality). As soon as the Crown began to favor the new pro-Entente policy, Giolitti was forcibly put aside by the new leading groups, the representatives of the heavy industry, of the big agrarians and of the General Staff, which even went so far as to conspire to assassinate him.

The new political forces, which made their appearance after the armistice, had already consolidated themselves during the war. The peasants formed themselves into three powerful organizations—the Socialist Party, the People's Party (Catholic) and the ex-soldiers' associations. The Socialist Party organized more than a million agricultural laborers and small farmers in Central and Northern Italy. The people's party grouped around itself as many small landed proprietors and middle peasants in the same districts. The ex-soldiers' associations established themselves especially in southern Italy in the more backward regions which had no political traditions. The struggle against the big landowners soon grew in intensity throughout Italy. The estates were invaded and the landowners were compelled to emigrate to the chief towns of the agrarian districts—Bologna, Florence, Bari, Naples. Since 1919 they began to organize their citizens' battalions in order to struggle against the "tyranny of the peasants" in the rural districts. What was needed most in this great upheaval of the rural working classes was a clear and precise watchword, a uniform, firm and determined policy and a concrete political program.

The Socialist Party should have dominated the situation, but the People's Party outstripped it. Sixty per cent of the membership of the Socialist Party were peasants. Of the 156 socialist members of parliament, 110 were elected by the rural districts. Four-fifths of the co-operatives with socialist management were agricultural co-operatives. The Socialist Party reflected the chaos reigning in the minds of the rural population in connection with the program and ideology of the party. Its activity consisted in nothing but maximalist declamations, noisy declarations in parliament and a flourish of trumpets. All the attempts from within the Socialist Party to make working class questions and proletarian ideology predominate, were combatted by the most dishonest means. Thus during the session of the National Socialist Council, held in Milan in April 1920, Serrati went so far as to say that the general strike which had broken out at that period in Piedmont and which was supported by all the workers, had been artificially stimulated by irresponsible agents of the Moscow government.

In March 1920, the possessing classes began to organize the counter-offensive. On March 7th, the first national conference of Italian manufacturers was convened in Milan which established the General Confederation of Italian Industries. During this Conference a precise and complete plan of united capitalist action was elaborated, in which everything was foreseen, from the disciplined and methodical organization of the manufacturing and commercial class down to the minute study of all the means and weapons of struggle against the workers' trade unions, and even down to the political rehabilitation of Giovanni Giolitti.

In the beginning of April, the new organization already obtained its first political success; the Socialist Party condemned, as anarchical and irresponsible, the great Piedmont strike in defence of the workshop committees and for the workers' control of industry. This party threatened to dissolve the Turin Section which has conducted the strike. On June 15th, Giovanni Giolitti formed his Cabinet by compromising with the agrarians and the General Staff, represented by Bonomi, Minister of War. There then began a feverish counter-revolutionary organizational work owing to the fear of the seizure of the workshops and factories by the workers, which was even expected by the reformist leaders, who met at the conference of the Federation of Metal Workers which was held in Genoa in June of last year. In July, the Ministry for War, headed by Bonomi began to demobilize about 60,000 officers in the following manner: the officers were demobilized, retaining 1/3 of their pay. Most of them were sent to the most important political centres with the understanding that they would join the "Fascisti di Combattimento". Hitherto had been a small organization of socialist, anarchist, syndicalist, and republican elements favoring the participation of Italy in the war on the side of the Entente. The Giolitti government made enormous efforts to bring about a rapprochement between the Confederation of Industries and the Agrarian Associations, especially in Central and Northern Italy. It is at this period that the first armed Fascist detachments made their appearance, and that the first terrorist acts were committed. The seizure of the factories by the metal workers took place at a time when all this work was only in its preparatory stage. The Giolitti government was compelled to adopt a conciliatory attitude and to have recourse to homeopathic treatment rather than to surgical operations.

Communism and the French Peasants

By Renaud Jean.

From Brittany, from Central France, from the Parisian district, from Savoy, from the Apulian Valley, from everywhere, our militants signal an important change in the attitude of the French peasants towards revolution. They are no longer so much afraid of this word, and, for various reasons, they tend to accept the thing.

