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THE LEADER OF THE WORLD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

By V. KNORIN.

THE history of the class struggle contains many noble and unforgettable names. Mythridates and Spartacus were leaders of slave revolts against slave owners. Thomas Muntzer and Florian Geuer, Razin and Pugachev were leaders of peasant revolts against the feudal aristocracy. Marat and Danton, Hebert and Robespierre led and directed bourgeois revolutions against feudalism. These names will always remain in the history of mankind. Campanella, Babeuf, Fourier, St. Simon, Robert Owen, the great utopian socialists, will always shine as beacons marking the path of development of socialist thought.

The toiling masses have risen hundreds of times in struggle against their oppressors, but have always been defeated. The brilliant plans of the utopian socialists remained unreal, impracticable dreams. Social formations and forms of exploitation changed. In place of slave-owning society came feudal society, to be replaced in time by capitalist society, but the exploitation and oppression of man by man remained unchanged.

Only capitalism prepared the objective prerequisites for socialism. It created its own gravedigger—the proletariat. But for the toilers to be able to throw off the oppression of their oppressors, it was necessary for the revolutionary movement of the oppressed masses to turn into an organised conscious socialist struggle for power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, led by a revolutionary proletarian Party.

Marx and Engels turned socialism from a utopia into a science. They showed the toilers the path towards the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the path towards socialism through the violent overthrow of the ruling classes. They formed the first international party for the struggle for Communism, the First International.

Lenin, the great thinker who continued the work of Marx and Engels, created the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and formed a new international worker's association—the Communist International.

Stalin, who took over from Lenin the struggle for socialism, developed Lenin's teachings still further, gave a practical plan of struggle for socialism, and on this basis brought the toiling masses to the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., and at the same time to the strengthening of the position of the international socialist revolution.

Lenin proved in practice that the victory of the

toilers over capital throughout the world is not a dream, and not a matter for the distant future. This victory can be achieved in the class struggle if the proletariat of capitalist countries, following the example of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., form a party which is strictly centralised, which knows the aim of its struggle and is supremely faithful to the cause of the liberation of the toilers. Continuing the work of Marx, Engels and Lenin, Stalin brought into existence in the U.S.S.R. the boldest dreams of the best representatives of mankind of all times on the subject of socialism, smashing the opportunist dogmas of the Second International regarding the possibility of the construction of socialism in such a country as Russia, a country having only a medium development in economic respects. Stalin concentrated in himself all the best traditions of the international workers' movement, all the experience of the class struggle of many centuries and all the experience of the struggle of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R.

Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin. . . .

These four names have penetrated deeply into the minds of the revolutionary masses of the world. Stalin. . . .

He rose from the very midst of the toiling masses. As far back as thirty years ago, in the pamphlet, "A Glance at Party Differences," he set out the main problems of the Bolshevik Party in a way which can be set alongside the works of Lenin, and which should become part of the iron arsenal of Bolshevism. In 1912 he elaborated in detail Lenin's teachings on the national question, and his pamphlet, "Marxism and the National Question," can also be compared only with Lenin's works on this question. At the VIth Congress of the Bolsheviks, he deputised for Lenin as the speaker giving the report of the Central Committee,* and gave an interpretation of the basic problems of Bolshevism and the prospects in its struggle for power and socialism which has been put at the basis of all the further activity of our Party.

After the death of Lenin, Stalin took upon himself the defence of Leninism, against the neo-Mensheviks and Trotskyites, who tried to distort Leninism just as Kautsky and Bernstein had distorted Marxism. It became urgently necessary to present Leninism in such a way as to beat off every attempt to distort it and to bring Leninist theory to the forefront. It was precisely this presentation of Leninism which

* See "Preparing for October."

was given by Stalin in his lectures on the "Foundations of Leninism" at Sverdlov University.

The significance of these lectures for spreading socialist consciousness and Marxist-Leninist theory among the masses can only be compared with the significance of such works as the "Communist Manifesto," "Capital," the "Criticism of the Gotha Programme," "What is to be Done?" "State and Revolution," "Imperialism" and "Left-Wing Communism."

Translated into *all* the languages of the U.S.S.R. and into *all the chief languages* of the peoples of capitalist and colonial countries, into French and Anamite, English, Urdu and Bengali, Chinese and Japanese, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese, German, Dutch and Malayan, Comrade Stalin's book has become the *basic* source of Marxist-Leninist conceptions and revolutionary study for the toilers of all countries.

* * *

The opportunists proposed to declare that Leninism—this international theory of the proletariat—was a product of purely Russian conditions. What did Stalin do? He defended Leninism as the theory of the international proletariat, as Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, as the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, as the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular.

On the basis of the Leninist theory of imperialism and proletarian revolution, in contrast to all the social-democratic and neo-Menshevik theoreticians, on the basis of the inexorable Marxian laws of the development of capitalism, Stalin, in "Foundations of Leninism," formulated three principles determining the course of all world development:

1. "The sharpening of the revolutionary crisis in capitalist countries, the growth of the elements of an outburst on the home, the proletarian front, in the colonising countries."

2. "The sharpening of the revolutionary crisis in the colonial countries, the growth of the revolts against imperialism on the external, the colonial front."

3. "The inevitability of war under imperialism and the inevitability of a coalition of the proletarian revolution in Europe with the colonial revolution in the East into a united world front of revolution against the world front of imperialism."

These three principles of the Leninist theory of imperialism and proletarian revolution which were defended by Stalin in the struggle against the opportunists gave a revolutionary *direction and orientation* to the Communist International for the whole subsequent period.

Based on the Leninist theory that imperialism is dying capitalism because it has carried the contra-

dictions of capitalism to the furthest boundary, beyond which revolution begins, Stalin developed Lenin's thesis of the necessity of the working class proceeding to new methods of struggle for the destruction of the almighty power of monopolist capital. The usual methods of the working class (trade unions and co-operative societies, parliamentary parties and the fight in parliament) are unable to cope with this omnipotence. Either they must surrender to capitalism, vegetating and degenerating more and more or else they must arm themselves with new weapons. Thus imperialism ripens the working class for revolution.

In practice this meant the necessity for a most determined struggle against the parties of the Second International, who, taking advantage of scattered principles and fragments of the theory of Marx, torn away from the living revolutionary struggle of the masses, tried to keep the masses under their influence. Stalin deduced four principles* from Lenin's teachings as the programme of this struggle:

1. The testing of the theoretical dogmas of the Second International in the fire of the revolutionary mass struggle, in the fire of living practice. This means that the unity between theory and practice must be restored, that the breach between theory and practice must be bridged over, for only thus can there be created a genuine proletarian Party equipped with a revolutionary theory.

2. The testing of the policy of the parties affiliated to the Second International, not by their slogans and resolutions (which must not be accepted at their face value), but by their deeds, for only by deeds can the confidence of the proletarian masses be won and deserved.

3. The re-organisation of all Party work on new revolutionary lines in the spirit of the training and education of the masses for the revolutionary struggle, because only thus can the masses be prepared for the proletarian revolution.

4. The self-criticism of the proletarian parties, educating and training them on their own mistakes. Thus only can trustworthy cadres and real leaders of the Party be trained.

These principles of Lenin and Stalin lay at the basis of the *practice of the Communist International*.

* * *

The ten years which have passed since the appearance of Stalin's lectures, "The Foundations of Leninism," have been full of the greatest changes and big events throughout the world.

The U.S.S.R. has become converted from a country backward both culturally and economically, a country of small peasants, into an industrial country, a country of big collective agriculture, a country

* "Leninism," Vol. I, p. 89.

which is well advanced in technical matters. In strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat, the U.S.S.R. has liquidated the last considerable exploiting class—the kulaks—and is building the first classless socialist society in the history of mankind. The dogma of the Second International, according to which the proletariat cannot and should not take power unless it has a majority in the country, if it has not ready-made a sufficient number of cultured and administrative cadres capable of carrying on the proper administration of the country, this dogma has been utterly destroyed. The dogma that the method of the general political strike and the armed insurrection are inapplicable for the proletariat has been finally destroyed.

Who will believe these dogmas now when the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., who form a minority in the country, having taken power by means of an armed insurrection, without having their own cultural cadres, formed these cadres and are building classless socialist society? Who will now believe the social-democrats who promised to lead to socialism by peaceful methods, but in reality in Germany and Austria led to fascism, led to new imperialist wars and the indescribable poverty of the masses, and who themselves are collapsing under the pressure of the sharpening of international contradictions and of their ally, fascism.

It is not surprising that some of the leaders of social-democracy are now passing over directly to the fascists (Severing and Loebe in Germany, Mosley in England, etc.) some are trying to manoeuvre, recognising in words the necessity of abandoning reformism and passing on to the struggle for revolution. It is not surprising that the masses, who not long since followed the social-democrats, are now turning towards the Communists.

Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. has a tremendous influence on the development of the international revolution. The growth of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is rousing the toilers of all countries to the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie for socialism in their country. The victory of socialism in our country has become a mighty force *accelerating the historic course* of the world proletarian revolution.

Leninism decisively destroyed the traditions of the Second International which accepted imperialist domination in respect to colonial peoples. Stalin still further elaborated Lenin's teachings on revolutions in colonial countries. The great example of the U.S.S.R. rouses the colonial peoples to the struggle for their agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution. The teachings of Lenin and Stalin on the national question have united and enlightened the young national proletarian cadres who became the leaders of the revolution in dependent and

colonial countries. The Communists of imperialist countries are learning that their struggle is closely connected with the struggle of the colonial peoples.

The development of the revolutionary movement in colonial and dependent countries did not make it possible for capitalism to make its stabilisation firm but constantly undermined it. The growth of revolutions in the colonial and dependent countries undermines the entire imperialist system. The Chinese Soviet Revolution has already become a powerful international anti-imperialist factor. The limitation to Europe of the workers' movement which was cultivated by the Second International (which in essence was *only* European) had been destroyed. The workers' movement in imperialist countries is united with the movement of the oppressed peoples in the dependent and colonial countries.

* * *

In the "Foundations of Leninism" Stalin gave in a concentrated form the theories of imperialism and proletarian revolution, theories which were elaborated by Lenin and which served as a key to the understanding of the entire development of the world situation. The stabilisation of capitalism which had commenced, required that its place be determined in the general process of the development of capitalism and proletarian revolution. "But if the revolution in Europe has begun to decline, must we not conclude that Lenin's theory of a new epoch, the epoch of world revolution, is out of date? Does it not mean that the proletarian revolution in the west is no longer a question of practical politics?"*

Stalin gives a clear answer to these question: "The epoch of the world revolution constitutes a new stage in the revolution, it covers a whole strategic period which may occupy years and even decades. In the course of this period there will occur, nay, must occur, ebbs and flows in the revolutionary tide." Revolution ". . . does not develop along a straight, continuous and upwardly aspiring line, but along a zigzag path, by means of a forward and backward path, on ebbs and flows in the tide, these advances and retreats temper the revolutionary fighters and prepare these for the final victory."†

At the XVth Congress of the C.P.S.U. Stalin said, on the basis of the further development of events: "From partial stabilisation there will arise a sharpening of the crisis of capitalism, a growing crisis will break down stabilisation—such are the dialectics of the development of capitalism at the present historic moment." Further: "In the midst of the working class, revolutionary energy has accumulated which seeks and will seek for an excuse, a chance, sometimes appearing to be a most in-

* "Leninism," Vol. I, p. 221.

† "Leninism," Vol. I, p. 222.

significant chance, to burst out into the open and fall on the capitalist régime. We are living on the eve of a new revolutionary upsurge both in the colonies and in the dominating countries. A new revolutionary upsurge will arise from stabilisation." This means that all the energy, all the forces of the international Communist movement must be directed more than ever to winning over the masses, to preparing them for the decisive class battles, because there is no Chinese wall between a revolutionary upsurge and a revolutionary situation.

There was a world economic crisis already at the time of the XVIth Congress of the C.P.S.U. On the basis of his analysis, Stalin states that "*the contradictions between the chief imperialist countries*" . . . "*between the victorious and defeated countries*" . . . "*between the imperialist countries and the colonies*" . . . "*between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat*" are becoming more naked and more acute, that "The stabilisation of capitalism is coming to an end," "that the upsurge of the revolutionary movement of the masses will grow with new force," that "the world economic crisis will grow into a political crisis in a number of countries," that the bourgeoisie will seek a way out of the situation by further fascisation and a new imperialist war, that the proletariat "will seek the way out in revolution."

Finally, at the XVIIth Congress of the C.P.S.U., Stalin stated that "capitalism has succeeded in easing the situation of industry somewhat *at the expense of the workers*," that evidently "what we are witnessing is the transition from the lowest point of decline of industry, from the lowest depths of the industrial crisis to a depression, but to a depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which on the other hand does not force it back to the lowest point of decline." He states that "the result of the protracted economic crisis was the hitherto unprecedented acuteness of the political situation in capitalist countries, both within the respective countries as well as between them," that "quite clearly things

are moving towards a new war," that "the revolutionary crisis is maturing and will mature." But at the same time, returning to the idea which he developed even at the XIVth Conference, he again emphasised the question of the necessity for a *strong, powerful Communist Party*

* * *

Ten years of the Stalinist estimate of the international situation! But all together they comprise one united whole. This is because every conclusion made by Stalin arises from an exceptionally profound analysis of facts and events based on scientific theory, the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. This is the only scientific theory which can carry with it the millions of toilers, because it is the theory of the overthrow of the power of capital, the theory of the proletarian revolution. This theory rouses the masses, gives them confidence, because it is true, because it has been justified again and again, year after year, in the eyes of hundreds of millions of people.

This theory of the proletarian revolution has tremendous strength because it has been proved in practice in the U.S.S.R., because the U.S.S.R. on its basis has become a powerful socialist country. It is a practical guide to action for hundreds of millions of people in all the countries of the world. In a brilliantly concentrated form it was set out in the "Foundations of Leninism" and has been developed further by Stalin uninterruptedly in accordance with the new facts in the development of the class struggle throughout the world.

From the Utopian Socialists to the powerful Soviet Government which rouses the toilers of the whole world by its example to the struggle for socialism; from the spontaneous movements of the masses without theory and guidance, without definite tasks and aims, to the modern revolutionary movements which have the best theory elaborated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, such has been the path of development of the class struggle and socialism.

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DIMITROV'S SPEECH IN COURT*

Dimitrov : By the provisions of paragraph 258 of the Codex of Court Procedure, I have the right to speak as defending counsel and as the accused.

Presiding Judge : You have the right to make your final remarks. You may do so.

Dimitrov : By virtue of the provisions of this Code, I have the right to controvert the case of the prosecution and to make my final remarks only after I have done that.

Judges of the court, prosecutors and counsels for the defence! At the very beginning of this trial, three months ago, I sent a letter, as the accused, to the Presiding Judge of the court. I wrote in the letter that I was sorry that my speeches led to conflicts. But I strongly protested against my conduct being interpreted as being a deliberate misuse of the right to ask questions and make statements with a view to carrying on propaganda. Naturally, as I am accused of a crime of which I am innocent, I try to defend myself by all means at my disposal.

"I admit," I wrote, "that some of my questions were not always put correctly from the point of view of their opportuneness and their form. However, this is only the result of my insufficient knowledge of German legal practice. Besides this, it is for the first time in my life that I am participating in such a trial. If I had a defending counsel of my own choice, I could undoubtedly avoid these incidents which are not conducive to the best interests of my own defence. I gave the names of a number of barristers—Dechev, Moro-Giafferi, Campinqui, Torres, Grigorov, Leo Gallacher (from America) and Dr. Leman (from Saarbrücken). But the imperial court has rejected all my proposals one after the other, on one pretext or another. I harbour no personal distrust towards Dr. Teichert as a man or a lawyer. But in the present situation in Germany I cannot have the necessary confidence in Teichert when he assumes the rôle of my official defending counsel. Therefore I am endeavouring to defend myself, and this being the case, I naturally take steps sometimes which are not proper from the juridical point of view.

"In the interests of my defence before the court, and also, I think, in the interests of the normal course of the trial, I apply once more — and for the last time—to the high court to permit Marcel Villard, who has this day received due authorisation from my sister, to take part in my defence. If this, my last request, should unfortunately be also refused, I shall have no other course but to defend myself to the extent of my strength and abilities."

After this application had also been refused, I decided to defend myself. Having no need either for the honey or the eloquent venom of the counsel who has been forced on me, I have defended myself all the time without the help of counsel.

It is absolutely clear that I do not consider myself bound in any way by the speech of Dr. Teichert made in my defence. The only things that are of any significance as far as my defence is concerned are the things I have so far said myself and those that I shall say just now. I do not want to offend my Party comrade Torgler—in my opinion he has already been sufficiently outraged by his defending counsel—but I must say outright that I would rather be sentenced to death by a German court for a crime of which I am innocent than secure an acquittal thanks to a speech in my defence such as that made by Dr. Sack on behalf of Torgler.

Presiding Judge (cutting Dimitrov short) : It is no business of yours to spend your time criticising here.

Dimitrov : I admit that my language is harsh and severe, but my struggle and my life have also been harsh and severe. But my language is honest and open. It is my habit to call things by their proper names. I am not a barrister, compelled to defend his client here.

I am defending myself, as an accused Communist.

I am defending my own Communist revolutionary honour.

I am defending my ideas, my Communist convictions.

I am defending the meaning and content of my life.

Therefore every word which I speak before the court is, so to speak, *blood of my blood and flesh of my flesh*. Every word is an expression of my deep indignation at the unjust charge, at the fact that such an anti-Communist crime is attributed to Communists.

I have often been reproached with not taking a serious attitude to the German High Court. This is absolutely untrue. It is true that *for me, as a Communist, the highest law is the programme of the Communist International, and the highest court is the Control Commission of the Communist International*.

But for me, as one accused, the High Court is an organ to which my attitude must be most serious, not only because it consists of judges who have special qualifications, but because this court is a very important organ of State power,

* Final text of speech, supplemented from stenographic notes, and translated from the Russian translation.

an important organ of the ruling social order, an organ which can pass the highest sentence in its ultimate form. I can say with an easy conscience that I have spoken nothing but the truth on all questions before the court, and consequently before public opinion. As for my Party, which is now carrying on its work illegally, I have declined to give any information whatsoever in that connection. I have always spoken seriously and with a feeling of the most profound conviction.

Presiding Judge : I will not tolerate you carrying on Communist propaganda here in this court. You have been doing it all the time. If you continue in this spirit I will deprive you of the right to speak.

Dimitrov : I must strongly protest against the statement that my aim is propaganda. It may be said that my defence before the court has had a certain propagandist value. I admit that my conduct before the court may also serve as an example for a Communist on trial. But I do not admit that this is the aim of my defence. My aim is to refute the charge that Dimitrov, Torgler, Popov and Tanev, the Communist Party of Germany and the Communist International have anything whatever to do with the fire.

