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Another Step Forward

By *A. Lozovsky.*

Berlin, March 22, 1923.

The International Conference at Frankfort carried us another step forward on the road to uniting all proletarian forces for the struggle against war and Fascism. This conference aroused the greatest interest among the workers, and rightly so. It was the first international conference which had been held since the occupation of the Ruhr valley, at which all questions were thoroughly debated. The soul-saving speeches which the leaders of the Amsterdam International delivered on the subject of the Ruhr invasion need not be counted. Of course nobody has thought of taking these reformist tea-parties seriously; even those who took part in them knew perfectly well that nothing would come of them. When Fimmen reflected on the passivity of the Amsterdam International, and began to shed tears, his colleague Oudegeest wrote an article in which he endeavored to prove that these speeches of Fimmen were to be explained by his "exhaustion". We do not know whether Fimmen is really exhausted or not, or whether it was the proletarian conscience which spoke in him—but it is an unalterable fact that the leaders of the Amsterdam International admitted their own impotence; nay more, they admitted that they have no wish to carry out the resolutions passed at the Hague.

That which both the Amsterdam and the 2. International failed to do, has been accomplished by the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions. The communist parties and the revolutionary trade unions, and these alone rose up determinedly against the predatory invasion by French imperialism; they alone roused the masses to a real struggle. These revolutionary actions have been welcomed with the greatest sympathy by many workers still belonging to reformist organizations. The Frankfort conference was not only attended by communists and revolutionary syndicalists, but also by workers belonging to the German social democratic and independent social democratic parties. The social democratic workers took part in the conference against the will of their leaders. When they were faced by the alternative of either submitting to the anti-proletarian decisions of their leaders, and of thus weakening the struggle against war, or of acting against their leaders' decisions and lending their aid to strengthen the anti-imperialist and anti-Fascist front, they chose the latter course: they acted as real proletarians. In this way a united front has been actually created, a front upon whose strength the life of the working masses hangs in the most literal sense of the word. It is true that but few social democratic workers attended the Frankfort Conference (only ten in all), but this

small group, which preferred a united front with the revolutionary workers to a united front with the bourgeoisie, mirrored the ever-growing indignation of the broad masses against the anti-class policy of their leaders.

But the Frankfort Conference was not only a manifestation of the ever-increasing united front of the proletariat, it was above all a consultation held by men of ripe revolutionary experience, who set themselves concrete questions as to the most effective methods to be adopted in the struggle against war danger and Fascism, as to the means to be taken for combining the broad masses in united organizations with one united will, and for assembling the scattered proletarian forces in order to lead them against the growing reaction. The Frankfort social democratic journal, the *Volksstimme*, ironically named our conference a "conference of war". This newspaper wanted to stigmatize us by such a designation, as the social democrats were not pleased with my declaration that we were no peace conference, but a class war conference. In this sense the Frankfort Conference really was a war conference. Its task was to collect the experiences gained in the class struggle in every country, to sum up these experiences, and to work out practical forms and measures for the class war. — We are quite prepared to admit the designation of our conference as a war conference, for it indicated the lines on which the class war is to be carried on. Our army is the whole working class; our front forms a zig-zag line, traversing every country in a thousand directions. We have the largest army in the world. But a part of our army is still in a state of complete passivity, is still under the influence of bourgeois ideology; one part of it is poisoned by reformism, and only one part of it is gathered round the flag of class war. It was the work of our conference to weld the revolutionary workers more closely together, to build a bridge between the revolutionary workers and the workers who are members of reformist organizations, or who belong to no labor organization and stand apathetically aside from the social struggle developing around them—to draw all these over to the side of irreconcilable class war.

Was the Frankfort Conference successful in fulfilling these tasks? Undoubtedly. Above all, the conference adopted a number of practical measures calculated to create new fulcrums for our struggles: the control commissions, committees of action, international fraternities, etc. All these are new centres of organization, whose task lies in drawing the masses more closely together for their struggle against imperialism. The culmination of all the organizations formed is the International

Committee of Action, a body standing outside of party, and commissioned to lead the work of the revolutionary workers of every political trend, to enter into close relations with all labor organizations, and to do its utmost to convene an international labor congress.

The International Conference passed a number of concrete organizational resolutions, and in addition to this imparted concrete instructions to the revolutionary workers of the most important countries as to their immediate tasks under present circumstances, and pointed out the subjects on which the proletariat of each country must concentrate under existing international conditions. The program has been worked out carefully; and this program is no product of a mere national movement. It is a product of the experiences gained by the revolutionary movement in all countries.

The Frankfort Conference differed from the Hague conference in that it did not occupy itself with pacifist speech-making. The men who met in Frankfort were no pacifists, but revolutionists; no phrase-makers, but men of action; and they were thus able to enter into every question of our complicated class strategy.

The most important strategic question for the working class is that of the international co-ordination of action. We have seen how the Amsterdam and 2. Internationals which were restored with so much trouble after the war, resolved themselves into their national constituents as soon as the war clouds lowered in Europe. The pacifist gossipers of all countries made lame speeches on the League of Nations, and inveighed against Poincaré for his ungentlemanly behavior, but all the same they continued to prefer the cultivation of national narrow-mindedness, and the preference of "national interests" to class interests. The Frankfort Conference has provided an actual object lesson of what the international solidarity of the proletariat really means. While the French and Belgian reformists were making drawing-room speeches, the French communists and revolutionary syndicalists appeared at the Frankfort Conference and there declared, before the workers of all countries, that they would exert every endeavor to break the neck of rampant imperialism. And they were not deterred from attending the conference by the fact that dozens of communists and syndicalists are still in prison for participating in the Essen conference. In such manner do the revolutionary workers of all countries regard the duties imposed upon them by the international complications and international conflicts of today.

