

THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE OF 1917

PART II

As was shown in the first part of this article, some sections of Socialist opinion throughout Europe had never fully accepted the need for war in 1914, and the advent of the first Russian Revolution in March, 1917, had stimulated a general hope for an early peace. The Dutch and Scandinavian Socialist parties took the initiative in proposing an international Socialist conference to be held at Stockholm to discuss peace terms. By the end of July, 1917, this proposal seemed likely to succeed. The Petrograd Soviet had joined forces in preparing for the conference with the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee led by Huysmans, the Secretary of the Second International; the Governments of Russia, Great Britain, and Germany showed at least some degree of benevolence towards the idea; the Socialist parties of the Central and neutral powers, and also of France, had agreed to attend; and a Russian mission from the Petrograd Soviet had set off to gain support for Stockholm from the Socialists of the Entente countries.

In July, however, the British Government came round to the viewpoint of the other Entente Governments and put difficulties in the way of the Socialists who wished to get to Stockholm. From then on Stockholm was doomed to failure despite the support of most of the "patriotic" Socialists of the Entente countries. And as the summer went on Lenin's influence in Russia and in the international Zimmerwald movement grew, an influence which he used to build up opinion favourable to the creation of a Third International and to the destruction of the Second International and all its works, including Stockholm.

Thus in the final analysis the ultimate failure of Stockholm turned on two men, Lloyd George and Lenin. To Lloyd George Stockholm may have had some emotional and political appeal. But more important it represented a two-way hedge. While the Russian alliance seemed likely to be of military value he wanted to keep the confidence of the Petrograd Soviet which supported Stockholm; but with the failure of the Russian summer offensive this motive vanished. On the

other hand, in the near-desperate days for the Entente of the spring of 1917, Stockholm might have provided a much needed route to a negotiated peace if the military situation made it imperative; but the reduction of the submarine menace in the summer removed this motive as well. In Lenin's calculations Stockholm might have been the means of re-unifying the Socialist movement which had split apart in 1914 and therefore had to be destroyed if a new Third International was to be created out of the left wing of the old Second.

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To revert to the main theme from these digressions, the work of the visiting Russians from the Petrograd Soviet to bring the British Labour Party around to the idea of a Stockholm conference was greatly aided by Henderson's arrival back in London, on 24 July, from Petrograd where he had come to believe in the need for such a conference. He reported to the Labour Party Executive the next day, which voted 9-4 in favour of Stockholm, though making the condition that the conference's decisions should not be binding upon those not willing to be bound. As this vote reversed the former decision of the party, it had to be confirmed by a general congress, which it was agreed should take place on 10 August. The Executive Committee also decided to go ahead with the inter-Allied Socialist conference that it had been decided to hold when the Labour Party had turned down the idea of Stockholm. To meet the request of the S.F.I.O., it was decided to send Wardle, MacDonald, and Henderson to Paris with the delegation from the Petrograd Soviet to discuss both these conferences.¹

The hitherto pro-war elements of British Labour were now joining the movement for Stockholm as those of French Labour had done a month earlier. Though the psychological moment to hold the conference had passed with the opening of the first Russian offensive on 1 July, which had distracted the interest of the Russian masses, Huysmans could nevertheless feel satisfied with the success of his

¹ "Stockholm", (op.cit., p. xx) gives the dates of Henderson's return to London and of the Executive meeting as 3 July. Fainsod (op.cit., p. 138) repeats this in his book. However all British sources, including Henderson himself in his resignation speech in the House of Commons on 13 August, give the dates as 24 and 25 July. It seems reasonable to accept that they are right on this point. Brand, op.cit., p. 95 and p. 184; Elton, Godfrey (Baron), *The Life of James Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1919)*, Collins Publishers, London, 1939, pp. 324-7; Lloyd George, op.cit., pp. 1898-9; Hamilton, op.cit., pp. 135-6; *The Herald* (The Daily Herald), The "Limit" Printing and Publishing Co., London, editor: George Lansbury, 18 August, 1917, "The Choice for Labour, Stockholm or the Doormat?" pp. 4-5; "Parliamentary Debates", op.cit., Vol. XCVII, pp. 910-11.

efforts so far. However, the attitude of the Entente Governments was hardening.

An Allied War Conference was held in Paris, 25 and 26 July, to discuss the Balkan situation and especially the policy of maintaining Allied forces at Salonika. It was learnt at the opening session that from a military standpoint Russia could no longer be counted upon; the second Russian offensive, begun on 19 July, had ended in failure on 26 July. The delegates at the conference were very disappointed and greatly concerned over this defeat, and it undoubtedly influenced their decisions. The question of Stockholm was also discussed informally, and, though it was not on the agenda and no decision was made, the general sentiment was opposed to allowing Socialist representatives from Allied countries to attend.¹ Thus began the united and determined policy of the Allied Governments against Stockholm. The reasons for this hardening of attitude by the Entente Governments are not far to seek. In the first place, the meeting coincided with the failure of the Russian offensives. Russia could not give military support to the war for a long time to come, and, therefore, the need to humour her politicians and her troops was gone. Up to this time it had always been possible that the French Government would even reverse its decision not to grant passports to Socialist delegates to Stockholm. Sembat had suggested that this was so to the S.F.I.O. Parliamentary Group on 13 July. He had said that at the Allied War Conference, the Russian delegates would once more ask the other governments to grant passports, and that Clemenceau had assured him that the French Government would accede to the demand in order to avoid the danger of a halt in the Russian offensive.² Now there was no need to make this concession. Lloyd George even toyed with the idea of a peace letting Germany do what she pleased with Russia, provided the other Allies got what they wanted.³

In the second place it was evident that Lloyd George's use of convoys to protect merchant shipping, begun in May, was going to be effective. Submarine losses, though not yet negligible, were considerably less than they had been in the spring, and the British fear of losing the war because of the lack of merchant ships was gone. Moreover, Salonika, discussed at the conference, could perhaps replace

¹ U.S., "1917", *op.cit.*, pp. 147-8 and pp. 149-51; Sharp, William Graves, *The War Memoirs of William Graves Sharp, American Ambassador to France, 1914-1919*, edited by Warrington Dawson, Constable and Co., Ltd., London, 1931, pp. 167-8; *Daily Telegraph*, Frances Caine, London, 25 September, 1917, "German Socialists", p. 6.

² Bourgin, *op.cit.*, pp. 237-8.

³ Hamilton, *op.cit.*, p. 138.

Russia as a second front, and with the United States about to play an active part, there was every reason to suppose that the Central Powers could be defeated, and that "peace by compromise" was no longer necessary.

