

SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY IN THE NETHERLANDS

REPORT

TO THE

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

TO BE HELD AT

VIENNA

**RELATING TO THE POSITION AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN HOLLAND DURING THE YEARS**

1910—1914

PUBLISHED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

REPORT

OF THE

Social-democratic Labour Party in the Netherlands.

The Socialist Labour Movement in Holland has in the four years since the International Congress of Copenhagen traversed a period of unprecedented prosperity, of sturdy growth, and of ever increasing influence and power. A numerical comparison with the results obtained in countries of about the same size cannot lead to a just valuation of what the political and the trade union movements have achieved in those years. It should be borne in mind that it was not before 1894, after the old Party had gone under in an anarchistic muddle, that Social-Democracy could organise its couple of hundred staunch followers, and was able to commence the agitation in a proletariat, degenerated for generations by exploitation and alcoholism in such a degree as has perhaps not been the case anywhere else in Europe; in gloomy indifference resigned to its misery; a proletariat, the majority of which submitted to being priest-ridden, and with only a small minority, that, smarting under the yoke, wasted their energy in foolish anarchistic activities, the futility of which caused many to relapse into the old indifference.

It is not surprising that, notwithstanding the devotion of all who had taken up the cudgels for the Cause, the membership of the new Party grew with shameful slowness; a few hundred only were added annually to our forces.

Many years after the Social-Democratic Labour Party (S. D. A. P.) had been founded, anarchism retained its hold on the majority of the trade unions; it performed there its usual destructive work; it goaded the trade unionists against the „politicals“, it made them neglect the real objects of their associations and dragged them into all sorts of adventures, in no way connected with the aims of trade unionism. It was not before 1900 that great financial sacrifices made the issue of a socialist daily paper possible; and for many years it could find but a few thousands of readers.

The disastrous results of the general strike of 1903

destroyed a great deal of what had been attained by unceasing patient labour. A flood of petty-bourgeois and anarchistic hatred seemed to be submerging everything. And when in 1905 the ranks had been strenghtened by new recruits, a new federation of trade unions was being created over against the anarchistic Labour Secretariat, and new perspectives opened out, internal differences began to exercise their nefarious, paralysing influence in the Party. These latter led to a crisis, resulting in the secession of about 500 members, who had declared their allegiance to the three quarrelsome leaders, who were expelled because they refused to submit to a resolution of the Party Congress, carried almost unanimously. These secessionists founded a so-called new organisation, viz. the Social-Democratic Party (S. D. P.).

The general elections of 1909 showed that the socialist workers remained true to our Party; the candidates of the S. D. P. obtained but a few hundred votes. Our Party did not obtain any more seats than it held before, but the number of votes cast for her candidates showed a considerable increase.

The Party proceeded hopefully upon its onward course, sure of internal peace, which would enable her to more effectually wage war against her natural enemies. This hope has since then been realised to such an extent as the most optimistically inclined had not dared to expect. The Social-Democratic Labour Party saw its membership trebled after the secession of the 500; the general elections of 1913 raised the number of its seats in parliament from 7 to 15, whilst the number of votes obtained increased most surprisingly.

In these few years the S. D. A. P. has grown from a Party, divided against itself, torn by internal quarrels, cankered by mutual distrust, without any power of attracting the masses, into a political organisation, having more adherents than any other in our country, able to maintain an energetic political campaign with ever-increasing forcefulness, and to discuss in perfect concord the most vital questions of principle and of policy. Within a few years the Party, from being a group without direct political influence, has grown into a power, able to inscribe its principal demands for reforms on the programs of the bourgeois parties constituting the government.

Between the Party and the Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions the relations are very cordial. Each retaining its independence in its own sphere, they co-operate loyally

in all such social and political matters, in which the interests of the working class as a whole are concerned.

The Federation of Trade Unions (N. V. V.) had left its most difficult years behind in 1910. The membership of the affiliated Unions has since then been more than doubled, so that it now constitutes a centre of Trade Unionism far superior in size, but certainly in organisation and efficiency, to what had been attained in the hay-days of „the old movement” and syndicalist régime. The methods of organisation and policy, laid down by the founders of the N. V. V. at the time of its conception, have now been accepted by practically all the Unions, excepting those under clerical influence, whose sphere is limited to the economical and intellectual „backwoods”. In all the Unions of any importance anarchism has been totally suppressed. Over against the few anarchistically inclined, numerically weak, and morally inefficient Unions, the Unions influenced by the principles of the N. V. V. are growing and blowing at a surprising rate.

Not before the last few years it could be said of the majority of our Unions that they exercised any real influence on the conditions under which their members worked. More than ever before they were able to rely upon their own resources. And on many occasions splendid proof was given of well-organised help, of practical mutual solidarity.

THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT.

During the last four years the question of Universal Suffrage has permeated the political situation.

