

International Reformism in its True Colours

(NOTES OF A TRADE UNIONIST)

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Gossip on Pan-Europe

EUROPE'S loss of financial and industrial hegemony and the steady growth of the United States have given rise among a section of the European bourgeoisie and European reformism to the idea of the unification of Europe for a struggle against dangerous competitors. Talk about Pan-Europe is now the most fashionable theme in bourgeois-Fascist and reformist circles. At the beginning of October a Pan-European Congress actually took place in Vienna, where ardent speeches were made on the advantage of unity to Europe against advancing America. But all the decisions of this "Congress" are of such a meagre, colourless malaria-like nature that even the initiators of the Congress are disconcerted by the product of their creation.

Needless to say the Amsterdam International could not stand aside from these Pan-European talks; for where could they develop their inborn talents if not in this "arena"? But the Amsterdamites are not simply private people who engage merely in talk about unification of Europe. As satellites of the Solar system called the League of Nations they immediately place the question on a "practical" basis, linking up their Pan-European projects with the International Economic Conference, convened by the League of Nations, in which a "Labour group" is participating which has its own plan for saving Europe from the onward march of the United States.

A "Respectable" Ideal

In order to get acquainted with this new discovery of the Amsterdam International, let us turn to its official Bulletin (No. 38 of October 5, 1926), which devotes a special economic supplement to the question. The Amsterdam International wants a "more composite organisation of European economy." The task is highly respectable, and it is just for this reason that the idea of Pan-Europe, in the words of the Amsterdamites, is meeting with great success. Now let us hear what the Amsterdam gossipers have to say about the Pan-European idea.

"If Europe wants to exist," we read in the Economic Supplement to the Bulletin of the Amsterdam international, "it must become Pan-Europe both in economics and politics. In politics no idea has met with such a warm response for a very long time as the idea of Pan-Europe. The rapidity with which this idea has spread throughout all camps, and struck particularly deep roots in the Labour movement within a few weeks, is a proof of the existence of something like a feeling of European solidarity.

"The fact that a section of the advanced bourgeoisie is in favour of the movement should not hold

the workers back from approving it. In Labour circles of course it is realised that the chief motive for a large part of the bourgeois support is pure sentimentalism or a temporary terror caused by the bad economic situation in Europe. The workers should also not fall under the influence of the Communists, who ridicule the whole movement and are bound to ridicule it for the simple reason that the pre-requisite for their entire policy is the economic ruin of Europe. It is in the field of economics that it is possible to separate the wheat from the chaff; and then it will become clear who really is seriously concerned about restoring Europe and at the same time its social recuperation.

"That ultimately Pan-Europe cannot be a bourgeois idea will be made clear then when everyone sees that it is not a question of the play of egoistical instincts on the European scale, but of the first step on the path of trade union international policy."

By Eloquence and Conscience

All this is very exalting and touching. Particularly touching, of course, is the "social recuperation" of Europe and the "spirit of European solidarity" discovered by the Amsterdam Columbines. It is true that this spirit, whose heralds are Chamberlain, Briand, Mussolini, Stresemann, Benes and their Social Democratic understudies, savours about as much of solidarity as the Amsterdam Bulletin does of Socialism; but these are "home truths." What is important to us is the "exalted deception."

The Amsterdamites of course see that things are not going so very well in Europe as far as solidarity is concerned; but it is the "petty interests" of the capitalists who are to blame for this; they have begun organising "international trusts which are not being created for the purpose of European economic unity capable of competition, but from economic motives of a private nature." The official organ of Amsterdam is unhappy that these "false organisations have already begun being formed on an international scale," and therefore, proposes a method of checking "false organisations," a method elaborated of course by the "Labour group" at the League of Nations. The "Labour group" demands that "industrial cartels be put under the control of the Labour Office of the League of Nations and conducted with the support of the various governments and the workers' and consumers' organisations." Although the "Labour group" has forgotten to tell us by what measures it intends to put the cartels under control, we can tell this secret to our readers: the most important moving forces of Pan-European thought are the eloquence of the Labour group, the consciences of the leaders of the "false organisations," and the "spirit of European solidarity." All these together will lead to

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the "social recuperation of Europe" and the disgrace of the Communists.

