

INTERNATIONAL

PRESS

CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 2 No. 80

19th Sept. 1922

Central Bureau: Berlin SW 48, Friedrichstrasse 225, III. — Postal address Franz Dahlem, Berlin SW 48, Friedrichstrasse 225, III
for Inprekorr. — Telegraphic address: Inprekorr.

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Politics		In Soviet Russia	
The Russo-Japanese Peace Negotiations. By <i>Karl Radek</i>	597	Recent Labor Legislation in Soviet Russia (II). By <i>J. Larin</i>	601
South America and Soviet Russia. By <i>M. Yaroshevsky</i>	598	The Cooperative Movement	
The Manufacture of Public Opinion in England. By <i>N. Zelonopolsky</i>	599	The Cooperative Movement and Communism. By <i>A. Henriot</i>	602
The Election Campaign in Poland. By <i>N. Ulan</i>	599	To All Communist Workers in the Cooperative Movement	603
Economics		Appeals	
Britain's Death Struggle with the United States. By <i>J. T. W. Newbold</i>	600	(R.I.L.U.) To the Transport Workers of All Countries!	603
Labor Movement		Notices.	
The Conference of the Italian Railroad Workers. By <i>E. Peluso</i>	601	George Sorel. By <i>M. Ollivier</i>	604

POLITICS

The Russo-Japanese Peace Negotiations

By *Karl Radek*.

The peace negotiations of the Far East Republic and Soviet Russia with Japan were opened at a railway station of the Southern Manchurian Railway. The Japanese Government refused to hold the negotiations in Tokio, Peking, Chita or Moscow. By this choice of a place lying outside all connection with the world, the Japanese Government proves its fear of public opinion, even of the Japanese people. The Soviet Government would have had no fear of holding the negotiations in Tokio, although in Japan not only every Communist, but also every labor activity is liable to severe punishment. Although in Tokio not a single workers' paper appears, Russia was quite certain that its attitude would meet with the greatest sympathy. In fact the Soviet Government puts forward no other demand at these negotiations than that of a conclusion of peace, based upon mutual benefit, and this demand perfectly accords with the demands of Japanese public opinion, even of the public opinion of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie of Japan comprehends perfectly what dangers for Japan the continuance of the intervention policy may result in. The Japanese Government declares that it will evacuate Siberia, regardless of whether it can come to terms with Soviet Russia or not. We heard no such declaration from the Japanese Delegation at the Washington Conference. There they still spoke of the necessity of defending Japanese interests and for this reason held it to be necessary to remain in Siberia for the time being. What, then, has changed since the Washington Conference? In the first place Japan is convinced that she must clear out of Siberia. Must, then, Admiral Kato, the head of the Washington Delegation and the head of the present Japanese Government be reminded with what self-assurance he listened to the speech of the American Secretary of State, Mr. Hughes, who read out all the declarations of the Japanese Government concerning Siberia one after the other, and who had to point out impartially how often the Japanese Government had broken its promises? If it were not necessary to avoid everything that could disturb the negotiations just begun, I would repeat here that passage from the book of Sullivan, (one of the journalists very closely in touch with the American Government), on the

Washington Conference, which describes the attitude of the Japanese Delegation in Washington. It is probable that the impressions gained there by Admiral Kato hastened in the highest degree the decision to evacuate Siberia.

The second reason is the mood of the Japanese bourgeoisie itself. The occupation of Eastern Siberia cost Japan 600,000,000 yen. If the purpose of the occupation were the preparation for the seizure of Eastern Siberia, then this plan was under the given conditions of the world situation incapable of being carried out. If, however, the occupation by Japan was to help in gaining an economic foothold in Eastern Siberia before other capitalist powers should make their appearance, then Japan achieved the exact opposite. The exports of Japan into Siberia fell considerably during the occupation. The Newspaper *Tokio Asahi* is perfectly right when it writes:

"The best method of defending the interests of business people who have dealings with Russia is the renunciation of such methods which can bring a hostile element into the mutual relations of the Russian and Japanese peoples."

It is superfluous to explain to the Japanese Government what feelings the Japanese occupation called forth among the Russian people. If it should turn out (which some Japanese papers fear) that the promises of Admiral Kato regarding the evacuation of Siberia remain on paper only, if the fulfilling of these promises should be postponed until the alleged non-partisan Kato Government, (which was formed in consequence of the dissolution of the late government party of the agrarians and militarists, *Sen-Yu-Kay*) shall yield up power again to an open government of this party, after which the Japanese troops will remain in Siberia,—then we have only to call to mind the words of another Kato, of *Baron Kato*, leader of the capitalist party *Ken-Se-Kay*. Baron Kato, in his speech of April 25th, which, among other things, was devoted to the failure of the Dairen Conference, said the following:

"The endless postponement of Siberia's evacuation, merely for the sake of prestige, is leading to a sharp estrangement between Russia and Japan, and to the increase of the already heavy burden of taxation of the Japanese people, requires further sufferings on the part of the Japanese troops in Siberia and calls forth the suspicion of the foreign powers towards Japan."

Soviet Russia demands the evacuation of Siberia in the interests of the Japanese as well as of the Russian people.

If, however, Japan vacates Siberia (and it will be compelled in its own interest to do so), it has two ways of doing so: Either

she transfers power in Vladivostok to the White Adventurers, or hands over Vladivostok and the other occupied districts to the Republic of the Far East which is allied with Soviet Russia.

Perhaps many Japanese circles hope to be able to intimidate us by playing the menace of the White Government against us. We trust that such hopes are not entertained by a single serious man who has an influence upon Japanese foreign policy. For if Japan should surrender Vladivostok to the White Guards, she will be faced with the question of supporting these White Guards, or not? If the Japanese Government supports them, then it will have to occupy Eastern Siberia again, and once more squander enormous sums of money. If, however, Japan actually desires to get out of the Siberian *cul-de-sac* and really to cease supporting the White Guards, the latter will then be wiped out, and Japan will find herself face to face with the Far East Republic and with Soviet Russia.

Hence, from the Japanese point of view it would be a senseless thing to prolong the negotiations unnecessarily, to twist and turn, and to pretend that the negotiations in Tchan-Tchun are negotiations with the Far East Republic in the presence of and not peace negotiations with Soviet Russia. Japan's diplomats are known for their sobriety and matter-of-factness, and we are surprised at these covert tricks. The representatives of the Far East Republic have often enough declared, plainly and concisely, that they do not even dream of separating from Soviet Russia, and that the Far East Republic is only a buffer state which was formed in order to avoid conflicts between Japan and Russia. That was said at the time when the whole world was not yet convinced of the hopelessness of the intervention policy. Now, however, Japan is also convinced of it.

