

workers recognize and will recognize no other party than that which was created and brought to maturity by Vladimir Ilyitch.

Our Party can do well to pay the closest heed to the conspicuous movement which has set in during the last few days amongst the wide circles of the non-party workers. We must meet this movement with all our power. If we, in the near future, succeed in bringing an entirely new stratum of workers from the industrial concerns into our Party, it will be the best wreath we can lay upon the newly made grave of Vladimir Ilyitch. The new stratum of workers which, in view of the remarkable enthusiasm amongst the non-party proletariat during the last few days, will, after the necessary test, enter our Party, will not be — of that we are convinced — the worst one.

These new strata of what were yesterday non-party workers, will gain through the help of our Party the necessary tempering and Marxist education, and will become a worthy part of the advance — guard in the cause of Lenin. Yesterday we heard accidentally a conversation of two workers:

**The first . . .** „What will we now do without him (Vladimir Ilyitch)?“

**The Second:** „Oh, that won't be so very difficult now — But what would we have done had he died three or four years ago?“

In this way simple workers translate into their own language the words of the poet: „Say not with sorrow: they are no longer there, but with thankfulness: they were there.“

The misfortune which has befallen our Party will be felt by the whole working masses of our country as their own misfortune. The best friend of the people is dead. But also through his death he has united anew the ranks of the class of which he was the Standard Bearer.

Nearer and still nearer to the working masses — that is our answer to the enthusiasm which has set in amongst the non-party workers. And only such a policy of our Party is worthy of the name of Vladimir Ilyitch.

## IN THE INTERNATIONAL

### Third Convention of the Workers Party of America.

By I. A. mter.

The third convention of the Workers Party (Communist) took place on December 29, 1923, and was one of the most important in the history of the Communist movement of the United States. The general policies carried out by the Central Executive Committee of the Party were approved, nevertheless the former minority of the Committee, led by Foster and Cannon, representing the „industrials“ in the Party, carried the convention against the „politicals“, led by Pepper and Ruthenberg, and now direct the Party.

Comrade Ruthenberg, executive secretary of the Party, reported that the Party now contains 25,000 members, divided into sixteen Language Federations, in addition to seven language groups not large enough to constitute Federations. The Finnish Federation is the largest, having 7,000 members; then follows the English section with about 2,000 members. Nevertheless, about 50 per cent of the Party membership speaks English, although enrolled in Language branches. The multiplicity of languages is one of the difficult problems that the Party has to deal with and acts as an obstacle to uniform action on the part of the membership as a whole.

There are several issues before the Party at the present time. The attacks on the Communists in the trade unions and on members of the Trade Union Educational League; the expulsions that have taken place; the vicious campaign against the Communists and „reds“ in the organizations, particularly by the reactionary leaders of the United Mine Workers and the International Ladies Garment Workers, demand the intensification of Communist work in the unions and better organization of the Left Wing, in order to strengthen the offensive of the progressives and radicals against the reactionaries in the unions. The amalgamation campaign for transforming the craft unions into industrial unions must be continued with energy, until by pressure from below amalgamation really is brought about. This may be a process of years, but it must be pressed.

American imperialism is on a rampage. Mexico, Central and South America, the West Indies, the Philippines, China and even Europe are feeling the heavy golden hand of American capital. The expansion of American militarism is concomitant with the expansion of imperialism. War is bound to come, and the American workers must be put on the alert. The convention decided to widen the campaign against American imperialism and militarism.

In order to get a firm footing in the work shops and to prepare for the coming struggles in the United States, when the capitalist government will make new assaults on the revolutionary movement, the convention decided to form shop nuclei and gradually to put the whole Party on this basis. The difficulty of language and the spy system in the shops are two serious impediments to the transformation. Hence the change will be carried out very slowly and carefully.