In the third place it was fairly certain that not all in the Labour and Socialist movement supported Stockholm. Though the Executive of the British Labour Party had voted for the conference, even Henderson was not at all certain that he could get the support of the extra-ordinary congress on 10 August. A large number of the trade unions, in particular, completely supported the nation's war effort. In France, though the S.F.I.O. was officially in favour of attending Stockholm and though all the leaders spoke in favour of so doing in public, some of the right-wing leaders would have preferred the party not to attend.¹

In the fourth place the Allied War Conference gave the various governments a chance to compare views. Only the British Government – apart from the Russians – had ever favoured the conference, and now that the tactical advantages in allowing it to be held were over, there seemed to be no adequate reason sufficiently valid for the British to antagonise their allies, especially as the Labour Party's goodwill could undoubtedly be kept by other means.

Lloyd George accepted the logic of the situation, and joined the others in opposing Stockholm. And it seems that it was actually at this conference that he decided not to grant passports to intending British delegates to Stockholm. On 26 July, while he was still in Paris, the British War Cabinet meeting under Bonar Law, strongly expressed its disapproval of the trip to Paris decided upon at the Executive Committee meeting of the British Labour Party, and felt that Henderson as a member of the War Cabinet should not go, for by going he would compromise the Government – especially as MacDonald was to go with him. Henderson argued that he was going in his capacity as Secretary of the Labour Party and MacDonald as Treasurer; that it, therefore, had nothing to do with his functions as a Minister of the Crown nor with the opinions of MacDonald; and that in any case he had decided to go, had arranged for the trip, and could not withdraw at so late a date. The rest of the War Cabinet was so adamant in its disapproval that Henderson offered his resignation, but not knowing Lloyd George's own feelings in the matter and not wanting to accept the resignation without that knowledge, the Cabinet finally

¹ Labour Leader (The New Leader), A Weekly Journal of Socialism, Trade Unionism and Politics, the Official Organ of the I.L.P., Manchester, 30 September, 1920, "Jean Longuet on Tour for the I.L.P.," p. 7.

let him go to Paris.¹ If Lloyd George had by then already decided against Stockholm, the Cabinet meeting would presumably either have kept Henderson in England or accepted his resignation.

Henderson, before leaving for Paris, telegraphed to the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee in Stockholm that he had discussed and agreed with the mission from the Petrograd Soviet to postpone Stockholm for a further week, to 22 August, to allow time to hold an inter-Allied Socialist Conference followed by the extra-ordinary conference of the Labour Party.² Then, all arrangements made, Henderson, Wardle, and MacDonald left for Paris accompanied by the four delegates of the Soviet, Ehrlich, Goldenberg, Rousanov, and Smirnov.

Lloyd George had left George Young, one of his War Cabinet Secretaries in Paris to keep an eye on Henderson and with instructions to get Lord Bertie, the British Ambassador, to give Henderson cautionary advice. Lord Bertie, for various reasons was unable to see Henderson and carried out his instructions by asking Albert Thomas to prevent the French and British Socialists from behaving foolishly, which Thomas promised to try to do.³ Albert Thomas, since his return from Russia had been reluctant to accept the S.F.I.O. decision to attend Stockholm, and had repeatedly demanded "conditions" for attendance.⁴ In a speech he made at a public meeting at Champigny on 12 August he explained these "conditions": though he continued to support Stockholm, like Bracke, Milhaud, Renaudel, and Guesde, he believed that the French party should open the discussion there with the question of "war guilt", and that if the German Socialists refused to accept that guilt, the S.F.I.O. should leave Stockholm.⁵

The British and Russian delegates met the S.F.I.O. delegates, 29-31 July, and worked out a number of *ad hoc* rules, in a series of eight resolutions, for the holding of the Stockholm conference, as it was clear that it would be not only undesirable, but also impossible, to hold it strictly on the lines of the pre-war international Socialist

¹ Brand, *op.cit.*, pp. 44-7; Clynes, The Rt. Hon. J. R., *Memoirs: 1869-1924*, Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., London, 1937, Vol. I, pp. 210-12; Barnes, George N., *From Workshop to War Cabinet*, Herbert Jenkins Ltd., London, 1924, pp. 156-7; Lloyd George, *op.cit.*, pp. 1898-1914; Snowden, Philip (Viscount), *An Autobiography*, Ivor Nicholson and Watson, Ltd., London, 1934, Vol. I, pp. 474-5.

² "Stockholm", *op.cit.*, p. xxi.

³ Lennox, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 161-2.

⁴ Bourgin, *op.cit.*, pp. 226-46.

⁵ L'Humanité, *op.cit.*, 14 August, 1917, "La Conférence de Stockholm et l'adhésion du Parti socialiste français", pp. 1-2; The Times, *op.cit.*, 15 August, 1917, "M. Thomas and Stockholm."

conferences. The most important of these rules allowed for the representation of the new minorities that had grown up since 1914, if they had been formed into separate parties. The meeting also reaffirmed the British and French Socialists' determination that the decisions of the Stockholm conference should not be binding upon those attending, sought a further postponement of the conference until 9-16 September, and worked out the arrangements for the inter-Allied Socialist conference to be held in London, 28-29 August, although the disapproving Russian delegates were prepared to attend "solely for the purpose of getting information and in order to put forward their point of view."¹

After the Paris meeting, but before the delegates had left for home, thirty-four members of the French Socialist Parliamentary Group signed a declaration dissociating themselves from Stockholm.² In the two months since the S.F.I.O. had decided to attend Stockholm, an opposition had become firmly established within the right-wing of the party.

From Paris, the Russian delegation went on to Rome while the British delegation returned to London. An Italian Socialist party congress had decided, 23-27 July, to go to the third Zimmerwald conference to urge participation in Stockholm. When the Russian delegation arrived in Rome, on 7 August, the Italian party not only agreed to go to Stockholm, but also to accept the conference decisions as binding upon itself.³

Meanwhile, Henderson, MacDonald, and Wardle arrived back in London on 1 August to be greeted by a general uproar. That evening, Henderson had to explain in the House of Commons why a member of the British War Cabinet should accompany a pacifist like MacDonald to Paris. His explanations were accepted, but the beginning of his fight for Stockholm was on. Moreover, he had to pay the expenses of the Russian delegates in England "out of his own pocket", although previously the Cabinet had agreed to pay these as a return for the

¹ Fainsod, *op.cit.*, p. 139; L'Humanité, *op.cit.*, 31 July, 1917, "Les Débats sur l'Organisation de la Conférence internationale"; The Labour Party, *Adjourned Party Conference to be Held in Central Hall, Westminster, London, S.W.1., On Tuesday, August 21st, 1917, at 10:30 a.m.: Report of the Special Party Conference Held in London on Friday August 10th, 1917, with Report of the Executive Committee and Agenda for Adjourned Conference, etc.*, The Labour Party, London, n.d. [1917], p. 29; P.S.F., "Pendant la Guerre", *op.cit.*, pp. 180-2; The Labour Party, *Executive Committee, Special Party Conference Held in Central Hall, Westminster, London, S.W.1., on Friday, August 10th, 1917, at 10:30 a.m.*, The Labour Party, London, n.d. [1917], pp. 12-4.