When the attitude of the clerical government, come into power by the general elections of 1909 and backed in both Chambers by an impregnable reactionary majority, left no doubt that they would not seriously try to solve the suffrage-problem in a democratic sense, the Congress of our Party, held in 1910, decided to concentrate all its forces on the struggle for Universal Suffrage during the forthcoming years. In coöperation with the Federation of Trade Unions a movement for a petition was set on foot. Its purpose was to create a strong agitation, thereby mobilising the working classes for the struggle for Universal Suffrage, and to convince the bourgeois parties by tens of thousands of signatures that the Dutch workers of both sexes were thoroughly in earnest over their demand to be put in possession of their full political rights.

The movement was directed by a National Committee, composed of political and trade union leaders. Locally the branches of the Party worked in unison with the branches of the Unions.

In dozens of large gatherings, in hundreds of meetings, held even in the smallest towns and villages in remote corners of the country, our speakers stirred the masses to take interest in the question of the Suffrage and in our general principles. A number of pamphlets left our presses in issues of tens of thousands. Hundreds of thousands of manifestoes and leaflets were spread broadcast all over the country. And our members, canvassing for signatures, used every opportunity for verbal propaganda in the houses they visited. The tangible result of this campaign was that 317,522 citizens (all above the age of 21), of which nearly one third were women, by placing their signature under the petition signified their desire for the Constitution to be revised so as to make it include unadulterated direct universal suffrage.

In September 1911, on the day parliament was opened by the Queen, the Executive Committee, at the head of a procession of 20,000 men and women, went to present the petition to the Government.

This grand demonstration, turning the day, which the bourgeoisie considered as essentially theirs, into a veritable „Red Tuesday“, created an enormous impression in all classes. It was a brilliant close to the first stage of our suffrage campaign, which would reach its culmination on the day of the general election of 1913.

It was only natural that the government did all that was in its power to prevent a repetition of such hostile proletarian enthusiasm. A procession on the second „Red Tuesday“ in 1912, was prohibited — which did, perhaps, more than the most fiery appeal could have done, for the success of our last national demonstration at The Hague before the elections. More than 30,000 workers of both sexes responded to our call. Notwithstanding the prohibition by the authorities this army marched in 10 divisions to the Houses of Parliament; it was a revolutionary feast, the most forceful incentive to carry on the campaign during the coming months in such a way that, bending under the will of the proletariat, a majority would be sent to parliament, led by a strong vanguard of Social-Democrats, pledged to inscribe Universal Suffrage in the Constitution.

REVISION OF THE PROGRAM AND REORGANISATION.

In the midst of all this struggle and strife the Party saw its way to devote its Congress of 1912 to a long and carefully prepared revision of its program. The old program, which had done service for 17 years, had been derived from the Erfurt program of the German Party, and was sorely in need of being revised. The committee to which the preparation of the revision had been entrusted, submitted a unanimously adopted project, which, after a dignified and businesslike discussion, was carried without dissent, all shades of opinion within the Party being satisfied.

The vigorous growth of the Party, especially in 1913, necessitated a thorough overhauling of the internal organisation. Accordingly a revision of statutes and bye-laws, relating thereto, was prepared, and adopted by the Congress of 1914.

The unity of the Party would of necessity not only demonstrate itself by the concord in which its scientific basis was laid down, but also in the choice of its policy and the character of its struggle, especially now it saw itself supported by popular enthusiasm, unlimited devotion and ever-growing keenness of thousands of members, but also, and in the first place, by a considerable increase of its membership and the extension of its press.

The following figures show the growth of the social-democratic movement in Holland:

January 1st.	Number of Branches	Membership	Increase
1895	26	700	—
1898	51	2200	1500
1902	90	4500	2300
1906	152	6816	2316
1910	205	9504	2688
1914	389	25830	16326

The figures for the years 1910—1914 are as follows:

January 1st.	Number of Branches	Membership	Increase
1910	205	9504	—
1911	220	9992	5.1
1912	253	12592	25.9
1913	284	15667	24.4
1914	389	25830	64.2

The number of female members was 1100 in 1910, 1500 in 1911, 2047 in 1912, and 3011 in 1913.

Finances.

For the means of carrying on their propaganda the branches have to rely almost exclusively on the contributions of the members, varying from 3 to 10 cents per week in the country, and from 5 to 20 cents per week in the towns. A portion of these amounts has to be paid into the general fund of the Party; according to the size of the branches this varies from 1 to 2 cents per week. The next statement of figures shows the weak spot of our Party: its financial position. Our country does not possess co-operations, who supply adequate amounts of money, or who, by founding and maintaining halls, or by supporting educational work, afford valuable assistance. All the profits, made by our daily, and by a few of our weekly papers, are required to maintain their standard of efficiency, and to supply their own wants.

The ordinary income of the central fund was:

	In total	The branches supplied
1910	f 9027.—	f 4733.—
1911	„ 9295.—	„ 5400.—
1912	„ 12268.—	„ 7086.—
1913	„ 13776.—	„ 9424.—

For the general elections of 1913 the central fund received voluntary contributions amounting to f 24194, amongst which f 3500 came from India, and f 3000 was given by the German Social-Democratic Party.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

When reviewing the number of socialist votes, it should be borne in mind that in Holland the suffrage is still tied to taxation. In 1913 of 1.412.973 men of over 25 years of age, 960.676, or 67.99 pCt., were enfranchised. Principally on fiscal grounds 452.297 men, or nearly one third of the total, were deprived of the right to vote.

