

# Factors Governing Our Tactical Line

THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE—FASCISM—SOCIAL DEMOCRACY  
AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following notes cover four of the major questions considered at the Eleventh Plenum of the Executive of the Communist International. No one can understand the present situation in Germany, in Poland, and the tasks of the Communists everywhere without a clear understanding of the features and factors dealt with in this article.*

QUESTION: How is the intensification of the class struggle and the revolutionary upsurge in capitalist countries expressed?

ANSWER: The world economic crisis strongly intensified the class contradictions of capitalist society.

The class struggle is being intensified and the revolutionary upsurge growing in all capitalist countries and colonies.

*In a number of countries, particularly in Germany and Poland—the prerequisites of a revolutionary crisis are growing. In China and India the revolutionary crisis is developing.*

The bourgeoisie seek a way out of the crisis by worsening the material conditions of the workers and through intervention against the Soviet Union and new imperialist wars.

The proletariat is fighting against this capitalist way out of the crisis with increasing energy. "The class struggle, developing during the further evolution of the world economic crisis confronts the widest working masses with the necessity of making the final decision: either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat; either economic and political slavery or making an end of capitalist exploitation and oppression; either colonial oppression and imperialist war or peace and fraternity among nations." (Thesis on Manuilsky's report).

The revolutionary upsurge finds its expression in the tremendous growth of the economic struggle in all capitalist countries, in the growth of the unemployed movement, in the growth and the strengthening of the Red Army and the Soviet districts in China, in the growth of the revolutionary movement in the colonies, in

the growth of the peasant movement in the capitalist countries, in the extension and strengthening of the ideological and organizational influence of the sections of the Comintern, in the great unrest of the social-democratic workers and in the beginning of the disintegration of the social-democratic parties in individual countries.

The economic struggle in capitalist countries is growing stronger and more intense. In January, 1931, in England, the number of working days lost due to strikes was equal to 75% of all the working days lost for the whole of 1930 (3.4 million working days lost in January against 4.5 million for the whole of 1930). In France, a mass strike movement among the miners developed for the first time in ten years.

The strike movement in the colonies is growing, particularly in India. After the textile workers in Bombay were defeated in 1930, a new strike wave rose, affecting hundreds of thousands of workers.

Strikes have acquired a more stubborn, more desperate character and are growing sharper and sharper.

They are now becoming more protracted and acquiring an ever greater political significance. The economic and political struggles frequently lead to bloody clashes between the workers and fascist gangs. The workers answer the bourgeois offensive with a counter-offensive more promptly and with great vigor.

The high level of the development of a revolutionary upsurge is also expressed by the fact that the Communists in a number of capitalist countries, have begun to *lead class struggles independently*. This is a great achievement for our sections of the Comintern.

In addition to strikes, new forms of struggle—demonstrations of the unemployed, clashes between the workers and the police, the refusal of the workers to pay taxes and peasant uprisings—have come into more extensive use.

The upsurge of the revolutionary mass movement of the proletariat is being reinforced by the revolutionary-mass movement of the proletariat and the toiling peasantry in the colonies. The world economic crisis accelerates and increases the national-revolutionary movements in the colonies and the semi-colonial countries for emancipation and sharpens the revolutionary struggle for liberation from the oppression of the imperialists, the national bourgeoisie and the land owners. The banner of the Chinese Soviets, under which the workers and the peasants are fighting against the Chinese counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and imperialist interventionists, for the victory of Soviet power all over China under the leadership of the Communists, is already being unfurled over a territory with a population of more than 60 million.

The revolutionary movement among the peasants is also growing in capitalist countries. The peasant disturbances in Roumania and Western Ukrainia, for example, bear witness to this. The reserves of the proletarian revolution, the millions of toiling peasantry, have already come into the movement, the oppressed and exploited of the whole world are rallying more and more closely round the banner of the Communist Party for the fight against the hated capitalist burden.

The revolutionary upsurge doesn't develop at the same pace everywhere. Some countries go ahead, others remain behind, but the revolutionary upsurge develops in all countries in an ascending line.

The growth of the revolutionary upsurge is characterized by the growth of the *prerequisites of a revolutionary crisis* in a number of countries such as Germany and Poland, and the growth of a revolutionary crisis in China and India.

The revolutionary crisis is the result of the sharpening of all the contradictions of the capitalist system and, above all, of the growth of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. characterized the revolutionary crisis in the following way: "Growing out of the general crisis of capitalism, and the present economic crisis, the revolutionary crisis developed on the basis of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses. These elements of the revolutionary crisis are bound up with the extraordinary increase of poverty and suffering of the masses, with their growing revolutionary activity, with the undermining of the whole international and internal system of capitalist domination, with the rapid regrouping of the class forces, with a crisis among the ruling classes which is seeking a way out of its own contradictions through fascism, new imperialist wars and armed intervention against the U.S.S.R." (Thesis on Manuilsky's report).