² *The New Europe, A Weekly Review of Foreign Politics*, Constable and Co., Ltd., London, 13 September, 1917, "Stockholm: A French View", Villehardouin, p. 262.

³ Gankin and Fisher, *op.cit.*, p. 601.

Russian Government's payment of the visit of the British Labour delegates to Petrograd. Now that the whole issue had become so controversial, the money was not forthcoming.¹

The Stockholm question was now boiling up towards a climax in London. Henderson was repeatedly attacked. His reception by fellow Cabinet members since his return from Petrograd had not been very warm, and now grew steadily colder until his resignation from the government. Perhaps, as Clynes says in his *Memoirs*, the government had hoped that Henderson would remain in Russia as Ambassador.² Such an appointment has often been used to remove a prominent person from meddling in domestic politics. On the other hand, Henderson's own views on the war had been changed by his trip to Russia, and though he still wanted the war to be won, he felt increasingly that "the political weapon" was the better method; and he believed that only contact with the British and French Socialists was likely to keep the Russians in the war, and to keep the moderate Socialists, who wanted to honour Russia's former international commitments, masters over the Bolsheviks within their country.³ Henderson – whom Balfour compared to John Wesley⁴ – though slow to make up his mind, stuck to the decisions he made. Therefore, he was determined to carry through the fight for Stockholm to the best of his ability. This made conflict with Lloyd George unavoidable.

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There was considerable confusion in the public mind over who was holding the conference and where. As there were three separate invitations to two separate conferences and any number of postponements with new invitations for both conferences, this is not surprising. Among journalists, and, indeed, even among governments, it was often assumed that the conference sponsored by the Petrograd Soviet was to be held in Petrograd and that the conference in Stockholm was the one sponsored by the Zimmerwaldians. (It was often stated to be Lenin's conference, though he had tried to separate the Russian Bolsheviks from even the Zimmerwald movement. However, to the uninitiated he had become synonymous with the Left Zimmerwaldians and the Left Zimmerwaldians with the Zimmerwaldians generally). News was sparse and often misleading, frequently deliberately

¹ "Parliamentary Debates", op.cit., Vol. XCVI, pp. 2218-26 and p. 2285; Vol. XCVII, pp. 916-7.

² Clynes, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 211; Hamilton, op.cit., pp. 124-5.

³ Elton, op.cit., pp. 324-8.

⁴ Sharp, op.cit., p. 168.

so, but one reads with some surprise that the American Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Polk, cabled the American Ambassador in London, Mr. Page, saying, "Department assumes that your reference to 'Stockholm Conference' was intended for 'Petrograd Conference' ", and Mr. Page answered, "No. The reference to Stockholm conference is correct, for that is where it is to be held..."¹

Another cause for confusion was that, in June the Russian Provisional Government, as distinct from the Petrograd Soviet, had called for a conference of the Allied Governments to discuss war aims.² The headlines for both could read, "Russians Call for International Conference on War Aims" or "Russians Call for Peace Talks". It is therefore not to be wondered that journalists, politicians, and diplomats, not to mention the "man in the street", were confused as to who was coming where, when, and why.

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On 2 August, Buchanan, the British Ambassador at Petrograd, telegraphed the Foreign Office:

"I have reason to believe that the non-Socialist members of the Government would much prefer that the Stockholm conference should not take place for fear that peace talk might have a bad influence on the army. They will not, however, place any obstacles in the way of the attendance of the Russian Socialists, but they will not consider themselves bound by the decisions which the conference may take. They are anxious that it should be attended by Socialists of other Allied countries so that Russia should not be left *tête-à-tête* with Germany.

My personal opinion is that it would be a mistake to leave the Germans a clear field at Stockholm, more especially as it would render our attitude open to misconstruction here. As we have no intention of being bound by the conference's decisions, I do not see how the attendance of British Socialists can prejudice our interests."³

M. Phillips Price, correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* in Petrograd at that time, also states that the middle-classes in Russia would have preferred no international Socialist conference and were happy when passports were refused to delegates from other countries, but that the populace as a whole had put its faith in it and that the Soviet, and in consequence the Second Coalition Government, continued to support it. He then mentions an interview in which

¹ U.S., "1917", op.cit., p. 749.

² Golder, op.cit., p. 356.

³ Buchanan, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 160-1.

Tseretelli, the Menshevik leader and Minister of Posts, on 3 August, following a meeting of the Central Soviet Executive, gave Price to understand "that there was no difference of opinion between the Soviet and the Second Coalition Government on the question of the necessity of the Stockholm Conference, and that if a communication casting doubt upon this point had reached London from official Russian sources, nothing was known about it in responsible quarters in Petrograd."¹

That same day, 3 August, Nabokoff, the Russian chargé d'affaires in London, telegraphed to Tereschenko in Petrograd for instructions, wording his request to get a particular reply:

"The question of the participation of representatives of the British Labour Party in the Stockholm Conference will be decided next Friday. There is a strong agitation within the party against this participation and the opposition to British participation will undoubtedly be strengthened by the reply of the American Federation of Labour to the French Federation. It stated categorically in this reply that the Conference cannot, at the present moment, have useful results, and that the American Federation does not intend to send delegates to Stockholm. Mr. Bonar Law stated yesterday in the House of Commons that the Government would not send delegates, that the approval of the Conference depends not on the Government, but on the Labour Party, expressed the hope that this approval would not be given, and pointed out that the Government had not decided whether anybody would be allowed to take part in the Conference. The Leader of the House added that 'This permission will not be given without serious consideration and will probably be refused.' I consider it absolutely necessary, with a view to safeguarding the stability and closeness of our union with Great Britain, where the majority of public opinion is adverse [to] the Conference, that I should be in a position to declare most emphatically to Mr. Balfour that the Russian Government as well as His Majesty's Government regard this matter as a party concern and not a matter of state, and that the decisions of the Conference, should it be convened, would in no way be binding on the future course of Russian policy and of Russia's relations with her Allies. I shall be questioned by Mr. Balfour on the subject, and therefore expect you to give me definite instructions."²

¹ Price, *op.cit.*, p. 67.

² Nabokoff, Constantin, *The Ordeal of a Diplomat*, Duckworth and Co., London, 1921, pp. 134-6.