The remarkable thing is that this change of view is taking place at a time when the economic condition of the various rural classes is still superior to that before the war.

It is true that since 1919 and the triumph of the national bloc, the prices of certain agricultural products have fallen. Taxes are increasing yearly. Many peasants who counted on the high prices and the possibility of saving money and have bought land without entirely paying for it, now feel the heavy burden of mortgages. On the whole, however, the enormous majority of the French peasants are living better than before. The small landowner has paid off his debts, improved his machinery, re-furnished his home, and is better fed and clothed. Thousands of tenants and petty farmers have become proprietors. Due to the scarcity of labor, the wages of the laborers have tripled and quadrupled.

How can we explain these paradoxical facts. The peasants of 1919 often indigent, feared Socialism. The peasant of 1922, without having become "rich", but enjoying better living conditions, does not fear and even sympathizes with the idea of revolution.

First of all a large section of the rural workers possess no land. Contrary to the classical table of the French bourgeoisie, many feudal domains were not divided up during the revolution of 1793. Some of them still belong to their old owners. It is impossible to give the ratio of the land which became the property of the peasants, during and after the revolution, to the total area cultivated. The pre-war statistics showed in France about 5,700,000 agricultural enterprises, 4,850,000 of which were of small size, from less than 1 to 10 hectares, and 850,000 holdings of over 10 hectares. But these statistics do not give a precise idea of the ratio of the land cultivated by the owners to the land which produces capitalist profits. Nor are there precise figures as to the number of landless peasants. The statistics for the pre-war period are as follows: 1,474,931 landless peasants in 1896; 1,328,931, in 1901; 1,324,261, in 1906. How many are there now, after the ravages of war? A million? Perhaps less. But since in 1920 the rural population of France did not exceed 3,700,000, we can conclude that about one-fourth of the workers who were employed on the land worked for wages. If we take into account the hundreds of thousands of tenants and small farmers who cultivate the land for the benefit of the rural bourgeoisie, we see that the rural proletariat forms about one-third of the rural population. Therefore, for one-third of the French peasants the question of ownership is the same as for the wage workers in commerce and industry.

Some people will say that this was just as true before the war, and nevertheless the landless peasantry was absolutely hostile towards socialism. That is true.

But the war has created a new mentality among the peasants. The spirit which gave rise to the Jacquerie who demolished the castles of the feudal barons and hung their owners, the spirit which a century of constitutional and parliamentary government, had lulled to sleep, awoke again in the trenches. The peasant realized more or less the futility of the political game in which he was always the loser. He knows, and he will know better to-morrow if the Communist Party fulfils its task, that his essential enemy is not the Radical or the opportunist, the Republican or the reactionary, but the landowner, the rich, and that his struggle is for the conquest of the land. In the trenches the peasant recovered his class consciousness. There remain the small landowners. One might think that, being owners of their instruments of production, they would have no interest in the revolution and indeed would fear it and become allies of the parties who wish to preserve the present system of society. Nevertheless we hope to gain many of them for Communism.

True they own their land, but when it comes to selling their products, they feel the yoke of big capital. The financial situation of the country troubles them particularly. Their savings are invested in state bonds. They see with fear the increase of the budget. And above all they detest war and militarism, which menace them with expropriation. There are in France, as in every country which took part in the imperialist war, millions of men who had to give up seven or eight years of their lives to the government; thousands and thousands of returned soldiers whom the State has robbed of their strength, of their health, or of a limb; and a million and a half families

who have lost their support. This hatred of war may be turned into a powerful revolutionary movement if we can free ourselves of all Wilsonian pacifism, and do not fall into demagogic side-tracks.

To sum up, even for different reasons, both the rural proletariat and the small landowners are susceptible to Communist penetration. The only enemies of the revolution in the country will be the large landowners and the large tenants who draw capitalist profits from the employment of rural labor.

The Awakening of a Race

By J. Steklov.

