

# POLITICS

## International Reformism and the United States of Europe.

By A. Lozovsky.

The onslaught of American capitalism on Europe, the enfeeblement of European capitalism and the ruin of whole sections of its trade and commerce have made certain elements of the European bourgeoisie and European reformists begin to yearn for a united Europe. A unified Europe, the unity of Europe, the interests of Europe, the European spirit, the solidarity of European nations and other flowery phrases are now current in the bourgeois (progressive!) countries and reformist newspapers and journals. Projects for the strengthening and invigorating of Europe in the face of American competition spring up like mushrooms. The subject is being especially energetically thrashed out in the social democratic press in Germany, where the question of pan-European economic and political unity, in the hope of restoring the importance of the whole of the fatherland, is gravely discussed. In the opinion of Paul Kampmeyer, "the unification of the continent of Europe is not only a problem for the proletariat. Almost every day every European is profoundly concerned in the happy issue."

this problem." (*Socialistische Monatshefte*, July, 1926.) The same author considers that the proud mission of the political and economic unification of Europe belongs to the German social democrats, as the most democratic party. Hilferding's social democratic organ "*Die Gesellschaft*" also devotes a great deal of space to these questions, while in this paper the question of what to do with Bolshevik Russia, which country simply cannot be fitted in with the bourgeois reformist projects and plans, is subjected to very close examination.

All projects for the unification of Europe at present fall into two categories: on the one hand attempts are being made to create an "independent" movement; on the other hand, to make the League of Nations a centre for the reconstruction of Europe. As representative of the independent movement (independent in a very relative sense) may be counted the recently-concluded Pan European Congress in Vienna. This congress was attended by all sorts of bourgeois liberals and semi-liberals, by pacifists, reformists, by benevolent ladies, by former Government officials out of a job, and the rest of the characteristic public that loves to show itself at international congresses.

Side by side with Wirth and de Monzie, the "left" social democrat Loebe came forward; and they all considered it their most important duty to produce such decisions as would please everybody, to have a resolution carried for which they would not have to blush in the ministerial sitting rooms and salons.

International social democracy, in the shape of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, has made the League of Nations a point of departure for all its Pan-European aspirations. The vice-president of the Amsterdam International, Leon Jouhaux repeatedly appeared before the Geneva auditorium advocating the conversion of the League of Nations into an "All European Parliament" which should take upon itself the solution of the most important economic and political problems. Like practical men the Amsterdamites concentrated all their attention on the International Labour Office (where they have exactly a quarter of the votes!), demanding from time to time that this organ should be invested with plenipotentiary powers for the solution of all kinds of economic questions.

At the moment the Amsterdam International is engaged on an International Economic Conference, the initiators of which are Leon Jouhaux, the representative of the reformist unions of France and Loucheur, already becoming famous as a chief of the biggest electrical enterprises. On the other hand the Amsterdamites are worried by the question of how to bring into line the developing international combines of the biggest branches of industry, while the Amsterdam International cannot think of anything better than to submit these international trusts to the aforesaid "Pan European Parliament" — the League of Nations and its offspring, the International Labour Office. In order to acquaint ourselves with the new discoveries of the Amsterdam International we must turn to its official bulletin\*) which has devoted a special economic supplement to this question.

The Amsterdam International desires "a more shapely organisation of European economics". The problem is in the highest degree respectable and that is why the idea of Pan-Europe has, in the words of the Amsterdamites, such a tremendous success.