The vital questions confronting the convention were the Farmer-Labour Party, more especially the Federated Farmer-Labour Party, which was formed on July 3 last, and within which the Communists play a leading role; and the question of a „third“ bourgeois party. Some comrades had contended that the formation of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party acted as an obstacle to the growth of the farmer-labour movement since the whole movement was stamped as Communist. The Federated Party did not receive all the affiliations that had been hoped, the membership of the organizations actually affiliated to the Federated Party amounting to only 155,000, although several other local parties have endorsed it and are ready to cooperate with it. The Minnesota Farmer Labour Party which sent two United States Senators to Washington, has called a convention to take place in St. Paul on May 30, the Federated Party signing the call for the convention. This convention will probably be attended by delegates representing two or three million organized workers and farmers. In the Minnesota Party are a number of petty-bourgeois elements such as tradesmen, small country bankers, lawyers etc. This convention will be a sign of the revolt of the workers, farmers and some sections of the petty-bourgeoisie against the domination of the capitalist political parties. It will be the first call to action on a mass scale that the Communists have been able to issue, for the Workers Party will be present at the convention, possibly by direct representation, or through the Federated Party of which it is an integral part. Gompers is opposed to this convention, since he recognizes that this is a real revolt, reaching a climax through the militant activity of the Communists. The tactics of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party in regard to the Federated Farmer Labour Party were generally approved by the convention.

The moot point was in regard to the „third“ bourgeois party. This is a new question of tactics for the American Party and in some respects for the Communist International. The capitalist political parties of the United States are dominated by two groups: Rockefeller, representing primarily the industrial group, and Morgan, the financial group. In the past few years, the possibility of a clean definition of these two groups has grown smaller. Wall Street dominates big industry and in Wall Street are Rockefeller and Morgan. Morgan is heavily interested in several of the same industries in which the Rockefeller interests have huge investments, such as steel, railways, traction, shipping. Both groups control the raw material of the country. Ford's abortive rebellion against Wall Street was based on his being a manufacturer of finished products therefore he is dependent on Rockefeller and Morgan. Ford has sold out to Coolidge, hence he cannot be regarded as a leader of any rebellious group.

The farmers of the middle west and large sections of the working class still believe that they can secure help from some form of a bourgeois party, not built up on class lines. They are in open rebellion against the big trusts and trust to a good leader to conduct them out of the desert. This leader is La Follette. The oil scandal, which has involved both the Democratic and the Republican party, has led to the demand of the Senate that Secretary of War Denby resign. It also eliminates McAdoo as presidential candidate. By giving a „black eye“ to both parties, it increases the hatred of both parties among the workers and farmers, and enhances the prestige of La Follette.

The backbone of this revolt, which is assuming the form of a third party, consists of the farmers and workers. The petty merchant class is also interested, but it forms the mino-

riety. In other words, the third party movement is composed relatively of the same elements as the class farmer-labour party. The question is: what kind of a program would they fight for?

The farmers and workers have serious grievances against the trusts and the capitalist government. They are expressing them in the demand for the nationalization of the mines and railways, protection of the foreign-born workers, protection of child labor, cheap industrial products for the farmers. More radical groups are demanding a moratorium for the farmers, in view of the fearful plight of the farming class. During the past year, the farmers have formed about 15 per cent of the bankruptcies; there were 300,000 foreclosures; although the planted acreage was reduced 12 per cent, there is a huge surplus of grain, and further reduction is contemplated. Recognition of Soviet Russia is being demanded for ideological and material reasons. How many of these demands will the third party fight for?

La Folette is committed to a large number of them. He represents elements, which, in large part, would accept them. If a program approaching the above one in content is put forward, what shall be the attitude of the Communists? Shall they fight side by side with the third party against the trust-dominated and controlled capitalist parties, or shall they split the ranks of the workers, small and medium farmers and the petty bourgeoisie?

When the thesis was discussed in the former Central Executive Committee last November, the overwhelming majority voted in favor of the former strategy, the vote standing 21 to 3. During the month of November and December, a change of view took place. Some of the CEC members who voted for the proposition, discovered that it is a fallacious policy. They contend that to entertain such a policy denotes merely to strengthen the faith of the masses in petty-bourgeois reformism; that such strategy may be engaged in only in revolutionary situations; and that, as such a situation does not exist in the United States, it would be a serious blunder to advocate it. They declare that the formation of a class farmer-labour party is the only warrant of a safe revolutionary course, not subject to misinterpretation or misdirection.