I know that nobody in Bulgaria believes in our alleged complicity in the burning of the Reichstag. I know that there is probably no one in other countries who believes it. But in Germany conditions are different. Such strange statements might be believed here. I, therefore, wanted to prove that the Communist Party had nothing to do with such a crime.

If propaganda is spoken of, then many speeches delivered here have had such a character. The speeches of Goebbels and Goering have also had an indirect propagandist effect for the benefit of Communism, but no one can make them responsible for the fact that their speeches had such a propagandist effect. (Movement and laughter in the court.)

The press has not only defamed me in every possible way—this is a matter of indifference to me—but in dealing with me it has also called the Bulgarian people “savages” and “barbarians”; I have been called a “shady Balkan subject,” “a wild Bulgarian,” and I cannot pass this over in silence.

It is true that Bulgarian *Fascism* is savage and barbarous. But the Bulgarian working class and peasantry, the intellectuals of the Bulgarian people, are by no means savages and barbarians. The level of material culture in the Balkans, of course, is not so high as in other European countries, but spiritually and politically the masses of our people are not on a lower level than the masses

in other European countries. Our political struggle, our political strivings in Bulgaria, are not lower than in other countries. A people which has lived for 500 years under a foreign yoke without losing its language and nationality, our working class and peasantry which fought and are still fighting against Bulgarian fascism and for Communism, such a people is not barbarous and savage. It is only the fascists in Bulgaria who are savages and barbarians. But I ask you, Mr. Presiding Judge, *where is the country where fascists are not barbarians and savages?*

Presiding Judge (cutting Dimitrov short) : Are you hinting at the social relations dominant in Germany?

Dimitrov (with an ironic smile) : Of course not, Mr. Presiding Judge.

Long before the time when the German Emperor Karl V. said that he only spoke German to his horses, while the German aristocrats and educated people wrote only in Latin and were ashamed of speaking German, Kirill and Mefodi, in “barbarian” Bulgaria, had established and were spreading ancient Bulgarian script.

The Bulgarian nation has fought with all its force and with the greatest stubbornness against the foreign yoke. Therefore I protest against these attacks on the Bulgarian people. I have no grounds for being ashamed of being a Bulgarian. I am proud that I am a son of the Bulgarian working class.

Before dealing with the basic question, I must draw attention to the following : Doctor Teichert reproached us by saying that we were responsible for putting ourselves in the position of being accused of burning the Reichstag. But I must say in reply that very much time has passed since March 9th, when we were arrested, and the time when this trial began. It was possible during this period to have investigated every point giving rise to suspicion. During the preliminary investigation I spoke to responsible officials of the so-called fire commission with regard to the Reichstag fire. These officials told me that the Bulgarians were not to blame for the Reichstag fire. We were only accused of living with false passports, under false names, and living without permits, etc.

Presiding Judge : The things you are now speaking of have not been discussed at the trial. Therefore you have no right to speak of them now.

Dimitrov : Mr. Presiding Judge, all the facts should have been looked into during this period so as to release us from this charge in good time. In the indictment it states that “Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev assert that they are Bulgarian

emigrants. In spite of this, however, it may be taken as proven that they lived in Germany with a view to carrying on illegal work." They are "delegated by the Communist Party of Moscow to prepare an armed insurrection," says the indictment.

On page 83 of the indictment it states that "though Dimitrov has declared that he was not in Berlin from February 25th to February 28th, this nevertheless does not alter matters and does not release him, Dimitrov, from the charge of complicity in burning the Reichstag." "This is plain not only from the testimony of Helmer," says the indictment further. Other facts also indicate that—

Presiding Judge: You must not read out the whole indictment. We know it well enough.

Dimitrov: I must say that three-quarters of all that was said in the court by the Prosecutor and the Counsels for the Defence were well known long since, but they were repeated here over again. (Movement and laughter in the court.) Helmer testified that Dimitrov and Van der Lubbe were in the Beyerhoff Restaurant. Further, I read in the indictment: "Even if Dimitrov was not caught red-handed, nevertheless he took part in the preparations for setting the Reichstag afire. He went to Munich to ensure himself an alibi. The pamphlets found on Dimitrov show that he took part in the Communist movement in Germany." Such were the grounds given for this hastily drafted charge which turned out to be still-born.

Presiding Judge (cutting Dimitrov short): You must not use such expressions in regard to the indictment.

Dimitrov: I will try to find a different expression.

Presiding Judge: But not such an impermissible one.

Dimitrov: I will return to the methods used by the prosecution and to the indictment in a different connection.

The nature of this trial was determined in advance by the thesis that the burning of the Reichstag was the work of the Communist Party of Germany, and even of world Communism. This anti-Communist act—the setting fire to the Reichstag—was attributed to the Communists, was declared to be the signal for a Communist rising, a signal for a change in the German Constitution. With the help of this thesis, the whole trial was given an anti-Communist character. It states in the indictment: "The prosecution takes the point of view that this criminal act was intended to be the call, the signal for the enemies of the State, who wished thereupon to carry through a general attack on the German State in order to destroy

it, and to erect in its place the dictatorship of the proletariat, a Soviet Government by the grace of the Third International."

Judges of the court! This is not the first time that such a crime has been laid at the door of the Communists. I cannot here cite all the examples of this kind. I will recall the attempt on the railway here in Germany, near Uterburg, carried out by a psychopath, adventurer and provocateur. At that time the statement was circulated not only in Germany but in other countries that this was the work of the German Communist Party, that this was a terrorist act committed by Communists. Then it was discovered that it was done by the psychopath and adventurer Matushka. He was arrested and sentenced.

I will recall another example—the assassination of the French President by Gorgulov. At that time also statements were made in all countries that the hand of the Communists could be seen here. Gorgulov was depicted as a Communist, as a Soviet agent. And what turned out to be the case? It was proved that this assassination was organised by White Guards, and that Gorgulov was a provocateur who wanted to bring about the breaking off of relations between the Soviet Union and France.

I will also recall the blowing up of the Sofia Cathedral. This explosion was not organised by the Bulgarian Communist Party, but as a result of it the Communist Party suffered persecution; 2,000 workers, peasants and intellectuals were savagely murdered by fascist gangs, on the pretext that the Cathedral was blown up by Communists. This provocation associated with the blowing up of the Sofia Cathedral was organised by the Bulgarian police. As far back as 1920 the head of the Sofia police, Prutkin, organised bomb-throwing himself during the railway strike as a means of provoking the Bulgarian workers.

Presiding Judge (interrupting): This has nothing to do with the trial.

Dimitrov: The police official Heller spoke here of Communist propaganda in favour of incendiarism, etc. I asked him if he was not aware of cases when incendiarism performed by employers was later attributed to the Communists. In the "Voelkischer Beobachter" of October 5th it states that the Stettin police—

Presiding Judge: This article has not been brought forward at the trial. (Dimitrov tries to continue.)

Presiding Judge: Do not dare to speak of it here when it has not been referred to in the trial.

Dimitrov: A whole number of fires— (The presiding judge again interrupts Dimitrov.)

Dimitrov: This was a case for investigation

because a whole number of cases of incendiarism were blamed on the Communists. Then it was found that they had been committed by employers "with a view to providing work." I will recall another point, namely, the forging of documents. There are a great many forgeries which have been used against the working class. There are very many such cases. I will remind you of the well-known Zinoviev letter. This letter was never written by Zinoviev. It was a forgery. This forgery was used by the British Conservatives against the working class. I remind you of a number of such forgeries which have figured here in Germany.

Presiding Judge : This is outside the bounds of the court investigation.

Dimitrov : It has been stated here that the burning of the Reichstag was to have served as a signal for an armed insurrection. Attempts have been made to prove this in the following way :

Goering has stated here in court that at the moment when Hitler came to power the Communist Party of Germany was compelled to inflame the feelings of its followers and to undertake some action. He said : "The Communists had to do something. It was now or never!" He said that the Communist Party had for years been calling for the struggle against national-socialism, and that when the national-socialists took power, the C.P.G. had no other alternative but to take action, now or never. The Chief Public Prosecutor has tried to formulate this thesis more exactly and more "wisely."

Presiding Judge : I shall not permit you to insult the Chief Public Prosecutor.

Dimitrov : The assertions made by Goering in his capacity as chief witness for the prosecution were developed here by the Chief Public Prosecutor. The Chief Public Prosecutor, Doctor Werner, said : "The Communists were in such a position that they had either to retreat without a fight or to accept battle even without completing their preparations. Under the given circumstances it was the only chance the Communist Party had left. Either to abandon their aims without a struggle or to undertake a definite act of desperation, and to stake all on one throw. Under certain circumstances this might have saved the situation. There was a chance that it might not succeed, but even then the situation would not be worse than if the Communist Party retreated without a fight." The thesis which has been put forward and attributed to the Communist Party is not a Communist thesis. Such a supposition shows that the enemies of the C.P.G. know it very badly. Anybody who wants to correctly carry on a struggle against his enemy should know this enemy very well. The fact that

the Party was suppressed, that its mass organisations were dissolved, that it lost its legal existence, are naturally heavy blows at the revolutionary movement. *But this does not by any means signify that all is lost.*

In February, 1933, the Communist Party was threatened with suppression. The Communist press was prohibited and the suppression of the Communist Party was expected. The German Communist Party expected this. Its leaflets and newspapers spoke of it. The German Communist Party knew quite well that the Communist Parties had been prohibited in many countries, but that they continued their work and struggle in spite of this. The Communist Party is prohibited in Poland, Bulgaria, Italy and some other countries.

I can speak of this on the basis of the experience of the Bulgarian Communist Party. After the rising in 1923 the Bulgarian Communist Party was suppressed, but it carried on its work, and though it cost many sacrifices, it has become stronger than it was before 1923. This is understood by every critically minded person.

The German Communist Party can, in a suitable situation, bring the revolution about even as an illegal Party. This is shown by the experience of the Russian Communist Party. The Russian Communist Party was illegal. It was subjected to bloody persecution, but later the working class led by the Communist Party came to power. It was impossible for the leaders of the German Communist Party to argue that all was now lost, and that the question was one of two things, either insurrection or death. Such a silly idea could not have entered the heads of the leaders of the Communist Party. The Communist Party knew perfectly well that illegal work would mean numerous sacrifices and would demand self-sacrifice and daring, but it also knew that its revolutionary forces would strengthen, and that it would be able to carry out the task facing it. Therefore it is absolutely impossible that the German Communist Party wanted to stake everything on one throw at that time. *Fortunately the Communists are not so shortsighted as their opponents, and they do not lose their heads in the most difficult situations.*

I should add to this that the German Communist Party and the other Communist Parties are sections of the Communist International. What is the Communist International? I will permit myself to quote the statutes of the Communist International.

I will read the first paragraph of the statutes :
"The Communist International — the International Workers Association — is a union of Communist Parties in various countries ; it is a world Communist Party.

"As the leader and organiser of the world revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the upholder of the principles and aims of Communism, the Communist International struggles to win the majority of the working class and the broad strata of the propertyless peasantry, and fights for the establishment of the world dictatorship of the proletariat, for the establishment of a world union of Socialist Soviet Republics, for the complete abolition of classes and for the achievement of Socialism—the first stage of Communist society."

In this world Party, covering millions of people, and known as the Communist International, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is the strongest Party. It is the ruling Party of the Soviet Union, the greatest country in the world. The Comintern is a World Communist Party, and weighs up the political situation jointly with the leaders of the Communist Parties of all countries.

The Communist International, to which all the sections are directly responsible, is not an organisation of conspirators but a World Party. *Such a World Party does not play at insurrection and revolution.* Such a World Party cannot say *one thing* to the millions of its supporters and at the same time secretly *do the opposite*. Such a Party, my dear Doctor Sack, does not engage in double book-keeping!

Doctor Sack : All right, get on with your Communist propaganda.

Dimitrov : When such a Party appeals to the millions of the proletariat, when it makes its decisions on tactics and immediate tasks, it does so seriously, fully conscious of its responsibility. I will read you a decision of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. As these decisions were quoted here in court, I have the right to read them.

According to these decisions, the basic task of the German Communist Party is as follows : "To mobilise the vast masses of toilers in defence of their vital interests, against the bandit policy of monopolist capital, against fascism, against the emergency decrees, against nationalism and chauvinism, and by developing economic and political strikes, by struggle for proletarian internationalism, by means of demonstrations, to lead the masses to the point of the general political strike : to win over the bulk of the social-democratic masses, definitely overcome the weaknesses of trade-union work. The chief slogan which the Communist Party of Germany must put forward to offset the slogan of the fascist dictatorship (the "Third Empire") and the slogan of the social-democratic Party ("The Second Republic"), is the slogan of the *Workers' and Peasants' Republic*, i.e., Soviet Socialist Germany, which will guarantee the possibility of the voluntary affiliation of

the people of Austria and other German territories."

Mass work, mass struggle, mass resistance, the united front, no adventures! Such is the alpha and omega of Communist tactics.

A manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Comintern was found on me. I think that it can also be quoted. Two points are specially important in this manifesto. Thus, it speaks of demonstrations in various countries in connection with the events in Germany. It speaks of the tasks of the Communist Parties in the struggle against the national-socialist terror, and also of the defence of the organisations and press of the working class. In this manifesto, it says among other things :

"The main obstacle to the formation of the united front of struggle of the Communist and social democratic workers was and is the policy conducted by the social democratic parties, who have exposed the international proletariat to the blows of the class enemy. This policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie known as the so-called policy of the "lesser evil," has led in practice to the triumph of fascist reaction in Germany.

The Communist International and the Communist Parties of all countries have repeatedly declared their readiness to join in a common fight along with the social democratic workers against the capitalist offensive, against political reaction and civil war. The Communist Parties were the organisers of the common fight of the Communist, social democratic and non-Party workers in spite of the leaders of the social democratic parties, who systematically disrupted the united front of the working masses. On 20th July last year the Communist Party of Germany, after the Prussian social democratic government had been driven out by Papen, proposed to the social democratic party and the A.D.G.B. (German General Federation of Trade Unions) to organise a common strike against fascism. But the social democratic party and the A.D.G.B., with the approval of the whole of the Second International, described the proposal to organise a common strike as a provocation. The Communist Party of Germany repeated its proposal of common action at the moment when Hitler seized power; it called upon the Central Committee of the social democratic party and the Executive Committee of the A.D.G.B. to organise the resistance to fascism, but this time also met with a refusal. Nay, more, when in November last year the Berlin traffic workers unanimously went on strike against a wage reduction, the social democratic party sabotaged the united front struggle. The whole

practice of the international labour movement is full of similar examples.

The Bureau of the Labour and Socialist International published on 19th February last a declaration on the readiness of the social democratic parties affiliated to this International to form a united front with the Communists in order to fight against the fascist reaction in Germany. This declaration stands in sharp contradiction to the whole of the previous actions of the L.S.I. and social democratic parties. The whole policy and activity of the L.S.I. hitherto justifies the Communist International and the Communist Parties in putting no faith in the sincerity of the declaration of the L.S.I. Bureau, which makes its proposal at a moment when in a number of countries, and before all Germany, the working masses are taking into their own hands the organising of the united front. In spite of this, however, the Executive Committee of the Communist International, in view of fascism, which is unchaining all the forces of world reaction against the working class of Germany, calls upon all Communist Parties to make yet another attempt to set up the united front of struggle with the social democratic workers through the medium of the social democratic parties. The E.C.C.I. makes this attempt in the firm conviction that the united front of the working class, on the basis of the class struggle, will be able to repel the offensive of capital and fascism and to accelerate extraordinarily the inevitable end of all capitalist exploitation.

Having regard to the fact that, owing to the peculiarity of the conditions, as well as the differences in the concrete fighting tasks confronting the working class in the various countries, an agreement between the Communist and social democratic parties for definite actions against the bourgeoisie can be carried out most successfully within the confines of each individual country the E.C.C.I. recommends the Communist Parties of the various countries to approach the central committees of the social democratic parties belonging to the L.S.I. with proposals regarding the joint actions against fascism, and against the offensive of capital. Nevertheless, the negotiations between the parties concluding such an agreement must be based on the most elementary prerequisites for the common fight. Without a concrete programme of action against the bourgeoisie any agreement between the parties would be directed against the interests of the working class.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International, which makes these proposals before the international working class, calls upon all Communist Parties, and in the first place on the Communist Party of Germany, immediately and without waiting for the results of negotiations and

agreements with the social democracy with regard to a common fight, to proceed to organise joint fighting committees with social democratic workers and with workers of all other persuasions.

The Communists have proved through their long years of struggle that they stand, and will stand, not in words but in deeds, in the front ranks of the fight for the united front in class actions against the bourgeoisie.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International firmly believe that the social democratic and non-Party workers, regardless of what attitude the social democratic leaders adopt in setting up the united front, will overcome all obstacles and, together with the Communists, set up the united front not in words but in deeds.

Precisely at the present moment, when German fascism has organised a monstrous provocation (setting fire to the Reichstag, forging documents about an alleged Communist insurrection, etc.) in order to crush the workers' movement in Germany, every worker must recognise his class duty in the fight against the capitalist offensive and fascist reaction."

In this manifesto, nothing is said of the direct struggle for power. This task was not raised by the Communist Party of Germany nor by the Communist International. But I can say that the manifesto of the Comintern provides for armed insurrection.

The Court has drawn the conclusion from this that as the Communist Party aims to bring about an armed insurrection, then this insurrection was being directly prepared and was to have broken out. This, however, is illogical, incorrect, to say the least of it. Of course, it is the task of the Communist Parties throughout the whole world to struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is our principle, our aim. But it is a definite programme, which requires the forces not only of the working class but of the other strata of the toilers, if it is to be carried out.

It was a well-known fact that the German Communist Party stood for the proletarian revolution. But this is not the question to be decided at this trial. The question is whether a rising was really fixed to secure the seizure of power for February 27th, in connection with the burning of the Reichstag.

What has the Court enquiry shown, judges of the Supreme Court? The legend that the Reichstag fire was the work of the Communists has completely broken down. I shall not here quote the testimony of the witnesses, as the other defending counsel have done. But this question may be considered as settled for any person of normal intelligence. The Reichstag fire is in no way whatever connected with the activity of the

Communist Party—has no connection not only with a rising, but with a demonstration, a strike or any other action of this kind. This has been fully proved by the court enquiry. The burning of the Reichstag — I ignore the statements of criminals and psychopaths — was not taken by anyone to be the signal for a rebellion. No one noticed any actions, movements or attempts at rebellion in connection with the fire at the Reichstag. No one heard of it at that time. All stories tending in this direction belong to a much later period. At the time of the fire the workers were on the defensive against the attack of fascism. The Communist Party of Germany was trying to organise the resistance of the masses, to organise their defence. But it has been proved that *the burning of the Reichstag was the pretext, the prelude to a wide and deliberate destructive drive against the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party of Germany.* It has been proved beyond dispute that on February 27th-28th the responsible representatives of the government did not dream that a Communist rising was about to break out.