"If Europe wishes to exist", we read in the economic supplement to the Amsterdam International Bulletin, "then she must become Pan Europe, both in her economics and her politics. It is long since any idea has had such a wide response as the idea of Pan-Europe. The rapidity with which its comprehension spread in a few weeks through all camps and struck specially deep roots in the Labour movement is proof of the existence of something like a feeling of European solidarity. The fact that a part of the more advanced bourgeoisie upholds this movement ought not to affect the workers' approval of it. In working class circles it is of course understood that the principal impulse moving the greater part of the bourgeois adherents is one of pure sentimentalism (!) or temporary panic evoked by the unfortunate economic situation of Europe. The workers should also not allow themselves to fall under the influence of the Communists, who deride the whole movement and are bound to deride it simply because the premises of their whole policy is the economic ruin of Europe. It is precisely in the economic sphere that the wheat can be distinguished from the

tares; here it can be seen who really wants the economic recovery of Europe, together with her social recovery. That Pan-Europe, in the last result, cannot be a bourgeois ideal is obvious when it is clearly seen that this is not an affair of the display of egoistic instincts on a European scale, but of the first step towards the creation of a real international commercial policy." (The italics are everywhere my own. A. L.)

All this is, of course, very elevated and touching, especially the touch about the "social recovery" of Europe, and the discovery of "the spirit of European solidarity", by the Amsterdam Columbuses. It is true that this spirit, the apostles of which are Chamberlain, Briand, Mussolini, Stresemann, Benes, and their social democratic satellites, has about as much flavour of solidarity as the Amsterdam Bulletin has of Socialism, but all these are only "bare facts" and what is important is "our elevating illusion". Amsterdam, of course, sees that the European atmosphere is not especially favourable for solidarity, but that is the fault of the "petty interests" of the capitalists who have organised "international combines, created not with the purpose of furthering European economic unity, with competitive capabilities, but from economic motives of a private nature". The official organ of Amsterdam is displeased that "these pseudo organisations have already begun to form themselves on an international scale", and therefore suggests a method worked out of course, by the afore-mentioned "labour group" attached to the League of Nations. The Labour Group demands that "industrial combines" should be placed under the control of the Labour Office attached to the League of Nations, and directed with the co-operation of different government (!) and workers' and consumers' organisations". Although the Labour Group has forgotten to tell us by what means it intends to place the combines under control, we can impart that secret to our readers. The most important boosters of the Pan Europe idea are the orators of the Labour Group (Jouhaux, Oudegeest, Leipart, and Co.), the conscience of the leaders of the "pseudo organisations" and "the spirit of European solidarity". All these projects work together for the "social recovery of Europe" and the humiliation of the communists. The Amsterdamites believe that out of this bewildering pan-chatter an "ideal form of Pan Europe" will in the end arise.

What is the political significance of all this pan chatter of Pan Europe, which has increased so rapidly in recent times? All these projects reflect the economic and political downfall of Europe better than countless statistical findings, the continent of Europe's loss of pre-war hegemony and the ousting of European capital from its place in the sun. These pan-Europe projects are all the more effective on account of the prospect of that abyss towards which Europe is rushing, thanks to its "economic divisions and its extravagance", as Dr. Pinner expresses it. "Europe ought to be united not in order to surpass America" affirms the "left" social democrat Toni Zender, "but to save its own life, that is to save the life of European capitalism".

But the social-democrats and Amsterdamites coming forward with projects for the unification of Europe do not forget the chief thing: they openly demonstrate the point that the unification of Europe should mean the mutual governing of the colonies (see Hilferding's organ "*Die Gesellschaft*", August 1926). This is a very real question and it underlies all the "philosophical" arguments of the German social democratic orators on the theme of the unification of Europe. This yearning for a unified Europe has, in general, common roots with the craving of international bankers for extended markets and the regulation of trade. What is this much talked of "social recovery of Europe?" It is the consolidation of capitalist exploitation, "the Americanisation of the whole productive apparatus for the speediest freedom from American competition and the Americanisation of the European labour movement with the object of freeing it from the growing influence of Bolshevism".

Pan European projects and all the fuss which the reformist press is making about the economic and political unification of Europe only bear witness to the profound dissension prevailing in bourgeois Europe, and to the fact that the results of the Versailles Peace, increasing enormously the number of customs barriers, are making themselves felt with more and more power, and demonstrate the helplessness of European capitalism in the face of the growing influence of America.

Not pan-chattering about Pan Europe, but a revolutionary struggle for a socialist United States of Europe is the only way out for the toiling masses of Europe.