

International Notes

Italy

THE Italian Socialist Party, the most powerful party in the country, has for the past two months been passing through a crisis which has divided it into two factions—for and against the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Prampolini, Turati and other parliamentary leaders have flatly refused to support the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, declaring themselves to be against bloodshed, and considering revolution unnecessary to accomplish "the few reforms the workers need."

"Violence is a crime, and futile," Prampolini declares in a recent article in *Avanti*. "There is another way. We say that the bourgeoisie is a minority, still they rule. We can rule, and the way to rule is to conquer the majority with propaganda."

Lazzari, secretary of the Italian Socialist Party, stands for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. In an answer to Prampolini, in a subsequent issue of *Avanti*, he writes under the head, *Violence and Dictatorship*:

"Our fathers have taught us that the Social Revolution is not coup d'etat, but that the maturity of certain conditions call into action the revolution, which is necessary for changing the social relations between men. We remain faithful to this teaching. If the bourgeoisie chooses violence as the last defense of its privileges, we will use violence to consolidate the rising power of the proletariat."

While this discussion is raging another question of more immediate tactical importance—the question of participation in the forthcoming national election—is engaging the attention of the Party branches. *Il Soviet*, Naples, official organ of the Party in Southern Italy, opposes participation: "To accept the elections, today, means the spending of our energies for the continuation of the bourgeois institutions we need to destroy. . . . The revolutionary conquest of parliament is today unavoidable. Every electoral action, now, is futile and dangerous and is better left to the bourgeoisie. The Party must not take part in the elections."

On account of the crisis brought about by these two questions the Socialist Party called a convention at Rome, in which it was decided that action was necessary and that the Party should call mass meetings to propagate the general strike for the release of all political prisoners, the withdrawal of the troops from Russia, the ending of the Tripolitan War and the immediate demobilization of the army.

The general strike started in Milan, Rome, Turin, Bologna and many other big industrial centers, resulting, in many places, in civil war. The government is using the question of Fiume to revive the hysteria among the masses and thus stampede the revolution. It will use Fiume for political purposes in the coming elections, and by this means the revolution may for a short time be postponed, but it cannot be averted. The forces which create revolution are active and the state is in complete bankruptcy.

Another general strike is called for May Day and all over the country, the workers are massing for action. On the result of these demonstrations depends the immediate future of the revolution in Italy; if the government can survive May Day the revolution may be delayed for some months.

The Party has decided to sever connections with the reactionary Second International and align with the Third International on the basis of the Bolshevik call.

Ireland

The National Executive of the Irish Labor Party has issued a call for a general strike on May Day. It is not clear whether it is proposed to have a one

day strike for the general purpose of demonstrating Irish Labor's solidarity with their comrades throughout the world, or whether May 1st is to see the initiation of a general strike aimed against the government. The reactionary independent unions of Belfast, whose leaders were responsible for breaking the recent general strike in that city, have suggested that Labor down tools on May 3, giving as the reason that Saturday falls on that day and is a half holiday. Commenting on this action the *Voice of Labour*, official organ of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, believes that the rank and file in Belfast will stand with their brothers for May 1.

A new factor is the Limerick situation, which has developed since the National Executive Committee issued its call, and it is believed that Irish labor will now utilize May Day for a nationwide strike in sympathy with the Limerick Soviet strike.

England

Robert Williams, general secretary of the Transport Workers' Federation, sent the following message calling for a May Day strike, to the London *Daily Herald*:

"As one actively associated with the Triple Industrial Alliance, let me congratulate you upon the stirring appeal in the editorial today to that organization to decide upon 'action, swift, sharp and stern.' The Triple Alliance and the Labour Party are asked immediately to summon an Industrial Parliament to grapple with the present situation.

"The Labour Party Executive has passed a strong resolution upon the terms of the Miners' resolution submitted to the Labour Party's League of Nations Conference. The Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, however, is standing directly in the way of the wishes of the organized work-people of the country. Organized workers are determined that conscription should be resisted by every possible means, but the Parliamentary Committee, as its name would indicate, believes in lobbying and deputations.

"This matter of conscription concerns all organized workers, both outside and inside the Triple Alliance. Labour is accustomed to demonstrate on May Day or on the first Saturday or Sunday in May, according to varying circumstances. Labour

should make up its mind to take the same action in this country as was taken by organized labour in Ireland when conscription was about to be thrust upon the Irish people. Let us, therefore, commence by doing as Ireland did, and have a universal stop day on May 1.

"The Miners' Federation are already pledged to a general stoppage for one day upon the first Monday in May. Perhaps the Miners' Conference at Southport, to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, will give a lead to organized labour by declaring their stoppage shall take place on May 1.

"We must all now choose between Karl Marx and Winston Churchill. It is quite possible that if the Miners' Federation make strong representation to the Triple Alliance that body will back the Miners' action. It would therefore be incumbent upon all trade unionists to consider favorably such a powerful lead as they would be offered.

"In every trade union there are resolute and courageous men who are as bitterly opposed to conscription as the Miners. Unfortunately for the members of these other organizations there is not such strength of character at the head of affairs as there is with the Miners. The whole of the organized workers of Coventry, it is reported, have determined upon this action. The workers of Britain want a lead; here is their opportunity. Do not let us demonstrate in a wishy-washy manner for the Workers' International while Winston Churchill and his associates want to prepare two million bayonets to suppress the Workers International throughout Europe."

The National Executive of the British Labor Party formulated a statement of its policy at the League of Nations Conference held in London in the first week in April. We reprint the statement in part:

"The Committee have also considered the Conscription Bill now before Parliament to be unnecessary, and a direct violation of election pledges given by responsible Ministers at the late general election, and demand its withdrawal.

"The Committee have also taken the Russian situation into special consideration, and, in the name of the politically-organized workingclass and Labour movement, reiterate their demand that the policy of military interference in Russia shall be stopped forthwith.

"They regret that the inability of the Government to make up their minds regarding their attitude to Russia has meant that British soldiers have been left practically isolated in Murmansk and Archangel, and exposed to attack; the Committee express an emphatic opinion that an arrangement should be made which will lead to the immediate cessation of hostilities and the safe withdrawal of British troops from Russian soil.

"The Committee have also considered the continued retention in prison of political and military offenders, including Conscientious Objectors, and declare that an amnesty should be granted at once."

Spain

The preparations for concerted action by the Spanish workers on May 1, have so alarmed the government that the workers have been mobilized as soldiers to carry on essential services under military law in the event of a general strike.

South Africa

The Johannesburg municipal strike is ended, with the "concession" of the 48-hour week for the whites. Native labor is receiving the lash, jail, and casual bullets.

In Time of War

By Louise Bryant.

*With wonder I read
Of those to whom this war has brought new
Love and faith in their fellows,
For my soul that had these things
Is slowly become desolate
As the hillside after the passing of the lumberman.
Pitiful with the wreckage of splendid visions
I sit idle, barren;
My restless hands pass over the little things of life
Seeking,
But that which once commanded them to create
and would not be denied,
Asks nothing of them.
My eyes become cold,
They rest indifferently on the desolation of battle-
fields,
On the dead heaps of those who carried the unborn
visions of the future.
But my foolish ears still listen
For what they once hoped to hear,
For the one thing that could give them back their
faith,
The revolution of the armies of the world.*