The Amsterdamites believe that from this delirious "Pan-Gossip" there will ultimately arise the "ideal form of "Pan-Europe." What is this—infantile sickness or senile decay? Both!

On the Way Towards the Old Court Livery

Germany is quietly and easily moving forward towards her Hohenzollern. Eight years ago the German Revolution began with a government of Social Democrats and Independents; now Germany, thanks to the ingenious strategy of the Social Democrats, has been transformed into Hindenburgia, which as everyone knows very well is nothing more or less than a step towards monarchist restoration.

A Stud Farm for Royalty

When a revolution took place in Germany—for which the Social Democrats are not to be blamed!—the question of the monarchy came up. The Social Democrats thought with indignation and terror about the barbarity of the Russians who had meted out to the Romanoffs their deserts. The Social Democrats after all, were not Bolsheviks, not "barbarians," they were Europeans. Therefore when they had discreetly and with courtly bows removed the crown from the Hohenzollern head they immediately granted the Court and all the Crown Princes and princelets imposing pensions to the end of their days.

It is no secret that Germany, before the war, was something like a big stud farm for the supply of kings and queens to all countries. Thanks to this special kind of national industry the number of persons connected by blood ties with these "anointed sovereigns" was very great. Each one of these people, since they had given joy to the German people by their appearance on earth, were granted by the Social Democrats the chance to live without financial worry at the expense of "their" people.

But "l'appetit vient en mangeant." Having lived for a few years on rations (which cost the State many millions per year) the Hohenzollerns revolted: they wanted to receive everything they were "entitled to." Had it not been for the masses of workers the Social Democrats would never have favoured the confiscation of the property of the royal houses. Now, when the formal side of the matter has been decided by a referendum, the Social Democrats together with the bourgeois and monarchist parties are placing financial burdens on the German people in order to feed up their "most august" parasites.

"We Only Abstained"

It is true that the Social Democrats did not vote for the agreement with the Hohenzollerns, they "only" abstained; but everyone understands very well what this irresponsible policy of abstention means at such a moment, and on such a question. The Social Democrats, by this abstention of theirs, voted for the monarchy; that is something that no worker will ever forget! Such is the "struggle" of the court Social Democrats for

democracy. The German Social Democrats long ago put the black, gold and red tricolour in place of their red flag, but now have relegated even this banner to the archives. Henceforth they adopt court livery as their standard.

That is how the German Social Democrats are fighting the monarchy and its survivals. The Bolsheviks and Social Democrats were confronted with one and the same question: how to finish with the monarchy? We ask the Social Democratic workers: which method—the Bolshevik or the Social Democratic—is simpler, cheaper and more advantageous for the toiling masses? Which is real democracy and proletarian Socialism, and which is vain chatter and profoundly anti-democratic pseudo-Socialism?

D'Aragona Determines Himself

Our old friend the semi-Amsterdamite and semi-Fascist D'Aragona continues to evolve. When the waves of the Labour movement rose very high in Italy (in 1920) D'Aragona came to Moscow and took part in the inauguration of the R.I.L.U. Returning to Italy just at the time when the factories were being seized, he immediately got down to organising the break-up of this movement in which he and his colleagues met with brilliant success. No sooner was the movement squashed than D'Aragona found courage to say openly that he was and remains an Amsterdamite.

After the victory of Fascism the evolution of D'Aragona became clearly catastrophic. He issued a declaration against "Moscow gold," boasted that he had succeeded in breaking up the "Bolshevik movement of 1920" and finally, went to such extremes that he openly proclaimed the necessity for a reconciliation with Mussolini. This pro-Fascism proved to be too scandalous even for his reformist friends, and in order to avoid loss of all influence in the trade unions D'Aragona was removed from his post and replaced by less garrulous renegades.

Loyal—to Fascism

But Signor D'Aragona was not content to sit quiet; he continued building a bridge between reformism and Fascism. There are innumerable pretexts in Italy for displaying one's sentiments as a loyal citizen. D'Aragona chose for this the strike of agricultural workers in Molinelli. The fight in Molinelli has lasted for some years. The agricultural workers have displayed exceptional heroism in the defence of their interests. The union has frequently been disbanded, but each time it has been built up again,

In July of this year the union was again disbanded under the pretext that it was of a "clearly anti-national and destructive character" and that "the names of the present organisers concealed the old leaders of the Red organisation." In order to smash the refractory workers of Molinelli, hundreds of workers were chased out of their quarters by the united forces of the Fascist landlords and landowners.