I have asked many questions on this subject of the witnesses called here. Above all I questioned Heller, the wonderful Karwane (laughter in court), Frey, Count Heldorf, and police officials. In spite of the variations among them, they all replied that they had not heard anything to indicate that a Communist insurrection was about to take place. This means that absolutely no steps were taken at all by governing circles.

Presiding Judge : But the court received a statement from the chief of the Western Police Section on this question.

Dimitrov : In his statement to the court the chief of the Western Police Section related that Goering called him to his office and gave him verbal instructions on the struggle against the Communist Party, i.e., on the struggle against Communist meetings, strikes, demonstrations, the electoral campaign, etc. But even this statement does not indicate that measures were being taken against a Communist insurrection which was about to take place immediately.

Barrister Seifert spoke of this yesterday. He drew the conclusion that no one in Government circles expected a rising at that moment. Seifert quoted Goebbels, and mentioned that from the start the latter did not believe the news about the Reichstag fire. Whether this was so in reality is a different matter.

The emergency decree of the German government on February 28th, 1933, is also a proof in this respect. It was issued immediately after the fire. Read this decree. What is written in it? It says there that such and such paragraphs of the

constitution are repealed, namely, paragraphs on the freedom of organisation, freedom of the press, personal inviolability, the inviolability of the home, etc. This is the essence of the emergency decree, of its second paragraph. The drive against the working class—

Presiding Judge : Not against the workers but against the Communists.

Dimitrov : I must state that not only were Communists arrested on the basis of this emergency decree but so were social democratic and catholic workers, and their organisations were disbanded. I should like to emphasise that this emergency decree was directed not only against the C.P.G., although, of course, the decree was directed first and foremost against it, but also against the other oppositional parties and groups. This law was needed in order to introduce exceptional measures, and it is organically connected with the burning of the Reichstag.

Presiding Judge : If you make attacks on the German government I shall deprive you of the right to speak.

Dimitrov : In this trial one question has been altogether left without explanation.

Presiding Judge : When you speak, address yourself to the judges and not to the public. Otherwise your speech may be regarded as propaganda.

Dimitrov : One question has been left unexplained both by the prosecution and the defence. I am not surprised that they did not think it necessary. They are very much afraid of this question. At the end of February, the situation was such that a struggle was taking place in the camp of the national front.

Presiding Judge : You are entering a sphere which I have already repeatedly forbidden you to touch.

Dimitrov : I wish to remind you of my application to the court to call a number of witnesses, including Schleicher, Bruening, Papen, Huegenberg, the Vice-President of the Stahlhelm, Duesterburg, and others.

Presiding Judge : But the court turned down the application to call these witnesses. Therefore you must not speak on this matter.

Dimitrov : I know, and I know why.

Presiding Judge : It is unpleasant for me to be continually interrupting you during your final remarks, but you must observe my instructions.

Dimitrov : This internal struggle in the national camp took place in connection with a struggle behind the scenes in German business circles. The struggle went on between the Thyssen and Krupp groups (war industry) which had financed the national-socialist movement for many years in

succession, and their competitors who were to be pushed into the background.

Thyssen and Krupp wished to establish the principle of autocracy and absolute domination over the country under their practical guidance, to bring about a considerable reduction in the standard of living of the working class, and for this purpose it was necessary to crush the revolutionary proletariat. At this time the Communist Party was striving to form a united front so as to unite all forces for defence against the attempts of the national-socialists to annihilate the working-class movement. Some of the social-democratic workers felt the necessity for the united front of the working class. They understood the need for it. Many thousands of social-democratic workers joined the ranks of the C.P.G. But in February and March, the task of establishing the united front did not by any means imply a rebellion and preparations for it, but only meant the mobilisation of the working class against the plunderous onslaught of the capitalists and against the violence of the national-socialists.

Presiding Judge (cutting Dimitrov short): You have always emphasised that you are only interested in the political situation in Bulgaria, but what you are saying now proves that you have displayed a big interest in political questions affecting Germany.

Dimitrov: Mr. Presiding Judge, you are trying to reproach me, but I can reply to you as follows: As a Bulgarian revolutionary I am interested in the revolutionary movement in all countries. For example, I am interested in South American political questions. I know them probably as well as I know German questions, though I have never been in America. But then that does not mean that if some parliamentary building in South America burns down that I am to blame.

During the court proceedings here, at the trial, I have learned a great deal, and thanks to my political sense, I have picked up and understood many details. There were two basic points in the political situation at that period. The first was that the national-socialists were striving towards autocratic power, and the second, counterbalancing this, was the activity of the Communist Party directed towards establishing the united front of the workers. In my opinion, this has also been made clear during the court proceedings at the trial.

The national-socialists needed a manoeuvre to create a diversion, to distract attention from the difficulties existing within the national camp, and to disrupt the united front of the workers. The "national government" required an impressive excuse for issuing its emergency decree of February 28th which abolished the freedom of the press,

the inviolability of personal freedom, and which established a system of police repressions, concentration camps and other measures for the struggle against the Communists.

Presiding Judge (cutting Dimitrov short): You have reached the very limit. You are making insinuations!

Dimitrov: I only want to cast some light on the political situation in Germany on the eve of the Reichstag fire, as I understand it.

Presiding Judge: This is not the place for insinuations against the government, or for statements which have been disproved long ago.

Dimitrov: The working class had to defend itself with all its power, and for this purpose the Communist Party tried to organise the united front despite the resistance of Wels and Breitscheid, who have now raised a hysterical howl abroad.

Presiding Judge: You must pass on to your defence, if you want to do so. Otherwise you will not have enough time for it.

Dimitrov: I have stated earlier on that I agree with the indictment on one point. I must now confirm my agreement. This applies to the question as to whether Van der Lubbe set the Reichstag on fire *himself* or whether he had any confederates. The representative of the prosecution, Parisius, has stated here that the fate of the accused depends on the answer to the question as to whether Van der Lubbe had accomplices or not. To this I reply: No, a thousand times no! This argument of the prosecution is not logical. *I consider that Van der Lubbe really did not set fire to the Reichstag by himself.* On the basis of expert evidence and the data of the court proceedings, I have come to the conclusion that the act of setting fire to the large hall in the Reichstag was of a different type to that in the restaurant on the lower storey, etc. The large hall was set on fire by other people and by other means. The acts of arson committed by Lubbe, and the incendiarism in the large hall only coincide in *time*, but are *essentially different* in other respects. The most probable thing is that Lubbe is an unthinking tool of these people, a tool who has been misused. Van der Lubbe does not say everything here. He is stubbornly keeping silence even now. The solution of this question does not decide the fate of the accused. Van der Lubbe was not alone, but neither Torgler nor Popov nor Tanev nor Dimitrov were with him.

On February 27th, Van der Lubbe in all probability met a certain person in Henningsdorf and told him of his attempts at incendiarism in the Town Hall and the Palace. This person told him that all these fires were merely "child's play." The burning of the Reichstag during the elections

would be the real thing. Thus the burning of the Reichstag arose out of a secret alliance between political madness and political provocation. The ally representative of political madness is sitting in the prisoner's dock. The ally representative of political provocation remains at liberty. The stupid Van der Lubbe could not be aware that while he was making his awkward attempts to set fire to the restaurant, the corridor and the lower storey, certain persons unknown were at the same time making use of the combustible fluid spoken of by Doctor Schatz to set fire to the large hall. (Van der Lubbe begins to laugh. His whole body shakes with silent laughter. The attention of the public, the judges and the accused at this time is focussed on Lubbe.)

Dimitrov (pointing to Lubbe): The unknown provocateur took care of all the preparations for the fire. This Mephistopheles has succeeded in disappearing without a trace. And here we have the stupid tool, the pitiful Faust, while Mephistopheles has disappeared. It was most probable that a bridge was established in Henningsdorf between Lubbe and the representatives of police provocation, the agents and enemies of the working class.

The Chief Public Prosecutor, Werner, has said here that Van der Lubbe is a Communist. He has stated further that even if Van der Lubbe is not a Communist, he did the job in the interests of the Communist Party and in connection with it. This statement is not true.

Who is Van der Lubbe? Is he a Communist? By no means! Is he an anarchist? No! He is a declassed worker, a mutinous lumpen-proletarian, a creature who has been misused, who has been utilised against the working class. No! He is no Communist. He is no anarchist. There is not a single Communist in the world, not a single anarchist who would behave in court as Van der Lubbe is doing. Genuine anarchists perform senseless acts, but when they are in court they accept responsibility and explain their aims. If any Communist were to do such a thing, he would never remain silent in court while innocent people stand in the prisoners' dock. No, Van der Lubbe is no Communist, he is no anarchist. He is a tool misused by fascism.

There can be nothing in common between this person, this misused tool who has been utilised to do harm to Communism and the chairman of the Communist fraction of the Reichstag, or the Bulgarian Communists.

I must remind you here that on the morning of February 28th, Goering published a news-bulletin on the fire. In this news-bulletin there is a statement to the effect that Torgler and Koenen fled from the Reichstag building at 10 p.m. This

story was spread throughout the country. The statement added that the fire was the work of the Communists. At the same time the tracks of Van der Lubbe in Henningsdorf were not followed up. The person who spent the night with Van der Lubbe in the police lodging house in Henningsdorf has not been found.

Presiding Judge (cutting Dimitrov short): When do you intend to finish your speech?

Dimitrov: I want to speak for another half-hour. I must express my opinion on this question.

Presiding Judge: But you cannot keep on talk ing endlessly.

Dimitrov: During the three months of the trial, Mr. Presiding Judge, you have compelled me to keep silent time after time, promising that I should be able to speak in detail in my own defence at the end of the trial. Now the end of the trial has come, but despite your promise you are restricting my right to speak once again. The question of Henningsdorf is extremely important. Washinsky, the man who spent the night with Van der Lubbe, has not been found. My proposal to seek him out was declared to be purposeless. The assertion that Lubbe was in Henningsdorf together with Communists is a lie concocted by a national-socialist witness, the hairdresser Grawe. If Van der Lubbe had been in Henningsdorf with some Communists the fact would have been investigated long since. Mr. Presiding Judge, no one has been interested in seeking Washinsky out.

The person in plain clothes who came to the Brandenburg police station with the first news of the fire in the Reichstag has not been sought out, and remains unknown to the present day. Investigations were conducted on a false track. The national-socialist deputy, Doctor Albrecht, who left the Reichstag immediately after the fire, has not been questioned. The search for the incendiaries has taken place not where they really are to be found but where they do not exist. They have been sought for in the ranks of the Communist Party, and this is incorrect. This has made it possible for the real incendiaries to disappear. The decision was: as they did not arrest and did not dare to arrest the real incendiaries, they had better take other, so to speak, "honorary" incendiaries of the Reichstag.

Presiding Judge: I forbid you to go on like this. I'll give you ten more minutes.

Dimitrov: I have the right to make proposals on the sentence, and to state my reasons. The Chief Public Prosecutor has regarded all the evidence of the Communists as unworthy of belief. I do not take up such a position. I cannot state, for example, that all the national-socialist witnesses are liars. I think that among the millions

of national-socialists there are honest people as well—

Presiding Judge: I forbid you to make such malicious attacks.

Dimitrov: But is it not remarkable that all the chief witnesses for the prosecution are national-socialist deputies, journalists and supporters of national-socialism? The national-socialist deputy, Karwane, stated that he saw Torgler together with Van der Lubbe in the Reichstag building. The national-socialist deputy, Frey, stated that he saw Popov together with Torgler in the Reichstag building. The national-socialist waiter, Helmer, stated that he saw Van der Lubbe together with Dimitrov. The national-socialist journalist, Weberstadt, saw Tanev together with Lubbe. What is this—accident? The witness, Doctor Drescher, alias Zimmerman, an employee of the “Volkischer Boebachter”—

Presiding Judge (interrupting): That has not been proved.

Dimitrov: —stated that Dimitrov was the organiser of the explosion in Sofia Cathedral, a point which has been disproved, and professed to have seen me in the Reichstag with Torgler. I state with absolute confidence that Drescher and Zimmerman are one and the same person—

Presiding Judge: I reject that. It has not been proved.

Dimitrov: The police official Heller has quoted a Communist poem here from a book published in 1925, so as to prove that the Communists set fire to the Reichstag in 1933.

I will also take the liberty of quoting a poem from the great German poet Goethe:

Lerne zeitig Klüger sein.
Auf des Glückes grosser Wage
Steht die Zunge selten ein;
Du musst steigen oder sinken,
Du musst herrschen und Gewinnen
Oder dienen und verlieren,
Leiden oder triumphieren,
Amboss oder Hammer sein.

Yes, those who do not want to be the anvil must be the hammer!

The German working class as a whole did not understand this truth either in 1918 or in 1923, or on July 20th, 1932, or in January, 1933. The social democratic leaders, Wels, Severing, Braun, Leiparte, Grassman, and their like are responsible for this. Now, of course, the German workers will be able to understand it.

A great deal has been said here about German justice and law, and I want to express my opinion on this matter. There is no doubt that the political combinations of the given moment and the ruling political tendencies always have an effect on the decisions of a court.

The Minister of Justice, Kerl, is a competent witness for this court. I will quote him:

The accepted idea of formally liberal law is that the idol of justice should be objectivity. This brings us to the source of the alienation between the people and justice, and in the last analysis it is always justice which is to blame for this alienation in the long run. What is objectivity at a time when the people are fighting for existence? Does the warring soldier or the warring army know anything of objectivity? The soldier and the army know only one thing, have only one idea, and admit only one question, namely, how to protect liberty and honour, how to save the nation.

Thus, it is obvious that in a nation which is fighting a life and death struggle justice cannot bow down to *lifeless objectivity*. The measures of the courts, the prosecutors and lawyers will be dictated by *one idea alone*, namely, what is most important for the nation, what will save the people?

Not *spineless objectivity*, which signifies *stagnation*, and therefore *fossilisation, alienation from the people*—no, all the actions and all the measures of a legal body as a whole and of each individual must be subordinated to the needs of the people, of the nation.

Thus, justice is a relative conception.

Presiding Judge: This has nothing to do with the question at issue. You must make your proposals.

Dimitrov: The Chief Public Prosecutor has proposed to acquit the accused Bulgarians since there is an insufficiency of evidence. But this does not satisfy me at all. The question is by no means so simple. This would not remove suspicion. No, it has been proved during the trial that we had nothing to do with the burning of the Reichstag. Therefore there is no place for any suspicion whatsoever. We, Bulgarians, like Torgler, must be acquitted not because there is an absence of incriminatory evidence, but because we, as Communists, have nothing in common and could not have anything in common with this anti-Communist act.

I propose that the following decisions be made:

1. The High Court to recognise our innocence in this affair and to declare the accusation false. This applies to us all—to me, Torgler, Popov and Tanev.
2. Van der Lubbe to be regarded as a tool used to harm the working class.
3. Those responsible for the unfounded charge against us to be called to account.
4. To recompense us at the expense of the persons responsible for time lost, for damage to our health and the sufferings we have undergone.

Presiding Judge: The Court will bear these so-

called proposals of yours in mind when discussing the verdict.

Dimitrov: The time will come when these proposals will be carried out with interest. As for the full investigation of the burning of the Reichstag and the discovery of the real culprits, this, of course, will be done by the judgment of the people in the coming proletarian revolution.

In the 17th century, the founder of scientific physics, Galileo, was tried by the stern court of the Inquisition, which had to sentence him to death as a heretic. With the deepest determination and conviction he cried:

"And nevertheless the world revolves!" And later this scientific truth became known to all mankind.

(The Presiding Judge sharply cuts Dimitrov short, stands up, gathers his papers and prepares to leave the court.)

Dimitrov (continuing): *We Communists can now say no less firmly than old man Galileo:*

And nevertheless it revolves! The wheel of history is turning, moving forward in the direction of Soviet Europe, in the direction of the World Union of Soviet Republics!

And this wheel, driven ahead by the proletariat, under the leadership of the Communist International, cannot be stopped by destructive measures nor by prison sentences nor by death sentences. It turns and will continue to turn until the final victory of Communism.

(The police seize Dimitrov and force him violently into his seat.)

The Presiding Judge and his colleagues withdraw to consider whether Dimitrov may continue to speak. After discussion, the court returns and announces that Dimitrov is finally deprived of the right to speak.

THE SITUATION IN GERMANY

By G. SMOLIANSKY.

FIFTEEN months ago the German bourgeoisie, aiming to save themselves from proletarian revolution, placed the most savage and terroristic fascist party of the bourgeoisie in power. The National Socialist Party was at that time at the zenith of its demagogy and its mass influence. To the glare of thousands of torches, crowds of the Berlin middle-class and unemployed Storm Troopers, driven furious by the horrors of the crisis, marched past the President's palace. On the balcony, the "leader" himself, Adolph Hitler, held the man by the hand whom social-democracy had put in power to watch over the Weimar constitution, the East Prussian feudalist and the Kaiser's Field Marshal, Hindenburg, demonstrating to the latter the determination of the German people to have an "authoritative" government. Imitating the "iron chancellor" Bismarck, the "leader" greeted the demonstrators, intoxicated by lavish promises and unrestrained chauvinism, with the cry, "The heavens salute our victories!"

The fascist bourgeoisie were not alone in announcing to the whole world that Marxism was already a "thing of the historic past," that the "Communist Party of Germany was dead," and that the "fascist regime would reign for 30,000 years," but, using every loophole, all the social-democratic saviours of capitalism deafened the working masses with poisonous prophecies of a new epoch of "fascism and reaction."

But, of course, fascism was not fated to eliminate class contradictions, and to stride over the contradictions within decaying German capitalism in defiance of the whole of historic development. The advent of the fascist dictatorship to power in Germany was able to retard the victory of the proletarian revolution for a time, but the rôle of fascism, and at the same time its historic doom is precisely to be found in the fact that, in making a principle of the "total state" and the "nation" against the "struggle of classes," it *still more sharply lays bare the contradictions of the capitalist system and still more thoroughly digs a gulf between the classes.*

On the basis of a Marxist-Leninist analysis, the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. in its resolution of April 1, 1933,* showed the only possible outlook, namely, the revolutionary outlook, before the German working class.

"Every day of the Hitler government will reveal with greater clearness the manner in which the masses who follow Hitler have been tricked. . . . The revolutionary upsurge will inevitably grow in Germany, in spite of the Fascist terror. The resistance of the masses to fascism is bound to increase. The establishment of an open fascist dictatorship, by destroying all the democratic illusions among the masses and liberating them from the influence of social-democracy, accelerates

*See "Why Hitler in Germany" ?

the rate of Germany's development towards the proletarian revolution."