This definition embodies the nature of the development of the revolutionary process in all of its totality.

The Plenum connects the revolutionary crisis not only with the revolutionary upsurge, but with the presence of a general crisis of capitalism and above all, with the existence and growth of the U.S.S.R., with the instability of international capitalist rule, with the maturing revolutions in China, India, Germany, Poland and other countries. It is further connected with the growth of the danger of war and intervention against the Soviet Union.

**QUESTION:** What did the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. pay attention to its characterization of fascism?

**ANSWER:** *The main factor in fascism is its open offensive against the working class with the employment of every method of coercion and violence. It is civil war against the toilers.*

*The process of changing from a bourgeois dictatorship to an open form of a dictatorship against the toilers is the essence of the fascistization of the bourgeois state.*

The correct political evaluation of fascism is of great significance in the struggle of the working class.

Fascism is not a new form of government differing radically from the so-called democratic republics. To say that it is, means to fall in with the view held by the liberal bourgeoisie. International Social-Democracy formulated it in this way advancing the new theory of the "lesser evil" and insisting that the democratic republic is the lesser evil in comparison with fascism.

The bourgeois "democratic" republic and fascism are only two forms, *two types of the bourgeois dictatorship*. It is impossible to mark the exact boundaries between bourgeois democracy and fascism. Fascism is an outgrowth of the democratic republic. Bourgeois democracy is only the frame within which fascism develops.

It is impossible to insist that fascism is a product of an invigorated capitalism. On the contrary, it is the product of a weakened capitalism.

*The mistake of the right* opportunists in their evaluation of lies, as Manuilsky said, in his concluding words at the plenum, in the fact "that it identified fascism only as the ordinary capitalist offensive, only as an increase of reaction, and attributed the increase of fascist reaction to a strengthening of the position of capital." Henceforth, the conclusion drawn that the working class has become weaker, that it is impossible to strike during a crisis, that it must retreat, that an agreement with fascism must be reached if civil war is to be averted, i.e., in other words—a definition of all the treacherous tactics of social-democracy.

*The mistake of the "left"* opportunists results in their seeing fascism only as the product of the disintegration of capitalism. This is an absolutely wrong way of stating the question because it ignores the important fact that fascism is not only the product of disintegrating capitalism, but is the form of an attack on the working class by capital.

Fascism contains within itself elements of the offensive of the ruling classes and elements of their disintegration. The ultimate

fate of fascism depends on the active class struggle of the proletariat. The speed and decisiveness with which the elements of decay and disintegration will develop in fascism depends on how actively the working class will fight against fascism. Passivity and retreat of the proletariat in the struggle with fascism, results, on the contrary, in an offensive of the latter against the working class—in the establishment of a fascist dictatorship.

The revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in practice completely confirms this statement. In Germany, where the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party is fighting fascism most actively, the elements of the decay of fascism are rapidly developing. In Italy, where the working class showed passivity in the struggle with fascism, the fascist dictatorship was established.

Fascism is the form of the offensive of capital on the working class but this does not mean that the proletariat is only on the defensive. In Germany, in France, in Poland and England, for example, there is a capitalist offensive and a counter-offensive and a very opposition by the working class.

Can the proletariat prevent the establishment of the fascist dictatorship? The plenum answered this question positively. The international proletariat *can prevent the fascist dictatorship from being established by ruthlessly fighting against the capitalist offensive*, against every kind of dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The correlation of class forces determines whether or not the proletariat can prevent the fascist dictatorship from being established. The struggle with fascism, the struggle with the growing fascist movement, the struggle against the fascist dictatorship is now the most important task of the working class and its Communist vanguard.

QUESTION: Why did the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C. C.I. pay such great attention to Social-Democracy?

ANSWER: Because Social-Democracy is the main social pillar of the bourgeoisie in its struggle with the proletariat. The successful struggle for the proletarian dictatorship is impossible unless the working masses are freed from the influence of Social-Democracy.

*Social-Democracy is the most active factor and vehicle for the fascization of the capitalist states.* Social-Democracy plays the same traitorous role in the establishment of the fascist dictatorship that it played in all the basic stages of the development of the class struggle since the imperialist war.

“It sent millions of the proletariat to the imperialist war under the flag of the ‘defense of the fatherland,’ it helped ‘its’ bourgeoisie

carry on armed intervention against the U.S.S.R. in 1928-1920. It saved capitalism from the proletarian revolution immediately after the war (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Finland). It actively helped the bourgeoisie to strengthen capitalist economy. It harnessed the working masses to the yoke of capitalist rationalization. It now applies all its energy to save the capitalist system of exploitation and slavery from impending ruin." (Manuisky report).