The majority of the Central Executive Committee maintained that the policy is correct, but for different reasons. The "industrials" see in it a powerful weapon with which to oust Gompers from control of the unions and from continuing his propagation of the idea of "rewarding the friends and punishing the enemies of labour" through the medium of the capitalist parties. The "politicals" declare that rejection of an election campaign in coalition with the third party despite its petty bourgeois ideology and control, means to evade the whole issue. The petty bourgeois party will be formed with us or without us. To support it might result in its victory. Then alone would the workers and farmers realize that petty bourgeois reformism is fruitless. All preaching and education has no effect: the workers, and especially the farmers, must see it in action. The campaign will allow us to enter the third party wherever opportunity presents itself, to form a left wing within it, and split it away from the third party. By ruthless, merciless criticism of the third party, the Communists will unmask its character. Thus, whether the third party is victorious or defeated, out of this campaign will ultimately come greater class-consciousness of the workers and the farmers.

The minority has not learned the lesson of the Bulgarian election defeat, when the Communists did not understand the policy of a coalition with the small peasants who were dominated by the big peasants; nor of the British Communists in endeavoring to get into the Labour Party, which is made up primarily of workers with a minority of petty bourgeois liberals. It would evade the struggle, which is along a very thorny path.

Unquestionably, there are serious dangers involved in this policy. To carry it out successfully, the Party members must observe strict discipline. Above all, they must understand the policy and be able to carry in out like Communists. They must understand that it is a strategy and not an end in itself. They must recognize that it is an unmasking policy and a mobilization of the workers and farmers for action. Though supporting the third party, they must be able to criticize it pitilessly. This is a strategy that the Parties of Europe and America are just learning to apply. It is a hard course, it will involve many blunders — but that is the path of the Revolution.

Tactics within the convention led to a coalition of the industrials and the opponents of the third party policy. The new Central Executive Committee is led by the industrials. There is no question, however, that cooperation of the industrials and the politicals, which led to the elaboration of the successful trade union and political policies during the past year, will bring about a realignment in the new CEC, under the leadership, however, of the industrials.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Philips Price: „Germany in Transition“.\*)

By E. Varga.

Philips Price is one of the very rare English intellectuals, who have joined the Communist Party. As correspondent for the „Daily Herald“, he lived since the armistice until the end of 1923 in Germany, and in this way had the opportunity of studying at first hand the development of the social and political situation there.

His book contains the political history of Germany from the end of the War to the setting up of the Seeckt-dictatorship. The central-point of his work concerns the role played by the Social-Democratic Party during this period. He recognizes most clearly how the Social-Democratic Party, fearful of the Revolution, has restored step by step to the bourgeoisie the power which, with the collapse of the War, had fallen into its hands without any efforts on its part and almost against its wil. In particular, he recognizes most clearly how the traditional attitude of the Social Democracy as a party of the highly skilled workers, with its hostility and its disregard of the movement of the agricultural workers, has made possible the successive revival of the power of the Junkers. In the last chapter: „German Socialism and the Interpretation of the Teachings of Marx“, the writer seeks to point out the ideological root of the treachery of Social Democracy, and the opportunistic explanation of Marxism. The book gives in compressed brevity (260 pages) a fairly complete picture of the events in Germany in the five years after the war, and in its style is adapted before all to the needs of the English reader. For England especially it is a most opportune book. For the situation in England at the present time is very similar to the situation in Germany in 1918. In England too a so-called Labour Party is ruling, but the social bases of society remain as undisturbed as they were in Germany when the Social Democrats were in Office. The hopes of the English working class of improving its position, through a Labour government are as great as were those of the German workers regarding Social Democracy. In England too they will not fail to be disappointed. Price's book is well suited to prepare the English working class for this disappointment, as well as to make clear to it that the dashing of its hopes will not be the result of mere chance. It does not depend on the good or bad will of the leaders of Social Democracy and of the Labour Party, — they may be honest men personally and yet betray the cause of the working class — but on the system itself. Every attempt to improve radically the situation of the working class through the bourgeois state apparatus must fail, because this apparatus, built as it is, can only serve the bourgeoisie. By means of the example of Germany, Philips Price's book furnishes proof of the correctness of Lenin's theory of the State, as set forth in „The State and Revolution“. The book may serve as a good primer for the English proletariat in order to learn through the German example the future development of the political conditions in England, and the truth of the conception of the State held by Marx and Lenin.

The leaders of the British Labour Party appear to have rightly estimated the importance of this book by preserving silence over it. We, at least, have not up to now seen any review of the book by Price in the press of the Labour Party so far as the latter has been accessible to us. It is all the more necessary therefore that our English comrades do everything possible, so that the book shall reach ever wider circles of the English proletariat.

\*) 1923. London, The Labour Publishing Company.