The leaders of the Amsterdam and 2. Internationals did not wish to appear at the Frankfort Conference, but as they had to do something in view of the Ruhr occupation, or otherwise they might lose the support of all workers, the reformists of Italy, France, England, and Belgium assembled in Paris at the same time as the Frankfort Conference was being held, for the purpose of seeking a solution for the problems agitating the international proletariat. Vandervelde, Renaudel, MacDonald, and Modigliani, resolved to send a deputation to Berlin to negotiate with the German social democrats on the reparations and on the Ruhr occupation. A strange decision to come to! In the first place, why was it necessary to call the reformists of the Entente lands together first, why not have invited the German reformists at once? The thing is perfectly clear: The reformists of France, Belgium, and of the countries diplomatically connected with them, felt themselves to be in the position of victors with regard to the German reformists, and settled upon a course with regard to them just as the Entente bourgeoisie acts towards the German bourgeoisie. As soon as two representatives of Entente reformism are gathered together, they begin to cry out about the reparations, as if it were only France and Belgium which were devastated by the war. All this is perfectly incomprehensible so long as we regard the reformists as representatives of the working class, but as soon as we regard them as representatives of the "Nation", that is, of their own bourgeoisie, their proceedings become perfectly comprehensible.

Fascism, recognized as a preventive counter-revolution, was accorded great attention by the Frankfort Conference. Fascism is raising its head everywhere. It hopes to finally suppress the discontented masses, and to establish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie for long decades. But what is the difference between Fascism and ordinary, non-Fascist reaction? The fact that Fascism misuses the working masses by demagogic methods, that it endeavors to utilize the most radical watchwords, that it attempts to form labor organizations of its own. Fascism disintegrates the labor organizations, tries to split them up from within, to demoralize them, in order to be better able to strangle them. Not only is Fascism the highest form of reaction, it is at the same time the embodiment of the extremest bellicose nationalism, leading inevitably to fresh wars. Therefore the

Frankfort Conference not only worked out a program for combatting war, but at the same time it laid down the lines of struggle against Fascism.

The Frankfort Conference has shown us that it is not only the communists and revolutionary syndicalists in the working class who are desirous of fighting against war, but many other working class elements as well; it has shown that the united front tactics proclaimed by the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. have their source in a profound need of the broad masses.

The Frankfort Conference was the highest consummation of international solidarity in another sense also, in that the separate groups faced the possible results of their impending joint struggles against the whole bourgeoisie. The International Conference, in declaring that the first task of the revolutionary workers of Germany is the overthrow of the Cuno government and the establishment of a workers' government, faced the fact that this may lead to a war on the part of the Great and Little Ententes against the social revolution in Germany. No one doubts for a moment that the workers' government in Germany signifies an alliance for life or death between revolutionary Germany and Soviet Russia. To a conference of internationalists such an alliance is a matter of course. It would be a strange thing if Soviet Russia would permit the strangulation of the social revolution in Germany. This was so perfectly obvious to everyone that the question did not even give rise to a debate. All were fully convinced that when the German proletariat has overthrown its bourgeoisie, and finds itself confronted by European imperialism, then the Russian proletariat and the Red Army will fight hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder with the German workers until the end, until complete victory over the bourgeoisie.

The most obstinate and conservative reformist is now forced to recognize that it is only the revolutionary workers who are carrying on any effective struggle against the Ruhr occupation. It is true that the German bourgeoisie, and its allies, the German social democrats, continue to repeat, day after day, that the German communists are agents of Poincaré; at the same time the whole yellow press of France maintains that the French communists and revolutionary syndicalists are the paid hirelings of Cuno. This insolence is nothing new. It is a well known line of tactics, invariably followed by ruling classes and disciples: to represent the revolutionists of their country to be agents of a foreign power. Let them say what they will; let the dogs bay the moon! The revolutionary workers of all countries took the first step in Essen. The Frankfort Conference has taken the second step in the same direction: An international committee of action has been formed, national and district committees, commissions, fraternities, etc. have been called into existence. The path is traced out before us. It only remains to work, to work, and once more to work—and the victory is ours!

POLITICS

What has Mr. Vandervelde to say?

By Karl Radek.

Moscow, March 10, 1923.

Our readers will recollect how the one-time royal minister of justice Vandervelde, caused us to blush with shame by declaring, at the S.R. trial: "In our country, in Belgium, the communists may do as they like, write what they like, and say what they like." Mr. Vandervelde added, with a grimace: "This does not trouble us; nobody is afraid of them; we are a powerful Belgian labor party, they are an inconsiderable minority."

To-day the wire brings us the news that 20 Belgian communist have been arrested, among them three members of the party leadership of whose names we are not informed. They will be accused of some frightful crime, perhaps even of high treason. But what has happened that democratic Belgium, whose advantages were so highly praised and favorably compared with Soviet Russian barbarity, has suddenly become so disturbed?

The Communist Party of Belgium, though young and weak, has manfully protested against the participation of Belgium in the rapacious raid on the Ruhr. The Belgian bourgeoisie declared to the workers of Belgium that they were obliged, on behalf of the welfare of the Belgian people to loot Germany. The Belgian communists reminded the Belgian miners that, despite the enormous gains of the colliery owners, they are living in want and misery. They issued the slogan: No campaign against the German miners (whom the representatives of Belgian capitalism are treating precisely as General Beseler and other

representatives of the then victorious German militarism treated the Belgian miners), but a campaign against the Belgian capitalists. When the movement began among the Belgian miners, Mr. Vandervelde's party ran for help to the Belgian capitalists, and began to hunt down the communists. But it turned out that the Belgian communist party, despite its youth and weakness, had the greater influence, and that the fit of jingoism evoked by the German invasion of 1914, and the subsequent sufferings of the Belgian working masses, and even more by the victory of the Entente, is now over. The miners did not follow Mr. Vandervelde, but rather responded to the appeals made by the Belgian communists Jacquemotte and van Overstraeten.