The more feverishly fascism has striven to "satisfy all classes," by plundering millions of taxpayers so as to throw subsidies running into billions to the manufacturers and agrarians, along with sops to isolated strata of the petty-bourgeoisie who were promised the "restoration of economic independence," the more sharply the deep class contradictions show themselves, while at the same time the process of class differentiation in town and village has been intensified. After a year in power, German fascism has carried into effect an open dictatorship of the most predacious, most grasping monopolist capital, such as the world has never seen. And the more fiercely the apparatus of the fascist terror operates, the more powerfully is the supreme revolutionary struggle of the Communist Party of Germany impressed on the minds of the masses. After a year and a quarter of fascist dictatorship, the German Communist Party is acting as the only revolutionary force organising the overthrow of the detested régime, and has accumulated enormous political capital. And however much the fascist government has tried to penetrate into the ranks of the working class so as to deprive Marxism in Germany of its life source at one blow, the hatred of the working masses towards national socialism has grown with every new day. The Leipzig battle of the fearless proletarian revolutionary Dimitrov against the fascist "court," and the stunning moral and political defeat of fascism was greeted enthusiastically by the entire mass of the German proletariat as their own victory. It could not be otherwise.

Hitler was able to come to power primarily because as a result of the treacherous policy of social-democracy, the working class was *split within and isolated without* from the petty-bourgeoisie of town and village, and above all from the peasants. When he came to power, Hitler addressed himself to the strata which had helped him to surround the proletariat, in his famous "four-year Programme." The three big planks in this platform were:

(a) "The salvation of the peasants in order to preserve the basis for the food and the vital foundations of the nation," so stated Hitler.

(b) "The creation of work for the unemployed."

(c) "The struggle against the danger of inflation" in the direction of which the government of Papen and Schleicher had already made a move. "The protection of the currency" was embodied in the arsenal containing the chief slogans of the national socialists, its purpose being to win the mass of the urban petty-bourgeoisie, for whom the inflation of 1923 is undoubtedly the most terrible event they recollect over the entire post-war period. In the *first period* of their power, the national-

socialists feverishly hastened to secure the influence among the masses achieved as a result of their previous demagogy, so as to strengthen and concentrate the apparatus of State power, which they had seized. This was the period of "Gleichschaltung," of the political "unification" of Germany. The last relics of the various independent regions were liquidated. All other political parties of the bourgeoisie disappeared. The demagogy of the national socialists, even at this period, rapidly faded. But fascism still industriously disguised the finance-capitalist character of its measures. It deceived the peasants' in their expectation of receiving land and of being liberated from "debt slavery," but was still able to make demagogic use of the debt moratorium which it declared in the countryside and of the celebrated policy of "autarchy," which amounted to artificially raising the prices of farm products. By means of these measures, fascism sought to give the impression of the "united village family" as the main foundation of the "totality of the nation." It is noteworthy that the social-democrats, like all the opportunists who loudly announced the advent of a new era of fascism and reaction, accepted this fascist fiction as genuine fact. It is also a characteristic feature of the manoeuvres of the national socialists that Hitler utilised his chief ally Hugenberg and the latter's nationalist, mainly agrarian party, as the chief object of his demagogy, accusing the nationalists of aristocratic reaction, corruption, and depicting them as the main obstacle in the way of the "settlement" of the peasants. This slogan was to replace the old demagogic promises of a fundamental land reform.

Fascism also tried to utilise the first period of depression among the workers who were caught unprepared by the treachery of the social-democrats and the wide scope of the fascist terror, to immediately get the workers' mass organisations, and primarily the trade unions, into its hands, and to set up a mass basis for itself in the factories. By organising a "national festival of labour" on May 1st, and on the following day seizing the apparatus of the reformist trade unions, the leaders of German fascism, intoxicated with the speed at which the "unification" of the apparatus of the State and the bourgeois parties was taking place, seriously harboured the illusion that it was possible for it to win the working class—and to win it at lightning speed. The workers were assured that the system of wage agreements would remain inviolate. At the same time, fascism tried to fetter any outward activity displayed by the proletariat by officially prohibiting strikes under the threat of the sternest repression. But very soon a wave of movements in the factories in which many workers, formally members of the national socialist party, participated, compelled the fascists to realise

the illusory nature of their attempts to bring the working class under their control. At this time the social-democrats were completely under the impression of their own collapse. They did not exist either as an organisation or as agitators or as propagandists. In these most difficult conditions, the Communist Party re-organised its work underground, displaying wonderful examples of mass proletarian heroism and accumulating that political capital which was one of the most important factors later on in the transition to the beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge.

In respect to foreign affairs, this period was characterised by the practical isolation of Germany. All the surrounding bourgeois governments were scared by the aggressiveness of German national socialism. In France and Poland the question of a preventive war was most vividly in evidence at this period. This isolation of Germany from the outer world in turn helped German fascism to keep up the chauvinist hysteria which it had unleashed.

A new stage began after the summer of 1933, the characteristic feature of which was primarily that it was the *beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge*. The social-democrats were timidly in evidence as yet, feeling out their old leading cadres. But the new moods and ideas among the masses compelled the social-democratic leaders living in other countries to raise the question of the "revision" of their former policy, of the necessity of "*neu beginnen*," of "beginning afresh." The Communist Party, which was re-organising itself to meet the illegal situation, suffered severe losses just at this very time, thus giving rise to new hopes in the breasts of the social-fascists. The Communists, they reasoned, have cleared the road, and we, social-democrats, will climb back on their shoulders to the masses who used to follow us. The Communist Party was faced with the question of directing the underground organisations towards mass work, of forming independent class trade unions, of attracting the masses of social-democratic workers. An influx of social-democratic workers began to make itself felt very palpably in the Communist organisations. A sectarian danger was disclosed in their fear of this influx.

In this period, national-socialism openly displayed itself as the *dictatorship of monopolist capital*. With the aid of the government, cartelisation reached enormous dimensions. For instance, the well-known Steel Amalgamation reduced the share of the government practically to a quarter, while the share of Thyssen is estimated at 13-25 per cent., the Rhein Steel Corporation at 11-12 per cent., Otto Wolf at 9 per cent., the Ganniel group and the Dutch factories connected with it at 6 per cent., etc. In the literal sense of the term, a handful of capitalist

robbers concentrate in their hands the basic commanding heights in German economy. A transition is taking place from political to economic "totality." All the economic organisations of the bourgeoisie are "unified." Fascism carries into practice the most sacred predatory dreams of the employers as to their right to be "masters in their own house," declaring the capitalist to be the "leader" of the factory at the head of a "united factory family." But at the same time considerable illusions are still maintained regarding the "programme for the creation of work," which is assisted by a fact which objectively favours fascism, namely, that its coming to power coincided with a certain alleviation of the world economic crisis and its passing from the lowest point to a depression (in Germany as well).

The Hitler Government scatters government funds still more recklessly, spending 6 billion marks on subsidies and gifts during its year in power, and of this sum 2 billions went on the fulfilment of the "plan for finding work" which in reality was a programme for preparing for war. This programme of providing work is carried out first of all at the expense of lowering the standard of living of the working masses, by directly lowering wages, by introducing the shortened working week, by reducing social insurance, forced labour, and by draining the hard-earned money belonging to the mass of taxpayers into the pockets of the employers. The clearest example of the predatory character of the fascist "drive against unemployment" is to be found in the situation existing in East Prussia (province), where the Fascists are boasting that they have completely "liquidated" unemployment in this border district. During the month of October alone the industrialists and agrarians in this district received subsidies amounting to 3,124,000 marks. This means that if the fascists were to take it into their heads to carry their "drive" through on a similar scale throughout the whole of Germany, then they would have to hand out 500 million marks a month to the employers, or 6 billion marks for the year. These measures of the fascist government arouse a feeling of sympathy and a desire to imitate among the entire international bourgeoisie. For instance, an article in the organ of French heavy industry, the "*Journee Industrielle*," dated March 30, 1934, which gives a eulogistic estimate of Hitler's "drive against unemployment," is very noteworthy of the fascisation of "democratic" France.

"In any case," it states, "almost everyone can see . . . the rebirth of the spirit of the family property and economic independence (referring to the new position of the employers—G.S.) in a country which was permeated with collectivisation more than any other capitalist country was. This makes it impossible for us to give a sweeping

condemnation of the German policy of struggle against unemployment, even though it had to be accompanied by big financial difficulties."

This "international solidarity" of the bourgeoisie takes on a further special interest because in essence all the economic measures of the fascist government are a concentrated form of carrying out *before* the war the things which the international bourgeoisie already considers necessary *during* war itself. It is not only a question of mass armaments before the war, of manipulating public opinion, but of *immediately* carrying out fundamental economic reconstruction in all spheres to conform to the needs of war and covering both industry and agriculture. Such a reorganisation is being carried through in *all* capitalist countries. But in no single capitalist country is it being carried out to *such a degree* as in Germany. This is made essential by the whole economic and political position of the German bourgeoisie. Moreover, as distinct from 1914-18, the *private* interests of monopolist capital stand out much more openly and cynically now.

The "new labour regulations" which liquidate even fascist trade unions, which establish unlimited power for the employer in the sphere of wages, and which convert the factory into a barracks of the Frederick the Great epoch, has called forth a new wave of the sharpest hatred, as yet somewhat deadened, of the workers for fascism. Although the new law only comes into force in June, the employers have already had time to make wide use of the new regulations for directly cutting wages. Official fascist statistics which boastfully talk of three million workers brought into industry in 15 months, are at the same time compelled to record the absence of any increase in the total amount of paid wages, and in many cases, a direct reduction. The fascists themselves say that while, according to their figures the number of unemployed receiving work from December, 1932, to September, 1933, was 1,700,000, the sum paid out in wages remained practically at one level. In its report for 1933 the Krupp Company states that during the year the number of workers increased by 7.762 while the sum paid out was reduced from 69.6 million marks to 67.4 millions. The report of the well-known Chemical Trust, the "I. G. Farbenindustrie," shows an increase in the number of workers employed by 35 per cent., while wages increased by only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The fascist press has been converted into a graveyard as far as information is concerned, and publishes nothing but empty and bombastic speeches by Hitler, Goebbels and all the endless great and small "leaders." But the Government institutions are filled with memorandums from the employers uttering warnings as to the "dangerous ferment in the minds" of those in the factories, and endless complaints against the "demagogu" even of the

"labour front" which was formed by the police by reshuffling the fascist trade unions.

"The strivings of the national socialists to eliminate class contradictions has remained *merely a wish* up to now. The general prohibition of strikes could only bring about the *removal of the outer manifestations of the struggle but could not remove their causes . . . on the whole nothing has changed.*" This, for example, is what is written by the manager of the Lignose Chemical Trust (working chiefly on war orders), in whose factories the workers were most carefully selected, so that in some cases 100 per cent. of the workers are formally members of the national socialist party.

The employers' appetites grow from day to day. The dreams of the capitalists may be gauged from an intimate conversation of a certain Ober-Regierungsrat, Dr. K., a big business man, which took place on December 22, 1933 :

"German economy is in a condition of most dangerous crisis. The entire 'programme for creating work' as operated by the government will never be carried out. Sooner or later wages will have to be lowered again. And, however comical it may sound, in many respects we shall have to *go backwards 200 years*. And above all we shall have to lower habits of life *to the limit.*"

The employers regard any tempo legalising the plunder of the workers as being too slow and this gives rise to serious friction even with the representatives of the "labour front," who resort in their propaganda to the use of a certain dose of demagogu. In connection with their demagogic campaign "to reduce prices" which is being carried on by the "labour front" under the guidance of the notorious doctor Ley, a number of employers' organisations, especially commercial organisations, have come out with a sharp criticism of the propaganda of the "labour front," while Hitler himself, in his speech at Munich on March 21, announced a "second drive against unemployment" and raised the question of lowering prices. The Empire Association of Wholesale and Foreign Trade characterises the results of this slogan as follows :

"We must state that *the mere information in the press about such a campaign* has, according to the information at our disposal, caused a *certain condition of disquiet*. . . . In view of the exceptional resources at the disposal of the propaganda apparatus of the German 'workers' front,' such an all-embracing campaign for the lowering of prices would cause *such a critical position in business that we consider that we have the right to draw attention to this immediately.*"

There is the further very significant fact characterising the situation that the leader of the Berlin section of the "workers' front," Engel, who was the fascist personification of the inviolability of wage

agreements, was dismissed only a few days ago. The employers are trying to get rid as quickly as possible of any external formalities which could in the slightest degree hinder the capitalist being "master in his own house."

On the other hand, a section of the unemployed have been taken into industry in one way or another. The unemployed who are outside the factory gates are trying above all to get jobs inside the factories. But when they find themselves in the surroundings of the present-day fascist factory jail, or working as serfs in the forced labour camps, they will with our aid be drawn into the common class front in the factory against the employers.

For this reason, nothing is now causing greater disquiet to the fascist dictatorship in Germany *than the question of the workers*. The fascist government compels the employers to engage unemployed national socialist workers first of all, and to throw out the old cadres who are all suspected, and not without reason, of "sympathy towards Marxism." The Government has launched the slogan that all unemployed national socialists who have a Party card numbering from No. 1 to No. 100,000 must immediately receive jobs. But even this cannot be done, because in the overwhelming majority the unemployed Storm Troops consist of unskilled workers, who moreover are dreaming of a better life now that their party is in power, while for the employers to lose their old cadres means to undertake a very unprofitable and risky experiment.

Thus fascism is twisting and turning in the effort to develop a mass basis for itself in the factories, since it is being stifled in the clutches of the old contradictions of the German bourgeoisie and of the new ones created by the fascist dictatorship.

The same is true of the *villages*. Though Hitler in his last speech still continued to talk of the decisive importance of the peasants, nevertheless the dream of the "united village family" has long since faded away. The Minister of National Economy, Schmidt, openly mocks at "liberation from the tyranny of interest." The period of the moratorium has not yet elapsed, but the government is already taking on itself the rôle of collector of current debts. Only those who have farms of not less than 7 hectares are considered to be "peasants." According to the new fascist "inheritance law" these farms may not be divided. This law has introduced the fiercest dissension into the peasant family, because a farm can only be left to one heir, while all the others are doomed to pauperisation and hopeless unemployment in circumstances when the crisis is on. At the same time, enormous exasperation has been caused among the agricultural proletariat, for, in addition to the detachments from the "forced labour" camps who have been sent on agricultural work, 200,000 unemployed have been sent into the countryside as so-

called "auxiliary workers," while the labour of the latter is paid for literally at the rate of 5 pfennigs a day and extremely limited food and "working garments." Thus, instead of the "united village family," fascism has called into existence an unprecedentedly *keen differentiation in the villages*. Fascism is still trying to manoeuvre while continuing to incite the farm labourers against the unemployed, whom fascism itself has driven into the countryside, and while inciting the village against the town. But the new features, as compared with the previous period, are that in implanting a new "strong peasant" in the villages based on the inheritance law, fascism is trying to tear the middle peasant away from the united front with the poor peasants and the farm labouring village elements against the big landowners which it used demagogically before coming to power. It is trying to tear them away so as to get them into closer contact with the kulaks and the landlords, and to establish for itself, even on a narrow basis, a quieter and firmer basis in the villages.

At the same time fascism is directly attracting new strata of the petty-bourgeoisie to the state pie, thus attaching them strongly to the fascist state, and simultaneously creating illusions among considerable groups of the petty-bourgeoisie who have not yet "fixed themselves up." The doors are opened to all the greed and vanity and pride of the petty middle-class, intensified in addition by anti-Semitism and chauvinist intoxication. The abundance of appointments in the unified government offices, in the race-sterilised educational institutions, scientific institutions, editorial offices of newspapers, etc., has given wings to the hopes of the army of declassed petty-bourgeois elements who are thus liberated for a time from the realisation that they have no perspectives and that they are crushed down by the capitalist crisis. But, as was the case in the villages, in the "programme for creating work," in the predatory method of management, the sops and appointments had in the long run to *become* more and more *exhausted*. And ahead there is the possibility of *inflation*, the terrible scourge of the urban petty-bourgeoisie. And the further matters go, the more does dissatisfaction grow among these circles. The Swiss paper, "Neue Zurich Zeitung," which openly sympathises with the national socialists, describes the feeling in the town as follows:

"When you listen to what is being said among the people you immediately notice that even in personal conversations people are very reserved in expressing their opinion. . . . Only women talk and criticise among their nearest acquaintances. . . . The intellectuals have only partly been won over, a fact which frequently causes outbursts of anger among the national socialists." The petty-bourgeoisie of the towns were most

deeply affected by the military chauvinist propaganda of the national socialists. And it was necessary on the foreign political arena carefully to veil the militant slogans of the first period of power and to manoeuvre, utilising the contradictions of the competing imperialists. The first line taken by the fascist dictatorship, namely, to organise a united front of the world bourgeoisie against the Soviet Union, and to take the lead of the counter-revolutionary military campaign, and on this basis to explode the Versailles system, did not succeed. The next attempt, namely, a head-on attack on Austria so as to cut the Versailles knot there, was also a failure. Hence the transition to *more complex manoeuvres* calculated on a longer period. On the other hand, a preventive war against Germany did not take place because British imperialism did not want to strengthen the position of the French bourgeoisie on the Continent, because Italian imperialism, which bars the path of fascist Germany to the Near East was at the same time by no means interested in further strengthening French imperialism. German fascism utilised these contradictions, and to a certain extent was able to break through the vassal system of French imperialism in the East and South-East of Europe (Poland—a breach in the Little Entente). In reality nothing but territorial borders have remained from the Versailles Treaty. German fascism is also trying to create a basis for a temporary agreement with French imperialism (unsuccessfully, it is true), and is trying in every way to soothe the frightened French bourgeoisie. "Not a single intelligent Frenchman," writes the newspaper, "Neue Zurich Zeitung" in an inspired article entitled "Germany and France," "will seriously believe that France is dealing with the Hitler of 1923, who merely talks differently now, owing to his cunning, but secretly thinks as he thought formerly."

It is clear that this need to manoeuvre requires a certain re-adaptation to secure a *quieter mass basis* in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie included.

In these conditions, fascist Germany at the beginning of 1934 found itself face to face with a serious commercial and financial crisis. With no colonies, and no foreign monopolist markets, having by its policy of "autarchy" secured the declaration of economic war on itself by the neighbouring countries, with no exports of capital and at the same time an unceasing leakage of gold and the currency fund, the national socialists were bound to be brought to this crisis very quickly as the result of their predatory management. *This was the first serious open blow at the economic policy of Fascism.* The impossibility of "autarchy" for capitalism has been demonstrated in practice, as plainly as possible. As the liberal "Prager Presse" stated humorously, "autarchy came in sooner than its authors wanted."

The foreign trade balance of Germany, which was favourable in 1928, became unfavourable for the first time in 1934. While the balance of foreign trade of the countries competing against Germany improved somewhat during the last year, the reverse took place in Germany. The lowering of wages and the standard of living of the masses, which contracted the home market still further during the last year, could not be a real basis for extensive dumping on the world market. Furthermore, the prices of the raw material imported by German industry (textile raw material, non-ferrous metals, etc.), which fell during the crisis years more than the finished products exported by Germany, rose again during the last year, thus depriving Germany of a big advantage. If the import of raw material is reduced for a long time, or even if the import of some raw materials is stopped, this means that the whole "programme for finding work" will be endangered and a new wave of unemployment will be caused. Nevertheless, the national socialist government has to a certain degree already been compelled to take such steps, and has for a time completely stopped the issue of foreign currency to importers of textile raw material and copper, in general limiting the quotas of foreign currency by one third. For the coffers of the government store are empty of foreign currency. The foreign currency fund in April, 1934, was only 6 per cent. of what it was in 1930.