It suffices to observe the tone of the Japanese press on the occasion of the Rappalo Treaty, to see that the Japanese bourgeoisie also perceived the complete bankruptcy of the intervention policy. The organ of the Sen-Yu-Kay Party, *Ziu-O* is quite clear on this, and writes on the French policy as follows: "France attempted to support Poland in order to erect a barrier between Russia and Germany, and sought after the formation of an anti-Soviet Alliance of the Baltic States, Roumania and Poland. France supported the anti-Bolshevik movement in every possible manner. But her policy led precisely to those results which she most feared. It led to a yet closer rapprochement between Russia and Germany,—to the signing of the Rappalo Treaty. France must take the blame upon herself for all this. The importance of the Rappalo Treaty consists in this, that it drew Russia out of her international isolation and isolated France instead."

We hope that after the negotiations of Tchan-Tchun are over, we shall not be compelled to wonder over the fact that the Japanese are so sensible with regard to the affairs of France but not when it is a case of their own interests.

Indeed the negotiations at the little station on the Manchurian Railway, which, as is known, is not a chief artery of world capitalism, represent a part of the general policy of compromise between the Russia of the Workers and Peasants, the first country of the World Revolution, and countries of International Capitalism. This policy of compromise is, under the given circumstances, historically unavoidable for both parties.

This compromise between Japan and Russia will be possible if Japan does not intend to play the rôle of Commodore Perry, who in the year 1854, compelled the Japanese Government to capitulate to American and European capital. Soviet Russia proved at Genoa and at the Hague that she is only minded to conclude such treaties from which she herself can derive benefits. The Soviet Government is prepared to enter into such a treaty with Japan, and Japan will also be able to reap advantages from it. There can, of course, be no talk of anything which gives prior rights to Japan, still less of such rights which Japan does not grant to other countries. If the newspaper *Kokumin*, (the organ of the liberal militarists), acts towards Russia as the champion of world capitalism, it suffices to call attention to the complaints of the English and American press, which accuse Japan in that she herself does not allow foreign capitalists a free hand. The purchase of land and soil by foreigners, the activity of foreign insurance companies, etc. etc.—all these are bound up with enormous difficulties.

The negotiations in Tchan-Tchun will lead to favorable results, only if Japan acts strictly according to the A.B.C. of good businessmen. "Only that business which is advantageous to both parties can be a lasting business."

South America and Soviet Russia.

By M. Yaroshevsky.

It was only about 30 to 40 years ago that South America was drawn into the orbit of capitalist world economy. Yet its development, thanks to the powerful stream of capital and of

emigrants from Europe, acquired an extraordinarily rapid pace. In the first half of the nineties, the Socialist Party which had originated in Argentina, declared in its manifesto that: "as by now the whole of the free soil in the country has been taken, the further development of the social relations in the republic must take the same course as in Europe". As a matter of fact, the capitalist conditions of society which in the coast districts and in the temperate regions have reached a high grade of development, are now penetrating rapidly into the interior of the Continent and into the equatorial districts where the mestizos (a mixture of Whites and Indians) preponderate, and the patriarchal communal form of society has remained. Capitalism has there brought about the disproportionate and rapid increase of ground-rent and the price of land, thereby increasing the struggle of the tenants, of the overwhelming majority of the existing small and middle farmers and cattle breeders who produce for the market, against the great land owners who possess about 70 per cent of the productive land.

The World War which advanced the importance of South America as a supplier of raw materials on a large scale, threw the decision of the competitive struggle between the ground-rent and capitalist profits in agriculture, in favor of the latter. In the most advanced countries, like Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, the native bourgeoisie succeeded to power. Foreign capital, which in South America not only occupies the position of great land owner, but also has in its hands the chief railway lines, the shipping companies, the banks and foreign trade, endeavors to cut down the profits of the local capitalist as much as possible and fight against the local powers. The intentions of world capital with regard to its activities in South America, have now completely changed. Not only has the flow of European capital into South American undertakings not been renewed since the War, but a portion of this capital has even come back, which occurrence has led to the entire disappearance of some important branches of industry (timber-cutting, for instance) and consequently the abandonment of these districts by the population.

As regards the United States the governments of South America up to now have barely succeeded in getting short term loans from the New York Banks, and this only under the most onerous terms. The United States built up protective tariffs against the products of the South American republics and at the same time increased, by artificial means, her own imports into these countries.

The leading republics of South America reached this stage of capitalist development when further advance had become unprofitable for the old exploiting capitalist countries, while the strongly developing labor organizations, very mindful of their class interests, exercised a strong pressure upon the profit interests. The South Americans have come to the conviction that no further stream of foreign capital is to be expected in the near future, and that it is absolutely necessary to overcome the present severe crisis by their own efforts. Steps have therefore been taken towards developing the exchange of commodities in the interior of the Continent, and plans formulated for a whole series of railway lines, and local laws regulating rents and terms of tenancy.

At the same time, the South American republics began to display more initiative in questions of international politics, whilst they defended their independence with their combined strength, especially with regard to the United States. The struggle of Soviet Russia against the counter-revolution, which was supported by world capital, aroused not only the enthusiasm of the working masses of South America but it was also followed with great interest by many of the ruling circles of the South American republics. This is confirmed by the repeated reports of interviews with Comrades Tchitcherin and Krassin in the South American papers. And in March of this year the Government of Uruguay laid before Parliament the draft of a commercial treaty with Soviet Russia.

South America regards Soviet Russia, as a market for its enormous surplus of agricultural products and raw materials in general, for which it has no market at present. This is one of the motives for the interest which the bourgeois circles of South America display towards Soviet Russia at this moment. Apart from this, South America which feels the full strength of the crisis in the world economy, has an interest in the reconstruction of the productive power of Soviet Russia who will hardly be a dangerous competitor in the international market for raw products within the next few years.

These tendencies which lead to an understanding with Soviet Russia, owe their origin to the reactions which are to be traced back to the imperialistic efforts of the United States to dominate the Republics of South America.

The Manufacture of Public Opinion in England

By N. Zelonopolsky (London).

Every child knows by this time that the "Bolshevik Dictators", have among other crimes, suppressed the freedom of press. This charge has been repeatedly brought up against Soviet Russia in the past few years, by the liberal and radical bourgeois press, and even by the workers' organs. Well, let us see what this much-vaunted freedom of the press is worth in old, "leberal" England, which boasts of its wise Constitution.

2300 periodicals are published in England. Of this number, the workers (15 million men according to the official statistics of the Social Insurance Bureau) dispose of 46 weeklies and 75 monthlies, with rather limited circulations. Of 180 dailies, the workers control but one, the *Daily Herald*, which maintains a precarious existence.

Let us pass over to the circulation. In London are sold 6,500,000 numbers of the daily newspapers. Of these 6,500,000 copies, 150,000 represent the issue of the *Daily Herald*, the only labor organ. Add to this that the evening editions have a circulation of about 3 million, and that there is no evening labor daily.