As soon as this happened, it appeared that Belgian democracy is as unapproachable as a chaste maiden uninjured to the temptations of life. The Belgian government tolerated the agitation of the communists so long as it was convinced that Mr. Vandervelde and his party could cope alone with the communist danger. But so soon as it became evident that the communists can place themselves at the head of an elementary movement among workers who have lost their faith in Vandervelde, then the Belgian bourgeoisie fell upon the communists, and flung open the doors of the prisons for their reception. It is possible that Mr. Vandervelde, with the skill peculiar to him, will even protest against these arrests. Mr. Vandervelde invariably makes a point of protesting whenever the bourgeoisie, with his assistance, prosecutes its aims. Then he washes his hands in innocence exclaiming: "I protest". But nobody can be deceived by this skillful manoeuvre on M. Vandervelde's part. He and his party aided their bourgeoisie to maintain power at the moment when it was tottering. Now they protest, with their tongue in their cheek. But the general conclusion which we can draw from this is even more instructive: The bourgeoisie plays with democracy so long as it is not dangerous to it. But as soon as democratic liberty permits the working class to organize any form of struggle, as soon as it facilitates any preparation for attack on the part of the working class, then the bourgeoisie throws democracy overboard, and bourgeois conjurers manufacture laws on treason against the state.

What has Mr. Vandervelde to say to this?

From Westminster Palace to Santé Prison

By R. Albert (Paris).

"... and thus the paths of the flunkies and the revolutionaries cross each other..."

Within three days of each other—March 17. and 20.—two socialist conferences took place in Paris. The agendas of both contained almost the same items: both were occupied with the questions unfolded by M. Poincaré, the spokesman of the Comité des Forges: The Ruhr, the coming war, the great capitalist threat against the world peace.

Two "socialist" conferences. A symbol.

One took place in the great hall of the trade union buildings. Here there were thousands crowded together who had marched hither direct from their places of work, working men in old-worn clothes, the weariness of the day's toil in their bones, but at the same time containing in their heads everything which Paris possesses of revolutionary hope and confidence, courage and will to action.—Outside of the hall, in the darkness of the night, a pack of despicable beings prowled about, around this mass of workers, like hungry dogs ready to make a snap at any moment: police and spies.

The speaker's platform was occupied by a man with hair just turning grey, a man of high stature, with clear eyes—he spoke with outstretched hand. The foreign accent was scarcely noticeable in his voice. Had the chairman not just introduced him, it could have been assumed that he belonged to this mass of Parisian proletarians.

Höllein, communist member of the German Reichstag, was speaking...

And the hall re-echoed with the thunders of applause from the thousands of Parisian working men and women; hands and faces were raised enthusiastically to welcome this German, and the strains of the "International" filled the great hall. For there was not one present but felt that the conceptions Frenchman and German belong to the past, and that the terms "boche" and "welsche" are infamous designations. A German worker was speaking to French workers, a communist to communists. They all understood only too well what he was saying. The misery of the German children? In the suburbs of this opulent Paris there are just as many pale-cheeked children. The intrigues of the plutocrat Stinnes? Ah, did not the Comité des Forges have the

class brothers of the workers here assembled, shot at Le Havre only yesterday? The monarchist plots in Munich? The bourgeoisie and the "Action Française" elements were also represented in the hall by their spies. The imprisonment of German revolutionists? In France the leaders of the workers are also sitting behind bolts and bars...

This German communist was felt to belong to the same common stock as all those present in the hall. He came from a country where, four times within five years, the proletariat has unfolded its red flag and shed its blood in insurrection. And the thousands of workers listening here in Paris were well aware that for them, there is neither fatherland nor peace under the bourgeois regime, that there is no salvation without the inexorable struggle of the exploited against exploiters...

After leaving this mighty meeting, the speaker was arrested and taken to prison.

Höllein came here to bring proletarian Paris the fraternal greetings of the German workers, and for this he is charged with plotting against the security of the state; it seems as if the plain words of the communists contain something especially dangerous. Höllein is now in a cell of the political department in the Santé. Cachin is "dwelling" near him; thus the representatives of two democratic parliaments are living under one roof in a prison of the French republic.

The other socialist conference took place three days later in the comfort and tranquility of the Palais Bourbon (French parliamentary building), surrounded by the servile respect of the servants, discreetly guarded by some of the more superior spies from the prefecture—to make sure that no-one disturbed the socialists at their work... Here the socialist deputies from four allied countries unfolded their portfolios (which did not yet look quite ministerial), and took their ease as well-remunerated shepherds of the peoples... Here the flower of European socialism was represented (except those of the enemy countries), or what the II. International regards as the flower. A choice selection of one-time and future ministers: Citizen Vandervelde, the signatory of the Versailles peace; citizen Renaudel, his cronies Treves and Modigliani, who will presently be receiving an offer from Mussolini, that they black his boots in some sub-secretariat of state. Citizen Ramsay Macdonald from the English Labor Party...

Ramsay Macdonald, who had just come from the banquet in Westminster Palace, where he had dined well at the table of His Majesty the King of England; where his majesty had condescended to speak to him just as the champagne or liqueur was being passed around... Who will ever give us a report on this aspect of the history of socialism?

Did George V. perhaps speak with him on the future of the British working class, or even of the fate of those 172 Hindu peasants who were condemned to death "in the king's name" somewhere in the great dependency?...

And this inter-parliamentary socialist conference of the II. International passed a resolution that... passed a resolution that... resolved that a commission, also inter-parliamentary, should be sent to Berlin to negotiate with the leaders of the party of Ebert, Scheidemann, and Noske.