D'Aragona made use of his presence at the International Labour Office (he "represents" the Italian workers in this den of thieves) to make a speech, not in defence of the beaten up and persecuted workers, but against them. This was such a brilliant "defence" of the workers of Molinelli that all Fascist papers are now

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beating a tatoon on their kettledrums in honour of the "just and correct Labour policy of the Fascist Government."

Well, how did the "Labour group" on which sit the most prominent leaders of the Amsterdam International react to this? They didn't react at all. Everything was tranquil on the battlements of Amsterdam. D'Aragona continued to determine himself, having the full and unconditional support of the Amsterdam International, for the Italian apple had not fallen very far from the Amsterdam apple tree.

Which is Better?

Side by side with the nice German Social Democrats should be placed the P.P.S. (Polish Socialist Party) which is nice in absolutely all respects. As "immemorial" enemies these two organisations of the Second International have always been in a state of rivalry. This rivalry is mainly in the field of adaptation to the bourgeoisie of the fatherland and in the struggle against the Communists.

The German Social Democrats only have to commit some infamy; the P.P.P. hastens to out-blackguard their German colleagues. They on their part do not miss a chance to get a few points ahead on their Polish colleagues. This fight for the championship in blackguardism has become particularly clearly manifest just recently.

Champion Blackguards?

The German Social Democrats had hardly had time to smash the Hamburg strike and abstain from voting as to whether or not to pay the Hohenzollerns, when the General Council of the P.P.S. met and immediately left their "hereditary enemy" far behind. The Council of this party had to determine its attitude towards Pilsudsky and towards the fact that a member of the Polish Socialist Party, Morachevski, had joined Pilsudsky's Fascist party. The position of this party, from whose womb Pilsudsky and his chief adjutants and assistants originated, was by no means easy. When one remembers that the P.P.S., like all the parties of the Second International, cries from the housetops that it is in favour of democracy and against dictatorship, and that Pilsudsky not only shoots workers (this the P.P.S. might swallow) but that he has spat in the face of the

Sejm, placing himself above the Constitution, then it becomes clear how difficult it is to avoid offending democracy and yet to support their own Morachevski somehow or other.

After two weeks' discussion between the Rights and Lefts (there are such even on the Council of the P.P.S.) they realised that no situation is so bad but a way out can be found. Success was attained. The General Council condemned the policy of Barthel, *i.e.*, of a government which no longer existed, took up a wait-and-see position (what's the use of hurrying?) in respect of Pilsudsky, and declared that the entry of a member of the P.P.S. into the Pilsudsky Government was the personal affair of the free lance Morachevski. Thus the dead received their deserts, live Fascism was not offended and a personal union with it was established through Morachevski. All this, of course, is done in the name of democracy and Socialism. King Solomon in all his wisdom could not have conceived a better policy!

What the Horse Replied

The Polish government paper "Epoka" writes in reference to this "historic" meeting: "In the Council of the P.P.S. the conviction gained the upper hand that excessive concentration on doctrines might under present conditions become dangerous for the equilibrium of the Polish State." As the P.P.S. has never been carried away by Socialist doctrines we might end the matter here, but the question naturally arises—which are the better, the German Social Democrats, or the P.P.S.? This question must be settled without fail, for the Hungarian, Roumanian, Yugo-Slavian, French and the British sections of the Second International all claim the palm of championship in this competition of traitors, capitulators, cowards and lackeys. Well, which is better?

To this question so full of tragedy, we can only give the following anecdote as a reply: Once a wagon and a sleigh began disputing as to who was the better. They quarrelled for a long time until finally they decided to ask the horse. "The horse has pulled us both, it will be able to tell us," decided the disputing parties. So they went to the horse. "Which of us is the better?" they both asked at the same time. The horse looked at them, winked its eye, wagged its tail, and said: "You are a swine, and you also are a swine—to hell with both of you."