But this not yet sufficient to make "public opinion". The bourgeois system of news-feeding is much more extensive; to the daily publications, we must add the 6,000,000 numbers of the bourgeois weekly press, served every Sunday morning to the London population.

And here we have the picture of the contending forces. On one side the heavy artillery of the bourgeois press, and on the other the beanshooter of the proletariat.

Now let us look a little closer at the organization of the bourgeois English press. Let us make a little tour through the malodorous factories where the public opinion of a modern democracy is manufactured. The most important morning daily is the *Daily Mail* (circulation 1,817,947). The *Daily Mail* vulgarizes for its readers the opinions of the aristocratic *Times* (circulation 75,000). The *Times* is the semi-official organ of the Government, more especially of the Conservative Party, the enemy of all progress. The *Times* demanded the "war to the bitter end" against Germany, and favored intervention in Russia. Today it defends the "Entente cordiale". During the Hague Conference, it never referred to Comrades *Litvinov* and *Krassin* except as "bandits". The *Times* belonged to the deceased Lord Northcliffe, the greatest poisoner of English public opinion.

And while we are at Lord Northcliffe, let us consider a while the activity of this man who has just died, mourned by every journalistic prostitute. Lord Northcliffe owned (and his heirs still do) the following dailies: *Times* (75,000 circulation), *Daily Mail* (1,817,947) *Evening News* (894,558). This makes a total of 2,787,705 numbers daily. That is to say, that 2,787,705 fools daily gave their hard-earned pennies for their dose of interventionist, imperialist, super-patriotic, reactionary, "bitter-end-ist" literature of Lord Northcliffe. On Sunday, 866,515 persons get their Sabbath intellectual meal from Northcliffe's *Weekly Dispatch*. Is it exaggerated, then, to say that Lord Northcliffe was the greatest mind poisoner in England, who boasted of making his victims "think" as he himself pleased? The quality of information of the Northcliffe press is notorious, and justly despised by the rest of the bourgeois press.

Irrespective of their owners, the English bourgeois journals are all very much alike. *Daily Mail*, *Daily Mirror* (1,059,861), *Daily Express* (855,000), *Daily Sketch* (837,654), *Evening News* (894,558), *Star* (702,600) *Daily News*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Morning Post*, — all print 10 to 20 pages, large size, 4 to 8 of which are entirely devoted to advertisements, which makes a newspaper a paying proposition. A page in the *Daily Mail* costs £1000; in the *Daily Express*, over £500. The advertisement tax nets the Government a yearly income of £13,000,000,—9 million from the morning papers and 4 million from the evening editions. The English dailies have financial, commercial, sporting, literary, society, pages. They relate the least incidents of the St. James Court. But the Moscow reader, accustomed to his *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, would be very much surprised. Never a word of the working class, unless it be to combat some strike, or give a line or two to some labor accident in which a larger number of workers have lost their lives ("lesser" accidents are not judged worthy of notice). Needless to say, that the English newspapers have neither pages for the woman worker, nor for the youth?

Competition is one of the laws of capitalist society. In their hunt for buyers, the newspapers resort to the dirtiest tricks, always publish news to defame and discredit their competitors. The least scrupulous of them, Lord Northcliffe, had published a sensational pamphlet, entitled: *Newspapers and their Millionaires*. In it we find some very interesting things which, for once, happen to be true (strange thing for Lord Northcliffe).

He claims that every single London daily, with the exception of the labor press and some purely sporting papers, is backed by some very rich, often multi-millionaire owner, king of sea traffic, of paper, of coal or of petroleum.

An easy thing to prove. Here are the principal owners of the English press:

1. Lord Northcliffe (now his heirs).
2. Viscount Rodzermeeer, owner of *Daily Mirror* (London), the *Leeds Mercury* (Leeds), the *Glasgow Record* (Glasgow) and the weekly *Sunday Pictorial* (2½ million circulation) very much read by the workers because of its numerous illustrations and its cheap price (2 pence).
3. Baronet Halton, owner of *Daily Sketch*, *Daily Dispatch*, *Evening Standard*, the weekly *Sunday Chronicle*, and a number of provincial sheets.
4. Lord Burnham, owner of *Daily Telegraph*.
5. Lord Beverbrook, *Daily Express* and *Sunday Express*.
6. Lord Inverforth *Daily Chronicle*.
7. Viscount Cowdray, one of the petroleum kings, owns the *Westminster Gazette*.
8. Baronet William Berry, one of the brothers Berry who own about half the appartement houses of London, owns the *Daily Graphic*, *Sunday Times*, *Financial Times*. One of the Berrys, Seymour Berry is manager of the *Western Mail*, published in Cardiff, the coal centre of Wales.
9. Mr. Cudberry, big chocolate manufacturer, owner of *Daily News* and *Star*; a great enemy of France because of the serious competition of the Meunier products.
10. Lord Riddle, owner of the *News of the World*, an idiotic weekly filled with melodramatic serials, with a circulation of 3½ million among the English working class.
11. Countess Brathurst, — *Morning Post*, ultra-reactionary.

Well, there is a thing to be proud of this *press freedom* of England! English "public opinion", which unfortunately includes the working class opinion, is manufactured by a dozen capitalists who have no interests but those of their business. From this it is easy to understand their hatred of the Proletarian Dictatorship, and their zeal to defend the freedom of their press. Let us hope that the reader of this too summary article will have understood also.

*

It would be highly interesting and useful for our comrades from France, Belgium, Italy and America, to furnish us similar articles on the press of their own countries. The Ed.

The Election Campaign in Poland

By N. Ulan (Warsaw).

In democratic Poland which has the ex-Socialist Pilsudski as its chief of state, the Communists are outlawed and their press, driven underground, cannot, or only with great difficulty penetrate to the masses. Any official participation by the Communist Party in the elections for the Sejm and the Lower Chamber, which are to be held at the end of October and the beginning of November, is out of the question, as even the publication of a list of candidates is impossible. The candidates announced and all those who sign the list are immediately arrested.

Regardless of all this, the Red fractions of the trade unions, and of the industrial and agricultural workers have formed a Central Election Committee and have entered the election campaign against all the bourgeois parties and against the White, "Socialist" Party (P.P.S.). This Committee is composed exclusively of trade unionists and workers in the workshops. Every industrial centre is represented on the Committee. Every industrial centre is represented on the Committee. It consists of men who are very well known to the Polish proletariat through their activity in a struggle lasting almost three decades. Almost every one of these men has had his experiences in the prisons of the Czar and Kaiser. The agricultural proletariat has also sent its best representatives to this Committee, people who stirred up the Polish agricultural worker to take up the struggle.