Among these socialists there was not one who knew manual labor or daily want, or had not found time to forget them. Not one who knew prison. Not one who preached mass action. Not one who had an idea beyond hypocritical and lying phrases. Not one who was a revolutionist. Not one who was not an honored and honestly honoring servant of some bourgeois power.

Two socialist conferences. A symbol.

The citizen Ramsay Macdonald came from Westminster Palace...

Höllein went to Santé prison.

"... and thus the paths of the flunkies and the revolutionaries cross each other..."

Open letter to Mr. Benes*)

Dear Sir,

You are a member of the League of Nations, and one of the aims of this League is to see that justice is administered in this world, for which purpose, as you will be aware, it boosts quite a large number of citizens into the next world, by protecting every imaginable war adventure. You, as member of this honorable institution, and as Minister for Foreign Affairs in a democratic republic, probably find the following of interest. Your Moscow representative visaed my passport, and it was specially

*) Prime Minister of Czech-Slovakia.

noted on the passport that I was going to Marienbad for a course of treatment. When I appeared at the police headquarters in Prague I was informed by the police officials, in the charming manner peculiar to them, that I had to leave Prague for Marienbad within 24 hours (this term was prolonged to three days). Although deeply moved that the police should be so anxious about my health, I asked the chief of police why I could not remain in Prague for five or six days. He replied gruffly that he had his good reasons, but was not obliged to inform me of these. Thus, although I am obliged for your three days hospitality, I leave Czecho-Slovakia with the feeling that the Soviet air of my own country will do my health much more good than the healing waters of Marienbad, when these are mingled with police supervision. And yet I should like to ask you, as minister, whether you can explain to me why your democratic police prefer to see me outside of your frontiers? If I were General Degoutte, and should trample in my soldiers' boots over the necks of the unarmed population of the Ruhr area, I could live in Prague as long as ever I liked, and as my boots would be those of a worthy representative of the French Exchange, the chief of police would polish them with his own hands. If I were Admiral Stark, and should sell ships which are the property of the Russian state, and appropriate the money for myself, your country would naturally extend its hospitality for a longer time. If I were a White Guard officer, and had attacked the Red Army from behind, under General Wrangel's command, when it was fighting against the Poland of the landowners, then you would not only permit me to remain in Prague, but would grant me financial aid from the money collected from Czech workers and peasants. If I were Stinnes, and had scooped in milliards out of the misery and poverty of the German people, you would have shut your chief of police up in a lunatic asylum if he had thought of limiting my sojourn in Prague. And finally, if I had been a speculator, and had come to Czecho-Slovakia for the purpose of raising the prices on the necessities of life, or of executing some exchange manœuvre, your chief of police and the other authorities would have prepared a magnificent reception for me. But I am no French general, I do not indulge in speculation, I have not sold Soviet Russia either wholesale or retail; I am not even a whining S.R., but something much worse—I am a Bolshevik. Hence this limitation of the hospitality of Prague.

And do you know why it was necessary for me to spend a few days in Prague? I wanted to form an idea, if only superficially, of the unemployment, the position and form of organization of the trade unions, the administration, the forms of book keeping, and of all the difficulties which hinder the development of the labor movement in your country. These were my "criminal" intentions. This sufficed to expose me to the impudence of your agents, who dogged my footsteps without intermission. And your agents do not appear to have worked in vain, for on the morning of the 13. March one of these amiable creatures stopped me in the street and conducted me to the police headquarters, where a regulation was read to me showing that a decree dating from the year 1871 banishes me for ever from Czecho-Slovakia. Several dozens of soies accompanied me in the most friendly manner to the station, some agents even coming as far as the frontier; your government appeared to fear that if I had extended my stay in Prague even one day beyond the term granted, the country would have been endangered.

You must not imagine, Mr. Benes, that I am in the least offended at this agreeable treatment on the part of your chief of police! No; he is a pillar of democracy, and therefore suffering from anti-Bolshevism, and from love for White Guards and speculators. I merely establish the fact the Czecho-Slovakian democratic republic receives with open arms every dishonorable, treacherous, anti-labor element of the whole world, but limits its hospitality as soon as it is a question of a communist, a functionary of the international trade union movement, serving the working masses of Russia and of all countries. You can adduce for your justification the fact that your republic is no worse than the French or the American—this is true. I have not the courage to try and decide which of these three republics is the worst. But you at least are on the same level as your French patron. Despite all this, I have nevertheless carried away some very pleasant impressions from Czecho-Slovakia—not from you or the chief of police, of course—but from those revolutionary workers who feel themselves organically related to the Russian revolution. I do not abandon the hope of being able to visit Czecho-Slovakia again before long, and am fully convinced that the workers of your country will show *real* hospitality to the representative of the Russian workers. The so-called democratic republics are but passing phenomena, are they not, Mr. Benes?

With Soviet greetings.

A. Lozovsky.

Prague, 13. March, 1923.

ECONOMICS

Ruhr occupation — German and French economics

By E. Varga.

If there really were some people still naive enough to believe that after the world war, conflicts could be solved by the League of Nations or in some other peaceful manner, France's military proceedings must have sufficiently convinced them by now that within capitalism conflicts can only be solved by force. What is going on in the Ruhr area at the present time is war: the war of an unarmed population against an armed enemy.