In the five general elections in which the Party participated from 1897 to 1913 the number of votes, cast for its candidates, is shown in the third column:

Year of election	Number of votes	Ditto of socialist votes	Percentage
1897	437.579	12.451	2.8
1901	424.693	39.066	9.2
1905	608.982	65.561	10.8
1909	651.410	82.855	12.7
1913	796.067	144.249	18.1

The influence of the Party is greatest in the big cities, and in some industrial centres, as is shown by the following figures.

Votes cast for the socialist candidates and percentages:

	1909	1913	1909	1913
Big towns	29.823	61.498	19.9	31.1
Smaller towns	19.002	30.026	17.6	21.7
Urban districts	6.541	9.164	13.8	15.7
Rural districts	27.489	43.561	7.9	10.8
Total	82.855	144.249	12.7	18.1

It would, however, be a mistake to conclude that the Party has no grip on the rural proletariat. In the agrarian districts (the urban boroughs excepted) of the northern provinces our candidates obtained:

in Groningen 24.5 pCt. in 1909, 28.2 pCt. in 1913,

in Friesland 24.7 pCt. in 1909, 28.8 pCt. in 1913,

of the total valid votes cast. Of the 14 constituencies in these provinces our Party was victorious in 7.

Compared with 1909 the elections of 1913 show a progress 61.394 votes, i. e. of 74 pCt. The influence of the two great bourgeois groups was relatively reduced.

Of every 1000 votes obtained the

	1909	1913
Clericals	555	474
Liberals	303	297
S. D. A. P.	127	181
Others	15	48

The Social-Democratic Party (S. D. P.) put up candidates in 18 constituencies in opposition to ours; in 1909 it had done so only in 4. In these latter 4 the number of votes cast for its candidates receded from 542 in 1909 to 463 in 1913. In the 18 constituencies in which candidates were put forward in 1913, 1339 votes were obtained, the total number of voters being 204.407. In not one constituency the result of the election would have been different if the S. D. P. had not participated.

Of our candidates dr. P. J. Troelstra, leader of our Parliamentary group, was elected in the first ballot; in 21 constituencies (10 urban, and 11 rural, amongst which 8 agrarian) our candidates reached the second ballot; in 10 against a liberal, in 11 against a clerical candidate.

This result of the elections brilliantly shows the attraction which Socialism in Holland has obtained. The high

tide of socialist votes is evidence that the Dutch working classes have, full of confidence and hope, made a decided forward move towards Socialism, and that the truth is permeating them that the proletariat has to look for salvation solely to their own, independant political class war.

The general result of the elections was above all a victory for Universal Suffrage. Already the first ballot proved to be a serious blow to the clerical coalition. By this fall of Clericalism the designs of its politicians to stem the tide of democratic influence, brought about by the continual forging ahead of the suffrage army, by giving new power to the Senate and to the Crown, were doomed to failure.

The different bourgeois parties of the Left had entered upon the election campaign with a common platform, of which Universal Suffrage was the principal plank.

The right wing of the liberal (which means in Holland anti-clerical) concentration was compelled to adopt this platform, because thereby was created the one and only possibility of a united action of the three liberal parties against the clerical majority at the first ballot, and of these with the social-democrats at the second ballot, to bring about thereby the fall of the clerical government, which had already weakened its position by threatening the interests of great manufacturers, merchants and bankers, by its introduction of a new tariff bill. It was only the purely, materialistic care to protect the profits of their capitalist undertakings against this latter attack by a powerful agrarian and industrially backward group, which made these liberal-conservatives proceed to the Canossa of the Democracy.

It was therefore the business of our Party to use the influence it possessed in many constituencies where only bourgeois candidates stood for the second ballot, and in which it held the balance, in such a way as to bind down the hesitating liberal elements to our principal demand of political reform, Universal Suffrage, more firmly than these would have done of their own sweet will.

In accordance with the resolution of Congress re this matter the Executive Committee of the Party made it known to all liberal candidates standing for the second ballot against clerical candidates, that the support of our Party was dependent upon a satisfactory declaration on their part re:

1. the urgency of Universal Suffrage for men;
2. the necessity of removing from the Constitution every obstacle against Suffrage for women, and of preventing

this Suffrage to be made dependent on fiscal or such like conditions;

3. the extension and immediate execution of the principle of non-contributory old-age pensions, laid down in the Compulsory Insurance Act (a few days before the election added to the Statute Book);

4. the non-execution of the rest of the said Act.

The Central Committee of the liberal concentration by way of answer referred, regarding the first two questions, to its election program, and refused to reply to the last two. These latter were, however, satisfactorily replied to by 14 of the liberal candidates; 9 others referred to the answer of their Central Committee. When it became evident that our Executive Committee would not budge, and the support of our Party would be withheld, the latter amplified their first communications with such declarations and definitions that together they formed a satisfactory reply.