Some Negro delegates have made their appearance at the IV. Congress of the Communist International. At the first glance, this event may seem insignificant, but it is really the beginning of an important historic movement destined to play a significant role in the general struggle against world imperialism.

The awakening of the Eastern peoples, viz., of the peoples of Asia, has already been registered on the scales of history. There is no doubt whatever that this is one of the most vulnerable spots of the world imperialism. When the movement of the white proletariat will join with the revolutionary movement of the oppressed nations of the East, the position of international capitalism, threatened from all sides, will be undermined. But this position will be menaced by even greater dangers when the movement of the black race joins the stream of the general liberation movement.

It is true that the negro race, i.e. all the peoples and tribes of Africa, are not as numerous as the Asiatic peoples. Its cultural level is also much lower than that of the latter. Nevertheless, the negro race is a quantity with which we must reckon. It numbers about 200 millions, the majority of whom are in Africa, and is one of the pedestals of world imperialism. About one-tenth of this race lives in America, principally in the U.S.A. and in the Antilles, where they constitute the lowest category of unskilled labor.

It should also be stated that owing to the geographical distribution, which brings the negro peoples into close proximity with the world bourgeoisie, and owing to their cultural backwardness, which turns them into obedient tools in the hands of world capitalism, the black peoples represent a far greater peril to the white proletariat than the peoples of the East. The British make use of their black proletariat in South Africa for the struggle against their white slaves, as we have seen during the recent rising of the South African white workers. In the U.S.A. the black proletariat is a weapon in the hands of the American bourgeoisie, with the assistance of which the wages of the white workers are beaten down and strikes broken. During the last decades the French bourgeoisie has extended its colonial empire in Africa through the medium of its black troops. It also mobilized these black forces during the world war. In its struggle for the suppression of the revolutionary movement of the French proletariat, the bourgeoisie makes use of these black forces which under the leadership of white officers are converted into a soulless machine with which it hopes to keep its own toiling masses in subjection.

It is therefore self-evident that the adherence of the black race to the world Communist movement would be a severe blow to international capitalism on the economic as well as on the political field. The bourgeoisie reckons on the cultural backwardness of the negro people which, in its opinion, should constitute an insurmountable barrier against the penetration of revolutionary ideas among the negroes. However, acting on the principle that the Lord helps those who help themselves, it takes stringent measures, in the form of repressions, to protect the negroes against permeation with such ideas. Only recently the first attempt of the French Communists to conduct communist agitation among the population of Northern Africa, was brutally suppressed by the republican courts. True, propaganda was conducted only among the Arabs of Algiers and Tunis, but the communist contagion could and should be transmitted by the Arabs to wide masses of the negro population of the French colonial empire. The British in South Africa are also taking measures against a rapprochement between the white and black proletariat. They strive to arouse racial hatred and dissension and thus prevent the development of a united labor movement against capitalist exploitation.

Attempts to draw the negro proletariat into the world labor movement were made even in the period of the Second International, particularly by the French Labor Party (the followers of Quesada). It is a well-known fact that at one time—in the early part of the century—its parliamentary fraction included a negro member, Legitimus by name, from the island of Guadeloupe. Subsequently another negro member named Lal Groslier,

made his appearance from the island of Marinique. But these were only the first timid steps from which nothing resulted and which to a certain extent bore a casual, nay, even anecdotal character. Legitimus turned out to be a demagogue of the lowest type, who did not scruple to pretend to employ witchcraft in order to hold the negro masses in his grip. Localities with a numerous black proletarian population were not affected by this agitation. Even the millions of negroes inhabiting the U.S.A. were not affected by socialist propaganda. As to Africa, nothing has been done in that direction.

Thus, the Communist International has a virgin field of action before it. It is true that the Negro Proletariat is on a very low level of cultural development. However, one should bear in mind that it is subject to excessive exploitation, that its wages are extremely low and the conditions in which it lives are appalling. Therefore, a propaganda which promises to the negro proletarians equality of rights with their white brothers and liberation from oppression and exploitation is bound to meet with an eager response. Furthermore, if one takes into consideration that on the whole the negroes are a healthy race, which bourgeois civilization has not yet demoralized, one has every reason to believe that revolutionary, and especially communist agitation has every chance of success among the black proletariat.