Before considering the question of the economic significance of the Ruhr area, and of the consequences of the occupation for German and French economics, we must first emphasize the fact that in this case the same illusion is prevailing as during the world war. At that time there existed a general belief that a world war could not last longer than a few months, that modern economics were so internationally interwoven that it was impossible for a war to last longer. Experience shows that a world war can last 4½ years. And in this case: it was believed that an occupation of the Ruhr area, attended by a cutting off of the supply of Ruhr coal, would lead to a speedy catastrophe in German economics. How often was it repeated, by the bourgeois press of Germany, that a railway strike for instance, or a coal-miners' strike, would bring about an immediate catastrophe in the economic life of Germany, and must therefore be avoided at any cost. But now experience shows that after more than two months of Ruhr occupation, and after supplies of Ruhr coal and iron have ceased for six weeks, there is no thought whatever of a catastrophe in German economics. This proves, in the first place, that this pretext for combating labor movements is based on a lie, and, in the second place, that German capitalist economics are exceedingly elastic.

The coal and iron problem.

The purpose of the Ruhr occupation is stated by France to be the necessity for getting pledges from Germany that the reparations are paid regularly. These are the "productive pledges" which France sought to obtain by occupying the Ruhr. But besides this financial aim, another factor has been decisive for the occupation, that of the special interests of French heavy industry. To make this clear, the following figures may be adduced:

Even before the war France had a large excess of iron ore as compared with her coal. A great part of the iron ore produced on the Lorraine frontier of France had to be exported, and was smelted in Germany. After the war, the disproportion between iron and coal in France became much greater. French coal production has been diminished by the devastation of the mines in Northern France by the Germans; on the other hand, France's output of iron ore has been enormously increased by her possession of Lorraine and its ore mines. The change which has taken place may be gathered from the following collective statistics for the whole of Europe, taken from "Economic Statistics":

In 1913 the total coal output of Europe was over 600 million tons:

Germany, old boundaries	190.11 mill. t	= 31.17 %
France, old boundaries	40.05 "	t = 6.56 %
Great Britain and Ireland	292.04 "	t = 47.87 %

With the present political boundaries, the coal output of Europe is distributed as follows:

	1913		1920	1921	1922
	Mill. t	%			
Germany, present boundaries (without Saar)	140.9	23.10	108.4	113.9	119.1
Saar area	13.2	2.16	9.8	9.5	11.2
France, including Lorraine	43.8	7.18	24.3	28.2	31.2
Belgium	22.8	3.74	22.4	21.8	21.3
Poland (with Eastern Upp. Silesia)	40.5	6.64	29.4	29.9	36.4
Czecho-Slovakia	12.7	2.08	11.1	11.6	—
Great Britain and Ireland	292.0	47.87	233.2	166.3	255.9
The rest of Europe	44.1	7.23	—	—	—
Europe	610.0	100.00	—	—	—

Thus the coal output of France has dropped from 44 million tons in 1913 to 31 million tons in 1922.

The output of iron ore, which has developed in the opposite direction, is shown by the following:

and part-time, is not an immediate consequence of the Ruhr occupation; it is the continuation of a downward process which began six months ago, and has been rendered more acute by the stabilization of the mark which took place a few weeks ago.

But although the Ruhr occupation and the cessation of coal supplies has not yet led to catastrophic results for German economics up to now—apart from the Ruhr area—this does not by any means signify that this state of affairs could be borne permanently by German economics. The store of coal will soon be exhausted, and the import of English coal cannot in any way replace the shortage of Ruhr coal; neither is England's production large enough to do this, nor is Germany capable of raising the money required for the continuous purchase of expensive English coal.

With regard to the economic position in the Ruhr area itself, we must admit that no reliable data are obtainable. It is probable that the coal output has diminished very considerably—probably to less than half of normal—and that this coal is coked in the Ruhr area itself, and used for smelting the existing and imported iron ore, and that the iron goods thus produced are placed on stock for the present.

The Ruhr occupation and French economics.

However incredible it may appear, the consequences of the Ruhr occupation are at the moment much more disastrous for French than for German economics. The French iron industry is completely dependent on German coal and German coke. Only very small reserves were on hand, have now been used up, and a large number of blast furnaces in the east of France, above all the Lorraine works, have been compelled to shut down for lack of coal. The total amount of coke required monthly is about 700,000 tons, only a very small amount of which is produced in France itself, or is replaced by English or Czecho-Slovakian coal. The position is best characterized by the following survey given in *L'Usine*, the periodical of the French iron and steel industry: "We have now been in occupation of the Ruhr area for a month, and the situation of our iron industry is becoming more and more critical every day. When the government decided to adopt compulsory measures against Germany, it sent official notice to our industrial undertakings to make the necessary preparations for taking over large amounts of coke. The results are sufficiently well known. We entered the Ruhr on January 11, and since January 19, our industry has not received a single ton of coke from the Ruhr area. Our factories are working today at about 60% of the January rate, that is, at 30% of their normal production. We are continually being compelled to extinguish additional blast furnaces, and the situation has every prospect of becoming worse.

The majority of the works are running scarcely a quarter of their blast furnaces. The small reserves are completely exhausted. It must not be forgotten that the German deliveries were always in arrears, so that it was impossible for our industry to take precautionary measures against possible crises, quite apart from the fact that it was never consulted.

When German or pro-German newspapers, attempt to represent the Ruhr occupation as an action undertaken at our instigation, this is very far from the actual truth. On the contrary, our industry is the first to suffer from the resultant conditions. It is precisely our industry which feels with the greatest acuteness the consequences of the policy pursued at present."

It must not be concluded from this that French heavy industry abandons the idea of controlling the Ruhr industry. All that is proved is the old story of the great war: that the cost of defeating the enemy by far exceeds the profits gained; that the conflicting parties ruin themselves mutually in the struggle for economic power.