Thus *inflation is knocking at the gates of fascist Germany.* And this is the case despite the fact that the fascist government has not made its reparation payments, that the foreign debts of Germany have shrunk by 4½ billions owing to the fall of the dollar and pound, and that expenditure on social insurance has been considerably reduced. At the same time, the budget for 1934 has in view a tremendous increase of expenditure, primarily military expenditure. The increase in the budget of the war ministry is to amount to 220 million marks, and of the minister of aviation to 132 millions. A new section covering the maintenance of the storm troopers is to take 250 millions, while 190 millions are to be spent on "voluntary labour service." This means that the commercial and currency difficulties are being *considerably increased by the difficulties facing the state budget.*

What is the way out ?

A struggle is going on between the contradictory interests in the camp of the German bourgeoisie around this question, a struggle carefully concealed up to the present under fascist unification. These contradictions cover different spheres, contradictions between *industrialists and agrarians, export and import capital, monopolists and non-monopolists, creditors and debtors.* Inflation or no inflation—such is the main theme of the discussion. The national-socialist

leaders who have been declaiming for a year about the salvation of German currency by the fascist régime, are still continuing officially to curse the inflation of the "November criminals." But a note is already to be discerned in their speeches, preparing for the possibility of a new inflation even though it be a partial one. In his speech at Munich, Hitler stated that "we shall never allow *such* an inflation as took place in 1923." All the speeches of the ministers and economists emphasise the necessity of increasing exports, while the report of the Empire Credit Association openly raised the question of a "change of currency." Finally, the economists-theoreticians are giving ideological arguments to prove the value of inflation for the entire German people.

"Measures for devaluation are *neither for nor against* any separate strata," writes the theoretical economic organ of national socialism, the "Deutsche Volkswirtschaft" (March, 1933). "And if devaluation is applied as an economic measure in connection with the market situation, it is . . . a measure for the general good, used in the struggle against the crisis and thus serving *in the interest of all strata.*"

On the other hand, banking capital is in the forefront in not being interested in inflation. The present president of the Reichsbank, Schacht, who is a representative of heavy industry, openly opposes inflation and also takes his argument from national socialist "ideology." He directly polemises against Hitler's speech when, at the end of March, 1934, he says outright in the "Rheinische-Main Economische Zeitung :"

"A thing which is incompatible with the spirit of national-socialist Germany and deserving of stern resistance, is the fact that irresponsible people at the present day are trying to discredit the policy of the Reichsbank by the propaganda of devaluation and of such plans, the fulfilment of which, possibly, would be of use to our foreign trade for a short time, but which would deal a heavy blow at German national economy as a whole."

As a way out Schacht proposes to demand a "breathing space" at the forthcoming conference of creditors in Berlin in April, for private debts to be counted as political ones, since Germany had to pay instalments on reparations. Schacht plans to go to America after the conference to seek credits for the purchase of raw materials. By restricting the issue of foreign currency certificates to importers, by strict control over raw material, by restricting the export of German bank notes and a number of similar measures, Schacht hopes to bring about an alleviation of the currency difficulties.

The near future will show whether Schacht can carry out these measures and whether the fascist

government can avoid inflation. Rumours are current of the resignation of Schacht. In any case, one thing is beyond question. Inflation is fraught with much worse results for Germany than for Britain or America. Germany has only one fourteenth of the gold and valuta backing of Great Britain and one forty-fifth of that of America. The political consequences of inflation for Germany are immeasurable. It is characteristic of Germany's present situation that there is unrest and discontent almost everywhere except in the directly interested circles. As political life does not exist openly, it finds external expression in the most varied forms, to the point of struggle on the religious field, which is taking on an ever more acute character (the Easter message of the Pope, the arrest of 400 clergymen). There is as yet no open movement of the masses against the fascist dictatorship. But fascism, which is leading Germany to catastrophe, may find itself faced with an accelerated process of the transformation of its enormous economic difficulties into such a movement. This is why fascism, while in any case gradually preparing for inflation, is at the same time afraid of it.

And this is why the fascists are hysterically sounding the alarm as regards the increasing number of "critics." The tricky demagogue Goebbels, who is the one who listens most keenly to the sentiments of the masses, bitterly sneered at a meeting of the Berlin functionaries of the national socialists at the "February" national socialists who fancied themselves to be the "old guard." For the real old guard will be the chief support of the fascist government "in case hard times come again, when the enormous crowds of the present hangers-on will melt away." The national socialists are having to admit to the masses bit by bit that they have deceived them.

"We must have the courage to strip our ideals of their romance," said Goebbels in his speech, "because the further we are from the ideal, the easier do we find it to clothe it in romantic coverings, and the nearer we get to the ideal the less romantic it becomes."

This is a direct political call to change the line pursued by German fascism to one operating on a mass basis which is less wide but more reliable. Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the Hitlerite youth, stated this quite openly on February 21 at a meeting of leaders of the Berlin section.

"The time for romance and chatter, the time for propaganda and recruiting has gone by. . . . It is no longer a matter of *leading millions*, but of educating the German who in the future will form the *cadres leading the nation.*"

* * *

The increasing ferment among the masses and the growth of the political influence of the Communist

Party of Germany signalled in all the speeches of the "leaders" and specialists in police affairs such as Hitler, Goebbels, Goering, Dils, Hess, face the German Communist Party, which is preparing the revolutionary overthrow of the fascist dictatorship with the task of more rapidly rallying the masses in town and village. This means a very different *scale of mass work* than that which has been used so far. Every omission in mass work is now converted into *political lagging behind* which threatens the entire work of *preparing the decisive revolutionary struggles* for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Fascism is striving hard to get hold of the factories. It is here where the decisive preliminary battle between Communism and fascism will take place, and it will depend primarily on the strength of Communism in the factories *how soon the hatred of the masses of the workers towards fascism will grow into open mass actions*.

Many movements are taking place. Despite the severe repression there is also an open strike struggle, news of which only gets through from time to time. Only during the last 1½-2 months we know of 11 cases of the strike struggle including the strike of a thousand railway workers in the railway workshops in Cologne, the workers of the A.E.G. Electric Company at Treptow, the moulding shops of Krupps, the automobile workers in Opel. Even the social-democratic press which, in order to justify itself throws the blame for fascism coming to power on to the "passivity of the masses" has been compelled to recognise a growth of the activity of the masses. The "left" social democratic organ "New Front" in a polemic against the Communists writes :

"Illegal Communist literature brings news of a mass of strikes. It is not true! *These strikes are short and passive*. It is true that discontent is growing. And even at the labour exchanges people are talking, and this was not the case previously."

The social democrats practically do not exist now as an *organised force* hindering the active class struggle in the factories. But the social-democratic workers who are thirsting for an active struggle against fascism, who are disappointed with Weimar democracy, who have come to hate their leaders, are growing more and more in numbers. The *new feature* is that the Communist Party of Germany has *for the first time* penetrated right into the midst of the social-democratic working masses. At the same time, social-democratic ideology, and especially the traditions of the social-democratic party, still maintain a firm hold over considerable masses of social-democratic workers, and so hinder them from immediately joining the ranks of the Communists, even though they leave the social-democratic party.

And this dictates *the first and most important task*

of the mass work of the Communist Party of Germany, namely, *to win these masses over to Communism*.

This means :

(a) *A more intense struggle against social-democracy* ; a clear line of principle in this struggle, and that the Communist Party must display itself to the social-democratic workers.

(b) *A bold approach to the social-democratic workers* ; sectarianism in respect to the social-democratic workers must be definitely overcome.

Fear of the social-democratic workers who in some localities form almost half of the lower party organisations of the Communist Party of Germany even now, who are a most important reserve for a new inflow of forces to the Communist organisation, and who represent a most important factor for strengthening the position of the Communist Party in the factories, may lead to the self-isolation of the underground organisation which is heroically and unselfishly carrying on illegal revolutionary work, but which is not yet capable of becoming the organiser of the broadest working masses. This *sectarian fear* is expressed above all by the fact that frequently the Party organisations do not show sufficient confidence in the social-democratic workers who are coming to the Party *in masses*. Frequently voices are heard to the effect that our task now is not "to run after the social-democratic workers," but "to gather the forces of Communism." This is a very improper contrast. The mass unrest is manifested not only in the fact that an ever larger number of social democratic workers are coming over to Communism but contacts with the Communist organisations are being sought by numerous elements who were in the Party at one time or another, but who left it for various reasons or who passively dropped out during the first period of the fascist dictatorship. However, the basic criterion for a member of an underground Communist organisation is above all *his reliability in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship*. Therefore the social-democratic workers who carry on an active struggle against the fascist dictatorship, and who come to our Party as the only revolutionary workers' Party, the Party of the proletarian dictatorship, are not only desirable members of the revolutionary proletarian vanguard, but they should be drawn into the most active participation in the work of the underground Communist organisation.

This sectarian fear of the social-democratic workers nourishes direct right-opportunist deviations. Under the pretence of "gathering the forces of Communism," and "utilising the experience of the old revolutionaries," efforts are made here and there to form blocs from the top with despicable renegades and Brandlerites who "whatever you may say, were Communists at one time," and consequently "are better" than social-democratic workers.

It is plain that incalculable harm may be dealt

to the cause of Communism by this conciliation to the social-fascist hangers-on who are doing everything in their power to discredit the Party and help the social-democrats to restrain the social-democratic workers from coming over to Communism.

For instance, it is absolutely impermissible that there should be such a sectarian-opportunist isolation of the social-democratic workers coming to the Communist Party as that which took place in one of the lower organisations. For a number of months, Communist workers, ex-members of the social-democratic party, paid their membership dues *collectively*, thus forming, as it were, *an organisation within that organisation*.

But in order to bring the social-democratic workers in masses to Communism and to ensure that the revolutionary activity of the social democratic workers and their hatred towards social democracy will rapidly rise *to the level of Communism*, it is necessary that the social-democratic workers at the same time see the *revolutionary face of the Communist Party*, that there be a tremendous increase in the *struggle against social democracy* and an exposure of the *counter-revolutionary nature of all its "left" manoeuvres*. Under the growing pressure of the masses, even the official leaders of the social democrats who are living abroad, in the persons of Wels and Stampfer, have worked out a "new programme" which is intended to daze the social-democratic workers with its "revolutionary" phraseology.

The aim is the same, namely, *the restoration of bourgeois democracy, i.e., the saving of capitalism*. But in view of the impression created among the social-democratic workers by the pitiful bankruptcy of the entire policy of German social democracy, this programme speaks of the "revolutionary", overthrow of fascism, of the period of "revolutionary dictatorship." However, when advancing the slogan of the "revolutionary dictatorship," this programme makes the reservation that this dictatorship (as distinguished from that of the Bolsheviks) will have to clear the path for the restoration of democracy. While putting forward the slogan of the "revolutionary overthrow" of fascism, this programme does not use a single word to show *how* the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat will be organised. On the contrary, the old social-fascist theory (the theory held by the entire social-fascist camp up to and including Seidewitz, Brandler and Trotsky) regarding a whole "period of fascism and reaction," the "self-exhaustion" of the fascist dictatorship, is calculated not on the organisation of the struggle but on a spontaneous movement of the masses against the hated regime, and this theory remains at the centre of the new programme.

"If the internal contradictions of fascism, *if* the increasing class contradictions in capitalism

develop, *if* discontent and disappointment shake the mass basis of the national socialist rule, *if* oppositional trends arise and spontaneous mass movements begin, then the task of the revolutionary elite will be to deepen these contradictions in the consciousness of the masses, to direct their development, to influence their purposefulness."

The events in Austria had a tremendous influence on the German workers and especially on the social democratic workers, showing them on the one hand the only revolutionary path which can avert the fascist dictatorship, and, on the other hand, the complete bankruptcy of the last "reserve of honour of German socialism." This, together with the ever increasing unrest among the masses in Germany in general, compelled a number of social-democratic leaders abroad, and especially the notorious "left" group of Seidewitz to resort to still more "left" demagoguery, to mimic the slogans of the Communist Party, and at the same time to increase their campaign of slander against Communism under the cover of hypocritical phrases on unity. The late leader of the reformist employees trade union, Aufheiser, a former member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party of Germany, who has the reputation of being the most "left" member of the Central Committee, openly states that "the programme of Wels and Stampfer is insufficient, because what social-democratic worker will now believe the bankrupt leaders?" The group of "lefts" around Seidewitz, in connection with the smashing of social democracy in Austria, the "model country of democratic socialism," "repudiates democracy, launches the slogan of the armed insurrection, the dictatorship of the proletariat, Soviet power, the restoration of the unity of the working class," but of course not through the Communist Party, but through the "gathering of all the honest supporters of unity in all the workers' parties," who will "form free centres of unity, and as a result will create the only *single* revolutionary party of the proletariat." Thus from the original Trotskyite-social-fascist formula: "All parties are bankrupt" (including both the social democratic and the Communist Party), which was unable to serve as a barrier to prevent the social-democratic workers coming over to Communism; "left" and "extreme left" social-fascism is passing over to the most cunning methods of struggle against Communism and to a struggle for a "breathing space" for social-fascism.

In order to expose this policy of social-fascism in the eyes of the social-democratic workers, Communists must show them *in practice how to carry out the revolutionary united front from below*. The social-fascists of all kinds are trying to attach themselves to the enormous political capital which has been earned by the Communist Party in its heroic struggle during the last year. Therefore, they are trying

at all costs to force "blocs with leaders" on to the Communists, and are exerting pressure on unreliable elements, as the wolf does in Krylov's well-known fable which cries "let bygones be bygones; the past is past." Such for example is the slogan of the Judas Brandlerites. The social-fascists, scattered and unorganised, are most insistent in their proposal to publish *joint newspapers*. It is clear that the aim is the same, namely, should the social-democratic workers get the impression that the "revolutionary character" of social-democracy is being "restored," they will lose the impulse to come over immediately to the ranks of Communism.

The second important question of mass work is *trade union work*. The Communist Party of Germany correctly adopted the strategic line of forming mass independent class trade unions. The experience of 15 months of fascist dictatorship has shown that even the small Red trade unions, of metal workers, miners etc., which existed before the coming of the fascist dictatorship, have nevertheless been able to hold firm, and continue their work in underground conditions, while the A.D.G.B. with its four million members has collapsed like a colossus with feet of clay. The social-fascists are here also mimicking us, stealing the slogan of independent unions, but by this they understand *not an active organisation* but the *gathering of the cadres of old trade union bureaucrats*, who will form an organised nucleus for the regenerated trade unions should a spontaneous upsurge of the masses and the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship take place. Of course, there is no need to imagine that in underground conditions it is possible to have trade unions with hundreds of thousands of members. But the thing that is *possible* and *necessary* for the Communist vanguard to do is to form *real class* underground trade union organisations which will be *really connected with the masses* in the factories and labour exchanges, which will really *lead all the economic movements of the masses*, and carry out for the Party their rôle of transmission belts to the masses.

This presupposes first of all the wide development of work in all the *existing mass organisations* formed by fascism for the workers. And this is precisely the *weakest link* in the work of the Communist Party, while without work in the mass fascist factory organisations, there cannot and will not be mass independent class trade unions. And without the most active participation in all questions of factory life, even in the way they are raised by the fascist government, there cannot be serious work in the mass fascist organisations. For example, the Communists must participate most actively in the campaign now being carried on by the fascists for the elections of the so-called "factory trustees" which are a bastard substitute for factory committees. Any boycott or passivity in this campaign would

mean separation from the vital questions of the masses. In exposing this fascist system of "trustees" as direct agents in the hands of the employer-"leaders," the Communists must carry on this campaign under the slogan of free elections, putting forward the candidature of workers who are popular among the masses and can defend the interests of the workers, as an offset to the candidates officially nominated by the employers. It is clear that the Communists must in all cases call on the workers to vote against the lists proposed by the employers.

This presupposes a completely different scale of work among the *national socialist workers*. Open expressions of discontent and disappointment are becoming more and more frequent among the national socialist workers. Hundreds of workers leave meetings of the "workers' front," fierce clashes take place between members of the Stahlhelm and the National Socialists in the factories. There have been many cases in which the Storm Troops, even during open demonstrations against the fascist government (as on January 7th near Kochburger Hills in Berlin) looked on these demonstrations in silence. This work must be converted from the work of the apparatus into *part of the mass work* by gathering all the oppositional elements among the national socialist workers.

Finally, *a decisive change must be brought about in the mass work of the Young Communist League*. Strikes and mass movements of protest in the labour service camps have shown what favourable soil exists for mass work among the youth. The youth who wander about without work, who did not go through the hell of the imperialist war, easily fall into the clutches of the national and social demagogy of fascism. But the fascist dictatorship has converted the whole life of the youth into an outright barrack convict régime in return for a semi-prison ration and cheap parades. Here the struggle against sectarianism is literally demanded by the practice of life. The Young Communist League as a mass organisation will only grow and will only be able to organise the working youth for the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, if it liquidates at the greatest possible speed its present impermissible isolation from the masses of the working youth who are in the Hitlerite youth leagues.

Such are the basic problems of the mass work of the Communist Party at the present stage. Only such mass work will be able to ensure that the Communist Party of Germany will carry out its rôle as the organiser of the proletarian revolution against fascism, and for the dictatorship of the working class. "Only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare and win power" (Stalin at the 17th Party Congress of the C.P.S.U.). For this there must be a clear *revolutionary aim, firm revolutionary will and the revolutionary ability to mobilise the masses*.

SOME OF THE EXPERIENCES OF THE CIVIL WAR IN FINLAND IN 1918

By T. L.

THE attention of both friends and enemies of proletarian revolution has been attracted to questions of armed class struggle by the heroic armed struggle of the proletarians of Austria against the onslaught of fascism, a struggle which clearly confirms the thesis that decisive battles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are imminent. In these circumstances, a study of the exceedingly rich experience of the armed class struggles that took place during the first round of wars and revolutions assumes particularly burning importance. It is our responsibility as Communists to ensure that this experience becomes the property of the broadest masses of all exploited and oppressed. The battles that recently took place in Austria have shown once again that the proletariat is capable of the greatest heroism and self-sacrifice. But heroism and self-denial are not sufficient to secure victory; what is wanted in addition is the art of securing victory. And the international proletariat can learn this art of securing victory from the experience of past fights.

The international workers' press did comparatively little to give publicity to the experience of the three months of civil war carried on by the Finnish workers against the Finnish white-guardists and German interventionists in 1918, at the end of the first imperialist war. It is true that the pamphlet written by Comrade Kuusinen on the Finnish revolution immediately after the defeat of the revolution enjoyed a wide circulation. But even this pamphlet paid little attention to the analysis of the military experience provided by the revolution.