The Central Committee had already in its first declaration fulfilled the conditions of our Executive, and pledged its support to those of our candidates who stood for the second ballot against clerical candidates.

We retained or won the 11 constituencies in which we stood against candidates of the Right; of the 10 constituencies in which we stood against liberal candidates we won 6, the clericals abstaining.

We lost not one of the 7 seats we held, and won 11. Our parliamentary group was thereby increased from 7 to 18 members; the Right saw its majority of 59 reduced to a minority of 45; the liberals won 3 seats.

The total result was:

	Old Chamber	New Chamber
Roman-Catholics	26	25
Calvinists	20	11
Historic-Christians	13	9
Right	— 59	— 45
Indep. Liberals	4	10
United Liberals	21	20
Liberal Democrats	9	7
Left	— 34	— 37
Social-Democrats	7	18
Total	100	100

The first consequence of the strengthened position occupied by our Parliamentary group in the new majority,

was that its political leader, Dr. P. J. Troelstra, was among those consulted by the Queen about the formation of the new government. In accordance with the opinion of the Party-conference, called by the Executive, and consisting of that Committee itself, the M. P.'s and the staff of the official organ of the Party, Troelstra advised the formation of a mixed cabinet from all the bourgeois parties, the task of which should be the realisation of the election program of the liberal concentration, as it had been endorsed by the electorate, after having been more sharply defined by means of our conditions of support at the second ballot. If this could not be realised, he advised the constitution of a liberal cabinet. Such a government could count on the loyal support of the social-democratic group, even for the military budgets, provided that these would not show higher figures than those of like former budgets.

To the leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party, Dr. Bos, the Queen entrusted the task of forming a cabinet of the „entire“ Left. In order to execute a government program, with revision of the constitution in the sense as desired by us, he offered to include three social-democrats in his cabinet, provided certain conditions regarding the co-operation in the cabinet, in Parliament and in the country could be agreed upon. In case of refusal from our side, Dr. Bos would not accept the task of forming a cabinet.

It was not sure whether in the latter case the liberal concentration would be inclined to form a political cabinet from the bourgeois parties of the Left only; that was to be considered if Dr. Bos' solution should prove impossible of execution.

In our second Party-conference Dr. Bos' proposals were rejected, 8 voting for, 13 against.

The unanimous opinion was that the formation of a homogeneous liberal cabinet, supported in the House by the social-democratic group, would offer greater guarantee for the revision of the Constitution than a mixed bourgeois-socialist government. It was, however, the question whether the liberals would strive after such a solution when Dr. Bos' effort had been made abortive by our refusal.

The minority considered it very well possible that the Independent Liberals would make use of such a refusal to promote the formation of a cabinet which would not made them face the consequences of their election program. In any case, they argued, one had to count with the probability that no liberal political cabinet would be formed, after which

every other solution would render the realisation of our election platform highly uncertain.

A government, which could not rely on the support of the entire Left for the realisation of its program, was every moment in danger of being defeated by some sudden manoeuvre of the opposition; and a consequent dissolution would possibly lead to a renewed clerical majority, where the palpable inability of governing by the parties of the Left would then have been signally shown. The fruit of our victories would then be lost: Universal Suffrage would for many years be out of sight.

They were of opinion that here we stood before the exceptional situation, described in the Paris resolution of 1900: the situation in which our direct participation in the government is necessary in order to repel a clerical-reactionary attack on our state institutions, and to reform the latter on democratic lines.

This minority foresaw considerable chances of success for a temporary alliance with the liberal parties for this definite object. The party, under whose pressure the great reforms had been brought to the fore, was justified in running some risk, in order to co-operate in making secure the reforms to which a great part of the people had looked forward for so long a time. They granted the possibility of a liberal cabinet being formed after our refusal, but considering the certainly not very keen desire on the part of the liberals to take upon themselves the responsibilities of government in perfect dependence of us, they did not deem this very likely. The situation would then become highly insecure. By our refusal we would lose our preponderance. Our responsibility towards the people that had given us their confidence would not be lessened if the liberals shirked their duty. If we came back with empty hands we could not wash ourselves clean by referring to party interests and political difficulties. The enthusiastic élan, the confidence in their own power, with which we had inspired the people, would change into general discouragement, which will bow us down for years.

The majority consisted of two elements. Some members based their objections principally on the character and the development of the Party. Granting the possibility of situations, in which the Party might make use of the provisions of the resolutions of the Paris and Amsterdam International Congresses, they were of opinion that the thereby supposed exceptional situation was not present in this case. Were not

all convinced that a liberal cabinet was under the circumstances not only possible, but even the most desirable? They held it to be clashing with our responsibility if we should allow us to be driven by the liberals into a combination, formed by considerations that had nothing to do with Universal Suffrage, which could not even boast of being a „democratic block”, for the influential right wing of this block would consist of the chosen representatives of capitalism, of militarism, and of imperialism. By accepting seats in the government the Party would be curbed and muzzled, not only in Parliament, but also in the country; the fine dash with which we fought our way upwards would be crippled, the revolutionary sentiment of the working classes would be quelled, and the representatives of the Party would repeatedly be compelled to oppose the workers and their activities. They declared to be far from sure that participating in the government would be equivalent to securing Universal Suffrage and Non-contributory Old-age Pensions. Under these circumstances these members stood for unconditional refusal, and, repeating our far-reaching willingness to support a liberal government, leaving the responsibility to parties who would not negotiate with us on this basis.