In conclusion, it may be observed that the cessation of coal and iron supplies from the Ruhr area, and the consequent stagnation of a considerable part of French iron industry, have led to a temporary revival of the markets in the other heavy industrial countries of Europe. England is the greatest gainer; her coal and iron industries are fully occupied at present, and at rising prices. This is one reason why the movement against the Ruhr occupation gains ground so slowly. Czecho-Slovakian heavy industry has also experienced a revival, but it is very difficult to get coal or iron transported across Germany from here to France. Germany is the chief buyer. American heavy industry is also gaining by the Ruhr conflict at present, for French and German competition has disappeared from the world market; moreover, Germany is buying coal from America. But this revival is merely a passing phase, and will blow out with a protraction of the Ruhr conflict.

The issue of the conflict.

It is not our task to predict the probable termination of the conflict. But one thing appears to be certain: On no account

will England permit France to carry off a complete victory in the Ruhr conflict. Such a solution, which would place the whole Rhenish-Westphalian heavy industry in French hands, will not be accepted by England. For this reason, the intervention of England and America in the conflict is inevitable, even if this interference is not open, and participation will be secured for English capital in Rhenish-Westphalian heavy industry. Further, there is no doubt whatever, despite the press campaigns and the official announcements made by French and Germans alike, that continual negotiations are going on between German and French heavy industries. We consider the most probable issue of the conflict to be—provided that the working class does not succeed in gaining decisive influence on the solution of the question by revolutionary action—that the Rhenish-Westphalian heavy industry will become the joint property of German, French, and English capital. This could be made technically possible by a loan to Germany, guaranteed by England and raised in England and America, and paid over immediately to France. This would enable Poincaré to withdraw from the Ruhr affair successfully. This international loan would be secured by the real values of German industry, above all by those of the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area, and a form would be found (for instance the issue of supplementary shares) enabling French and English capital to secure the desired participation.

This solution would probably be temporary only. The fact of the Ruhr occupation is in itself a proof that on the basis of the Versailles treaty there can be no capitalist balance of power. The political struggles for power which are expressed in the occupation of the Ruhr are again shaking European economics to their foundations, and the gradual improvement observable during the autumn months has again been erased.

The Soviet rouble and the French Assignats

By G. Sokolnikov.

(Russian People's Commissary for Finance.)

We frequently meet with the opinion that our traffic in paper money, like all traffic in paper money, must inevitably lead to a catastrophe; that the crisis which our paper money is undergoing is a deadly one, and that it is not possible to avoid the transition to gold currency, not merely in the sense of calculating on a gold basis but to the use of gold currency. But if we accord these opinions careful consideration, we find that the arguments on which they are founded are supported more by prejudice than by logic.

The instance most frequently adduced is that of the great French revolution, which attempted to put its economics in order with the aid of paper currency. When this paper money was deprived of value, it was replaced by metal coins, and after a crisis lasting some years France passed to metal currency again.

This historical analogy deserves a careful analysis, for such an analysis serves to disclose the extreme superficiality of this analogy, and demonstrates that it contains not a shadow of proof of the inevitability of the collapse of our paper currency. During the epoch of revolutionary crisis, France did not make the transition to metal coins because the paper money system had collapsed; the reverse was the case, the system of paper money collapsed because it was replaced by metal currency. And why? In the first place because coin currency was possible. There were such quantities of coins in the country (about 2½ milliards of francs), in the hands of private persons, that these sufficed to cover the requirements of French currency. This was the first and most important condition, and was a result of the then existing backwardness of banking activity, which had not yet reached the point of withdrawing metal from circulation in overwhelming quantities, and concentrating it in reserve funds belonging to the central banks.

Besides this, there were two other decisive factors. First, until 1793 France still had a favorable trade balance, and during the first year of the revolution this favorable commercial balance was able to prevent metal currency from leaving France. The revolution gave a powerful impetus to the development of foreign trade. Later on the revolutionary wars hindered the development of foreign trade, especially of sea trade. But—and this is the second factor—the Napoleonic wars brought about a tremendous increase of France's gold reserves, for the gold of Italy, Holland, and other countries was confiscated. It may be asserted, without exaggeration, that almost all the gold reserves accumulated by the commercial states of the continent during the middle ages fell into the hands of the French bourgeoisie, which proceeded (for a time) to extend its political hege-

mony in France to an immediate political and economic hegemony in Europe.

Even during the period of paper currency, France's finances were never on a purely paper basis. The government combined the system of issuing bank-notes with a system of paying in metal to bankers and business people who gathered round the government; the manufacturers supplying war requisites were almost invariably paid in metal coins.

During the whole period, up to the overthrow of Robespierre, the revolutionary government was supplied with considerable means by the issue of paper money, and when the fall in the rate of exchange came, it was inconsiderable as compared with the present fluctuations in the value of paper money in Russia, Germany, etc. At the time of Robespierre's downfall the paper money still retained 30% of its original value; it was not until later that the depreciation took more rapid strides, with regard to which it must be observed, that the most acute depreciation occurred at a time when the government itself was anxious for the complete depreciation of the paper currency. Thus the maximum limit of depreciation of this paper has nothing whatever in common with that limit reached by the Soviet currency.

During the epoch of bourgeois revolution, the economic conditions obtaining in France were naturally very different to those of Russia after the October revolution. In France there was never that restriction of commercial traffic which took place in Russia. In France the political force of the bourgeoisie was never so undermined as in Russia. When the French paper money began to depreciate in value, the revolutionary government encountered the economic resistance of the commercial bourgeoisie and of the industrial magnates, who wished to rid themselves of the sinking paper currency, and thus converted their economic resistance into a political resistance. The bourgeoisie had no objection so long as the "costs of the revolution" were borne by the nobility. But when the issue of paper money became a peculiar means of "taxing" financial and trade capital, the bourgeoisie made a clean sweep of the paper money, and of the government based upon it.

With us there is no resemblance to this. Our industry is a state industry and our trade a state trade, and though these are equally anxious to be rid of the depreciated currency, and to have another basis of support than Soviet currency, still this striving implies no political development, for the state industry and the state trade are much more in need of a firm Soviet power than a firm currency.