The class contradictions in Finland became greatly aggravated during the world war, when the Finnish bourgeoisie, supported by the terror of the Tsarist régime, intensified the exploitation of "their own" workers to an unprecedented degree. Among other things, the aggravation of class contradictions was manifested in the fact that the Finnish Social-Democratic Party, at that time the only workers' party in the country, and which stood at the head of the struggle of the Finnish workers against their native bourgeoisie and the Russian autocracy, had won an absolute majority in the Parliamentary (Sejm) elections in 1916, obtaining 103 seats out of 200.

The entire period between February and October, 1917, was marked by the extremely rapid and further aggravation of the class struggle. The powerful upsurge of the strike movement did not confine itself to the towns and industrial centres,

but spread to the countryside. The strikes were accompanied by a number of other resolute political actions. Thus, for instance, during the general strike in Abo at the end of May, a mass of workers participated in a demonstration which surrounded the Town Hall, arrested all of the Town Council members, as well as bourgeois students who were engaged in provocation on the streets. On June 4, when the Sejm was discussing laws regarding the 8-hour working day and the municipal elections, the Parliamentary buildings were completely surrounded by a demonstration comprising Finnish workers and Russian soldiers and sailors. It was this external pressure that forced the bourgeoisie to make concessions.

The question of food supplies played an important role in all the revolutionary actions that took place at the end of summer and in the autumn of 1917. It was on this background that the so-called "Butter Riot" broke out in August in the town of Abo. A large crowd, mainly women, incensed by the news that vast stocks of butter were stored in government cellars while the people were starving, raided these cellars, and seized several thousand kilograms of butter which they immediately distributed among themselves. In the middle of August a general strike broke out in Helsingfors due to the high cost of living.

Faced with the powerful upsurge of the revolutionary wave the Finnish bourgeoisie began its preparations for an armed struggle against the working class as early as the Spring of 1917 when it organised its own armed gangs, the so-called "Schutzcors." The workers called them the "Butchers' Guard" as far back as the 1905 revolution. These detachments were organised under the guise of being fire brigades, sports societies, etc.

To counterbalance the organisation of the bourgeois Schutzcors, the workers began in the Summer of 1917 to set up Red Guard detachments. But for a long while this process of organisation was a spontaneous one. It received no active or conscious leadership from the social-democratic party, which at that time still considered parliament as the main arena for struggle. The Finnish Social-Democratic Party was a typical party of the old order, in which different tendencies lived together in harmony. It is true that for a number of years a more or less distinct demarcation existed inside it between the right, revisionist wing and the left wing, the so-called Saltasarians, the latter deeming themselves orthodox Marxists and standing for the class struggle.

But at that time there was no consistently revolutionary Bolshevik wing in the Social-Democratic Party of Finland.

* * *

At the time the October revolution took place in Russia, the class struggle in Finland had reached its climax. The position was aggravated to the point of revolutionary crisis, and the masses of the workers were ready to undertake the decisive onslaught. Only six days after the October revolution in Petrograd, on November 13, the whole of Finland was in the throes of a general strike. The masses of workers who were instinctively striving to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat did not confine their struggle to the mere stoppage of work and street demonstrations. *The general strike gave a mighty impulse to the further development and organisation of the Red Guard.* The Red Guard began to arm themselves with the weapons they received from Russian military revolutionary organisations. Red Guard detachments disarmed the white-guardist Schutzcors in numerous localities, the latter failing to show any serious resistance at any point. In the majority of towns and industrial centres, power was actually in the hands of the workers during those November days.

The Finnish bourgeoisie was scared by the general strike, and bearing in mind its unpreparedness for civil war, was anxious to delay it for a more propitious moment. This explains why the bourgeoisie decided to make certain concessions. The Sejm ratified the laws governing the 8-hour working day and the municipal elections. The leaders of the Social-Democratic Party were quite satisfied with the concessions made by the bourgeoisie. After a successful 6-day strike throughout the country, they sounded the retreat, and called on the workers to end the strike, with the declaration that "the general strike is ended, but the revolution goes on."

The calling off of the November strike contrary to the wishes of the masses was one of the most fatal blunders committed by the leadership of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party. All the objective prerequisites for the victory of the working class were present during the November days. This fact is recognised not only by the then leaders of the Social-Democratic Party, who became Communists later on, but even by the white-guardist historians who write, that if the workers had begun their revolution in November, they would have gained a victory over the bourgeoisie. In those days the militant determination and active energy of the proletariat reached their climax, while the "modesty" and pliancy of the bourgeoisie bore witness to the embarrassment and unpreparedness of the latter for open civil war. At that time the white-guardist

schutzcors were poorly armed. The basic mass of *jegers*, i.e., of the petty bourgeois activists, who migrated to Germany during the world war in order to receive military education there, and who later became the principal core of the commanding staff of the white army, was still in Germany. The Finnish bourgeoisie did not even have any police at its disposal, for in the majority of cities since the February Revolution, order was maintained in the streets by the workers' militia. In November the Russian soldiers and sailors who happened to be in Finland at that time, displayed great revolutionary activity, but a few months later, when the civil war broke out they were no longer able to do so. There was hardly any probability at that time of intervention by German troops as the German troops were still at the front. In Russia, power was already in the hands of the proletariat. The only thing that the Finnish working class lacked in the November days to achieve a victory was a revolutionary Bolshevik Party, capable of training the masses for the revolution and of leading them to a decisive battle. After the November strike, Lenin wrote a letter to the leaders of the left wing of the Social-Democratic Party, the so-called Saltasarians, dated November 24 (11) in which he called on them to enter the path of socialist revolution (Vol. xxix, p. 510).

Comrade Stalin gave similar Bolshevik advice to the Finnish Social-Democrats in his speech at the Special Congress of the Social Democratic Party, convened immediately after the November general strike. In the course of his speech, Comrade Stalin said :

"Comrades !

"We are informed that your country is now going through a crisis of power, similar to the one which occurred in Russia on the eve of the October Revolution. We are told that efforts are also being made to scare you by talk of famine, sabotage, etc. On the basis of our own experience born from the practice of the revolutionary movement in Russia, we take the liberty to declare that all these dangers, even if they are genuine, are by no means invincible. These dangers can be easily overcome if firm action is taken without any hesitation. In an atmosphere of war and collapse, in an atmosphere where the revolutionary movement is flaring up in the West and where the victories being achieved by the workers' revolution in Russia are growing, there are no dangers or difficulties which can withstand our onslaught. Only one power can hold its own and gain the victory in such an atmosphere, and this is the socialist power. Only tactics of one kind are suitable in such an atmosphere and these are the

tactics of Danton : daring, daring and once more daring.

"And should you require our assistance, we shall render it to you, and shall stretch our hand to you in fraternal fashion.

"You may rest assured of this !"

But at that moment the leaders of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party failed to follow the advice given by Lenin and Stalin. They allowed themselves to be scared by the difficulties facing the revolution, and were unable to act firmly and without hesitation. In the resolution passed by a majority the Congress did not express itself definitely either for seizing power in a revolutionary way, or against it.

The Finnish Social-Democratic Party refused to fulfil its revolutionary duty in November, but the Finnish working class could not avoid the civil war. The civil war was merely postponed until the time when the correlation of forces changed sharply in favour of the bourgeoisie, when the bourgeoisie was in a position to take the initiative of the civil war into its own hands.

The development of events after the November strike led rapidly and irrepressibly to civil war. The Finnish bourgeoisie made full use of the time it gained at the cost of parliamentary concessions, to make systematic and active preparations for civil war. If the membership of the white-guardist schutzcorps amounted to 10,000 at the time of the November strike, then by the end of January they amounted to about 30,000 men.

The Whites showed great activity and enterprise in arming the schutzcorps. They obtained big supplies of arms by directly seizing munition stores belonging to Russian troops located on their territory. It was the German military authorities, however, who mainly supplied them with arms. Official white-guardist sources testify that by February 27, 1918, Germany shipped or had ready for shipment for the Finnish whiteguards 140,000 rifles, 250 machine-guns, 16 howitzer guns, 8 field guns (I enumerate only the most important.—T.L.).

Finland had a counter-revolutionary Vende of its own. This was the district Vasa with its backward reactionary and prosperous peasantry. This district, by the way, also comprises the village community of Lapua, which later acquired "world notoriety" as the centre of the terrorist fascist movement. It was here that the most active whiteguard elements gathered together from all corners of the country, and it was here that they were taught the art of war. It was here that the munition stores were concentrated. It was to this area that the White Swinhuwud Government escaped from Helsingfors. It was here also that the tsarist General Mannerheim, commander-in-chief of the white armed forces, found refuge with his staff.

If the preparations for civil war was of an extremely systematic and active character in the camp of the Whites, we see an entirely different picture in the camp of the workers. It is true that since the November strike the organisation of the Red Guard had assumed very wide dimensions, and that at the outbreak of the civil war the Red Guard already consisted of 25,000 workers. But *this magnificent creative initiative of the working masses failed to find the firm and skilful leadership which it deserved, and the absence of which could not but result in serious blunders.*

Thus, for instance, the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party failed to show sufficient activity in regard to arming the Red Guard before the outbreak of the civil war, although the prerequisites for the arming of the workers were favourable, due to the presence in the country of Russian revolutionary troops. *Instead of disarming whiteguard bands and acquiring fighting stamina in these skirmishes, as well as arms for the imminent decisive battles, the Red Guard detachments were doomed to idleness.* The result of this negligence being that at the outbreak of the civil war the Finnish Red Guard had not more than 1,500-2,000 rifles at their disposal. The question of military training was a very acute one in the Red Guard, for only few individuals among the Finnish workers had any idea of military affairs.

By the end of January, 1918, the Finnish bourgeoisie considered itself sufficiently strong to begin the civil war, and the bourgeois government thereupon issued its ultimatum to the working class, demanding that the Red Guard be disarmed and dissolved in the name of "strict order." This ultimatum was tantamount to letting the civil war loose, as there could be no question of the workers voluntarily submitting to it.

* * *

A characteristic feature of the outbreak of the civil war in Finland at the end of January, 1918, was that a counter-revolutionary uprising took place in the east and in the north of the country, and a proletarian uprising in the south. The initiative both in the civil war and in the preparations for it belonged to the Whites. Their "popular" uprising, as the bourgeois historians call the cut-throat attack of their whiteguards on the Russian soldiers and Finnish workers, was already in full swing when the workers' power was declared in Helsingfors on January 27, and the proletarian insurrection broke out in Southern Finland.

The Whites began active military operations in eastern Finland in the vicinity of Vyborg in the days following January 20. They attacked trains transporting arms for the Reds from Petrograd. On January 22 a strong whiteguard detachment attacked Vyborg, but was beaten off by the Red

“As the leader and organiser of the world revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the upholder of the principles and aims of Communism, the Communist International struggles to win the majority of the working class and the broad strata of the propertyless peasantry, and fights for the establishment of the world dictatorship of the proletariat, for the establishment of a world union of Socialist Soviet Republics, for the complete abolition of classes and for the achievement of Socialism—the first stage of Communist society.”

In this world Party, covering millions of people, and known as the Communist International, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is the strongest Party. It is the ruling Party of the Soviet Union, the greatest country in the world. The Comintern is a World Communist Party, and weighs up the political situation jointly with the leaders of the Communist Parties of all countries.

The Communist International, to which all the sections are directly responsible, is not an organisation of conspirators but a World Party. *Such a World Party does not play at insurrection and revolution.* Such a World Party cannot say one thing to the millions of its supporters and at the same time secretly do the opposite. Such a Party, my dear Doctor Sack, does not engage in double book-keeping!

Doctor Sack : All right, get on with your Communist propaganda.

Dimitrov : When such a Party appeals to the millions of the proletariat, when it makes its decisions on tactics and immediate tasks, it does so seriously, fully conscious of its responsibility. I will read you a decision of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. As these decisions were quoted here in court, I have the right to read them.

According to these decisions, the basic task of the German Communist Party is as follows: “To mobilise the vast masses of toilers in defence of their vital interests, against the bandit policy of monopolist capital, against fascism, against the emergency decrees, against nationalism and chauvinism, and by developing economic and political strikes, by struggle for proletarian internationalism, by means of demonstrations, to lead the masses to the point of the general political strike: to win over the bulk of the social-democratic masses, definitely overcome the weaknesses of trade-union work. The chief slogan which the Communist Party of Germany must put forward to offset the slogan of the fascist dictatorship (the “Third Empire”) and the slogan of the social-democratic Party (“The Second Republic”), is the slogan of the *Workers’ and Peasants’ Republic*, i.e., Soviet Socialist Germany, which will guarantee the possibility of the voluntary affiliation of

the people of Austria and other German territories.”

Mass work, mass struggle, mass resistance, the united front, no adventures! Such is the alpha and omega of Communist tactics.

A manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Comintern was found on me. I think that it can also be quoted. Two points are specially important in this manifesto. Thus, it speaks of demonstrations in various countries in connection with the events in Germany. It speaks of the tasks of the Communist Parties in the struggle against the national-socialist terror, and also of the defence of the organisations and press of the working class. In this manifesto, it says among other things:

“The main obstacle to the formation of the united front of struggle of the Communist and social democratic workers was and is the policy conducted by the social democratic parties, who have exposed the international proletariat to the blows of the class enemy. This policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie known as the so-called policy of the “lesser evil,” has led in practice to the triumph of fascist reaction in Germany.

The Communist International and the Communist Parties of all countries have repeatedly declared their readiness to join in a common fight along with the social democratic workers against the capitalist offensive, against political reaction and civil war. The Communist Parties were the organisers of the common fight of the Communist, social democratic and non-Party workers in spite of the leaders of the social democratic parties, who systematically disrupted the united front of the working masses. On 20th July last year the Communist Party of Germany, after the Prussian social democratic government had been driven out by Papen, proposed to the social democratic party and the A.D.G.B. (German General Federation of Trade Unions) to organise a common strike against fascism. But the social democratic party and the A.D.G.B., with the approval of the whole of the Second International, described the proposal to organise a common strike as a provocation. The Communist Party of Germany repeated its proposal of common action at the moment when Hitler seized power; it called upon the Central Committee of the social democratic party and the Executive Committee of the A.D.G.B. to organise the resistance to fascism, but this time also met with a refusal. Nay, more, when in November last year the Berlin traffic workers unanimously went on strike against a wage reduction, the social democratic party sabotaged the united front struggle. The whole

Guards. During the period between January 23 and 26, the Whites attacked the barracks of the Russian troops located in different small towns and villages in eastern Finland. The Russian soldiers put up no resistance anywhere, and were easily disarmed by the Whites.

In the chief seat of the White counter-revolutionary uprising, in the vicinity of the city of Vasa, the Whites began active military operations on January 27, i.e., on the very same day when the proletarian insurrection broke out in the South. Here also it was the Russian soldiers who were the first objects of the military actions of the Whites. During the night of January 28, the Whiteguard units which had gathered together the evening before made a sudden attack and disarmed the Russian garrisons stationed in Vasa and four other townlets (about 5,000 men altogether). The Russian troops, which were in a state of absolute demoralisation by this time, did not offer any resistance whatsoever to the Whites. Only the Russian sailors in Vasa carried on a fight against the Whites lasting for several hours

The Finnish bourgeoisie carried out a distinctly class line in their struggle against the Russian troops. They disarmed and interned the rank and file soldiers, shot the Bolsheviks and set the officers free.

Before General Mannerheim could direct all his forces against the insurgent proletariat of southern Finland he had to deal with a serious opponent in the shape of the proletariat of the industrial centres of northern Finland, and primarily of Uleaborg, where for five days the Finnish Red Guard, along with Russian soldiers, offered stubborn resistance to Whiteguard forces which exceeded their numbers by many times. Street fighting went on for many days in Kuupio as well, and in the industrial town of Varkaus, not far from it. On the other hand, in spite of the fact that the workers in Kaiana and St. Michael were masters of the situation they surrendered their arms to the Whites without a fight, after uselessly waiting for "instructions from Helsingfors."

The resistance of the north Finnish proletariat was broken, because the workers remained in their towns and waited for the Whites to attack, thus giving Mannerheim the opportunity of defeating the working class in separate sections, and by concentrating his forces to take one proletarian centre after the other. The workers remained passive when it was imperative to *undertake an active offensive, to help the neighbouring towns, when these were engaged in fighting, to gather Red Guard detachments together from all the proletarian centres and to organise a second front in the north against the White Army.* The objective prerequisites for such tactics were available but the leaders of the local

Red Guards preferred the ruinous tactics of waiting passively.

In these fights in the north of Finland the Finnish Red Guard demonstrated with full clarity all the features which were so characteristic of it throughout the entire period of the civil war, namely, sluggishness and passivity when on the offensive and the greatest persistence when engaged in defensive battles. It was here that the Social-Democratic Party school of thought could be felt, a school which was absolutely alien to questions of armed class struggle, and therefore unable to disseminate a correct understanding of the armed uprising among the working masses.

After the suppression of northern Finland, General Mannerheim was in a position to concentrate all his forces against the Red Guard of southern Finland, where power was already in the hands of the workers, and from whence the Red Guards began to move forward, although slowly, to meet the White offensive.

* * *

The brazen ultimatum of the White government about the dissolution of the Red Guards, and the armed raids of Whiteguard gangs at the end of January, finally convinced the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party that it was impossible to find a peaceful way out of the situation and that civil war was inevitable. This time the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party decided to remain with the fighting masses and to stand at the head of their defensive struggle.

On January 26 the working class newspapers published an appeal issued by the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party and of the Staff of the Red Guards, requesting the Red Guards throughout the country to be in fighting readiness. On the evening of January 27 an insurrection broke out in Helsingfors, the Red Guard occupying all government buildings. The workers in the capital seized power without any bloodshed. The plan of the uprising included the arrest of the members of the White government, but the latter disappeared in good time.

After this, power passed into the hands of workers' organisations almost without any armed resistance on the part of the Whites, in nearly all the largest towns of southern Finland, covering Abo, Vyborg, Tammersfors, Verneborg, Lahti, Kotka, and others. This shows how ripe the ground was for proletarian revolution. The Whites, who were aware of their weakness in the proletarian south of Finland, evaded an open struggle in the cities, and adopted partisan and diversion tactics in the rear of the Reds. The struggle against these guerilla detachments of the whites continued to the end of February.

* * *

The White army offensive from the north towards

the south, and the counter-offensive of the Red Guards towards the north gradually resulted in the formation of the front of civil war from Botnic Bay to Ladoga Lake, about 400 klm. long. This front was extremely unfavourable for the Red troops. The Reds held one-sixth of Finland, it is true, the most industrial and cultural section of the country. But the whole of Red Finland consisted of a very narrow strip of land with a long coastline which made it vulnerable from the sea. Furthermore in some places in central and eastern Finland the front was only 30 to 40 klm. away from the railways, which connects Finland with Petrograd.