Before the reply reached London six days later, the Second Russian Provisional Government took its final form under Kerensky's leadership on 6 August – six Socialists and eight non-Socialists.¹

Having decided to oppose Stockholm the British Government sought ways to frustrate it. On Tuesday, 7 August, the Attorney-General gave his colleagues a legal opinion that intercourse with the enemy without licence was forbidden by common law; in other words that it would be illegal for British Labour delegates to go to Stockholm without the express agreement of the government, which the government had determined not to give. Henderson wanted this to be made public straight away, and said so to Lloyd George. But later that evening, at the insistence of the other members of the Labour Executive, he telephoned Lloyd George and asked that nothing be said until after the Labour Conference on 10 August, so that it should reach its decision free of government influence.

The next morning the Cabinet met, and again discussed the legal position. It decided, in spite of Henderson's report of the views of his Labour colleagues, that the government would state this in the House in reply to a question already on the Order Paper, but for some reason it was not done.²

Then at 4:00 p.m. on 9 August, Nabokoff received the answer to his telegram:

“I entirely approve of the declaration to be made to His Majesty's Government in the sense suggested by you, and you are authorised to inform the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that although the Russian Government does not deem it possible to prevent Russian delegates from taking part in the Stockholm Conference, they regard this Conference as a party concern and its decision in no wise binding upon the liberty of action of the Government.”³

This telegram, which became the basis of Lloyd George's campaign against Stockholm is merely a truism. It says what the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee said when it issued its first invitation. It repeats exactly what Buchanan said in his telegram of 2 August, and Nabokoff in his of 3 August. It only emphasises that the conference is called by the Socialist Petrograd Soviet together with the Socialists of neutral countries and not by the Coalition Provisional Government, but that that Coalition must respect the actions of the Soviet and allow the conference to be held. It merely repeats what had been

¹ Buchanan, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 162.

² “Parliamentary Debates”, *op.cit.*, Vol. XCVII, pp. 914-6.

³ Nabokoff, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

common knowledge in Russia for some time, that the Cadets were not keen on having the conference, but that the Socialists, the soldiers, and the people were.

Though this telegram was supposed to indicate a complete change in Russian feeling since the formation of the Second Provisional Government on 6 August, it must be remembered that it was the result of a telegram originating in London on 3 August. Though whether that telegram was the result of the information received by the Foreign Office from Buchanan or whether it was the result of information received by the Russian Embassy from the same or similar Russian circles to those from which Buchanan obtained his, is not clear. (The latter seems the more probable on the basis of the information that Phillips Price gives.) Price, moreover, makes it clear that this information was to be ignored, and that the official view of the Russian Government remained as before.

Anyway, Nabokoff, pleased with his telegram, immediately sent it to Balfour together with a note which read:

“In a telegram I sent to the Russian Foreign Minister three or four days ago¹ I gave him an account of the statements made in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister and Mr. Henderson concerning the latter’s visit to Paris, as well as of Mr. Bonar Law’s statements regarding the Stockholm Conference and of the discussions which were taking place in the different labour organisations of Great Britain as to the desirability of sending delegates to Stockholm. I also drew the Russian Foreign Minister’s attention to the reply given by the American Federation of Labour to the French Confédération Générale du Travail. In conclusion I said the following: ‘I consider it absolutely necessary, with a view to safeguarding the stability and closeness of our union with Great Britain, where the majority of public opinion is adverse [to] the Conference, that I should be in a position to declare most emphatically to Mr. Balfour that the Russian Government as well as His Majesty’s Government regard this matter as a party concern and not a matter of state, and that the decisions of the Conference, should it be convened, would in no way be binding on the future cause of Russian policy and of Russia’s relations with her Allies.’”

He then quoted the telegram he had received in reply, and concluded:

“I hasten to lay before you the above information as I fear that

¹ It was in fact, according to Nabokoff himself, sent six days previously. By saying “three or four days ago”, he implies that it was to ascertain the views of the new Provisional Government. This had not been formed when he sent his telegram.

the impression has hitherto prevailed that in the words of one of the London newspapers, 'Russia ardently desires the Stockholm Conference', and this argument has been put forward in order to influence British public opinion in favour of the Labour and Socialist Parties of Great Britain participating in the Conference."¹

That same day, the Miners' Federation met to discuss how it would vote on Stockholm at the Special Labour Conference the next day, but decided to postpone any decision until it heard the speeches at the Special Conference, whereupon it would ask for an adjournment before the vote to decide its position.²

The Executive Committee of the British Labour Party again met and again decided (9-5) to recommend Stockholm. Henderson was asked to prepare the speech presenting its views to the conference, which he did, taking into account Nabokoff's telegram, a copy of which he received that evening.³ Knowing or guessing its origin, he did not feel called upon to quote it as a fresh appraisal by the Russian Government, since it contained nothing that was really new. The most that could be said was that it represented a change of emphasis. Henderson, therefore, felt that he had dealt with this telegram adequately by saying that, "such evidence as we have, though it is slight, suggests that there has been a modification in the [Russian] Government's attitude towards the Conference [at Stockholm]".⁴

The next morning the Special Conference of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress met. Henderson spoke and, while he was actually delivering his speech, a second copy of Nabokoff's telegram arrived with a covering note from Lloyd George. It was handed to him as he sat down, and, for the same reason that had prompted him not to include it in his speech, he now refrained from reading it to the meeting.

After all the speeches had been made, the meeting adjourned for a few hours at the Miners' request. During the adjournment the Miners met and decided (547-184) to support Stockholm. Then without a vote they agreed that the British delegation should be limited to twenty-four: eight from the T.U.C., eight from the Labour Party, and eight to be chosen by the Special Conference. They wanted

¹ Nabokoff, *op.cit.*, pp. 137-9; Lloyd George, *op.cit.*, pp. 1912-3.

² Miners' Federation of Great Britain, *Special Conference Held at the Central Hall, Westminster, London, on Thursday and Friday, August 9th and 10th, 1917* (hereafter called *Miners' Federation, "Special Conference, August 9-10"*), *Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Manchester, n.d. [1917]*, pp. 2-8.

³ "Parliamentary Debates", *op.cit.*, Vol. XCVII, p. 930.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 919; Hamilton, *op.cit.*, p. 148.

no separate delegations from the Socialist Societies; this became the issue on which the attitude for or against Stockholm throughout the British Labour movement eventually hinged. British Labour was ready to go, but the majority wished to exclude minority representation.¹

When the Special Conference re-assembled, it voted for Stockholm (1,846,000-550,000) and adjourned until 21 August, when it was to decide on delegates and on its memorandum on war aims. Henderson had won the day. He was surprised, as he had expected the vote to go against him, but then so had everyone, including the Government which set to work immediately to nullify this unexpected victory.