Thus the analogy drawn between the French and Russian financial crises is more than weak: in Russia there is not sufficient gold for economic traffic; it is impossible to enrich the inner traffic with gold from foreign traffic or from confiscations. Most of the gold had already been withdrawn from circulation in Russia before the revolution, and was in the state bank, not in the hands of private persons.

It must be added that even the collapse of the paper currency in France cannot be regarded in its essential character as a collapse of the paper money traffic. After the paper money had depreciated and disappeared, France still carried on the paper money system for some years, under another name. Paper money notes were issued by the state exchequer in anticipation of revenues. This paper money also depreciated, but the state finances were held together by it for some years, until the taxation system was regulated, and the French state bank decided on the issue of bank-notes.

Soviet Russia's greatest advantage lies in the circumstance, that the regulation of the taxation system, and the organization of the state bank and its bank-note issue, are already being carried out at the present time, so that our Soviet "paper money" is not only secure from collapse, but is on the contrary showing symptoms of improvement.

THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

To all Co-operative Organizations!

The I. International Conference of communist co-operators, as well as the IV. World Congress of the Comintern, decided that the co-operative societies have to take active and energetic part in all struggles of the proletariat.

At the present time the proletariat is threatened with a frightful danger. The greedy bourgeoisie of France, actuated by the desire to completely crush and exploit the working masses of Germany, has taken the step of occupying the Ruhr area. For the German people, this occupation signifies a source of immeasurable dangers, of suffering and misery. It is impossible

for the German people to patiently tolerate this predatory raid. The extension of French imperial power is an enormous danger for the peace of Europe. Storm-laden war clouds hang over Europe and the whole world. Now, more than ever, all truly proletarian fighting organizations must redouble their efforts in the fight against the bourgeoisie, and the Russian co-operative must not take the last place in the ranks of the proletarian forces.

In the face of this tremendous danger, we must immediately commence agitation within the co-operatively organized masses, for the creation of a united front against the bourgeoisie, and against the war danger threatened through the action of the bourgeoisie. We must continually expose to the masses of co-operators the policy of the social traitors, who pass resolutions at their peace congresses, but fail to carry them out when the decisive moment for action arrives.

We must devote all our powers to this struggle.

The attitude adopted by us to the question of the struggle for securing peace was clearly stated by Soviet Russia's delegation at the Hague conference. Our proposals to all labor organizations of the world are as follows:

1. In order to secure the greatest possible measure of success for the proletarian struggle in the cause of peace, it is necessary to put an end to any class collaboration and any coalition with the bourgeoisie, and to draw a sharp line between labor organizations and bourgeois governments.

2. In order to prepare the armies and the broad masses of workers for effective war against war, it is necessary to create legal and illegal soldiers' organizations, which organizations shall carry on an uninterrupted, persevering, and systematic work of agitation and enlightenment within the army, and be ready at the decisive moment to lead the armies rising against the bourgeoisie.

3. Energetic mass fighting is to be carried on for the annulment of the shameful Versailles treaty and other similar treaties; against the league of imperialist pirates sailing under the flag of the "League of Nations"; against the enslavement of the working masses of Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and other countries, through the medium of the "reparations". The international bourgeoisie must be made to pay the full price for making good all the damage and devastation for which it alone is to blame.

4. The working and peasant masses of the semi-colonial and colonial countries, suffering beneath the oppression of the imperialist robbers, are to be induced to join in the war against war. Special attention is to be devoted to agitating against imperialism amongst the colored troops.

5. Strenuous efforts must be made for the immediate evacuation of the territories in Germany occupied by Entente troops, and for the withdrawal of all occupation troops from all districts (Near and Far East, Africa, etc.) which, according to the orders of the League of Nations, that is, according to the right of might, are to remain under occupation.

6. A continuous fight must be conducted for the disarmament of the White Guard organizations of the bourgeoisie, for the arming of the working masses, and for the establishment of workers' governments whose task it will be, to carry out these demands against the will of the ruling classes.

The events in the Ruhr impart a special significance to this resolution at the present time.

We appeal to all the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia who are organized in co-operatives, and call upon them to voice their revolutionary protest against the danger of fresh carnage now being raised by the imperialist bourgeoisie of France, aided by the late Entente.

The Committee of the "Zentrosoyus".

THE WHITE TERROR

In Yugoslavia

By W. Vayovitch.

The reign of White Terror in Yugoslavia, which began towards the end of 1920, was not only revealed by the dissolution of the Communist Parties and of the trade unions, and by the imprisonment of thousands of workers; the Terror was further expressed by special methods of extorting confessions from the imprisoned communists, in order to obtain material to prove to public opinion how necessary it is to place the communist outside of the law.

In Bosnia, where 300 miners were kept awaiting trial for a year, eleven comrades fell victims to an inquisition whose cruelty surpasses all imagination. The death of these eleven

comrades best characterizes the regime obtaining in the prisons of this "civilized" country. The communist trial which took place in Belgrade last year revealed numerous facts plainly showing that reaction is determined to shrink from no means in order to supply the criminal court with "proofs" based on the "confessions" of the accused. Comrade Tchaki was so beaten during an examination that he lost consciousness; thereupon, cold water was poured over his head to restore him to consciousness. After the proceedings were ended, he was forced to sign the protocol of this "hearing". During a hearing of this description four of his teeth were knocked out.

The prisoners were crowded in hundreds into cells intended for 30 to 40 men at most. Here they were left for several days, in unbearable heat, without bread or water. They were continually ill-treated, for no other reason than that they were communists.