The most important achievement, however, is the fact that, in Poland, where chauvinism rages unrestricted, where the policy of suppression towards the national minorities which comprise over forty-five per cent of the total population, has been immeasurably increased, the proletariat of these oppressed nationalities has abandoned the national front with its own bourgeoisie and joined the proletariat of the whole of Poland in their common struggle. This fact is also being clearly demonstrated in the present election campaign, in that, the Ukrainian, White Russian, and German industrial and agricultural workers have sent their delegates to the Election Committee. The Central Election Committee is the only proletarian group in Poland which has put forward a positive program with regard to the

question of the national minorities, the only one which will take up the fight against every form of oppression including national oppression. At the election this proletarian group will form a powerful counterpoise to the bourgeois bloc of the national minorities which, without distinction of creed and nationality, contends with the Polish nationalists over the share of the exploitation and suppression of all the proletarians of Poland.

If one bears in mind the white terror that is raging, and further that the election platform had to pass the strict Polish censor, one understands with what caution the postulates had to be worded. Words like *Dictatorship of the Proletariat* or *Social Revolution* had to be scrupulously avoided. Our demands also had to be couched in the most cautious and discreet terms, so much the more as the Polish proletariat is still compelled today to wage a desperate struggle for the right of organization, the right to strike, and for freedom of the press. The fight for the eight hour day and for social legislation occupies a very important place in the election platform of this Committee.

The demands regarding the agrarian question had to be adapted to the great majority of the backward Polish agricultural workers and small peasants.

Denunciations are beginning already. Thus the chief editor of the *Robotnik* (Organ of the P.P.S.) quite openly informs the Police and the reaction that here it is a question of a Communist group.

We do not doubt that in spite of all repressions, the Polish industrial and agricultural workers will give a fit reply to the Polish bourgeoisie and to the P.P.S., whilst with ballot in hand they will decide for the Red Trade Union and against the P.P.S., against the white terror and for the liberation of the political prisoners.

ECONOMICS

Britain's Death Struggle with the United States

By J. T. Walton Newbold (London).

An incident occurred the other day at the port of Newcastle-on-Tyne in connection with the American Consulate there which, whilst it may be smoothed over for a time, is a sure index that the relations between the great capitalist trusts of Britain and the United States are steadily pushing the two mighty empires to war. The British Government protested, without success, to the American Government against the alleged action of one of its consuls in making the granting of a *visa* to a passport, or at any rate, the hastening of this, conditional on booking a passage to the States in an American owned ship. The American Government has answered the protest by saying it does not consider that its consul has acted irregularly and has declined to discipline him. The British Government has therefore closed the consulate. It is only a straw, but it shows the way the wind is blowing. A few incidents of this kind and we shall soon have the American capitalist press working up a war to defend the honor of "Old Glory", and to stop the British Lion tweaking tail feathers out of the American Eagle.

The British capitalist press and the British shipowners have been very angry in their criticisms of the Shipping Subsidy Bill which was recently introduced into the U.S.-Congress, and in support of which President Harding himself came to make an impassioned speech. There is much talk of retaliation and of the British Government using powers under existing but now dormant laws to subsidize or otherwise assist British shipping. Nineteen years ago, when Pierpont Morgan bought up a number of British shipping companies, the British Government loaned £ 3,000,000 to the great Cunard Steamship Company to enable it more easily to meet American competition. The year following, the greatest shipping company trading to South America had an alteration made in the Royal Charter, under which it operates, laying it down that the directors and the capital were to remain British. Thus the British Government assisted two British transatlantic shipping companies to resist the competition of lines owned and assisted by American finance capital.

Just before entering the War, the United States Government set up the U.S.-Shipping Board and, in conjunction with the American International Corporation, (a financial institution established by the industrial capitalists of America and presided over by Mr. Frank Vanderlip), it initiated a gigantic shipbuilding program. Then, it followed this up with the U.S. Emergency Fleet Corporation formed to operate the new boats. By one means or another, the American Government built and put at the disposal of the American export trade, a gigantic shipping fleet of about 13,500,000 tons. This fleet has been described as a

monument of the wastefulness and inefficiency of state ownership and management. It has been run at an enormous loss. It seems, however, that the Shipping Board has hired out the services of its ships to American exporters in the China trade at charter rates and freight charges with which the British lines could not compete. It was used and there is talk of it again being used in such a way as to enable the American coal exporters to undersell their British rivals in European and South American markets. It is very largely the competition of this enormous American shipping fleet which has knocked the bottom out of the market for ships. There are 10,000,000 tons too many ships just now. The greatest of all the shipbuilding companies in the world, Harland & Wolff Ltd., with six huge yards at Belfast and on the Clyde, which used to build the biggest ships that steam the seas, has now to be content with orders for two ferry boats costing each £ 1,500 and weighing, approximately 150 tons each. The yearly possible output of all the British and Irish shipyards is more than 3,000,000 tons. In the first six months of this year, new orders did not total 90,000 tons.

Researches I have made, enable me to say with absolute assurance that most of the big shipyards of Britain and Ireland are owned by the shipping companies, and that two-fifths of the British steel output is, normally, used in the shipyards and many of the great steel works owned by shipbuilding companies. Hence, having forced the price of ships down from £ 30 to about £ 7 a ton, having spoiled utterly the freight markets, and having driven the British Shipbuilding trade to the brink of ruin, the Americans have achieved a tremendous victory. They have devastated three great British industries,—shipping, shipbuilding and steel manufacture. Now, these are just the industries upon which the sea power, i.e., the naval superiority of Britain has been reared.

Right on the top of this, the American Government, able as it is to draw upon enormous sources of taxation and of loan issues, decides to subsidize American shipping more fully and more directly than hitherto. It is turning the operation and ownership of the State-built and State-supported merchant fleet over to private interests, mainly those of the Harrimans, who already have established connection with the technically efficient but financially handicapped German transatlantic shipping companies and who, also, are predominant in the ownership and direction of the great transcontinental railways of the United States. If American capitalism can lower the wages and increase the productivity of the American miners and railroad operators, then it will be ready for the terrific and overwhelming barrage of cheap commodity production, for export with which to complete the destruction of the financial power of the City of London.

The one remaining source of British capitalist money power is the cotton industry. Just when Gandhi's campaign in India had been blown sky high and the Indian and Eastern trade looked like recovering, the cotton bollweevil got busier than ever eating up the supply and increasing the cost of the raw cotton of America. Lancashire cotton buyers are in a terrible state of anxiety, for the economies they have effected in wages will appear "insignificant" if they have to pay the increased prices for the raw material that they anticipate. Besides, the Guaranty Trust Company and Brown Brothers, the chief houses to finance the transfer of the cotton crop, are not in a mood to be generous to the advantage of Manchester and to the detriment of New England and Carolina mill-owners.