It is for this reason that one must welcome the advent of the first negro delegates to the Comintern Congress. They are the first swallows, and will be followed by others. It is true, that only the negroes of North America are directly represented at the Congress, while the African negroes, who are the majority of the black race, are not represented. However, there is every reason to believe that through the American negroes it will be possible to carry communist propaganda into the untouched regions of Africa. It is true that something of that kind is already being done by the white workers of South Africa. But of course all this is not enough, all the more so as for various historic reasons the negro masses are more likely to listen to members of their own race than to white people whom they more of less distrust. The negroes of North America, who include representatives of the various negro peoples and tribes, can and must bring into being a negro communist literature and press, must establish training centres for agitators and propagandists who will carry on their work not only in the U.S.A. but in Africa itself by means of correspondence, as well as by the despatch of special emissaries to the various localities.

This is difficult work, the more so that one has to take into consideration quite exceptional conditions of culture and customs. Yet it is the most noble work the Communist International can now carry out. In the first place it will render easier the struggle of the white worker wherever the white and the black proletarians live and work side by side as in the U.S.A., South Africa, etc. It will also arouse the race which, while steeped in ignorance, has yet played an important part in the world economic system. The obstacles and great difficulties which the Communist International will meet in this field, must not discourage it, especially with the example of the Malayan proletariat before us, among whom a wide communist movement has been successfully established. This work is so important that all the difficulties in this direction must be overcome at all costs by the common efforts of all the communist parties and with their active material and moral support.

Contemporary Poland

By Felix Kon.

In the Theses adopted at the Third Conference of the Polish Communist Party, it is stated that the following three points will be the chief factors in the Polish revolution.

1. The revolutionizing of the working masses under the influence of the ever increasing attacks of the capitalists and of the government.

2. The revolutionizing of the wide masses of the landless and of the poor peasantry owing to the failure of the Agrarian Reform Act.

3. The steady growth of the revolutionary ferment in the border districts owing to the colonial and extermination policy of the Polish Government.

Only a few months have elapsed since then, but those prognostications have already come true.

The fierce attacks of the capitalists, who do not shrink from any means, have awakened the masses. A series of strikes are convulsing Poland, even in remote places where hitherto "peace and quiet" reigned supreme. The proletarian masses are offering a stubborn resistance to the fascist type of struggle against strikes, as was the case in former Prussian Poland. Disappointed with the Agrarian Reforms, which are carried out on the principle of "to him who hath shall be given", the

peasant masses are driven into a joint revolutionary struggle with the proletariat, while the extreme chauvinism and the colonization system, which exceeds the Bismarkian "Ausrotten", the persecution of the Ukrainians, Lithuanians, White Russians and Jews, have already brought matters to such a pass that the "democratic" Polish Government, with the approval and the support of the Social Democratic traitors has declared a state of siege and established field court martials, and is calling up troops to suppress the movement by force of arms.

In this atmosphere the election campaign is taking place, which does not augur well for its character. Its features are confiscation and persecution of the working class press, mass arrests of workers' and election committees, suppression of workers' meetings and organizations and finally annulment of the lists of the revolutionary proletariat.

All these circumstances will certainly result in only very few proletarian candidates being elected to the Diet. In this respect the bourgeoisie and its lackeys will certainly be triumphant. However, it is impossible to stay the development of the proletarian class consciousness by such police tactics. The working class is again on the war path: For them the Diet is only a means to an end. . . . The struggle will be partly carried on within the walls of the Diet. . . . What matters most, is the fact that in spite of the repressions, the struggle is not abating, but is on the contrary increasing and is affecting ever increasing sections of the proletariat. . . . And this means ultimate victory.

Sidi-bel-Abbe's "Extreme Left"

By G. Sajarov.