The notorious "chimney" of the Belgrade prison certainly represents the most refined torture practised by Yugoslavian "civilization". It is a narrow cell in which a human being can only stand upright. Our comrades were frequently confined in this for 48 hours at a time, or even longer, without bread or water; at the same time smoke was allowed to penetrate into the narrow space, which naturally caused the most intolerable torments. Comrade Kolatschek was beaten till he bled. This beating was carried out with a cow-hide whip. After this ill usage he was carefully cleansed of blood, and incarcerated in the "chimney" for some hours. It would require a thick volume to recount all the numerous methods of torture employed, but the few facts here stated suffice to demonstrate the appalling conditions obtaining in the Yugoslavian prisons.

Comrades Steitsh and Tchaki, one condemned to 20, the other to 30, years of imprisonment, in "light irons", are in a frightful situation. Their cells are unhealthy and damp, the food defies all description; in addition to this, they have to drag about with them iron fetters weighing 15 kilograms. According to the Serbian law the weight of light fetters should only be 5 kilograms but as these comrades are incarcerated in a prison of Voyvodina—a district belong to Austria before the war—they are forced to carry a heavier weight because the Austrian prisons were only provided with such fetters!

A young comrade from Slavonia was recently condemned to two years strict solitary confinement. The sentence contained the further regulation that the prisoner, once a month, had to pass 24 hours without a bed, on the concrete floor, and without any food whatever. And this cruel sentence was passed for no other reason than that communist literature had been found in the prisoners' house.

But despite all these persecutions and ill usage, the Yugoslavian proletariat holds true to the revolution, and has carried through several successful struggles within the last few months; this may best be seen in the founding of an independent labor party, and in the excellent development made by the independent trade union in recent months. The Yugoslavian proletariat will also find a way to fight for the liberation of its political prisoners.

In Pilsudski's Poland

By A. K. (Warsaw).

For decades the Polish revolutionists have never had a month's peace. The dictatorship of the Polish bourgeoisie followed immediately on the heels of the Czarist regime of occupation rule. Under Moraczewski's government arrests and murders were the order of the day, and all the governments which followed of whatever description, pursued the same policy of arrests and murders against the revolutionists.

"Pavilion", "Paviak", "Serbiya", "Mokotow" (well known Warsaw prisons), and dozens of provincial prisons, returned to their most notorious traditional methods. Nothing was changed but the uniform and the badges. The one-headed eagle was not an iota more humane than his double-headed predecessor. And beneath his sway the system and practices of the prisons remained unaltered, unless for the worse. Many of the old occupants of the prisons returned to them. Hundreds of revolutionary fighters, who had already spent half their lives in Czarist jails or in exile, made fresh acquaintance with the prisons of "independent" Poland. The communist deputy of the Sejm, Stefan Krolkowski, just recently set at liberty, has undergone eight years of Czarist imprisonment, followed by two years of incarceration watched over by Pilsudski's gendarmes. During the few years of existence of "independent" Poland, many of our comrades

have scarcely enjoyed liberty for a few months. An idea may be gained of the extent of the reprisals being carried on in Poland, by a glance at the present exchange list, which contains the names of more than 400 prisoners, of whom at least three quarters have already been imprisoned for two years, and all of whom are condemned to long terms of imprisonment. Five to fifteen years hard labor, the measure of punishment meted out to the communists; in one time Russian-Poland, the legal basis for this punishment is derived from the Czarist code of laws, in Galicia and Posen it is derived from the Austrian or Prussian code of penal law.

It has often been asked who has adopted the most brutal measures against revolution and the revolutionists: Czarism or the Polish Skallons, Kaznakows, Gruns, Ithofs, and Alexandrovs, as represented by such scoundrels as Witecki, Snarski, Gorzechowski, Miegzinski, Farynski, and their companions. That such a question can be asked at all is significant enough in itself. It is extremely difficult to reply for it is hard to compare the data, and moreover the intensity of the repressive measures under both regimes, has varied at different times.

If we do not consider separate details, but wish to characterize the period as a whole, we may say that, in the first place, mass repression was formerly never exercised for such long and uninterrupted periods, and, in the second place, such repressive measures were never so extensive as at the present time, now that Lemberg, Cracow, and Posen, in which political trials were formerly unknown, can enter into competition with Warsaw and Lodz. There is no doubt that this period is filled with shameful deeds, such as were unknown to the earlier history of the Polish revolutionary struggle—for instance the murder of the Soviet Russian Red Cross commission, with the old political convict Vreckovski at the head, in December 1918; or the murder of Brzozas, stabbed with a bayonet; or the murder of comrade Pola Maceyovskaya in the prison at Kattovitz, and the pogrom among the female political prisoners in Wronki.

Such excesses as were committed during Moratschewski's government have occurred in Poland at various times, and under the most various circumstances. The responsibility for these horrible crimes falls to the Polish Scheidemanns: Moratschewski, Baszynski, and Slivinski. Six months ago, under Slivinski's government, an arrested man was forced to make a confession by means of torture, and the rôle of executioner was not played by a gendarme or by the Defensive (Polish secret police), but by Luxemburg, the judge of the court of inquiry. During the electoral campaign a group of youths, who were arrested at an electoral meeting had their heads shaved like criminals, and in addition chained like convicts. In earlier times prisoners were certainly never subjected to such systematic psychological tortures as is now the case in Polish prisons. There are prisons in which as many as 10 hunger strikes have taken place in the course of a year.

The struggle raging in Poland against the communist movement is being carried on, as it has always been, under the leadership and active participation of the Polish Scheidemanns who sit in the offices of the Defensive, and openly and secretly co-operate with these secret police. Despite the dangers threatening them from the extreme right, these elements are still terribly afraid that the chains may be removed which hinder the development of the labor movement. A number of sharp lessons on the part of the right are first required, in order that the working class may revolt against these tactics of its leaders, and close its ranks for a united struggle against the repression hindering the development of the labor movement.

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