Moreover, the U.S. Supreme Court has recently annulled, as being a measure "in restraint of trade" and contrary to the Constitution, the law to suppress the horrible exploitation of Child Labor by means of which the Democratic South is building up its mill-industry. Already, British exports of cotton yarn have fallen from 210,000,000 lbs. in 1913 to 146,000,000 lbs. in 1921, and of cotton piece goods from 7,075,000,000 yards in 1913 to 2,903,000,000 yards in 1921. That is the writing on the walls of the Manchester and Liverpool Cotton Exchanges. That spells ruin, if it continues, not only for Lancashire but for the banks of Britain. Lancashire has, for a century, been a fountain from which a flood of profits, wide, deep, and torrential, has swept out to all the waiting channels of world investment. Now, this fountain threatens to run slow, to run shallow, to run dry.

Shipping, shipbuilding, steel and coal, no longer yield the profitable surplus from which to replenish the coffers of British Capitalism. If cotton fails them, then the British bourgeoisie might as well "put up the shutters".

But the proud inheritors of the great traditions of classic capitalism, the sons and grandsons of the men of Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham and London, who were the grand architects of British industrial capitalism; the magnates whose directorships read like a compendium of world geography and of the economy of all trades; the industrial captains, merchant princes, and rulers of subject races in a far-flung Empire "whereon the sun never sets", will never "put up the shutters"

or yield up the dominion without one, last, terrible struggle. That struggle—war between Britain and America—cannot long be delayed. Already they are gathering their allies and marshalling their forces. Already they are fixing the stakes and discussing the spoils of battle.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The Conference of the Italian Railroad Workers

By Edmondo Peluso (Rome).

The first gathering of a large proletarian organization in Italy since the failure of the general strike in August, has taken place in the beginning of this month in Rome.

The Central Committee of the Railroad Workers' Union was forced to call this Conference by pressure from the membership which charged the leaders with the following: 1. That the Central Committee had abandoned the Labor Alliance immediately after the strike, thereby splitting the united front. 2. That it had propagated the nationalistic and anti-class policy of d'Annunzio. 3. That it had expelled the Communist members from the trade union under the single accusation that they had always done their duty of militant comrades. 4. That it had openly sabotaged the general strike which it had itself called.

Simultaneously with this Conference, the first meeting of the Communist Railwaymen to discuss their activities within the unions and the Labor Alliance, took place.

Until very recently, the Railroad Workers' Union has been the foremost organization of the Italian workers, from the standpoint of its strength as well as of its class-conscious spirit. But the errors and the betrayal of its present leadership, have brought it down from its militant position. The Communist group within the union has become the most militant group of members, and because it dared to attack the present Central Committee before it had broken its promise of adhesion to the Red International of Labor Unions, it received all the weight of the anger and the spirit of vengeance of the union leadership. It is for that reason that two of our best comrades, Azzario and Berutti had been expelled from the union in flagrant violation of the constitution. The energetic campaign of agitation conducted by the Communist press has finally convinced the workers that something was rotten in the leadership of the union. The failure of the last general strike, the public confession of betrayal on the part of some of these mandarins of unionism, the attempt to link up the Union to the nationalistic movement, all this has increased the nervousness of the railwaymen. But at the same time it increased the activity of the Communists who have now gained great influence with the masses.

While the Central Committee was losing a great deal of time in futile discussions and could hardly arrive at any results, the Communist Railwaymen, in a conference which lasted only two days, have been able to formulate a concrete program to meet the most important problems of the railroad workers. Conscious that one of their first tasks is an intensified struggle against the present leadership, and not wishing to lose any time in futile recriminations against all violations of the law on the part of the Government, the Committee of Communist Railwaymen declared that the efficiency, the strength and the discipline of the organization could be assured only if the railwaymen adopted a clear spirit of class-consciousness as the basis for their program of action. That is why their prime care has been to formulate a concrete program of organic and economic demands for the railroad workers.

This program treats of the question of the employment of additional workers, of advancement and regulations, of the representation of the employees, of pension, of dismissals, etc. The Communist Railwaymen have also clearly defined their policy towards the Union. They have agreed that the unity of the organization must be maintained at all costs, but they demand the right for Communists to remain in the organization to accomplish their work of control and criticism, to help in the revision of the methods of struggle, and to enable the elimination of dangerous leaders.

Further, they have renewed their demand for the immediate convocation of a congress of railroad workers; they have insisted on the necessity of adhesion to the General Labor Federation, as well as the reorganization of the Labor Alliance, not as a union of the leaders, but one of the workers. Finally, they demanded adhesion to the Red International of Labor Unions.

This program was presented to the Central Committee of the Railroad Union, which thereupon decided to readmit the two expelled Communist leaders. The ambiguous resolution which

they adopted on the future policy does not exclude the repetition of past errors, and opens the way for all possible capitulations. Nevertheless, the Central Committee has been overthrown and a Provisionary Council of seven members elected, one of whom is a Communist. A new executive organ of the Railroad Union, with its probable center in Turin, will be formed.

The Communists have won a moral victory by the readmission of the expelled members and by the recognition of the right of minorities to propagate their ideas within the labor unions.

IN SOVIET RUSSIA

Recent Labor Legislation in Soviet Russia

By J. Larin.

II.

In regard to the above mentioned non-payment of insurance contributions it must be noted, that the question of *social insurance* of the workers in its whole extent was first settled in Soviet Russia through a new law in July, 1922. For several years there was in Russia no social insurance of the worker whatever. Since November, 1921, there have been gradually brought in various measures of insurance relating to workers and clerks, so that at present these embrace all its various forms (unemployment, sickness, child-birth, incapacity for work, etc.).

In July, 1922, the Soviet Government combined the contributions for the various kinds of insurance, and for this purpose divided all the workshops and offices into five classes. The insurance contributions varied from 21 to 28 per cent of the workers' wages according to the character of the workshop or office, i. e., an average of 25 per cent. In no other European State are the insurance contributions so high, and this gives Russia the possibility of fixing a much higher standard of maintenance than is the case in Germany and other countries. This could be carried through as a consequence of the reduction of the military budget, without injury to the state finances and even with some reduction of the deficit. The reduction of the military budget was rendered possible through the victories which Soviet Russia gained on all the war fronts.

The principal outlines of the Workers' Insurance in Russia as it has been set up since November, 1921, up to July, 1922, are as follows:

1. The organization of workers' insurance is uniform without division into workers' insurance, clerks' insurance and officials' insurance. In Soviet Russia, the economic organizations of those engaged in work are never divided into three sections.
2. The insurance extends without exception to all engaged in employment, to private employees as well as to state employees.
3. The insurance contributions are *paid exclusively by the employer* (consequently in the state undertakings as well) without the right of making any kind of deduction from wages.
4. The whole workers' insurance is based on the self-administration of the insured.