The social-fascists' treachery is manifest in *all the economic and political struggles of the proletariat*. They betray the proletariat by helping the others to plunder the national masses and the colonies economically and financially, cooperate with the imperialists in their plundering activities, and the preparation for intervention against the Soviet Union.

Social-fascists betray the interests of the proletariat in his class struggle from day to day. In Germany, Social-Democrat Zin-scheidt votes for reducing the wages of the Berlin metal workers by 8%. The German trade union bureaucrats vote for a reduction of 6% in the chauffeurs' wages. In the Ruhr, Berlin, Bradford, Lancashire, Warsaw, Paris, and Tokio the social-fascists betrayed the interests of the miners, textile, metal and transport workers. They supported rationalization which resulted in a reduction of wages and in tremendous unemployment. The Social-Democrats in Poland help the fascists break up workers' demonstrations, workers' meetings, workers' strikes. In all countries the social-fascists vote for war credits. Social-fascist Paul Boncour is the initiator of the law for the mobilization of the entire population during war. Social-fascist Renaudel speaks on the military-air fleet budget in the French Chamber of Deputies. "Socialist" Beechwood in England organizes the military expedition to India. The so-called "workers' government" in England suppresses the revolution in China and the uprisings of the colonial peoples in the English colonies. In Germany, the social-democratic government of Muller, builds battleship "A" and furnishes the means to construct a second battleship. All social-democracy supports the slanderous campaign against the Soviet Union. It supports interventions, supported, financed, and organized the counter-revolutionary work of the Russian Mensheviks in the Soviet Union.

Social-democracy has been transformed into a fascist detachment against the working class and into a militant detachment of world imperialism against the Soviet Union.

That is why the struggle with social-democracy, as the ally of fascism, as the chief social bulwark of the international bourgeoisie, is now the most important task of the proletariat.

The sharpening of the class struggle and the constant treachery

of social-democracy has resulted in stirring the ranks of the social-democratic workers profoundly. The unrest is greatest where the development of the prerequisites of a revolutionary crisis is greatest, as for example, in Germany and Poland. The elements of the decay of social-democracy are accumulating and with the masses of the social-democratic workers growing more revolutionary, social-democracy was forced to start a number of left manoeuvres. Thus, for example, it is now manoeuvring in the question of fascism and bourgeois democracy. It advances a slogan for the reduction of the working week, the "five day week," it carries on a pretended struggle against the decrease in wages, against the attack on social insurance, for the reduction of armaments, against the preparation for intervention against the Soviet Union, etc. Everywhere, we see social-democracy making left manoeuvres. But these left manoeuvres can not prevent the social-democratic workers from leaving the party because its treacherous policy becomes increasingly clear to these workers.

QUESTION: What is the principal task of the Communist Parties at this stage of the class struggle?

ANSWER: *The winning of the bulk of the working class and their preparation for the decisive battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat remains as formerly the principal task of the Communist Parties.*

Our brother Communist Parties, during these last years, have succeeded in achieving considerable success in the work of winning the bulk of the working people to their side. The Communist Parties have grown in number and in the extent of their political influence over the proletariat. The consistent tactics of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International and the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. resulted in the right opportunists being completely routed and the ranks of the Communist Parties cleaned from the right and "left" renegades and the conciliating elements. Never before have the sections of the Comintern been so united as today. But the defeat of the right and "left" opportunists does not mean that the struggle with opportunism is over, because the opportunist danger still remains.

*The chief danger with which the world revolutionary movement is faced remains the right danger. It will exist as long as capitalism and all its contradictions, its whole apparatus of oppression, repression, exists, as long as the influence of social-democracy on the working class has not been annihilated. Finland*

gave a striking example of a right deviation with the Communist Party actually capitulating before fascism. In the Chinese Communist Party, the right Shendisyuist elements defended the liquidatorist views in the struggle against the dictatorship of Chang-Kai-Shek. In Italy, the representatives of right opportunism were Santino Blasquo and Ferracia, who stood for liquidatorist pessimism in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship. The Communist International all throughout, fought all these right deviations in the ranks of the Communist Party most ruthlessly.

*Among the "left mistakes,"* that of Comrade Merker of Germany, who placed the social-democratic workers on a level with their leaders, is the most outstanding. We must further note the "left" mistake of Comrade Li Li Syan in China, who, starting out with an incorrect evaluation of the revolutionary situation, liquidated the Chinese trade union organization and came to absolutely wrong putchist deductions which threatened to destroy the Chinese Communist Party.

The Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. affirmed the significant success of the German Communist Party and the growth of the political and organizational influence of a number of sections of other countries. This is confirmed by the results of the elections to the Reichstag and the factory mill committees in Germany, in Czechoslovakia, the growth of the influence of the Communist Party in Poland, the mass revolutionary demonstrations, etc. An increase in the membership of the Communist Party can be seen in Germany, Poland, Italy, China, Indo-China, Spain, Bulgaria, Austria, Hungary and other sections as well. The growing political influence of the Communist Party is to be seen in the successful revolutionary struggle of the workers and the toiling peasantry in China; the formation of Soviets and the Red Army there and in the growth of the Chinese Communist Party. This influence is further expressed in the organization of a Communist Party in Indo-China and in India, reaching many millions of masses in Indo-China, and many Indian workers and peasants and which carries on a revolutionary struggle against the oppression of the national and imperialist bourgeoisie.

But accompanying these significant successes are *serious deficiencies in the work of our sections*. These deficiencies are the reasons why the growth of our organizations and the extent of their influence lags behind the revolutionary upsurge. This lagging behind can be seen in numerous fields of our revolutionary struggle. Our Communist Parties have by no means reorganized themselves into militant units everywhere, not every-



where have they taken the path of the independent leadership of the economic battles of the proletariat. This backwardness is particularly true of the Communist movement of three of the largest capitalist countries—the U.S.A., France and England.

This backwardness manifests itself in the under-estimation of the rate at which the working class is moving leftward. A number of strikes rose spontaneously, not prepared by the Communist Parties (Lancashire, South Wales, the political and economic war in Spain and others). The lagging behind manifested itself in the insufficient organization of the movement of the unemployed, particularly in the countries of fascist terror, where our parties had been driven underground. The lagging behind is also making itself felt in the inability of our Communist Parties to mobilize the masses for the revolutionary struggle on the basis of their daily concrete needs, such as can be understood by every worker. It manifests itself in the influence of the Communist Parties being weakly consolidated organizationally. Most of our organizations are very weak in large industrial enterprises. The problem of shifting the center of gravity from general Party and trade union work to the mill-factory enterprises is even more acute. Only 10% of the Party membership are in the factory-mill nuclei, in the U.S.A., in Czechoslovakia, 14%, etc. And this proves the tremendous work ahead of us still in this field. The lagging behind further manifested itself in the actual capitulation of the Finnish Communist Party to fascism in the summer of 1930, in the insufficient support given by the Communist Parties of the imperialist states to the revolutionary movement in the colonies, in the inadequate struggle against fascism and social-fascism, and the inadequate attention paid by our brother Communist Parties to the Young Communist League.

In order to overcome this backwardness we must increase the struggle *for winning the majority of the working class* so that we can prepare it for the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. If our Communist Party is to carry out this task the greatest activity is demanded. This demands that the Communist Parties become mass parties of the working class, that above all, the revolutionary trade unions become really mass organizations in all capitalist countries. The fight for the majority of the working class must be carried on by struggling against the capitalist offensive and the organization of the counter-offensive of the proletariat, against the reduction of wages, against the system of part time work, for the seven hour working day at the same increased wages, for the immediate help to be given to the unemployed, etc. It must also continue to fight against every kind of bourgeois dictatorship, against bourgeois democracy as well as against the fascist dictator-

ship. As the revolutionary struggle against the capitalist offensive develops, our Communist Parties must ruthlessly and steadfastly expose the traitorous role of the social-democratic and reformist leaders. The faith of the social-democratic workers can be won and the social-democratic organization destroyed if a most resolute and ruthless struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, independent of what form it may take, is carried on.

We must also liquidate, as soon as possible, the organizational lag in the political influence of our Communist Parties. Our sections of the Comintern must pay very serious attention to winning the proletariat and as our allies, the toiling masses in the city and village, above all, the many millions of the poor and small peasants. This struggle for drawing many millions of the peasantry over to the side of the working class during the present great agrarian crisis plays an important role in the fight against capitalism.

One of the most important tasks of the Communist Parties is the organization of the working class and the toilers for the fight against the preparation of intervention against the Soviet Union.

The Communist Parties must expose the preparation of the bourgeoisie for a new imperialist war, for a war against the U.S.S.R. by pointing to concrete examples. It must expose systematically the social-democratic lackeys, helping their masters prepare a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R.

The Communists of all countries must increase their work in the capitalist armies. The Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I., in its resolutions on the report of Comrade Cachin, emphasizes this and reminds all Communists of the instructions of the Second Congress of the Comintern, dictated by Lenin:

"The obligation to disseminate Communist ideas necessitates the carrying on of a steadfast systematic propaganda in the armies. There where this agitation is prohibited by special laws, it must be carried on illegally. To reject such work would be equal to betraying revolutionary duty and incompatible with membership in the Third International.

The increase of the work in capitalist armies, the systematic explanation of the significance of the preparation of a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. to the working masses, the ruthless exposure of the treacherous role of the social-fascists, the organization of the proletariat and the toiling peasantry for the defense of the U.S.S.R.—such are the basic elements of the struggle of the Communist Parties with armed intervention against the country which is building socialism.