On the same evening, 10 August, Henderson went to Downing Street to see Lloyd George. While waiting in the Secretary's room, Henderson says that Mantoux, of the French Embassy staff, told him of a second telegram purporting to be from Albert Thomas, which said, "Kerensky ne veut pas de Congrès."² Nabokoff was told of this message the following morning in his interview with Lloyd George. This telegram has been confused with the one from the Russian Foreign Office asked for by Nabokoff, due partly to the natural difficulty of realising that more than one telegram about the Russian attitude towards Stockholm had been received, and partly to Lloyd George's wish to spread misunderstanding and confusion so as to counteract the effect of the vote of the Special Conference. By taking an official telegram from the Russian Foreign Office containing platitudes together with part of Nabokoff's own covering letter with which it had been forwarded to the British Government and confusing it with the telegram in French believed to have come from Thomas about Kerensky's attitude a much stronger case could be made against Stockholm than if each message was weighed separately. Certainly they had the desired effect on the British public. Kerensky's denial published in the *Manchester Guardian* on 17 April, both that he opposed Stockholm and that the new Russian Government took a different view of it from that of the old, came too late, as did the statement of the Russian Government to Buchanan, the British Ambassador, on 13 August, that Nabokoff had written his covering note

¹ Miners' Federation, "Special Conference, August 9-10", op.cit., pp. 9-28; I.L.P., "Annual Report, 1918", op.cit., pp. 11-2; The Dockers' Record, A Monthly Report of the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union of Great Britain, August, 1917, "Special Conference of Labour Party Re Proposed International Conference at Stockholm", pp. 6-7.

² "Parliamentary Debates", op.cit., Vol. XCVII, p. 922. Though Mantoux himself did not remember this conversation when the writer spoke to him, he said that he often saw Henderson in the Secretary's office at Downing Street and that it was perfectly possible that he did see him at this time and tell him of the telegram.

to Mr. Balfour without instruction and that it had never been intended that he should say that the Russian Government was opposed to the conference.¹

The day after the Special Conference, Henderson resigned from the War Cabinet. Lloyd George, in the letter accepting the resignation (which Nabokoff says Lloyd George wrote before receiving Henderson's resignation), publicly accused Henderson not only of not informing the Labour Conference of the telegram, but also of misleading his War Cabinet colleagues into thinking that he would not support Stockholm at the Labour Conference.² Though the Cabinet seems, at least publicly, to have held this view, it is hard to see how it came to do so, for all the evidence is to the contrary.

A month earlier, before Henderson's return from Petrograd, *The Times* recorded that:

“As he stated before leaving Petrograd, Mr. Henderson is fully convinced of the desirability that such a conference [Stockholm] should be held and wishes the Labour and Socialist parties of all Entente countries, including America, to be fully represented in the persons of their most prominent leaders. He recognises, as does M. Branting, the difficulty involved by the fact that many of these leaders are members of their respective Governments; but he considers that it should be possible to come to some arrangement, involving perhaps temporary relinquishment of their offices, whereby they would be enabled to attend.”³

Ever since his return from Petrograd, Henderson's public words and actions had consistently favoured going to Stockholm. It seems unlikely that he expressed himself differently to his Cabinet colleagues. Moreover, as Beatrice Webb points out, “he was party to the resolution of the Executive [of the Labour Party] in favour of Stockholm and as Secretary of the party he was obliged to carry it out or to resign his office.”⁴ Lloyd George surely knew enough about the Labour Party to know that. The only possible explanation, other than bad faith, is that the Cabinet took Henderson's statement that he thought the conference would vote against Stockholm to mean that he personally was against it, but the distinction seems obvious enough.

¹ Manchester Guardian, op.cit., 17 August, 1917, “Kerensky and Stockholm Passports”, David Soskice, p. 5; Buchanan, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 163-4.

² Nabokoff, op.cit., p. 148.

³ The Times, op.cit., 24 July, 1917, “Mr. Henderson's Views on Stockholm”, p. 5; ed. Tracey, Herbert, *The Book of the Labour Party: Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders*, Caxton Publishing Co., Ltd., London, Vol. I, pp. 212-3.

⁴ ed. Cole, Margaret I., *Beatrice Webb's Diaries, 1912-1924*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1952, p. 93.

The Cabinet again discussed Stockholm on 11 August and decided that delegates should not be allowed to go; a statement to that effect was prepared for the House of Commons. The debate on 13 August in the House of Commons was a water-shed in several ways. For Stockholm, whether British Labour would be allowed to attend was crucial, since, if they could not, certainly French, Italian, and American Labour would not be allowed to go either. Bonar Law stated that passports would be refused; Henderson spoke on Stockholm and his resignation; and a general debate followed. But more than putting an end to the chance that Stockholm could provide an unofficial sounding-board for a negotiated peace, the debate also foreshadowed the beginning of a new policy, led by British Labour under Henderson, no longer of "civil peace", but of independent international Labour and Socialist action based on the "Memorandum of War Aims" which was largely written by Sidney Webb, and which had been presented in draft form to the Special Conference on 10 August. Moreover, from that day Henderson determined to create an independent Labour party capable of forming a government.¹

That same day, 13 August, Nabokoff had an interview with Lloyd George, in which he was thanked for the services he had rendered in "face of the bitter opposition of the Soviet".² The mission from the Petrograd Soviet which had returned to London, pointed out that Nabokoff's telegram was a truism and therefore in no way meant a change in the Russian position, but its statement was not heeded.³

On 20 August, the Miners' Federation met again to discuss Stockholm. The key issue was whether the Socialist Societies were to be given separate and independent representation. It was feared that if they were, the decisions at Stockholm might be influenced. At the Special Labour Conference on 10 August it had seemed that separate representation would be granted. So the Miners reversed their previous decision to support Stockholm, by a vote of 376 to 360. However, this reversal did not indicate a change of mind, but rather that the conditions on which their former support was based had not been met. The Nottinghamshire delegation (which alone had thirty votes, enough to have prevented the reversal) stated categorically that they would have voted in favour of Stockholm if they had been assured that the Socialist Societies would not have separate representation or if these societies had undertaken to support the decisions of the Special Conference, especially the statement of war aims.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

² Nabokoff, *op.cit.*, pp. 149-50.

³ Manchester Guardian, *op.cit.*, 13 August, 1917, "Russian Comment on the Russian Message", p. 5.