The other element of the majority consisted of those, who were of opinion that only when the liberals flatly refused to form a cabinet, social-democrats could, under certain conditions, participate in the government. But if the liberals were to make such participation a „conditio sine qua non” for their taking part in the formation of a parliamentary cabinet, we were to fulfill this condition. They granted that the sacrifice, which this would mean for the socialist movement, was not counterbalanced by the certainty that such „a most weak, least homogeneous, most risk-threatened, by its own composition most hampered cabinet” would pilot Universal Suffrage into port. But the responsibility for possible failure would then not rest on us, but on the liberals, who would have barred the better and safer road.

After the afore-mentioned decision it was not deemed necessary to call a congress, for nobody supposed that it would furnish such a majority that the practical result would differ from that at which the conference had arrived.

On the ground that the realisation of the working program, drafted by dr. Bos, evidently in accord with the liberal leaders, stood more and better chances with a homo-

geneous liberal cabinet, dr. Troelstra informed dr. Bos that no co-operation towards forming a cabinet was to be expected from the S. D. A. P.

He repeated his offer, made on behalf of our entire parliamentary group, of supporting a liberal political cabinet, and, convinced that the liberals could not possibly shirk the responsibility of the realisation of their program, he asked dr. Bos to consider with his political friends the formation of such a cabinet, on condition of the afore-mentioned support.

Dr. Bos did not, however, accept his mission. A conference of liberal M. P.'s rejected the idea of a liberal government; the opposition came especially from both the extreme parties.

Therewith the situation had come, in which a majority of the Executive of the Party would be likely to favour negotiations about the formation of a mixed liberal-socialist cabinet.

Meanwhile the Queen had called upon Dr. Cort van der Linden, a liberal statesman, who had for some years not taken part in practical politics, to compose a cabinet. It now became desirable to frustrate all efforts at forming a "cabinet d'affaires", that would not have Universal Suffrage and Old-age Pensions on its program — or at least to prevent the liberals supporting such a cabinet, whilst blaming us for refusing such combinations as they had considered practicable.

Through the initiative of comrades Vliegen and Schaper our Executive Committee decided to call an extraordinary Congress.

The majority of a third Party-conference, held to prepare the business of this Congress, adopted a resolution, affirming that the formation of an extra-parliamentary cabinet, provided it respected the demands of the electorate for Universal Suffrage and Old-age Pensions, was the most desirable solution under the circumstances, but declaring at the same time that if this might prove to be impossible, the situation of unavoidable necessity would be considered to exist, in which the Party, bearing in mind the resolution of the Paris Congress, had to waive its objections against a mixed liberal-socialist cabinet.

Over against this resolution, signed by 12 members of the conference, stood that of the minority, bearing 8 signatures. It argued that the Party was neither in nor outside parliament strong enough to face the dangers of such co-operation

with bourgeois parties, which would make it go contrary to the spirit and the aims of social-democracy; that realisation of our election platform would only be rendered likely by supporting a bourgeois cabinet, and that entering such a cabinet would under the circumstances be in contravention to the interests of the proletariat.

Karl Kautsky, the father of the resolution of the International Congress of 1900, was asked by Troelstra, whether, given the situation in which Universal Suffrage can only be saved by entering a bourgeois government, entering such a cabinet could be considered allowable.

Kautsky recognised that the situation in which the Dutch Party was placed, was one of the most difficult which any of the Parties of the International had to face for a long time. The Dutch Party by its dogged resistance against ministerialism, had acted in the spirit of the International, which demands that the entrance of a social-democrat in a bourgeois government ought to be avoided as long as possible. But that, if only by doing so Universal Suffrage is attainable, and it is reasonably sure that by doing so it will be attained, the exceptional situation, demanded by the Paris resolution, could be considered to be present.

At the Congress, held at Zwolle, the different opinions, already described, were again uttered.

Opposing each other stood the two views, the one holding that entering a bourgeois cabinet was the logical outcome of our electoral victory and of the development of our party, the other contending, likewise on principle, that this step had to be put off as long as possible, and was certainly not advisable now.

Those comrades who played a leading part in the trade union movement, were nearly all fiercely opposed to participation in the government. They were principally influenced by this argument, that the Unions would find themselves hampered in their freedom of action and of criticism under a government containing a minority of social-democrats, and that the hostile confessional and syndicalist Unions would utilise the lopsided situation in which the Party as well as its allies in the struggle for Universal Suffrage, the Unions, were placed to force the government into a position, antagonistic instead of favorable to our Unions, in case of industrial conflicts in which the government would be concerned.