All laws relating to insurance form an organic part of the unified labor laws, so that their infringement on the part of the employer is subject to the same penal clauses as the infringement of the remaining portion of labor legislation. It should be specially noted here, that in Germany, there is continual talk of the necessity of consolidating and unifying the labor laws. Soviet Russia, however, this task has already been accomplished. In the Spring and Summer of 1922 a Committee consisting of several Comrades, effected a revision of the labor legislation, and also carried out the condensation of the new Soviet labor laws into an organic, united whole with that portion of the labor legislation evolved during the first years of the Soviet Republic. The new labor law-book created by this Committee was later ratified and adopted by a gathering of the representatives of the Central Committees of all the trade unions in a series of sessions where the matter was discussed in detail. This will be confirmed at the next session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, in September, 1922.

The last of the important special labor laws which came into force in the middle of 1922, and which constitute an essential part of the material contents of the legal code for the protection of the workers and clerks is the Minimum Wage Law (I do not refer to the less important, as for example the law with regard to the labor bureaus in whose management representatives of the trade unions and of the Labor Commissariat take part but no representatives of the employer). The obligatory minimum wage

which applies alike to state as well as to private enterprises is fixed in Russia according to a method which is entirely different from that employed in Germany. The German trade unions seem to be bound up in their wonted traditions which were formed at a time when the mark was still of good and stable value. In this connection the Russian labor organizations (whose activity, by the way, is never described in the German trade union newspapers under the control of the Right Socialists), found a very correct method for countries with depreciating paper valuta.

For the fixing of the minimum wage in Russia a definite quantity of calories necessary for the sustenance of a human being. Every two weeks it is determined (with definite participation by the trade unions) how much this quantity of food stuffs costs at retail rates in the local markets. This sum is increased by about two thirds in order to cover the remaining cost of living, to which is added an average increase to meet the expected diminished purchasing power of the rouble. In addition to this, the average purchasing power of the rouble has been fixed recently. (In the last few months, moreover, the depreciation of the paper rouble has ceased, and the gold rouble at present costs in the open market, 200 roubles of the 1922 issue). The sum arrived at in this way forms the minimum wage of the first, i. e., the lowest class in the wage scale. All workers, clerk and officials are divided into 17 wage classes, whereby the minimum wage for every class is increased by a degree determined by law. Piece work is paid accordingly. It is forbidden to pay a wage below the minimum, while all recipients of wages and their organizations have the full right to strive for an increase of wages. The setting up of this system resulted in a considerable increase not only of the nominal, but of the real wage, in May-July, 1922. This circumstance confirms in practice the correctness of the conclusions of the Soviet Government whereby the interior economic condition of Russia has considerably improved even under the present difficulties.

The regulation of the application of the Minimum Wage law, as well as the determination of the minimum, is effected through a Wage Council consisting of nine members. These members are: the People's Labor Commissar, three representatives of the All-Russian Central Council of the Trade Unions, two representatives of the state organs with the greatest number of workers (namely, out of the Department for Transport and Industry), two representatives from the organs of supply (namely, the Finance and Food Commissariat) and one representative of the Soviet Government.

In the event of a serious difference of opinion in the Highest Wage Council, the question is then submitted for decision to the Communist Party of Russia whose decision the Council of the People's Commissars accordingly publish in an appropriate decree. This system means the surest guarantee that every improvement in the general economic situation of the country is taken advantage of in the interests of the proletariat. The working class of Russia knows, that any other government outside the Dictatorship of the Workers, only renders the condition of the working class under the present economic circumstances, worse.

THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The Cooperative Movement and Communism

By A. Henriet (Paris).

Socialists and revolutionary Communists have long disdained the cooperative efforts because they issued from a purely bourgeois mentality, and this in spite of the efforts of a small number of militant comrades who realized the value of the Cooperatives in the process of social transformation.

The Russian Revolution was needed to show the usefulness of the Cooperative in the Transition period from Capitalism to Communism.

The practical application of Communist theories is no easy matter. It meets immense obstacles in the numerous economic organizations resultant from Capitalism.

Just as the dictatorship (even in the hands of the proletariat) does not constitute an ideal form of government, but a necessity which every revolutionist must accept, so must certain parts of the industrial organism pass through an intermediary stage before they are ready for socialization.

It is easy to see how the railroads, the banks, insurance, navigation, large estates, industrial trusts, etc. may be socialized. It is more difficult to show how socialization of the exchange and distribution of products will take place, or the exploitation of the small farms, or the function of trade unions.

The complexity of human relations, acquired habits and mentality, necessitate a special form of organization, which will be a bond between the present Capitalism and the future Communism.

The intermediary step is Cooperation.

Whatever the laws of any country, the Cooperatives may be formed as commercial organizations within the capitalist world. They will make use of capital, but not to create profits. On the contrary, they wish to destroy the unearned profits of capital. The cooperatives make use of capital, but do not serve it. They reduce its revenue to a single capital rent.

The Cooperatives also tend to coordinate production and consumption, whenever useful and profitable, and thereby to destroy the capitalist regime working for profits.

Of course the Cooperatives do not meet all needs as was claimed by the reformistic cooperators who wished to moderate or destroy their revolutionary activity. The work of the Cooperatives is limited when compared with that of the capitalist trusts or of the state monopolies. It would be ridiculous to propose cooperation in the railroad organization where socialization is the natural next step. The task of the Cooperatives is to concentrate those economic functions which are not yet bound in a trust and which cannot be socialized because of their dispersion and of the individualist mentality of their owners.

Such organizations may be socialized only progressively, if one is to escape dangerous reactions which would furnish weapons to the enemies of the proletariat. In this respect, the experience of Soviet Russia with the cooperative system is very interesting.

However, in spite of its advantages over the economic independence which characterizes the great mass of the Russian population, we should not forget its possible detriments if the Cooperative does not pursue strict Communist purposes. For then it may become the strongest support of the petty bourgeois class and a weapon against the proletariat.

For instance, the Consumers' Cooperatives as they are organized in most countries are purely individualistic in tendency; the organization exists only to insure the greatest possible profits to its members. The capitalization of these Cooperatives is purely individualistic. Bonds and stocks are issued, or the members deposit certain sums which they may withdraw at will. The employees' wages, even if higher than in most capitalist enterprises, is nevertheless based on capitalistic principles. Briefly, such a Cooperative does not help to create the mentality necessary to Communism; it exists purely for the economic advantages of its members.

The same applies to Producers' Cooperatives. If at times, the equality of wages is accepted, they still work on the principle of exploitation of the buyer, just as capitalist companies. We could give thousands of examples to prove the avidity for gain of these Cooperatives. The results of a century of cooperative experience have brought us to formulate the rules of Communist Cooperatives, or rather of *Transitory Cooperatives*. These rules must tend to supplant the *collective* for the *individualist* mentality.

The Communists must oppose the individual appropriation of the profits relayed by the Association. These profits must be used to develop the organization and to prevent the creation of private capital. All salaries in the Cooperative must be as equal as possible.

These few measures, which seem self-apparent are not always accepted by our Comrades. To us they seem to be absolutely necessary if the Cooperatives are to serve our end and not become an enemy of the Communist cause.