The Miners then agreed to ask for an adjournment during the Special Conference of the Labour Party and T.U.C. to be held the next day in order to consider the draft memorandum on war aims, but agreed unanimously to vote for the memorandum if the conference accepted Stockholm and refused the adjournment.¹

On the 21st, the Special Conference reconvened. The adjournment asked for by the Miners was granted, and during it the I.L.P. held an impromptu meeting at Tothill Street. There Smillie pointed out that separate representation was the question on which Stockholm would be accepted or refused, and that he thought that if the I.L.P. waived its right to it, the Miners' Federation would let its districts vote separately rather than insist on applying the "bloc vote", i.e. casting all the Miners' votes in the same way, which was the usual Labour Party system of voting. However, Snowden held out for separate representation, so this chance to retain the large majority in favour of Stockholm was lost.²

When the Special Conference re-assembled after its adjournment, it supported Stockholm, but by a very meagre majority (1,234,000-1,231,000). The margin would have been much wider but for the Miners' bloc vote against. A resolution giving the Socialist Societies separate representation in addition to the twenty-four labour delegates was defeated (1,538,000-789,000), and one limiting the British delegation to twenty-four was re-affirmed (2,124,000-175,000).³ The Miners' fears, which so greatly reduced the majority in favour of Stockholm, were thus proved groundless. The damage was, however, done.

The reduction in the majority for Stockholm since 10 August was such as to make it much easier for the British Government to stand in the way of Stockholm, and though for some time there was a slight agitation against the refusal of passports, nothing positive was achieved.

While these important events for Stockholm's prospects took place in London, in France the divisions within the S.F.I.O. had become sharper. The "majority" Socialists (now in the minority) insisted that attendance at Stockholm should be made conditional on there being a discussion of "war guilt", and that, if the German Socialists were not declared guilty by the conference, the French Socialists should

¹ Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Special Conference Held at the Westminster Hall, London, on Monday, August 20th, 1917, Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Manchester, n.d. [1917], pp. 3-35.

² Interview with Raymond Postgate.

³ Labour Party, Report of the Seventeenth Annual Conference of the Labour Party, Nottingham and London, 1918 (hereafter called L.P., "Annual Report, 1918"), B.L.P., London, n.d. [1918], pp. 6-7.

leave. The rest of the party was strongly opposed, but finally, on 11 August, all, except the Left Zimmerwaldians under Loriot, temporarily patched up their differences by accepting a compromise by which the S.F.I.O. would attend Stockholm to ask all Socialists to “condemn the Governments responsible for the violations committed at the beginning of the war” and to “work against these Governments in order to shorten the war and save the honour and life of the peoples.”¹

The Inter-Allied Socialist Conference in London, agreed upon in Paris at the end of July, was held on 28-29 August. Coming as it did, on top of the confusion and cross purposes over Stockholm, it is hardly surprising that it was a fiasco. The French “majority” Socialists, who had been forced to accept Stockholm by the “minority”, but were convinced that they could reverse the position at the next national congress, remained adamant on the question of war responsibility and insisted that only unanimous decisions at the Stockholm conference would be binding. This reduced to nil the scope for a positive initiative and made most discussion pretty acrid. There was little agreement among the delegates generally, and nothing was achieved. Both the committees of the conference – one on Stockholm and passports, and the other on war aims – failed to reach agreement. There were frequent “incidents” and rudeness on many issues. And even when it was over the arguments continued: the British and French right wings, the Italian Reformists, and the Belgian delegation retired to the Waldorf Hotel; and the British and French left wings and the Russian and Italian Socialists to the Fabian Hall. There on 1 September two separate resolutions were drafted. From this it was clear for all to see that Stockholm had failed in its central aim of bringing together the heavy-weights among Socialist parties in the cause of peace.²

The failure of the Inter-Allied Conference, the confusion over Stockholm, and Henderson’s departure from the government led British Labour to work out a new three-part international Socialist policy based on Sidney Webb’s “Memorandum on War Aims”

¹ The Herald, op. cit., 25 August, 1917, “Frenchmen and Stockholm”, p. 7.

² Cole, M. I., op.cit., pp. 94-5; Van der Slice, Austin, International Labour, Diplomacy, and Peace, 1914-1919, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1941, pp. 39-41; L. P., “Annual Report, 1918”, op.cit., pp. 8-11; The Times, op.cit., 30 August, 1917, “Socialists Fail to Agree”, p. 6; L’Humanité, op.cit., 4 September, 1917, “La Conférence socialiste interalliée de Londres”; Current History, The New York Times Company, New York, October, 1917, “The Socialists and the War: Labour Conference in London”, pp. 94-5; ed. Compère-Morel, Adéodat Constant Adolphe, and others, Encyclopédie socialiste et co-opérative de l’Internationale ouvrière, Aristide Quillet, Paris, 1921, Vo III, pp. 495-6.

presented in draft form to the Special Conference of 10 August. This new programme was initiated by the T.U.C. at its annual congress at Blackpool, 3-4 September, 1917, and called for agreement on war aims within the British movement before proceeding to get inter-Allied, and finally inter-belligerent, agreement.¹ It shifted interest away from Stockholm and towards London, away from peace proposals and towards war aims, away from the efforts of the Russians and an international outlook and towards home affairs and the winning of the war. It meant that the failure of the Stockholm movement was generally accepted as a *fait accompli* and that the efforts to resurrect the old Second International had broken down. It only remained to dot the "i's" and cross the "t's".

* * *

While the fate of Stockholm was being decided in London, the I.S.C. continued actively in Stockholm. On 13 July it held another meeting with representatives of Zimmerwald organisations then in Stockholm. Here Radek and Kollontai, for the Bolsheviks, had again asked for a boycott of Stockholm, and had again received the reply that only the third Zimmerwald conference could decide.²

On 20 July a group of the Zimmerwald Left (Bolsheviks, Polish and Lithuanian Socialists, "Narrow" Bulgarian Social-Democrats, representatives of the Swedish Left) had met, and had written a manifesto, later printed in the Swedish left socialist press and from there widely reprinted, which denounced Stockholm as the method by which the majority Socialists were trying to retrieve the situation for their bourgeois rulers, and which accused the centrists of playing into their hands. It then expressed the hope that the third Zimmerwald conference would found a new revolutionary union.³

The fight over Stockholm raging within the Zimmerwald movement, continued, and was especially virulent between the Bolsheviks and the U.S.P.D., though even among the Bolsheviks themselves, not all agreed that the majority Socialists were complete dupes of their governments, especially as the governments continued to refuse passports. Kamenev, at a meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Bolshevik party on 19 August spoke in favour of going to Stockholm, arguing that events had entered a new stage. Lenin re-

¹ Trades Union Congress, Parliamentary Committee, *The Stockholm Conference*, n.p., September, 1917, pp. 1-2.