Although the White army displayed plenty of indecision and cowardice in its "rush to the south," it had, none the less, a definite plan of action and initiative from the very outset, and contrived to forestall the Reds and seize a vast territory comprising five-sixths of the country, and prevented the uprising of the proletariat in many industrial centres. Thus, the White army was given the opportunity to mobilise and supply a numerous army, and to effect the required regroupings without any interruptions.

It is very likely that even with the best of tactics the Finnish proletariat would not have been able to prevent the formation of this front of the civil war. But active tactics, and a general and simultaneous uprising throughout the whole country accompanied by an energetic offensive of the Red Guard would have absolutely changed the face of the picture of the civil war after the very first days of the struggle.

The formation of the front of civil war was followed by calm. The Whites proceeded to defend the favourable positions they occupied, considering their forces inadequate as yet for them to undertake a general offensive against the principal vital centres of Red Finland. They utilised this time for feverish organisational work. They dominated a vast territory, were continually receiving huge supplies of arms from Germany and other countries, and had thousands of officers at their disposal, and hence were in a position to cope successfully with the Reds as regards organising their armed forces.

It is true that the Finnish workers demonstrated their abilities to organise by spreading a revolutionary army of 80,000 strong over a 400 km. front within a few weeks. But in the first period the revolutionary government was more absorbed in legislation and economic construction, and failed to concentrate its attention on military questions, and to subject all its activity to this main and decisive task. It is true, that due to the almost complete absence of people versed in military matters, this sphere presented great difficulties. These exceptional difficulties could have been basically overcome by the daring transfer of the best Party organisers and agitators to the

fighting front, and by energetically training commanders for the Red Guard. But the Social-Democratic revolutionary government proved unable to display this necessary boiling energy. Generally speaking, the best organisers and agitators of the Party remained in the rear, and the first school for training the commanding staff for the Red Guard was organised only at the end of March. For this reason, the leadership of military questions frequently fell into the hands of accidental and often obviously worthless elements, and the organisation of the Red Guard from the military point of view bore an extremely primitive and amateur character during the whole period of the civil war. Instead of rigorous revolutionary discipline, social-democratic "freedom" prevailed with all the fatal consequences inherent in it. Meetings and voting before battles took place, unwarranted furloughs home and "to the bath," parties and dancing at most critical moments were every-day occurrences at the front to the very end of the civil war. This army showed miracles of staunchness and bravery in defensive battles, but was quite unfit for an offensive against the serious adversary confronting it. The question of supplying the Red troops with arms and munitions was solved successfully soon after the outbreak of the civil war with the aid of Russian revolutionary organisations. But the way these arms were used was very bad. An extreme lack of knowledge was manifested in the use of artillery, etc., enormous supplies of munitions were used irrationally. The fact that the commanding staff of the Red Guard completely lacked military training made its tactics very primitive. These tactics, as a general rule, consisted of frontal attacks against fortified positions held by the enemy, but no serious attempts were made to deal a blow at the vulnerable spots of the white front.

As regards the mass of the Russian troops located in Finland, they remained aloof of the internal struggle going on in Finland, as they were awaiting demobilisation and despatch to their homeland. In his polemics with the "left" communists in connection with the discussion on the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty Lenin established the fact that the Russian army which was not yet demobilised was a most serious handicap for the struggle of the Finnish workers, "for it could not help fleeing in panic, and drawing along the Red army detachments as well."

It is true that there were cases during the civil war where the Russian troops repulsed the offensive of the Whites, but such cases were exceptional.

Under the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty, the Soviet government of Russia undertook to withdraw all Russian troops located in Finland. In the main their evacuation was completed in the first half of March,

before the decisive fighting operations began at the front of the civil war.

The evacuation of Russian troops from Finland did not have an unfavourable effect on the fighting ability and the spirits of the Finnish Red Guard. On the contrary, on March 10, just at the time when the evacuation of the Russian troops was coming to an end, the Red Command considered it possible to issue an order for a general offensive, having in mind the excellent fighting spirits of the masses of Red Guards. Although the March offensive of the Red Guard produced no palpable results as regards the extension of the territory of Red Finland, this failure did not by any means shake the fighting determination of the Red Guards, or their certainty of success. The shortcomings and weak spots of the Red Guard manifested in the March offensive served as a serious impulse for their energetic elimination. Such measures of the revolutionary government, as the transfer to military work of a large number of prominent organisers and agitators, the organisation of military schools for the training of the commanding staff, the organisation of political work among the masses of the Red Guard, are convincing proofs that a noticeable turn was being made.

One of the most serious blunders committed by the Reds during the period of trench warfare was that the workers organised no actions in the rear of the White army, such as partial uprisings, guerilla and diversional acts. But even in this respect a turn for the better was to be noted in the middle of March. After the defeat of the Red Guard in northern Finland, about two thousand Red Guards who retreated to the shore of the White Sea and received arms there from Petrograd, began to make preparations for active military operations in the rear of the White army. In the middle of March they advanced back to Finland. Although their offensive took place far away from the main operative lines of the White army, and could have no decisive influence upon the result of the struggle, nevertheless a considerable number of White troops were diverted by these Red Guards.

At the end of March, when the German interventionist troops were already on their way to Finland, the Finnish White army decided to commence its offensive against Tammerfors, the main industrial centre of the country and there concentrated more than one half of its army, about 20,000 men, while the forces of the Reds at this point consisted of 10,000 men. For ten days the workers of Tammerfors defended their proletarian stronghold against the furious attacks of the Whites, with a bravery and persistence which inspired respect even from the White hangmen. Only after all their munitions were exhausted did they surrender. 600 Whites were killed in the battle for Tammerfors.

The fall of Tammerfors and the capture of its valiant defenders was a serious blow to the Reds. And by that time the intervention of the regular German troops was already in full swing in the rear of the Red Guards.

* * *

On the admission of General von der Golz, the commander of the German Interventionist troops (which totalled about 20,000 men), their object was to struggle against the spread of Bolshevism in Western Europe and the bridling of Soviet Russia. These troops which arrived by steamer from Danzig and Reval landed in the rear of the Red Guard in the first days of April. Their main forces, the so-called "Baltic division," landed near Hange on April 3, accompanied by a strong detachment of the German navy. A weak detachment of Red Guardsists stationed in Hange at that time was unable to prevent the disembarkation of the Germans. But the news of the appearance of the Germans in the rear of the Red Guard soon spread, and several hundred Red Guards hastened from Helsingfors and Abo to meet the Germans. A battle was fought near the Karia station. General von der Golz, who recognised his position as critical, dispatched all of his infantry and artillery against these Red Guards. For two days the Reds offered stubborn resistance to the Germans, but they were dispersed.

The battle near Karia station, where a handful of Red Guards successfully resisted the forces of the regular German army for two days, a force which outnumbered the Reds by many times, shows convincingly that the German intervention could have had a very sad ending if such cases of active resistance to the Germans had not been only isolated events. Had greater activity and enterprise been displayed by the Reds it could have been quite possible for the Red Guard detachments to surround von der Golz's troops, to exhaust them by continuous attacks from the front, rear and flanks, by destroying their communication lines and transports. For the offensive of the German troops took place on the territory where the proletariat was in power, although on the other hand it must be remembered that the basic mass of the armed workers were engaged at the front.

After the battle at Karia station, the Baltic division accompanied by a powerful fleet proceeded to develop its offensive against Helsingfors along the Finnish Bay. It met no serious resistance all the way. But when von der Golz approached Helsingfors, the workers, both men and women, of the Red capital rose in arms. Bitter fights were waged on the streets of Helsingfors for three days. And it was only after the destructive artillery fire of the heavy guns of the German navy that the resistance of the workers was broken. In his memoirs General von der Golz speaks with particular wrath about the "furious

armed women," i.e., of the women Red Guards who took an active part in the fight.

The German brigade under the command of Colonel Brandenstein found itself in a critical position. Having crossed the sea from Reval and having landed near Lovisa, about 80 km. to the east of Helsingfors, it was proceeding northwards in the rear of the Red Guard, with a view to reaching the railway leading to Petrograd and thus cutting off the retreat to the Red Guard from Western Finland. And here again the Reds were not capable of any active struggle, of surrounding Brandenstein's brigade by workers' detachments. But when Brandenstein already reached the railway line to Petrograd he encountered a stubborn resistance from the Red Guards. A detachment of 600 Red Guards met Brandenstein's brigade comprising 3,000 men at the Uusikulia station. *Although Brandenstein's brigade outnumbered the Red Guards by five times, it was forced to retreat southwardly after three days of stubborn fighting.* Afraid that his troops would be surrounded and destroyed by the Reds, Brandenstein appealed for help to von der Golz, who was fighting against the workers of Helsingfors at that time. Great was Brandenstein's surprise when the Reds did not surround him, and did not even pursue his troops but gave him the opportunity to rally his forces and to recover. Encouraged by the passivity of the Reds, he again took the offensive, and on April 29, after extremely bitter fights occupied the railway junction Lahti on the Petrograd railway. Thus he cut off the way of retreat to the West Finnish Red Guard.

At the end of April the Finnish white army concentrated 30,000 men and the whole of its artillery in the direction of Vyborg and took the offensive. After lengthy battles Vyborg was occupied and the line connecting Red Finland and Soviet Russia was cut off. In the first days of May, after a civil war which lasted three months, the Finnish Red Guard was smashed, disarmed and captured. The horrors of the White Terror set in.

* * *

The first and foremost lesson which the Finnish working class learned from the heavy defeat of the Finnish Revolution, was the basic lesson of all proletarian revolution, *viz.*, that the working class cannot be victorious unless it is headed by a really revolutionary Bolshevik Party, and that a party of the old type, such as the Finnish Social-Democratic Party was, is quite unfit for such a rôle.

The untimely preparation of the masses for the decisive battles for power, the failure to grasp the

most propitious moment for seizing power in November, the fact that they had no knowledge of the art of uprising, the defensive nature of the fighting actions carried through by the workers—all this is due precisely to the absence of a Bolshevik Party.

However, it is not sufficient to attribute the defeat of the Finnish proletariat at that time only to the absence of a revolutionary Bolshevik Party. The logic of the revolutionary storm and the civil war, which succeeded in teaching the Finnish proletarians and their leaders many a lesson, would have certainly ultimately led the best, revolutionary section of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party to correct practical conclusions, to the creation of an iron Bolshevik discipline in the Party and in the ranks of the Red Guard, to the creation of rigid revolutionary order in the rear of the red front, to the firm suppression of the resistance of the exploiting elements, to the development of active revolutionary actions, and guerilla warfare in the rear of the white front, and to offensive actions. The symptoms of a turn in this direction were already at hand. But the Finnish working class was not given enough time to effect this turn fully in practice. The blow of the German interventionists in the rear of the Red Guard decided the fate of the struggle in favour of the White counter-revolution. Surrounded on all sides the Red Guard of Finland was smashed in an unequal fight.

The question naturally arises: could the Finnish Whites have been victorious without the help of the German troops? A definite reply to this question could have been given only by the further course of the struggle. It is quite probable, that if they followed their former course, without any radical changes in all their methods of warfare, the Finnish Red Guard would have been smashed even without German intervention. But, on the other hand, the facts we have quoted of successful fights of the Red Guards against the German interventionists, are convincing proof that there would have been nothing dangerous about this intervention, that the Red Guards could have surrounded and destroyed the Germans if prior to the arrival of the latter they had had time to reconstruct their forces with a view to waging a revolutionary war in the spirit of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, who consider the basic rule of every armed uprising and revolutionary war to be absolute daring and decisive offensive.

There is hardly any other episode in the history of the armed struggles of the international working class which can render such obvious corroboration to the correctness of the words of Marx and Engels, that "defence is the death of every armed uprising," as the experience of the civil war in Finland.

THE SPECIAL IMPORTANCE OF REVOLUTIONARY THEORY AT THE PRESENT STAGE

(Speech of Comrade Martinov at the XIII Plenum of the E.C.C.I.)

THE editorial board of our journal, the "Communist International," raises before the Political Commission the question of our Sections giving it all-round support as the leading political and theoretical organ of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. In connection with this I wish to devote my speech to an explanation of the special importance which is assumed, particularly at the present moment by revolutionary theory, by raising the theoretical level of our Parties, and by their irreconcilable struggle against the slightest deviations from the foundations of Leninism.

I will begin with a few quotations which are well known but which it is very useful to call to mind again and again.

When Lenin was laying the foundation of the Bolshevik Party on the eve of the first revolution, he wrote that "without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."* In this regard Lenin was quoting the words of Engels who, in 1874, recognised not two forms of the great struggle, the political and the economic, "but three, placing the theoretical struggle on a level with them."† Lenin was quoting the words of Engels, who pointed out the "indifference to all theory, which is one of the main reasons why the British working class movement goes ahead so slowly in spite of the wonderful organisation of individual trades."‡

The significance of revolutionary theory was concretely formulated by Comrade Stalin in his lectures, "The Foundations of Leninism," and in his speech at the conference of Marxist Agrarians Comrade Stalin said:

"Theory may become transformed into a tremendous force in the working class movement if it is built up in indissoluble contact with revolutionary practice, because theory and theory alone can give the movement confidence, the power of orientating itself and understanding the internal connections of surrounding events, because theory and theory alone can help practice to understand not only how and whither classes are moving at the present time, but also how and whither they must move in the near future."

Comrade Stalin said:

"You know that a theory, when it is a genuine

theory, gives practical workers the power of orientation, clarity of perspective, faith in their work, confidence in the victory of our cause."

This rôle of revolutionary theory which has been emphasised so much by our teachers, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, assumes special importance at the present time when we are accomplishing a difficult advance, when the world is coming closely up to the new round of revolutions and wars, when the basic question of our movement, the question of power has been placed on the order of the day of history, and when the pressure of the class enemy on our Party is increasing tremendously both as regards fascist terror and social-democratic manoeuvres.

I shall indicate only a few of the facts and features which are characteristic of the present period of difficult uphill work, and in connection with these points, I shall try to demonstrate how easy it is now to slide into the morass of opportunism, how easy it can be at present for opportunism to creep into our ranks, how easily we may prove to be unequal to the tasks which face us, if we are not sufficiently well armed with the revolutionary theory of Leninism.

Firstly, in connection with the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis we find at present an upsurge of the revolutionary movement on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the mobilisation of the forces of counter-revolution, the furious offensive of fascism. Social-democracy, the agency and the main social buttress of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class, is utilising this two-fold process to scare the workers, to convince them that the "epoch of fascism and reaction" has now set in, and that the proletariat has been defeated on the most important sector of the struggle in the capitalist world, namely, in Germany. And we have heard here in the speeches of Comrades Thorez, Gottwald and Piatnitsky, that this theory found a temporary echo in the ranks of our Czecho-Slovakian Party, our French Party, not to mention the little oppositional Rémelle-Neumann group in Germany.

How could it happen that a number of our comrades adopted this capitulatory theory?

It did so because they only saw what was taking place on the surface and did not understand, and were unable to give a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the deep processes which are revolutionising the entire situation, and are revolution-

* Lenin, Vol. IV., p. 380, Russian Edition.

† Ibid. p. 381.

‡ Ibid.

ising the proletariat in connection with the economic crisis which has brought about the disintegration of the mechanism of capitalist economy. It did so because they regarded the establishment of open fascist dictatorship only as a growth of the powers of the bourgeoisie, and did not see that revolutionary development is simultaneously delayed and accelerated by the fascist frenzy of the bourgeoisie. It happened because they could only see how and whither the bourgeois classes are moving at the present time, and even that without sufficient clearness, and did not understand how and whither the toiling classes will be moving in the near future.

This arose from the fact that they had not held out against the pressure of the class enemy, had not deeply mastered Leninist theory, which, in the words of Comrade Stalin, "alone can help practice to understand not only how and whither classes are moving at the present time, but also how and whither they must move in the near future," and which "gives practical workers a clear perspective . . . and confidence in the victory of our cause."

Secondly, in connection with the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, social-democracy, which is the agency of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class, is not only becoming fascist rapidly, but is at the same time resorting to all kinds of demagogic manoeuvres on a scale unknown in recent years. In view of the fact that these manoeuvres have a certain effect on the workers, we must display great flexibility so as to repulse them. But if our Parties are insufficiently armed with the revolutionary theory of Lenin, if they are insufficiently impregnated with the realisation of the profound difference in principle between our Party and the social-democratic parties, if they are insufficiently steeled in merciless struggle against social-democracy, then the adoption of flexible tactics easily degenerates into right opportunist tactics or into a sectarian fear of the adoption of the united front.

I will give one example.

Immediately after Hitler came to power, the social-democrats talked of the united front with the Communists, of the conclusion of a "non-aggression pact" with them. In reply to these manoeuvres, and in reply to the fact that the bureau of the Second International publicly expressed its readiness to enter into negotiations with the Comintern on united struggle, the Executive Committee of the Comintern, with a view to defeating this lying manoeuvre, instructed the Communist Parties to conclude fighting agreements with the social-democratic parties regarding the united front of struggle. In this statement the E.C.C.I. enumerated all the past acts of

treachery committed by social-democracy and put forward two essential conditions for agreement to guarantee us against these agreements being utilised by the Second International against the interests of the working class.

We have already heard here how our French comrades took up this appeal of the Comintern and how they committed a serious opportunist mistake in carrying it into practice—nor were they alone in so doing.

How could this come about? It came about only because our comrades who committed this mistake had insufficiently mastered the principles of Leninism, had insufficiently understood and mastered the principle that whatever tactical steps we may take in respect to social-democracy, *at the basis of our tactics there lies an unalterably irreconcilable attitude in principle towards social-democracy.* It did so because our French comrades did not understand *all the regularity and inevitability* of the evolution of post-war social-democracy to fascism, though they speak of this often enough, and displayed an impermissible credulity in respect to our mortal enemy, forgetting the good old rule of Robespierre: "The basic virtue of a citizen is mistrust." Social-democracy is not so foolish as to write on its forehead: "I am the chief social buttress of the bourgeoisie."

Social-democracy always wears a mask, and if our comrades were better acquainted with the history of Bolshevism, they would know that the struggle of the Bolsheviks against the Mensheviks was not easy, because the Mensheviks not only concealed their opportunism behind "orthodox" phrases, but themselves accused the Bolsheviks of "lack of principles," of "opportunism" and even of "Millerandism." Vera Zaslitch said to me after the split: "You do not know what an unprincipled man this Lenin is! He is ready to change his tactics every month. I shall not be surprised if he changes the programme of the Party as well one of these days." Lenin replied to this charge: "How these Mensheviks drag at the tail of things! There has already been a sharp change in the situation, but they keep on repeating the old legends and drag the Party backwards."