Troelstra said to have observed such a strong and determined opposition in the Party's most important and

most valorous branches, that, whatever the result of the poll might happen to be, the practical result could only be negative. He urged, however, the adoption of the resolution of the majority on the ground of the possibility of the efforts of Dr. Cort van der Linden proving abortive, in which case, we maintaining our refusal, dissolution would be the only way out of the difficulty. Against such a contingency we had to be prepared. If the Congress were to withhold permission for participating in a bourgeois government, it would thereby deliver our parliamentary group, tied hand and foot, into the power of its political adversaries in the House.

The minority withdrew its resolution in favour of one submitted by the Amsterdam III branch, which, put to the vote against the resolution of the majority, was carried by 376 against 317, and 15 abstentions.

This resolution denies that there is under the circumstances any obligation of entering a cabinet for a party, which in its origin, spirit and aims is opposed to the bourgeoisie as a whole; the refusal on the part of the liberals of our support to a liberal government is explained by their unwillingness, not the impossibility, of accepting this most desirable solution; their attitude is explained by their desire to rob our Party of its class character; it demands Universal Suffrage and Old-age Pensions of any cabinet coming into power; support of a cabinet that rejects these measures is branded as treason to their election promises; it concludes with an appeal to the working classes to carry on the struggle for political and social reforms with redoubled energy and assiduity, as the only means of realising them within the shortest time.

Dr. Cort van der Linden's efforts at forming an extra-parliamentary cabinet were successful; its program contained: revision of the Constitution so as to include Universal Suffrage for men, clearing the way for the introduction of the Suffrage for women, proportional representation, and a few other practical social reforms.

In the discussion on its first budget Troelstra could promise it the support of the social-democratic group.

At the bye-elections, necessitated by four of our candidates having been elected in two constituencies, two of these were lost; and later another shared the same fate after Henri Polak had been elected member of the Senate.

The number of socialist M. P.'s was therefore reduced to 15.

The defeat in the latter constituency, created a profound impression in our ranks. It had been our stronghold, that had elected Troelstra at the first ballot. But this adverse result could not damp the ardour of our men and women.

Immediately afterwards, with but a few days preparation, our Executive Committee organised a week of propaganda, called "the Red Week", in which 3336 new members and 2603 subscribers to our daily paper were won. These are record figures, as had not even been obtained by our victories.

Elections for the county councils.

The elections for the County Councils, which had preceded the parliamentary elections, had been a hope-inspiring prelude thereto.

The Party had 23 representative in 3 counties; the elections gave it 42 representatives in 5 counties.

The political importance of these councils lies in the fact that they elect the Senate. Our proportionally strong group in the Friesland council forced the liberals there to an arrangement, by which two comrades, H. H. van Kol and Henri Polak, were elected to the Senate.

Municipal elections.

The municipal elections proved to be a brilliant confirmation of our victories in the Parliamentary elections.

Our Party went to the poll in 177 communities, including all larger and smaller urban ones outside the two Roman-Catholic provinces. The result was:

	Number of councillors	
	Outgoing	Elected
Clericals	383	357
Liberals	520	488
Social-Democrats . .	62	125
Others.	9	11

The number of our councillors now stands at 247. In Amsterdam our candidates obtained 43.7 pCt. of all the votes cast; 15 of the 45 councillors belong to our Party. The strong position occupied there by our Party found its recognition in comrade Wibaut being elected member of the Corporation. Therewith the first social-democrat has entered the magistrature of our capital.

In the important industrial and shipping centre of Zaan-dam we obtained the majority on the council. The Corpo-

ration of this community is now also in the hands of our comrades, the official recognition of which was given when comrade K. ter Laan was appointed burgomaster — to the intense joy of our entire Party.

THE PRESS.

The chief organ of the Party is its daily paper „Het Volk” (The People). It has passed its years of difficulties and obstacles. It has done yeoman service in the movement's great upheaval, and, in return, it obtained hosts of new readers among the thousands it had helped to attract. The number of subscribers was

December 31st.

1900.	7000
1905.	7554
1909.	10965
1913.	30149

These figures, too, show that since the foregoing International Congress Socialism in Holland has entered upon a new period of progress. The growth during that space of time is shown by these figures:

December 31st.

1909.	10965
1910.	11580
1911.	13375
1912.	23519
1913.	30149

There are, moreover, 22 weeklies, published by district federations of branches of the Party, having together about 30.000 subscribers.

A group of Christian social-democrats publishes a weekly, called „De Blijde Wereld” (The Merrie World), edited by clergymen, members of the Party.

The Society of Social-Democratic Municipal Councillors, too, has its organ, entitled „De Gemeente” (The Municipality), published monthly, as also the Union of Social-Democratic Women's Clubs, whose paper is published bi-weekly.

The Party's Congress of 1914 resolved that a scientific monthly magazine is to be published. Hitherto the necessity of a scientific periodical was partly supplied by „De Nieuwe Tijd” (The New Era), edited by number of socialists, which a few do not belong to our Party.