² Fainsod, *op.cit.*, p. 157.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 157; "Archiv...", *op.cit.*, Vol. XII, pp. 381-8.

buked him sharply and remained intransigent: Angelica Balabanoff says, "His view, of course, prevailed."¹

In spite of the polemics going on among its members, reflected simultaneously in Stockholm and Petrograd, the I.S.C. continued to organise the third Zimmerwald conference, which, after several postponements, met at Stockholm, 5-12 September, 1917.²

It re-affirmed the principles of Zimmerwald and Kienthal, but made no discernible impact on the course of events. It marked the final breaking up of the Zimmerwald movement. For it was here that the Bolsheviks gained the backing of the majority of the conference, and Lenin, as we have seen, was set upon the creation of a Third International, not the perpetration of the Zimmerwald movement. The meeting attracted much less attention among Socialists or in the press than either of the previous two conferences. It was overshadowed by events surrounding Stockholm, and by British Labour's efforts to inaugurate a new international Socialist policy. Moreover, the Russian Revolution had shifted pacifist interest from this smallish organisation to Russia herself. Also, as no representatives of the press were admitted, there was no information about it except the official report printed in *Nachrichtendienst*, the I.S.C. organ, and in *Berner Tagwacht*, edited by Robert Grimm.

Thirty-three delegates from ten countries and from the I.S.C. attended the meeting.³ Though representatives of the Entente countries had been refused passports and were, therefore, unable to come, it was decided that the decisions of the conference would be binding on all members of the Zimmerwald organisation. After the first two items on the agenda (the report of the I.S.C. and the resolution on the Grimm affair, referred to previously) had been

¹ Balabanoff, "My Life...", op.cit., p. 183; Fainsod, op.cit., pp. 157-8.

² Carr (op.cit., Vol. III, p. 570) says it was held early in September, 1918, but this is presumably a mis-print.

³ Delegates were: GERMANY: U.S.P.D.: Ledebour, Haase, Stadthagen, Hofer, Duncker, and Wengels; RUSSIA: Bolsheviks: Orlovsky and Aleksandrov (Carr [op.cit., Vol. III, p. 570] gives Semashko rather than Aleksandrov); Mensheviks: Axelrod and Panin; Menshevik-Internationalists: Ermansky; POLAND: The Presidium of the Social Democracy of Poland and Lithuania: Radek and Hanecki; FINLAND: Social-Democratic Party: Sirola; RUMANIA: Social-Democratic Party: Constantinescu and Frimu; SWITZERLAND: Social-Democratic Party: Bloc and Nobs; UNITED STATES: The Socialist Propaganda League and the International Brotherhood: Ahsis and Howe; NORWAY: Socialist Youth League: Nissen, Christian, and Erwig; SWEDEN: Socialist Youth League and left Social-Democratic Party: Samuelson, Ström, Lindhagen, and Lindström; AUSTRIA: Opposition within the Social-Democratic Party: Schlesinger and Luzzato; I.S.C.: Balabanoff, Carleson, Hoglund, and Nerman. Also two Bulgarians left Stockholm just before the conference and two arrived just after it. The Bulgarians accepted the resolutions of the conference.

accepted unanimously and without controversy, a bitter debate opened on whether or not to support the conference called by the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee. The bitterness was surprising and unjustified since by that date the question had become purely academic: it was clear that no Stockholm conference would be held. But the two Menshevik delegates reported that they were to take part in the Zimmerwald conference only if it voted in favour of Stockholm, and eventually withdrew because of their disagreement with the resolutions. Although no formal decision was taken, the majority was against participation.

The conference then turned to what it considered the most important question before it, the safeguarding of the Russian Revolution. Orlovsky asked the conference to support the Bolsheviks and protested against Menshevik and Social-Revolutionary support of the Kerensky régime, which was continuing the war and which had suppressed the Bolsheviks after the Petrograd uprising. Thereupon, controversy raged over whether the Bolshevik proposal for seizing power in Russia immediately was the best tactic for safeguarding the Revolution. The majority supported the Bolsheviks, and the conference decided that the best way to show solidarity with the Russian Revolution was to call a general strike. This was put in the manifesto, but as it was considered that to be effective the strike must be simultaneous in all countries, it was agreed that the manifesto was to remain secret until delegates from England, France, and Italy could be consulted and general agreement reached on details; it was feared that otherwise reprisals would be taken against members in various countries before united action could be organised. Angelica Balabanoff was accordingly deputed to ensure that no delegate took home a copy of the manifesto. Instead it was decided to transmit it secretly to members in Entente countries, by way of a young Danish Socialist who memorised the entire appeal in English; when he had delivered it in London, someone else was to memorise it in French and deliver it in Paris and so on!¹

However, no sooner was the conference over than Radek began to press Angelica Balabanoff to publish the secret manifesto immediately, because of the rapid development of the Russian situation. Having decided to seize power, the Bolsheviks felt that the Zimmerwald resolution demanding a general strike in their support would greatly increase their prestige, and show the Russian workers and peasants that they had international support for their ideas. They

¹ Balabanoff, "My Life...", op.cit., pp. 187-9; "Archiv...", op.cit., Vol. XII, pp. 397-403; Gankin and Fisher, op.cit., pp. 664-6, pp. 669-70 and p. 673; Balabanoff, "E. und E.", op.cit., pp. 166-72; Fainsod, op.cit., pp. 159-60.

were not particularly concerned about whether the strike was in fact carried out. Though it would obviously have been an advantage to be able to say that workers in other lands were joining the Russian proletariat in their revolutionary efforts, what was most important was to have the prestige of international support from the Zimmerwald movement. When Angelica Balabanoff refused to go against the decision of the conference, Radek was furious and threatened to publish the document without permission.

At about the same time Luise Zietz returned to Stockholm to ask for postponement of the publication of the manifesto because the U.S.P.D. feared that it would lead to further reprisals against its members by the German Government, already worried by the revolutionary organisational work undertaken in the German fleet by two alleged members of the U.S.P.D. The I.S.C. agreed to postpone publication, but insisted that ultimately the document should be published. Nonetheless, very shortly afterwards the Finnish paper controlled by the Bolsheviki did publish the manifesto at Radek's request. The October Revolution was by then in progress and its publication went largely unnoticed.¹

The disintegration of the Zimmerwald movement, which had begun with the February Revolution, when the B.S.I. had begun to effectively function again, and when, on the other hand, the Bolsheviki had begun to play an important rôle in international Socialist politics, was now a fact. Like the enthusiasm for Stockholm, the Zimmerwald movement petered out with the autumn. New forces were to take their places, for both were transitional phases.

Both the Stockholm international committees – the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee and the Zimmerwaldian I.S.C. – were overtaken by events. In the case of the I.S.C. it was overtaken by the struggle within Russia and came merely to reflect developments there instead of charting new courses for its supporters in different countries. In the case of the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee, the failure of the established Socialist parties in the Western Entente countries to rally effectively in support of Stockholm made further effort useless. Nonetheless, the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee continued to function in a sporadic manner throughout the autumn and early winter; and the Zimmerwald I.S.C. continued likewise until the Inaugural Congress of the Third International gave it a *coup de grâce*.