And this "unprincipled" Lenin, as Zaslitch prophesied in horror, really did, when he temporarily adopted the S.R. programme so as to attract to the side of the proletarian revolution the peasants who sympathised with this programme, calculating that when the dictatorship of the proletariat was established, it would be easy to convince the peasants on the basis of their own experience of the correctness of the Bolshevik agrarian programme. This is just what happened. The Mensheviks accused the Bolsheviks

of Millerandism and Jauresism in 1905 in connection with the readiness of the Bolsheviks, in the first Russian bourgeois democratic revolution, to take part in a provisional revolutionary government in case of a victorious insurrection. The struggle against the Mensheviks was not an easy one, but owing to the firmness of principle and irreconcilability of the Bolsheviks the latter were able to thoroughly expose the Mensheviks, and it was for this reason alone that they were able to secure the great October victory.

Thirdly, the menace of proletarian revolution in the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism, interwoven with an unprecedented world economic crisis, gave rise to the frantic orgy of fascism. Whereas the social-democrats prostitute Marxism in the most shameless manner, and tried to convert this mighty revolutionary doctrine into a weapon of bourgeois counter-revolution, fascism proclaimed a campaign for the extermination of Marxism, setting itself the aim of thrusting out the ideology of Marxism to replace it by an ideology of bestial nationalism and chauvinism in its most repulsive mediaeval forms (the theory of superior and lower races, etc.).

The experience of Germany has already shown that the fascist drive against Marxism has not only failed to exterminate among the workers this ideology so hated by the fascists, but has still further increased the strivings of the workers towards Marxist teachings. But this nationalism and chauvinism is at present taking hold of the ruined petty-bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, and the declassed workers, the sections of the population which can and should come over to our side.

Are we carrying on an adequate ideological struggle against the *Fascist variety of nationalism*? No, we are not. We expose the national and social demagogy of the fascists, explaining that they are not socialists, but lackeys of the big bourgeoisie. And here some people strayed into the opportunist social-democratic theory that the fascists are allegedly a party of the petty bourgeoisie or of the lumpen proletariat. Our struggle, also, against nationalism and chauvinism is *general*, and even this struggle is carried on to an insufficient degree. But the overwhelming majority of Communists, who have a correct position on this question, do not carry on an adequate ideological struggle against the "*specific*" fascist variety of nationalism, do not to a sufficient extent expose to the masses the fact that these fascist forms in which nationalism is expressed at present are the best confirmation that this is not only the ideology of an exploiting class, but the *stinking ideology of a dying exploiting class spitting out its venom in its historic death throes*.

And this must call forth a special repugnance towards this ideology.

Fourthly, in connection with the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, our Parties at present are everywhere putting forward the question of power. In connection with this maturing of the revolutionary crisis, this question of power is now being put forward by the social-democrats as well, but with demagogic aims. In order to deceive the workers, the social-democrats are also saying that the only way out of the crisis is socialism, the transfer of power to the working class. Some of them have even begun to talk about the "dictatorship of the proletariat," but of course about a "temporary dictatorship," about the path "through dictatorship to democracy," etc. The proletariat will not be able to be victorious in the forthcoming decisive struggles, will not be able to rally around the Communist Parties, if our Communist Parties do not smash up this demagogy of social-democracy, if, while linking up with the struggle for power, the struggle for the smallest and most trifling partial demands of the masses, they are unable to explain concretely *how* the power can be won and *how* social-democracy is trying at this stage to distract the workers from the *real* struggle for power by its demagogic lying phrases.

Is this campaign of explanation and exposure in connection with the question of power carried on well by us? We must state directly that it is not being carried on well enough. At present, when the question of power is being put on the order of the day of history, as it was at the time of the first post-war revolutionary crisis, great practical importance is assumed by the complex of questions regarding the state which Lenin, like the genius he was, dealt with in his book, "State and Revolution," and in his book, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky." The complex of ideas set out in these books, have now obtained full historic confirmation as the result of two paths—the Bolshevik path and the social-democratic path. Do we in our mass agitation now raise the question of power to such a height of principle? No, we do not. And this is because of the same neglect of revolutionary theory which finds expression in the fact that even the famous twenty-one conditions adopted at the Second Congress of the Comintern have not everywhere been well mastered up to the present, although it is precisely at the present time that they again take on specially urgent significance in connection with the attempts of the "left" social-democrats to form a new Two-and-a-Half International, or a new Fourth International.

Interest in revolutionary theory, or what

amounts to the same thing, in the theory of Leninism, is shown *unevenly* in our Parties in the capitalist, semi-colonial and colonial countries. Among the big Parties the greatest interest in the theory of Leninism is shown by our Chinese Communist Party, our German Communist Party, our Polish Communist Party and our Bulgarian Communist Party. And of course this is no accident. Our Chinese Communist Party is not only an heroic Party but is also a Party which greedily absorbs the teachings of Leninism. When I heard the speech of Comrade Wan Min here at the Plenum, I remembered the article which Lenin wrote even before the war, with the striking title "Advanced Asia and Backward Europe." Why is it that our Chinese Communist Party and the other Communist Parties of the East — Japanese and Indo-Chinese—so thirstily absorb the teachings of Leninism at the present time? Not only because of the double oppression experienced by the great semi-colonial Chinese people, but because our Communist Parties in the East were free of social-democratic traditions and democratic illusions.

Lenin wrote:

"Ignorance is not so far from the truth as prejudice, because ignorant but honest people who labour and supporters of the toilers can now, after the war, more easily understand the inevitability of revolution, civil war and the dictatorship of the proletariat than the Kautskys, MacDonalds, Vanderveldes, Brantings, Turattis and the whole bunch of them, crammed with the most learned reformist prejudices."*

The German Communist Party, as distinguished from the Chinese Party, was not free from the traditions of social-democracy. Historically it was connected by descent with the left Luxembourgian wing of social-democracy. And it was not easy for the German Party to overcome the mistakes of Luxembourguism. But Luxembourguism had one feature in common with Leninism, and this was its high interest in theory and its irreconcilability of principle, though not such irreconcilability as was to be observed in Leninism, but incomparably more so than in the centrist social-democracy. The same may be said of the Polish Communist Party. Historically it was also connected by descent with Luxembourguism, with the social-democracy of Poland and Lithuania. In addition it was linked up in the past more closely than all other Communist Parties with the revolutionary struggle of the Bolsheviks of Tsarist Russia. The same can be said of the Bulgarian Communist Party, which was historically linked up by descent with the movement of the "Tesniaks."

Our Chinese, German, Polish and Bulgarian Communist Parties, not to mention the C.P.S.U. of course, display, comparatively speaking, the greatest interest in theory, in the study of the foundations of Leninism. And it is no chance that these parties are the strongest of our Parties in the sphere of the practical struggle. Much less interest in theory and the study of the foundations of Leninism is shown by our other parties—the American, British, Czecho-Slovakian and French Parties, etc., although recently the strivings towards the study of the theories of Leninism has increased in these Parties as well, especially among their young cadres. This theoretical lagging behind is one of the causes why it is comparatively more difficult for them to overcome opportunist waverings in practice.

The method of overcoming opportunist waverings is not the same in our theoretically advanced parties and in those parties which are comparatively more backward theoretically. Our German Communist Party eliminated its opportunist deviations in the course of fierce struggles of principle against Brandlerism and the Ruth Fisher deviation. Our Polish Communist Party also overcame them in similar battles of principle against the Kosheva-Warsky group, the Chinese Party in the struggles against Chen-du-Suism and Li-Li-Hsianism, the Bulgarian Party in the struggles against the mistakes of the Tesniak movement. In these fierce battles of principle, the Parties became ideologically steel-tempered, and an example of such steel-tempering was shown us not long ago by our splendid Comrade Dimitrov, who found it necessary even in the court, on the Tenth Anniversary of the September revolt in Bulgaria, the criticise the opportunist mistakes of the Bulgarian Party leadership to which he belonged in 1923.

Others of our Parties get rid of their opportunist mistakes in a different way. They get rid of them without ideological battles, quietly, noiselessly, in family style. Therefore, they do not eliminate their opportunist mistakes thoroughly enough, and relapses occur very frequently.

When the Comintern points out or explains to the leaders of these Parties the various mistakes which they have made, they agree with the Comintern, but after correcting one mistake, they immediately make another one in the same sphere. It works out like the labours of Sisyphus. How is this to be explained? By the fact that political life does not stand still, that the situation is changing rapidly, and that if our enemies, the Social-Democrats, are defeated in one place, they rapidly reform their ranks and resort to new manoeuvres. In order to correctly

* Lenin, Vol. XXIV., p. 396, Russian Edition.

apply the directives of the Comintern to correspond with this rapid change of the situation and these rapid changes of the manoeuvres of our enemies, our Communist Parties must not only have a good knowledge of what is stated in the tactical resolutions of the Comintern, but must also be aware of the principles and methods of Leninism which the Comintern invariably takes as its basis when giving its tactical directives. And these principles and methods of Leninism have not yet been sufficiently mastered by our Parties, thanks to their neglect of theory. In order to operate the line of the Comintern consistently, it is not sufficient to master its directives *empirically*, but we must grasp them *theoretically*. And in this respect, things are by no means as they should be in our Parties.

I will deal in greater detail with one question connected with the problem of theoretical soundness and empiricism. Some comrades complain that we, with our learned language and politically sharpened definitions, find difficulty in approaching the broad masses because the masses always reason empirically. Complete clarity must be achieved on this question. The Russian Bolsheviks always placed theory at an extremely high level, and the same Russian Bolsheviks were able to talk to the masses in such a popular language and to make such a close approach to them, while at every moment taking into account what was worrying the masses, what they wanted, what they were striving to obtain, that their agitation found an echo among the broad masses, the millions of workers and peasants. The Russian Bolsheviks were well able to link up with the masses, remembering the words of Marx that "theory becomes a material force when it takes hold of the masses." The Bolsheviks considered, and still consider, that unless this is the case, theory is of no use to them, for they are not armchair wiseacres but revolutionaries standing at the head of the mass movement.

But the secret of the success of the Bolsheviks lies in the fact that they understood not only how to *link themselves up with* the masses, but also how to *carry the masses with them, to direct* their struggle towards the great revolutionary aims of the working class, that they did not drag at the tail of the masses, did not bow down before spontaneity, but raised the masses to the level of the revolutionary tasks facing them. They not only listened carefully to the voice of the masses, but, on the basis of their own experience, led the masses to the struggle for revolutionary tasks, patiently but firmly scattering their petty bourgeois prejudices, patiently but firmly expos-

ing the opportunist views with which the Mensheviks and S.R.'s influenced them.

And to enable the Party to carry on this *correct policy*, which is of *decisive* importance for consolidating the influence of the Party amongst the masses, to enable the Party to thoroughly understand *whither* it must lead the masses at the given period and *how* it must expose the conciliators, the Party itself had to thoroughly master the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism. This theory which is founded on dialectical materialism, is a very complicated theory. Marx wrote in the preface to the French edition of "Capital" (it is no accident that it was precisely to the French edition and not to the German), that: "There is no broad military highway leading to science. Only those can reckon on reaching its shining heights who do not fear the labours of climbing up its rocky paths." Our revolutionary theory is difficult. In order to master it and link it up with practice, all the economic and political conceptions and all the words in which these conceptions are expressed must be sharpened like razors.

Thus we must not mix two things. It is one thing to speak of the language in which we talk to the broad masses so that they can understand us, and another matter to speak of the ideas which we must inculcate into the minds of the *active elements of our Party*, the vanguard of the working masses, and of the learned language in which we of necessity wrap these ideas so that these active elements can *themselves* find their way in complex circumstances, so that they understand what tasks face us, so that they learn the complex strategy and tactics of Lenin. This Party language cannot be too simple, because it has to be the verbal reflection not of what is described as "common sense," but of the revolutionary dialectics of Marx and Lenin. Of course, there is no Chinese wall between the active elements of the Party and the masses, and there are many inconspicuous transitional paths, but as we rise from the masses to the regular Party workers, the higher we go in the hierarchy of the Party, the greater must be our claims and the more irreconcilable must we be in demanding theoretical clarity and exactness of our conceptions, as well as exactness of our Party language, because unsoundness of tactics and vacillation lie behind vagueness of words and ideas.

We see that behind the dispute about language there lies hidden a dispute on questions of the deepest principle. Those who cannot find the real language for the masses slip into sectarianism. But those who have a tendency to vulgarise

our *Party language* may easily slip into opportunism.

I repeat, in a number of our Parties things are far from well in respect to the theoretical comprehension of our tactical directives. I do not at all mean to say by this that our Parties are not growing ideologically. That would be a slander on them. They are bound to grow ideologically because their political experience is accumulating in the process of the struggle, and this experience is freshened also in the process of day-to-day Party leadership, and at Party conferences, and congresses, at Plenums of the E.C.C.I. and at the Congresses of the Comintern, and in the press. Our Parties are undoubtedly growing ideologically and have even grown a great deal in the last few years. But their ideological growth is still lagging very much behind the demands of the present time, when the pressure of the class enemy on our Party has tremendously increased and when the greatest soundness of principle is needed to withstand this pressure.

In this respect, matters are much better in the four Parties which I mentioned above, namely, the Polish, German, Chinese and Bulgarian Parties. For instance, I may point to the great theoretical achievements of the Polish Communist Party as expressed in its draft programme. I can give another example. The Comintern defined the character of the Chinese Soviets as the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasants, in the form of Soviets. The economic policy of the Soviet Government in China should have been constructed accordingly. But this correct general formula of the nature of Soviet economics in China proved to be insufficient, and in putting it into practice the Communist Party of China made mistakes which might have had very serious results. However, our Chinese Communist Party, which mastered the method of Leninism and was helped by the Comintern, succeeded in concretising this formula and correcting its mistakes. In doing so it took a number of points into account such as the length of the civil war in China, the economic backwardness of the Soviet districts, the existence of an economic blockade of the Soviets and the concrete revolutionary outlook in China.

When we point out the still very insufficient interest in theory which is shown by some of our Parties, such as the British, French and Czechoslovakian Parties, we sometimes receive a very curious reply: "This, of course, is owing to their national character. They are not Germans, whom Engels called a 'theoretical nation'." These arguments about "national character" are un-Marxian and un-Leninist, and in particular

the reference to Engels is completely unfounded. It is true that Engels said that the German workers were at an advantage in that they "belonged to the most highly theoretical nation of Europe." But he added immediately: "and that they have preserved that theoretical sense which has been almost completely lost by the so-called 'educated' classes of Germany."*

So the crux of the matter is not the nation. References to "national character" are anti-Marxian and anti-Leninist. It is not a question of some peculiar "national character" which is expressed in the neglect of theory, but of definite historical traditions which have grown up in the given country in certain circumstances and which change with the changes of these circumstances. Voltaire once said: "The Germans rule the clouds, the French rule the land and the English rule the sea." This dictum was true for a definite period of time. But in the 60's of last century, Germany, which had begun to build up her industry rapidly, came down with equal rapidity from the clouds of romanticism ("von den heiteren Regionen, wo die reinen Geister wohnen") to the earth, and began to operate the Bismarckian policy of "blood and iron." And France, which had ruled on the land, learned to "swim" and became the second colonial power in the world. It is often said of Britishers, of the British workers, that a theoretical approach to them is doomed to failure, that Britain is the classic country of empiricism, the classic country of practical compromises. It is forgotten, however, that if definite historic conditions gave rise to these features among the British bourgeoisie, who infected broad masses of the British proletariat with them, nevertheless they did not always exist and will not always exist in the future. It must not be forgotten that before the development of British trade unionism in the 40's of last century, England had its revolutionary chartist rising, and still earlier, in the 17th century, it had its Cromwell, and earlier still, in the Middle Ages, it had the most bloody history in Europe. And we do not doubt that in the very near future Great Britain will again leave the path of compromise and conciliation for the path of revolutionary catastrophe.

It is not a matter of the existence of some "national character" but of the existence of very bad historic traditions. But that is why we are Bolsheviks, namely, to break all bad historic routine, without fearing to go against the stream for a time. And if we explain to our British, French and Czechoslovakian comrades in a business-like manner, "empirically" on the basis

* Lenin, Vol. IV., p. 381, Russian Edition.

of the experience of their own practical struggle and their mistakes, how harmful empiricism is and how important it is for them to accelerate their mastery of revolutionary theory, then we shall undoubtedly have success, the more so as the objective conditions in which we live are pregnant with great and rapid changes. For that matter, as I have already said, a noticeable advance is to be noted at present in this respect among the young cadres of these Parties.

I will now pass from these problems to a very important practical matter connected with these problems. I return to our journal, the "Communist International." This journal, as the leading political and theoretical organ of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, is, and in any case should be, one of the weapons for raising the theoretical level of our Parties. But if it is to carry out this function well, our Parties must come to its help in two senses. Firstly, responsible comrades from our various sections must at long last begin to contribute to our journal systematically, not only in the sense of contributing informative articles, but in the sense of raising certain *problems* which arise from the movement in their countries. But this is not enough. They must learn to raise and elaborate these problems in Leninist fashion. This means that, in raising these problems, they must take the decisions of the Comintern and the decisions of their parties which have been approved by the Comintern as their starting points, linking these up with the changing circumstances of the struggle. This also means that when elaborating problems, they must follow the good example of the journalist comrades of the C.P.S.U. If these problems have already been raised in any form by our teachers, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, it is then necessary to make a thorough study of what and how and *in what concrete conditions* such and such a problem was spoken of by Comrade Stalin, the best interpreter of Lenin, who is developing his teachings further. Then, what and how and in what circumstances such and such a problem was spoken of by Lenin, the best interpreter of Marx

and Engels, who developed their teachings further. Then, taking as a basis the way they raised the particular problem, and taking them as a guide, as well as taking the new experience into account, to independently elaborate the problem further according to the new concrete conditions of the struggle. We should remember that though we mercilessly destroy conservative and reactionary traditions, we all the more honour revolutionary traditions, since we are not like the Ivans, who do not remember kith and kin. We value every thought, every word of our great teachers, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The second thing that we are seeking to obtain from the leadership of our Comintern sections is for them to energetically assist in obtaining a wide circulation for our journal, with a view to theoretically educating our Party activists, a task which is especially necessary at the present time when owing to the fact that many of our Parties have been driven into illegality, their own theoretical organs, as for instance in Germany, have temporarily been compelled to stop publication.

In conclusion, I will recall the words of Lenin which he said at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern and which were in the nature of a bequest to the Comintern:

"I think that the chief thing for us all, both for the Russian and the foreign comrades, is that after five years of the Russian Revolution we have to study. All the Parties and all sections in Russia are showing this by their thirst for knowledge. These strivings towards study show that a most important task for us now is to study and study again. . . I am convinced that in this respect we must say not only to the Russian but to the foreign comrades that a most important thing in the coming period is study. We study in the general sense. They must study in a special sense, so as to really attain the organisation, construction, method and content of revolutionary work. If this is accomplished, then I am convinced that the prospects for the world revolution will not only be good but excellent."

* Lenin, Vol. XXVII., p. 355, Russian Edition.