PROPAGANDA AMONGST WOMEN.

Special agitation amongst women is carried on by the Women's Propaganda Clubs, established in nearly all the towns where the movement has grown to any importance. Only female members of our Party are admitted. Together they constitute the Union of Women's Propaganda Clubs, the organisation and mode of operation of which will, in accordance with a resolution of the last Congress, be regulated by the Party. The sole task and duty of this Union is the teaching of our principles amongst the women, to bring them into the Party, and to turn them into good soldiers in the class war.

The action of our Women's Clubs is, like that of the bourgeois women's associations, mainly concentrated on the suffrage question. But where these latter carry on a sex struggle, with the main object of attaining "equality" of males and females in the qualifications necessary for enfranchisement, so that they are perfectly willing to accept a limited women's suffrage, even if this should exclude hundreds of thousands of proletarian women with their husbands, our Social-Democratic Women's Clubs stand for the complete demand: "Universal Suffrage for Men and Women". They reject every limited enfranchisement of women, which would certainly effect to some extent the political emancipation of their sex, but would at the same time enhance the political inability of their class.

The number of Clubs affiliated with the Union is now 31 with a total of 1300 members. The funds are supplied by the branches and federations of the Party, as well as by its Executive. The Union possesses an organ, entitled "De Proletarische Vrouw" (The Proletarian Women). That the socialist women's movement also has had its share of the general prosperity of the last few years, is shown by the increasing number of copies of, and subscribers to this paper:

December 31 st .	Number of copies	Subscribers
1910	3500	2550
1911	4700	3400
1912	6500	4550
1913	8000	6500

ORGANISATION OF JUVENILES.

The organisation of the young has for several years been sadly neglected in Holland. The few existing societies were

in chronic conflict with our Party, which was due to their desire for independence, especially after the expulsion of the three editors of "The Tribune" and the founding of the S. D. P., when they wanted to take up a position of "neutrality" towards both parties. Over against these older associations, branches of our Party have in many places established Societies for Juveniles. These are managed by the young people themselves, under the supervision of a committee, appointed by the branch of the Party, or by the local Boards of Popular Education, in which the branches of the Party and of the Trade Unions co-operate. A Central Committee for the Promotion of Organisation of Juveniles, whose members are appointed by the Executive Committee of the Party, supplies advice and assistance. This Central Committee also publishes pamphlets, leaflets, and an organ devoted to this movement. The membership of the Clubs (mostly established in 1913) had on December 31st 1913 reached a total of about 1000.

The organ "Het Jonge Volk" (The Young People) publishes 5000 copies per issue.

RELATIONS TO OTHER SOCIALIST ORGANISATIONS.

With the S. D. P. (Social-Democratic Party) we are constantly at war. If its agitators should not regularly attend our public meetings in order to accuse us vehemently of "treason to socialism" which we are daily committing, nobody would ever notice that there was still another socialist party but our own in existence. Its organ finds no readers, its meetings attract no hearers, and its candidates for parliament and municipal councils obtain no votes.

It is an insignificant sect, which has lost nearly all of those, who originally followed our three expelled members who founded it. Most of these have come back into our ranks.

Our relations with the Union of Christian Socialists are somewhat better. When it resolved before the last general elections to put forward candidates, many of its members left the organisation. It thereupon did not carry out its intention, but supported our candidates. After the elections were over, its Executive asked ours to negotiate about co-operation in parliamentary elections.

Granting that the socialist movement could very well find vent in different organisations, our Executive was nevertheless of opinion that direct political action by more than one

would not be desirable. Our Executive denied that either the program or the tactics of our Party should necessitate separate political action of Christian socialists, therefore refused to negotiate, and calling upon those socialists to fight their fights under the standard of unity of the proletariat, it urged upon them the necessity of entering the ranks of the Netherlands Branch of the International.

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

With the "Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions" (N. V. V.) were affiliated:

January 1st 1906,	11	Unions with	18.960	members.
„ 1st 1910,	27	„ „	40.628	„
„ 1st 1914,	35	„ „	84.434	„

The year 1913 showed the greatest increase, the number of affiliated organisations rising from 33 to 35, the total membership from 61.535 to 84.434, i. e. an increase of 37.2 pCt.

The increase in female members remained behind that of the male dittoes. The Unions, affiliated with the N. V. V. had on January 1st 1910 2942 female members (6.6 pCt. of the total membership); on January 1st 1914 the number was 4356 (5.1 pCt.).

The last quarterly statement, that of April 1st 1914, shows that the growth of 1913 will continue in the present year. The membership then stood at 87.734.

The Trade Union movement in Holland, in so far as it has not been under syndicalist (anti-social-democratic, disguised bourgeois, or anarchistic) or clerical influence, has therefore made every possible use of the opportunities afforded by the prosperity of industry and commerce, the increased cost of living, and other factors.

Only a few years ago our Trade Union movement lagged far behind that of the surrounding countries. The distance between the one and the others has been covered with surprising rapidity. The solid development of our N. V. V. guarantees that within very few years it will occupy the place in the International due to her in proportion to the size of its sphere of influence.