* * *

¹ Balabanoff, "My Life...", op.cit., pp. 189-90.

Though it was clear by now that Stockholm would never be held, the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee and others concerned with the conference refused to accept defeat.

On 25 September, the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee sent out a third manifesto, repeating that it was a permanent committee and insisting that an international Socialist conference would be held as soon as passports were granted to delegates. On 10 October it issued a "Minimum Proposal for a Memorandum on Peace Aims" in the name of the Socialists of neutral countries (though it had been written with the collaboration of Russian and Belgian Socialists, and been discussed with the S.P.D.) to act as a framework for a peace programme to be discussed at the international Socialist conference.¹

The S.F.I.O. met for its annual congress at Bordeaux, 6-9 October, where it confirmed the vote on Stockholm and protested against the Government's refusal of passports², and on 12 October, Poncet again brought the question of passports up in the French Assembly, but nothing was done about it.³ On 20 October, in its instructions to its delegates to a governmental Inter-Allied Conference in Paris, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets again appealed for Stockholm, saying that all obstacles in its way should be removed, and, in particular, that passports should be granted.⁴ But like the effort of the French Socialists this came to nothing.

* * *

The Socialists of the Central Powers, meanwhile, had continued their efforts for an immediate peace. They still debated its terms, though in general accepted the phrase, "peace without annexations or indemnities."

At the same time as the Entente Socialists held their unsuccessful conference in London, the Socialists of the Central Powers held a meeting in Vienna, 28-30 August, 1917, which had been planned to prepare for Stockholm. It passed four resolutions: the first stated its conviction that the Entente Socialists would defy their governments and go to Stockholm, which it demanded be held without further delay; the second, addressed to the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee, asked that the arrangements be completed; the

¹ "Stockholm", *op.cit.*, pp. xxvi-xxviii; Comité Organisateur de la Conférence Internationale de Stockholm, *Un Avant-Projet de Programme de Paix. Manifeste avec Mémoire explicatif des Délégués des Pays neutres aux Partis adhérents à la Conférence générale*, Appelbergs Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, Uppsala, 1917, pp. 1-31.

² P.S.F., "Pendant la Guerre", *op.cit.*, p. 189 and pp. 192-3.

³ Van der Slice, *op.cit.*, p. 170.

⁴ Golder, *op.cit.*, pp. 646-8.

third recommended that the question of war guilt should be excluded from the agenda; and the fourth asked the Austrian Government, now not far from military collapse, to continue its efforts for peace, especially by exercising pressure on Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey.¹

Scheidemann, with the approval of the S.P.D. and of the German Government, dabbled in various private and secret peace negotiations. In particular the S.P.D. was in favour of direct negotiations with the Bolsheviks, which might hasten peace in the East. Therefore, when Scheidemann learned that, with the failure of Stockholm, Stauning was pressing for an international Socialist conference of only those organisations that could get passports, he wrote to him on behalf of the Executive Committee of the S.P.D., stating that the German party was glad that he was again acting in this cause and that it would obviously be ready to take part in such a conference on the basis of its own Stockholm Memorandum, but that "an indispensable condition was that the support of the Russians should be obtained for certain."²

In December, Scheidemann went to Copenhagen and to Stockholm to continue his efforts to get a separate Russian-German peace, and while in Stockholm, he spoke to Huysmans about the conference that Stauning proposed. Huysmans described the developments since the summer, pointed out that the Western Entente Socialists would now only act together, and that, therefore, it would be some time before a conference could be held. He added that the suggestion for a new conference, mentioned by Scheidemann, had originated with Parvus, not with Stauning. Scheidemann felt this was unfair and prejudiced, and believed, as Parvus did, that Huysmans was connected with the British Legation, just as many of the English and French Socialists felt that Huysmans was connected with the Germans.³

In any case, when the Russian-Dutch-Scandinavian Committee met for the last time, 7-8 January, 1918, it rejected Stauning's proposal, and agreed to support the proposal of the British Labour Party and the T.U.C. to work out a policy which would be discussed in turn by the British, inter-Allied, and inter-belligerent Socialists, before a general conference would be held. This, it was felt, would lead, though more slowly, but also more surely, towards a successful

¹ Scheidemann, "Memoirs...", op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 404-5; Daily Telegraph, op.cit., 3 September, 1917, "Enemy Socialists" Demands", p. 3; Vorwärts, Berliner Volksblatt, Zentralorgan der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, Berlin, 2 September, 1917, "Stockholm", pp. 1-2.

² Scheidemann, "Memoirs...", op.cit., Vol. II, p. 433.

³ Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 434-42.

conference.¹ As the Labour Party had invited Huysmans to attend its congress at Nottingham, 23-25 January, 1918, it was, therefore decided that he should go to England for the congress and then remain in London where he could now carry on his work more effectively than in Stockholm. A statement was issued to this effect, and the committee disbanded.²

* * *

There end the efforts to convene the Stockholm Conference. It never met and it would be idle to speculate too far on what might have happened if a meeting had been held. Ministers and ex-Ministers of the established Western Socialist parties, pacifist oppositions, supporters and opponents of the war from both sides, the new men of Russia (Bolshevik, Menshevik, and Social-Revolutionary), the neutrals, the Social Democrats and the Marxist revolutionaries, would all have met under one roof to consider ways to peace. The mind boggles at the thought that they could have worked out any practical and acceptable basis for peace, unless one remembers the overwhelming war-weariness and sense of claustrophobic deadlock induced by three years of trench warfare, and also the vast horizons of hope opened for all Socialists and democrats by the first Russian revolution.

The efforts towards Stockholm, though they failed, had some positive results in the West. A fresh re-thinking of war aims and purposes ensued which was to influence some of the worthier aspects of the peace settlements including the League of Nations. Moreover the Socialists of the West found their feet as a force in domestic and world politics which had to be reckoned with; the assumption that organised labour would in the last resort toe the line for patriotic bourgeois governments was at an end. The Russian revolution and the response it evoked among Western Socialists shook the governments of the Great Powers and induced a new and healthy respect for the proletariat and their leaders. In the East, however, the consequences of Stockholm's failure were less happy. For Stockholm might have provided the bridge between Russian and the Western European democratic tradition and prevented the isolation of the new Russia in her early formative years: an isolation that we have reason to regret as the most baleful single influence on the world in the twentieth century.

¹ *L'Humanité*, op.cit., 28 November, 1917, „Une nouvelle Conférence internationale sera-t-elle convoquée?”; 30 November, 1917, “La Conférence de Stockholm”, p. 2; and 3 January, 1918, “Un Rapport de Camille Huysmans sur la Proposition faite par Stauning de convoquer une Conférence internationale”, p. 1.

² “Stockholm”, op.cit., pp. xxix-xxx.