I have before me a remarkable document. It is the answer of the Sidi-Bel-Abbes Federation of Oran (Algeria), to the appeal of the Communist International addressed to the French Colony. First of all, the section boasts of its revolutionism. "The Communist section of Sidi-Bel-Abbes is composed of old socialist militants who count about 20 years of social struggles in Algeria, militants whose line of action has always been directed towards the extreme left of socialism, at the time of the unity and of the Communist Party; this section is therefore well qualified to pronounce its opinion on the Algerian tactics of the Communist movement."

This "extreme Left" began its criticism of the colonial policy of the Communist International by the following monstrous affirmation: "There are colonial peoples who are already capable of self-government and others who are not." It is difficult to see wherein these "Communists" are acting most banal French bourgeoisie of the time of Napoleon III, who were convinced that they represented the vanguard of humanity, to protect all other peoples. These "Communists" are acting in a French colony; that is, their first duty is to combat French Imperialism. Nevertheless, they declare that the colonial Communist Federations in the most International of proletarian parties must admit the distinction between black and white, the division into free and slave races. These poor people cannot look beyond the coming municipal elections. They judge the Communist International from this standpoint and declare that no opinions may be spread on "their territory" for which they are not willing to take the responsibility. The Communist International must capitulate before the petty bourgeoisie of Sidi-Bel-Abbes because it is preventing them from peacefully cooking their little broth at the municipal elections!

The socialist petty bourgeoisie are willing to support the revolutionary movement only if this movement will "mark a stage in the historical development of humanity towards progress." The French police who protect the security of the inhabitants of Oran are also defenders of progress, who prevent the wheel of history from turning back to the regime of Mussulman feudalism.

These representatives of the working class aristocracy and petty bourgeoisie of the French colonies would never attract our attention if they were exceptions within the French Party, if there were not similar groups in other parties.

The colonial question is no longer a forum for oratorical exercises. The nationalist revolutionary movement of the colonies and the awakening of the colonial working masses demand that we carry on a ruthless fight against such tendencies in the International of the proletariat. The followers of Hildebrands, Van-Kols, and Noskes have no place in the Communist International. The Second International is open for such people. The internationalism of the Second International opposes neither intervention against Soviet Russia, the plunder of Germany, nor the oppression of the colonial peoples.

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Program of the Communist International

(Draft)

By N. Bucharin (Moscow).

I.

Capitalist Slavery

General Characteristics of Capitalism as a System of Exploitation

At the present time almost the whole globe is under the rule of capitalism.

This rule is based upon private property and the production of commodities for the market.

A small group of persons is in possession of the monopoly of the means of producing these goods, and of the means of distributing them; this group is the capitalist class. This monopoly assures to this class an undivided economic domination over millions of proletarians, who possess no means of production, and who are forced to sell their labor power.

The economic domination of the bourgeoisie is secured by its political rule, and by its state organization, which gives it a monopoly over all arms and means of applying physical force.

The Rule of the bourgeoisie is also secured culturally, for it possesses the monopoly of education, this being in the hands of the capitalists.

Wage Labor and the Conditions of Exploitation

The working class which forms a constantly growing majority of the population, thus serves as a living source of profit to the bourgeoisie exploiting its labor.

The working class, economically oppressed, subjected politically and culturally, is the slave of capital.

Contradictions in the Development of the Capitalist System

The hunt for profits forced the bourgeoisie to develop its productive powers continuously and increasingly, and to extend the sphere of operations of capitalist production. But the fundamental defects of the capitalist system revealed themselves at the same time with ever growing distinctness; these defects inevitably lead to the complete breakdown of the capitalist system.

The rule of private property imparts an anarchic character to production, and leads to blind production regulated by no conscious power. This is shown on the one hand in the severe conflicts between various competing concerns and groups of concerns, causing an enormous waste of energy; on the other hand the unregulated production causes periodically recurring crises, accompanied by destruction of productive forces and mass unemployment among the proletariat.

To the anarchy of production must be added the class conflicts. Capitalist society, built up on the exploitation of an overwhelming majority of the population by an inconsiderable minority, is torn in two, and its whole history is one of conflicts between the classes.

a) Anarchy of Production, Competition, Crises.

b) The Class War.