The fact that the Unions, affiliated with the N. V. V., having during the last few years remained in possession of the field in all industrial conflicts, has done much towards strengthening confidence in that institution and its tactics.

It certainly deserves to be related that the strongest of our Unions, that of the Diamond Workers, succeeded in obtaining the 8 hours' day for the whole of that trade; it was introduced on October 1rst 1911, and has been maintained ever since.

The struggle for the Suffrage finds cordial support in our Trade Unions. Our Executive Committee is constantly in touch with that of the N. V. V. as regards the manner in which the agitation is to be pursued. The Unions are always represented at our national and local demonstrations.

Exepting the N. V. V. there are four other Trade Union Federations, the total membership of which is, however, less than a third of that of the N. V. V.

The total membership of all existing Trade Unions amounted on January 1rst 1913 tot 189.030; in 1910 the number had been 143.850.

The membership of the Trade Union Federations amounted in 1910 to 43.35 pCt., in 1913 to 53.66 pCt. of this total. They were distributed, in percentages, as follows:

	1910	1913
N. A. S. (anarchists)	2.4	4.2
N. V. V.	28.2	32.5
Roman-Catholic Federation	8.1	11.1
Protestant Federation	4.5	4.2
Neutral Federation	—	1.5

The total income of the Unions affiliated with the N. V. V. amounted in 1913 to f 1.404.840, of which f 1.014.444 was supplied by members' contributions.

These Unions had funds which amounted on January 1rst 1914 to f 2.508.203.

Benefit to members amounted to f 835.721, of which f 422.053 was strike benefit.

THE TRADE UNION PRESS.

The Trade Unions, affiliated with the N. V. V., publish 36 papers, including 'the central organ "De Vakbeweging" (The Trade Union Movement)', which on January 1st 1914 had an aggregate issue of 125.038 copies; 8 of these are weeklies, 24 bi-weeklies, and 3 monthlies. The total number of copies, annually printed and distributed, is about 4.500.000.

With the exception of the Unions of Civil Servants, Chemists' Assistants, Domestics, Coopers, Agricultural

Labourers, Postmen, Government Employees, and Butchers' Assistants, most of which are but small societies, hardly having any need of international organisation, all the Unions affiliated with the N. V. V., belong to the international associations in their respective trades.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN HOLLAND.

The co-operative movement in Holland shows two currents, viz. 1. that of the bourgeois co-operation, whose object is the co-operation as such; 2. the workers' co-operation, which, whilst fully accepting the main principles of co-operation, uses it as a means to an object: that of supporting morally and financially the other divisions of the labour movement.

The total number of co-operative societies in Holland is 2679, having 355.000 members. Of these 481 are co-operative societies proper, having 160.000 members. Their aggregate business amounts annually to f 25.000.000.

160 co-operative societies, with 95.000 members, are affiliated with the Netherlands co-operative Union, principally a Wholesale Society, with an annual business of f 5.000.000. The workers' co-operatives will be affiliated with this organisation until September next; the obligation to be affiliated in order to be entitled to trade with the Wholesale will then cease to exist.

After the Congress of Copenhagen, where supporting the Labour movement was made non-obligatory, the Union of Workers' Co-operatives has considered the desirability of placing our co-operative societies on a more neutral basis.

At the annual meeting of 1912, however, it was decided by 108 votes against 10, to continue devoting a portion of the profits to the labour movement.

The Union of Workers' Co-operatives has made collective agreements with the Trade Unions concerned, about the conditions of labour of the workmen serving the affiliated societies.

The members of our Party generally consider it their duty to support those co-operatives that are based on the principles of the class war.

39 co-operative societies give a portion of their profits to the Labour movement; 32 of these are affiliated with the Union of Workers' Co-operatives; they employ 623 workmen.

The growth of these co-operatives is shown by the ensuing figures:

	1909	1912
Number of members	17.763	24.581
Turnover	f 1.876.659	f 2.910.351
Profits	„ 112.619	„ 185.645
Dividend to members	„ 65.153	„ 123.430
Donat. to Labour movem.	„ 14.571	„ 21.107

The following figures show the standing of these 32 co-operative societies. Aggregately they had in 1912:

Assets.

Cash in hand and banked	f 170.011
Stock	„ 464.415
Houses, factories etc.	„ 911.584
Debitors	„ 73.360
Sundry	„ 54.445

Liabilities.

Supplies	f 213.616
Loans	„ 941.096
Share capital.	„ 86.086
Funds	„ 121.567
Sundry.	„ 117.150
Profit	„ 185.371

We trust that we have shown that the International may confidently look forward to the growth of the socialist party in Holland. The results achieved in the last few years and which are plainly shown in this report are evidences of the fact that the formation of the power of the proletariat advances with great strides. And on this fact is based our trust that in the years to come the Dutch section of the International Socialist Party will keep in line with the brother parties in the march for our great and common goal.

The executive committee:

W. H. VLIEGEN, President.

J. W. MATTHIJSEN, Secretary.