Further, the system of collaboration of the classes within the Cooperatives where all consumers, rich and poor, are admitted on an equal footing, this economic democracy constitutes the same danger as "Parliamentary Democracy"—it distracts the attention of the workers from their true task. This collaboration of classes results in the political neutrality of the movement, which in a capitalist society always results in the cooperation with the employing class.

The question is important enough to draw the attention of all those who are interested in the economic progress of the world, for the Cooperatives are called to play an important role in the formation of a future society. These are new problems for the Communists, but they must be solved rapidly and on the basis of accepted principles.

It will rest with the Conference of the Cooperatives which will precede that of the Comintern to decide this question.

To All Communist Workers in the Cooperative Movement

On November 1st, one week prior to the opening of the Fourth World Congress of the Communist International, the 1st International Conference of Communist Cooperative Workers will be convened by the Cooperative Section of the Communist International. This Conference is to be attended by representatives of all those parties, of which the Third International is composed, in proportion to the extent of the cooperative movement of each country.

The tasks with which the Conference is faced are of an important nature.

From the time of the conclusion of the Imperialist War, the Cooperative Movement of the whole world has undergone a formidable development. The following table illustrates this growth.

The membership in England has grown from 2,879,000 in 1913, to 4,505,000 in 1920; in Germany, from 1,730,000 in 1914, to 2,725,000 in 1920; in Italy, from 1,500,000 in 1914, to 3,000,000 in 1921. The entire membership of all Cooperative Societies is almost exclusively composed of working people. This circumstance on the one hand leads our comrades to devote to this work more attention than they did previously, whilst on the other hand, it calls forth the necessity for the elaboration of practical measures to transform the Cooperative Movement into as great a revolutionary power as are the Trade Unions and Communist Parties, in order that this movement play a greater part in the cause of the liberation of the world proletariat.

The task of attracting Cooperative Associations to the proletarian cause becomes complicated, however, for the reason that the administration of cooperative combines of all countries with the exception of Russia and Bulgaria, is in the hands of opportunist, compromising social-traitors. These employ the tactic of contact with the bourgeoisie, which tends to darken the class-consciousness of the Cooperative membership, weakens the significance of Cooperation in the struggle of the proletariat, and at times even directs the movement against the proletariat.

It is only by exposing the true nature of this administration which will thus be deprived of the confidence of the masses, and only upon taking full possession of the entire apparatus of the Cooperative Movement, that it will become in our hands an active organ in the revolutionary proletarian movement.

Thus, it will be seen that the Cooperative Movement is faced with such tasks as are closely connected with those of the revolutionary trade unions and the political parties. In actual life this is illustrated by the fact that even the opportunist Cooperative Associations are compelled to take part, from time to time, in the struggle of the working class against capitalism during strikes and lockouts.

While we are witnessing the general impoverishment of the masses in the whole world, the Cooperatives which are called to supply the working class consumers with the prime necessities of life, are in their present condition, unable and even make no attempt to fulfill their tasks; they are in no position to fight against the apparatus of private trading; they suffer great losses, lack credits and can only struggle on behind privately owned capital. It is natural that this can only lead to the growth of dissatisfaction amongst the laboring masses in the Cooperative Movement, which ultimately resulted in the increase of the opposition at the Conventions of Cooperative Associations of the present year.

The Communists within the Cooperative Movement are faced with the task of welding and consolidating the growing dissatisfaction of the laboring masses within the Cooperative Movement.

It has to be kept in mind that in consequence of its being in the hands of one or another party, the administrative apparatus of the Cooperative Movement, which is a great factor in the economic life of most countries may become either a means of progress, or, a great obstacle in the struggle of the proletariat for its emancipation.

It is now our duty to preserve and strengthen the Communist organization within the Cooperatives. We are to adopt new methods for increasing our influence over the opposition and revolutionary elements within this movement; we are to endow the existing dissatisfaction with the character of an organized tendency, by exposing to the masses the real cause of the impotence of the Cooperative Movement in the struggle for the improvement of the working classes and to lay down new principles and new methods which are to be followed by the movement.

Having this aim in view, the Cooperative Section of the Communist International is now convening an International

Conference of Communists who are active participators in the Cooperative Movement. Following is the agenda for the Conference:

1. Report on the activity of the Cooperative Section of the Communist International.
2. Report of the representatives of various countries.
3. Communism and the Cooperative Movement.
4. Communist tactics in the Cooperative Movement.
5. Plan of organization of Communist activity within the Cooperatives.

We now suggest to all our Comrades who participate in the Cooperative Movement of various countries to take up the immediate discussion of the agenda of the Conference. (The number of delegates for each country as well as all other details have been communicated in a separate circular letter.)

We have no doubt that all our Comrades will fully appreciate the significance of organized Communist activity within the Cooperative Movement, and will take lively participation in the Conference, the aim of which is to join the Cooperative Movement to the general revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of the capitalist regime and for the triumph of Communism.

Long live the International solidarity of Communist workers in the Cooperative Movement!

Long live the Third Communist International!

The Cooperative Section of the Communist International.

APPEALS

To the Transport Workers of All Countries!

The Congress of the International Transport Workers' Federation, an organization proud of its three million members, takes place again in Vienna, on the 2nd of October 1922.

What should you, transport workers, railwaymen, seamen of all countries, whose wages have been reduced and working hours prolonged expect from this Congress?

Will it result in empty, wordy resolutions, or will it mean the beginning of international action?

You may best answer the question for yourselves when you consider the resolutions of the past international congresses of the Transport Workers in Amsterdam, Christiania, and Geneva. One of the resolutions demanded the

Eight Hour Day for All Seamen,

but the Washington Conference of the International Labor Bureau, the good friend of the I.T.W.F. decided against it.

The Eight Hour Day has been generally abolished.

One resolution demanded

War Against War.

In every country the leaders of the I.T.W.F. are working in collaboration with the government for the preservation of

Capitalism, the Cause of All Wars.

A resolution provided for the reduction of unemployment among the dock workers, but

Unemployment Among the Dockers has grown.

The past Congresses avoided the burning question as to how you should defend your wages and prevent that the workers of one country act as strike-breakers against the workers of another country. Of what value, then, can the resolutions of the coming Congress be?

Empty Words and Betrayal of the Proletariat.

On the very same day, on which the Congress will take place, on the 2nd of October, the wages of the English dockers will be reduced one shilling a day, and further reductions are expected for June.

Messrs. Bevin, Gosling, and Company have signed their acceptance of this reduction.

Messrs. Fimmen, Bidegaray and Scheffel have done nothing against the reduction of wages of the English dockers, and the French, German and Czech railroad workers. What have they done, what has been their international activity?

Strike-breaking against the American Miners!

The leader of the dockers, Bevin, wrote to the International Secretary of the miners on the 10th of August that to allow the transportation of three coal ships to America would be strike-breaking, *but in the week from the 19th to the 25th of August, nearly 150,000 tons of coal went to America, 2 million tons in the course of the strike, while the American miners were fighting for their livelihood.*

And what did the International Transport Workers' Federation do? Nothing! They approved silently this act of strike-breaking!

What else could one expect from an International which has been systematically destroying the united front of the transport workers? The I.T.W.F. maintains most amiable relations with the "League of Nations", i. e., with the Entente Governments whom the I.T.W.F. supports.

Enslavement of the working masses of Central and Eastern Europe, of the peoples against whom the Treaty of Versailles was directed, — this is the goal of this policy!

Just as the rich exploiter steals millions from the people and throws back pennies as alms, the policy of the I.T.W.F. is ruining the nations towards whom they may then practice holy charity. It is not the I.T.W.F., but the spontaneous will of the workers which has prevented the shipment of ammunitions to Russia. Or does anyone believe seriously that the same Thomas who refused to support the striking English miners with a strike of the railroads, "to prevent a revolution", as he said, is a friend of the Russian Revolution; reactionary at home, revolutionary in the International?

But the I.T.W.F. has done worse! It excluded the Russians, Bulgarians and Finns from the International. The French, Dutch, and Czech workers can no longer accept its leadership. In Germany, it threw the best militants out of the organization; in Czecho-Slovakia it caused the split of the Railwaymen's Union.

All these organizations have united in an *International Propaganda Committee* for the restoration of the united front.

We want the International to include all the transport workers of the world, that the eight hour day be fought for and defended, that a counter-attack be started against the wage reductions, that no country serve as strike-breaker against another, that all friendly relations with capital, with the League of Nations and their institutions cease.

When the gentlemen of the I.T.W.F. come to you with congressional phrases of unity, and other things, demand that, in all ports, on all railroads, they defend your wages, your life interests, your very existence, by international action together with us, the undersigned revolutionary transport workers' unions!

With fraternal greetings,

Russian Railroad Workers' Union — Russian Transport Workers' Union — German Seamens' Union — French Railroad Workers' Union — Czech Railroad Workers' Union — Dutch Transport Workers' Federation — Bulgarian Transport Workers' Union — Finnish Railroad Workers' Union.

NOTICES

Georges Sorel

By Marcel Ollivier (Paris).

Georges Sorel has just died at the age of 76. He was the man who indisputably exercised the greatest influence upon the revolutionary ideas of France in the course of the last fifty years. This influence outweighed even that of *Jules Guesdes*. One can perhaps compare it to that which *Proudhon* once wielded over his contemporaries.

For the rest, Sorel did but continue the work commenced by *Proudhon*. If *Proudhon* was the theoretician of reformist syndicalism, Sorel was the spiritual mouthpiece of revolutionary syndicalism, of the syndicalism of direct action. Today, the mutual connection between the two is clear. Both had the special conditions of the economic development of France, the special structure of the French proletariat in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the intellectual traditions of the French Revolution as a foundation and starting point. And for this reason the work of Sorel constitutes a wonderful supplement to

the work of *Proudhon*, and one can scarcely be understood without the other.

George Sorel first saw the light at Cherbourg (France) in the year 1846. After he had completed his studies at the Gymnasium of Rolling, he entered a Polytechnic institute which he left later with the title of engineer of Public Highways. He practised this profession until the year 1891. From that time onwards he devoted himself exclusively to his literary activities.

These were very far-reaching and important. He established, one after the other, the *Ere Nouvelle* and the *Devenir Social*, was collaborator on the *Mouvement Socialiste*, of Hubert Legardelle as well as on a whole series of social and philosophical periodicals both at home and abroad.

He published a great number of works of social criticism which found a great response both in France and abroad. We cite amongst others the *Réflexions sur la Violence* (Reflections on Violence) which today is translated into all languages, *Les Illusions du Progrès* (The Illusions of Progress) the *Matériaux d'une Théorie du Proletariat* (Material to a theory of the proletariat) etc. Written in classical French, all these works bear witness to a strong, philosophically trained, mind of rare intellectual strength and profound scholarship.

Sorel was the real spiritual leader of revolutionary syndicalism. It is due to him that revolutionary syndicalism acquired its own theory and practice. He established the theory of force as a necessary factor of social development, and direct action and the general strike as the means of the proletarian class struggle. In a country and at a time when the Socialist movement lay completely in the hands of the reformists and pacifist petty bourgeois intellectuals, this was an incalculable service which he rendered to the working class. Nobody so sharply and so vigorously chastised the petty bourgeois aberrations of Parliamentary Socialism in France during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century as Sorel. His vehement attack against the "intellectuals" in the French Socialist Party contributed to the withdrawal of a great number of revolutionary workers from this Party.

In contradistinction to the great majority of "Socialist leaders" Georges Sorel in no way howled with the wolves during the War. Whilst the "Marxist" Jules Guesde, accepted a portfolio in the Ministry of National Defense, Georges Sorel withdrew into proud retirement, waiting till the storm was spent. Immediately after the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia, he allied himself definitely on its side. His *Plaidoyer pour Lénine* (Speech in Defense of Lenin) which was printed in the fifteenth edition of the *Reflections on Violence*, met with the greatest response both in France and abroad. The article which he published in the *Revue Communiste* bears witness to his glowing love for Soviet Russia whom today all "Socialists" of the Second and 2½ Internationals are dragging through the gutter.

Compared with the parliamentary professional politicians against whom he waged a life-long fight, Georges Sorel appears not only as an intellectual but as a moral giant. It would be a prodigious error if one were to judge his work and the influence he exercised without taking into consideration the time and the environment in which he lived. His ideas were certainly far removed from Communism, but they contributed none the less powerfully to the creating of a wide breach in the petty bourgeois ideology: reformism, pacifism, and idealism, which were poisoning the labor movement of his time. In reality he was not able to free himself from the petty bourgeois traditions which he had inherited from his predecessors. But, his work as such, forms a powerful reaction against the errors of Parliamentary Socialism. Whilst the "non-compromising" Marxist Guesdes, in fact and deed capitulated before the Parliamentary Reformism of Jaurés, only to end finally in open betrayal, the Revolutionary Syndicalism of Sorel contributed to the calling back of the proletariat to its revolutionary class duty. If Revolutionary Syndicalism today seems to exhibit a reactionary character, it is due to the fact that it has grown to be a hindrance to the proletarian movement. But at the time when the proletariat was not yet in possession of its ideological equipment and its methods of warfare, and in a country where the slowness of economic development had not yet allowed the proletariat to clearly recognize the preliminary conditions to its victory, the emergence of Revolutionary Syndicalism was a great advance upon the road to the proletarian revolution.

It is from this point of view that we Communists must make our estimate of the work of Sorel.